

## HOPE THROUGH ABRAHAM OR MOSES?

MY DEAR FRIENDS, in my first message in this current series I called your attention to two colourful facts: the first fact was the reestablishment of ישראל, the State of Israel, after 2,000 years of statelessness; the second fact was that just such a restoration is well within the content of the predictive prophecy of **כתני הקדש**, our sacred Jewish Holy Scriptures.

Let us background this modern fact with some further salients in Israel's remarkable career.

Strictly speaking, the history of Israel began with the bestowal of Divine unconditional promises to Abraham, promises which were Divinely ratified later to Isaac and to Jacob; indeed, you will remember that the very name ישראל, Israel, was first bestowed upon Jacob at פניאל, Peniel, as recorded in ברשית, Genesis, chapter 32. This was a memorable occasion for, regarding it, Jacob himself declares:

### כִּירְאִיתִי אֱלֹהִים פְּנִים אֶל־פְּנִים

**“ . . . Because I have seen the Eternal One face to face.”** (Genesis 32:31)

Thus the very name **“Israel”** was born under supernatural circumstances and the nation Israel was born, years later, in the Exodus from Egyptian bondage, under circumstances also supernatural.

After entry into Palestine, as it was then known, the Promised Land, Israel unwisely exchanged the Theocracy — the rule of God — for a human monarchical system and a trio of successive kings, Saul, David and Solomon, absorbed 120 years rule over a united kingdom.

Following Solomon, the kingdom was divided into two parts for a period of 253 years — that is, from 975 to 722 before the Common Era — and, to distinguish the Southern Israel Kingdom from the apostate Northern Israel Kingdom, the former, the Southern Israel Kingdom, very wisely became known as Judah because in the Southern Israel Kingdom of Judah alone was vested the Davidic dynasty containing the precious Messianic promises and all of their implications.

In 722, before the Common Era, the apostate Northern Israel Kingdom came under predicted Divine judgement and was extinguished as a kingdom by the conquering Assyrian monarch Sargon.

After Sargon's extinction of the Northern Israel Kingdom, the Southern Israel Kingdom of Judah lasted only another 136 years — that is, from 722 to 586 B.C.E. — when it, too, came under Divinely predicted judgement and was crushed by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar.

Ignoring wisely the fantastical, unhistoric, unscriptural and dangerously anti-Semitic Anglo-Israel theories, let us note that it was during this total period of 389 years, and particularly this last 136 years of it, that the title or term **“Jews”** — derived from the important Messianic name **“Judah”** — became of equal and latterly of more frequent usage than the term **“Israel.”**

However, after the Babylonian captivity had ended, the returned exiles, representative of all the twelve tribes, resumed the national name "Israel," which became and still is completely synonymous with the term "Jew."

Now began, from the year 536 before the Common Era, Israel's chequered and troublous career through Persian, Grecian and Roman overshadowing until, in the year 70 of the Common Era, there fell upon our nation the culminating Divine stroke, the destruction of our Temple, which inaugurated that dark Galut, dispersion, scattering among the nations, which was the subject of our preceding message.

How few of our people of Israel know that this national disaster was a prophesied event!

Of all the prophets, how superior was the dignity of our great Leader Moses! You will recall that when some dared murmur against him it is recorded that the Eternal God manifested His Presence to Israel and announced:

**"Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Eternal will make Myself known to him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all My house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Eternal shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"**

The words I have quoted will be found in Bemidbar (Numbers), chapter 12.

Of the Levitical institutions associated with the Aaronic regime of worship, Moses as the mouthpiece of God cried: **"And I will make desolate your sanctuaries, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours."** (Vayikra, Leviticus 26:1b)

And our great prophet — I think I should say our much neglected prophet — Daniel declares:

ואחרי השבעים ששים ושנים יכרת משיח ואין לו והעיר והקדש ישחית

עם נגיד הבא וקצו בשטף ועד קץ מלחמה נחרצת שממות

**"And after sixty and two sevens will Messiah be cut off but not on account of himself; and the city and the sanctuary will the people of the prince that is coming destroy . . ." (Daniel 9:26)**

What a stupendous prophecy about stupendous events. Of the Temple in Jerusalem the historian Hosmer writes:

"Vast and splendid the Temple certainly was. The Romans were then at the height of their power, and familiar with all the magnificence of the earth, yet it seemed to them one of the wonders of the world."

Granted that the disaster was predicted, and with a calculable chronology appended to it, yet it is comforting to note that, at the same time, Moses predicted Israel's preservation through the anguish of the ages until, finally, Israel would be restored to his land and, later, to his Lord.

Surely we begin to discover how important is this subject, the subject of this series of messages, and how unhurried must be our treatment of it.

Lift up your eyes, my beloved people of Israel! The dark night shadows are already stabbed with the incandescent flecks of the dawn, even though we also behold the red glow of a prophesied final struggle.

Take heed and heart from these predictions glowing even in the darkness. Let me quote Moses again to you:

**“And they shall then confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, (that) through their trespass which they trespassed against me, and also that (because) they had walked contrary unto me: I also had to walk contrary unto them, and to bring them into the land of their enemies; and then shall their UNCIRCUMCISED HEART be humbled, and then shall they satisfy their iniquity, and I will then remember my COVENANT WITH JACOB, and also my COVENANT WITH ISAAC, and also my COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM will I remember; and the land will I remember.”** (Vayikra, Leviticus 26:40–42)

Please observe carefully and narrowly that it is Moses himself who points us, not to the Divine Covenant inaugurated under him at Mount Sinai, but rather back to the Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob originating some 500 years earlier.

I cannot stress sufficiently the significance of this fact.

Hear our great teacher Moses once more in the same strain:

**“And yet for all that, though they be in the land of their enemies, will I not cast them away, neither will I loath them, to destroy them utterly, to break my covenant with them; for I am the Eternal their God. But I will remember for their sakes the COVENANT OF THEIR ANCESTORS, WHOM I BROUGHT FORTH OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT before the eyes of the nations ... ”** (Vayikra, Leviticus 26:44,45)

Amazing fact! Oh, do please grasp it! It is Moses himself who assures Israel that Israel can find no hope in the Mosaic Covenant, so sadly broken and vitiated by the nation as such.

But, it is also Moses himself who affirms that the sky of prospect and promise is rosy and warm with a sure hope under the unconditional covenant made with our father Abraham.

Not the conditional Law of Moses but the unconditional Grace of God will be the basis of Israel's future blessing, for surely as our great prophet Jeremiah, with full Divine authority, announces to us:

**“Hear the word of the Eternal, O you nations, and tell it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scatters Israel will gather him and keep him, as a Shepherd his flock.” (Jeremiah 31:10)**

**Dr Lawrence Duff-Forbes**

**(1900-1964)**

**Founding Director of David House Fellowship Inc.**

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