

## A PONDEROUS PYLON OF PROPHECY

IN PREVIOUS MESSAGES I silhouetted the recent historic fact of the restoration of מדינת ישראל, the State of Israel, against the golden glow of our ancient predictive Scripture prophecy.

In this, my third address of this particular series, I am to substantiate the postulation of my previous message by selecting a salient in Israel's colourful history, a salient which, like some giant mountain pinnacle, stabs the historic skyline with dominating emphasis and refuses disregard. Having selected our thus unchallengeable historic pinnacle, I aim to illumine the sky immediately behind it with the Shekinah brilliancy of equally unchallengeable Divine predictive prophecy, thus conducting the attestation into willing acceptance and paving the way for our consideration of the prophecies of יחזקאל, Ezekiel, in future messages.

The nation of Israel came to life in the comforting crib of Divine love, safeguarded and canopied by the priceless patrimony of precious promise.

Listen to these delicate words of God regarding Israel:

**“The Eternal did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people – for you were the fewest of all peoples – but because the Eternal loves you . . .”** (Devarim, Deuteronomy 7:7, 8)

This tender Divine love was chaperoned by the most lavish and generous Divine promises which I can best epitomise by one quotation from the twenty-eighth chapter of Devarim as translated by Isaac Leeser:

**“And it shall come to pass, if you will hearken diligently unto the voice of the Eternal your God . . . that the Eternal your God will set you highest above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you . . .”**

Do please read for yourselves the record of these precious promises; indeed, it will materially aid your better understanding of this message if you will examine the whole twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy.

At this juncture it occurs to me that some of my gracious auditors may wish to enquire why the Eternal God called the nation of Israel and presented it with such a glorious prospect.

In anticipation of any such reasonable interrogation I shall gladly advance some of the Divine intentions.

In a world that had then departed from the original pristine Divine revelation and, losing its former knowledge of the One True God, had devolved into polytheism — the worship of many gods — Israel was called to restore to humanity the lost Divine disclosure that the God of Israel is the One God of the whole creation and besides Him there is no God.

Moreover, Israel was to rescue the world from the peril of pantheism and declare the Personality and Holiness of the Godhead. Obviously a faithful performance of this Divinely inaugurated missionary enterprise on the part of the nation of Israel was to be attended by God-bestowed spiritual and material national blessings and prosperity as a manifest demonstration that **“righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”**

Israel was also to be the Divine Menorah — candlestick — shining forth the oracles of Divine revelation to mankind; and lastly, but certainly chiefly, Israel was to be the tree of God from which would shoot the Branch, מָשִׁיחַ, the Messiah and Redeemer of the world.

Admittedly, Israel's patrimony of promise was priceless, but remember that the Divine purpose was priceless, too; indeed, so precious was God's purpose through Israel that Israel's patrimony was accompanied by a grave and very solemn premonition. Let me quote these warning words from Vayikra:

**“And if notwithstanding this you will not hearken unto Me, but walk contrary unto Me: Then will I also walk contrary unto you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you, sevenfold for your sins.”** (Vayikra — Leviticus 26:27, 28)

Thus far, my friends, we have seen God's purpose, Israel's prospects, and Israel's premonition; now let us look honestly and frankly at Israel's performance.

The history of Israel as recorded in the Tenach (a book, by the way, erroneously designated the “Old Testament”) is, as Niebuhr frankly admits, completely free of what he calls “national patriotic falsehood.” It is a Divine mirror providing a faithful reflection of national failure. Israel's national performance was a poor one indeed and brought our people into a long, long, dark night of sorrows.

Believe me, I recoil from drawing you into the darkness; yet if, together, we are to emerge into the bright prophetic promise of rest and peace for the beloved people and land of Israel, you must come bravely with me through the night of sorrows.

The Divine chastisements fell successively upon the nation until in the year 70 of the Common Era the prophesied climax as reached when the Roman General Titus destroyed our Temple in Jerusalem and set in motion the ghastly גְלוּת, the Diaspora, the scattering, the dispersion of Israel among the nations of the world.

It will be tragically easy, therefore, to select our specimen historic salient; the dreaded גְלוּת to be our pinnacle of history, for here commenced Israel's long, dark, tragic stateless trek down the ages of time and along the winding troubled roads of the nations of the world.

If we could employ the tears of Israel's Galut as a solvent to concentrate into one gargantuan pain-stab the anguish of but the six million Jewish people who perished under Hitler-hate, and if, by hypodermic syringe, we could introduce the resultant solution into the veins of the world, there

would be enough concentrated agony in this one single injection to make the whole globe writhe in pain for centuries.

Do you now enquire if this long night of Israel's anguish can be silhouetted against the illuminating background of prior Divine predictive prophecy? I answer most unhesitatingly that it can. Indeed, that is just the feature of attestation I am now compelled to choose.

Will you hear these selected pronouncements from Vayikra (Leviticus) chapter twenty-six and from Devarim (Deuteronomy) chapter twenty-eight? They are like the ominous beat of some reverberating drum of doom:

**“And I will render your cities a waste ... ”** (Vayikra 26:31a) **“And I will surely make desolate the land ...”** (Vayikra 26:32a) **“And you will I scatter among the nations ... ”** (Vayikra 26:33a, cf. Devarim 28:64a) **“And among these nations shall you find no ease, and there shall not be any rest for the sole of your foot ... ”** (Devarim 28:65)

Let me affirm strongly that the Galut was a definite mark of the Divine displeasure upon Israel nationally, not, of course, necessarily upon Israelites individually, and it is folly to deceive ourselves with specious human theories to the contrary. Let us face the facts.

Moreover, it is none other than our great and blessed prophet Moses who foretold, inter alia, this long גלות, this terrible dispersion, and the agony of it.

How happy I am to conclude this message by yielding to the tender impulse within me of giving you this premature assurance of comfort that this very same mantling and predicted night of sorrow is itself the evidence and certainty of the roseate and equally predicted dawn of joy.

How beautifully our Prophet Zephaniah speaks of this time:

**“Sing, O daughter of Zion,**

**Shout, O Israel;**

**Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,**

**O daughter of Jerusalem.**

**The Eternal has taken away your judgements,**

**He has cast out your enemy;**

**The King of Israel, even the Eternal, is in the midst of you;**

**You shall not fear evil any more.**

**He will rejoice over you with joy ... ”** (Zephaniah 3:14, 15, 17)

Yes, my beloved friends, surely joy cometh in the morning.

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**(1900-1964)**

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