

THE JEWS

It was said that King Louis XIV of France asked Blaise Pascal to give him proof of God. Pascal answered, **“Why the Jews, your Majesty, the Jews!”**

Bishop Thomas Newton (1704 - 1782) wrote: *“The preservation of the Jews is really one of the most signal and illustrious acts of divine Providence... and what but a supernatural power could have preserved them in such a manner as none other nation upon earth hath been preserved. Nor is the providence of God less remarkable in the destruction of their enemies, than in their preservation... We see that the great empires, which in their turn subdued and oppressed the people of God, are all come to ruin... And if such hath been the fatal end of the enemies and oppressors of the Jews, let it serve as a warning to all those, who at any time or upon any occasion are for raising a clamor and persecution against them.”*

In 1899 Mark Twain wrote in Harper’s Magazine: *“The Egyptian, Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away. The Greek and Roman followed, made a vast noise and they are gone. Other peoples have sprung up, and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out and they sit in twilight now or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal, but the Jew. All other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?”*

Leo Tolstoy wrote: *“What is the Jew?...What kind of unique creature is this whom all the rulers of all the nations of the world have disgraced and crushed and expelled and destroyed; persecuted, burned and drowned, and who, despite their anger and their fury, continues to live and to flourish. What is this Jew whom they have never succeeded in enticing with all the enticements in the world, whose oppressors and persecutors only suggested that he deny (and disown) his religion and cast aside the faithfulness of his ancestors?! The Jew - is the symbol of eternity. ... He is the one who for so long had guarded the prophetic message and transmitted it to all mankind. A people such as this can never disappear. The Jew is eternal. He is the embodiment of eternity.”*

Winston Churchill said: *“Some people like the Jews, and some do not. But no thoughtful man can deny the fact that they are, beyond any question, the most formidable and the most remarkable race which has appeared in the world.”*

When the Hebrews entered the Promised Land they were opposed by seven nations: the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Every one of these nations was “greater and mightier” than they were (Deut. 7:1). Yet, remarkably, these great and mighty nations have disappeared and the lowly Jews remain. How many Hivites do you know? How many Amorite communities do you know about? Yet, against all odds, the Jews have survived while others did not. Wicked men and nations have sought to exterminate them, but have failed. Somehow the persecuted Jews have survived while powerful dictators like Haman and Hitler did not. Moreover, they have manifested the ability to become citizens of many countries without compromising their commitment to be Jews. Somehow they have resisted centuries of efforts to integrate with others and thus destroy their national identity.

On multiple occasions God warned His people that if they worshiped other gods He would scatter them among the nations. Note!

- “I will scatter you among the heathen” (Lev. 26:33).
- “I will scatter you among the nations” (Deut. 4:27). From one end of the earth to the other” (Deut. 28:64).
- “For the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the LORD to anger. (I Ki. 4:15).
- **EVEN THOUGH THE JEWS WERE TO BE SCATTERED, GOD PROMISED THAT HE WOULD NOT FORSAKE OR DESTROY THEM! FURTHER, HE PROMISED THAT THEY WOULD RETURN TO THE PROMISED LAND AND THAT HE WOULD NOT FORGET THE COVENANT THAT HE MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS (DEUT. 4:31).**

Here is but one of many promises God made to Abram regarding the Promised Land: **“And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.” (Genesis 13:14-15)**

There are at least 170 references to the land God promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and promised not to forget it. In fact, some 55 times the Scriptures record that God confirmed this promise with an oath. 12 times the covenant is described as “everlasting”.

Perhaps the first time the Jews were scattered was when they were taken captive to Babylon. One of the many ways they disobeyed God involved the Sabbatical Year. Every seventh year the Promised Land was to rest (Lev. 25:4). When the Jews didn’t let the land rest God scattered them among the heathen so that the land could “enjoy her Sabbaths” (Lev. 26:34). Jeremiah predicted that Israel would be captive for 70 years (Jer. 29:10) which would indicate that the Jews had not observed the Sabbatical Year for 490 years. 2 Chron. 36:21 states that this 70 years of captivity was to fulfill the word of the Lord through Jeremiah until the land enjoyed her Sabbaths.

The return of the Jews from Babylonian Captivity is detailed by Ezra, Nehemiah, and others. The return of the Jews, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, was an integral part of God’s plan. Jesus was a descendant of Abraham and through Him all the families of the earth would be blessed. Since the Jews were in captivity, they didn’t have the funds to rebuilt their homeland. Isaiah predicted that God would prompt a pagan king named Cyrus to rebuilt Jerusalem. This remarkable prophecy came generations before Jerusalem was destroyed and Cyrus was born. (See Is. 44:26 - 45:1). As a point of interest, Cyrus is the only gentile called the Lord’s anointed.

Following the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A. D. 70, the Jews were again scattered among the heathen. As we have already observed, however, they never lost their identity as the descendants of Abraham. Neither did they lose sight of the promise God made to them

regarding their return to the land God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This time, however, it would be many centuries before they returned.

Early in the Christian era the Jews were not just scattered, they were barred from being in their own country. Their absence from the Promised Land continued for many centuries. In 1210, however, following the end of the Crusades, the Jews began trickling back home. First, several hundred rabbis known as the Ba'alei Tosefot, returned to settle in the land.. In 1263 Rabbi Nachmanides established a small Sephardic community on Mt. Zion. More Jews started to migrate to Israel after their expulsion from Spain in 1492. Still more came in the 16th century, and in the mid 1700s Gershon Kitover started the first Hassidic community in Israel.

Between 1808 and 1812 some 500 more arrived and ultimately settled in Jerusalem. By 1880 there were some 40,000 Jews living in Israel among 400,000 Muslims. In 1882 some 30,000 more Jews arrived and in the following years establish 28 new settlements.

During W. W. I Jewish population declined as a result of war, famine, disease, expulsion, etc. According to the 1922 census there were 84,000 Jews amidst 643,000 Arabs. In the 1920's more Jews arrived because of anti-Semitism in Europe. A record number arrived in 1935. In 1939 Jewish immigration was limited to a total of 75,000 over the next five years. With the outbreak of the war, however, Palestine was closed to the Jews leaving many of them to die at the hands of Hitler. After 1945 the immigration of Jews resumed but in 1946 the British began to intern those caught in Cyprus. This number interned grew to approximately 50,000.

In 1948, just a few hours before the U.N. mandate expired ending British control over the land, Israel declared it's independence. This was the first time Israel had been an independent nation in 2,900 years. The whole transaction took place in 24 hours, prompting some to remember the words of Isaiah: **“Who ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Can a country be born in a day” (Is. 66:8)**. This took place on Friday, May 14, 1948. Against the advice of many, President Truman of the U.S.A. immediately recognized Israel as a nation. When Truman spoke to the Jewish Theological Seminar in 1953, he dared to tell them “I am Cyrus”.

On May 15, 1948, one day after declaring it's independence, six Arab states declared war on Israel. The six nations were: Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. Azzam Pasha, Secretary-General of the Arab league said: *“It will be a war of annihilation. It will be a momentous massacre in history that will be talked about like the massacres of the Mongols or the Crusades”*.

At the time the war began the Israeli army did not have a single tank or cannon. Their tiny air force consisted of 9 obsolete airplanes. They had only one weapon for every three soldiers. The Arabs, by comparison, had plenty of arms, plenty of ammunition, plenty of tanks, plenty of planes, and plenty of soldiers.

The fact that Israel won it's war of independence against such overwhelming odds should force the most hardened skeptic to consider that perhaps God was somehow involved in that victory.

Unfortunately, however, the Arabs have never abandoned their desire to destroy the Jews. The Palestinian Nation Charter openly declared it's goal of eliminating Zionism in Palestine. The PLO, Hamas, and Hezbollah are also intent upon the destruction of Israel. In 2013 the new Iranian president Hassan Rouhani, also pledged to destroy Israel. This has led someone to observe - if the Arabs were disarmed there would immediately be peace. If the Israelis were disarmed there would immediately be no Israel.

Regardless of your views on prophecy, and the end times, it ought to be evident to everyone that there is something different about the Jews!