

A COVENANT WITH DEATH...

Part I

*The Mariners Tried it in Jonah's Day
Man Is Trying It Today
Antichrist Will Try It Yet Future
BUT...*

By Arlen L. Chitwood

(This four-part series deals with Israel and the nations, present and future Middle East peace efforts, and where, *according to the Prophets*, the whole of the matter is headed.)

“Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it” (Isa. 28:15-18).

“And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging” (Jonah 1:12-15).

A Jewish prophet, in the midst of a storm, knowing why the storm existed, explained matters to the men on board the ship. But they evidently either didn't believe him or didn't want to believe him. Accordingly, *they tried to do it their own way rather than the way stated by the prophet, which was God's way.*

They “rowed hard,” trying to bring the ship to land. And they “cried unto the Lord.” But all was to *no avail*, “*they COULD NOT!*” (v. 13). *They could accomplish NOTHING*, for they were attempting to save themselves and the ship *APART FROM doing it God's way, which Jonah had revealed to them.*

Doing it God's way was left as *a last resort, for a time when they had tried it their own way, without success.*

And the preceding would be *VERY TELLING about events in today's world, as the stage is rapidly being set for that which is about to occur* — the time which Jonah's prophecy foreshadows, Israel and the nations during the coming Tribulation.

Israel and the Nations, the World, Christians

A disobedient Jewish prophet on board the ship, out of the sea, can only typify a disobedient Jewish nation in the land, separate from all of the Gentile nations. And the matter, type and/or antitype, has to do with a failure to do as God had previously commanded.

The present unrest among the nations surrounding Israel, spreading out into the world at large, is only a mild precursor of that which is about to occur, introduced in the opening verses and dealt with throughout the first two chapters of Jonah. The present unrest, as previously stated, is only setting the stage for that foreshadowed in this book — *an unrest which CAN ONLY lie in the immediate future, an unrest of such a nature that the present unrest CAN ONLY pale by comparison.*

The reason for *the great storm on the sea during Jonah's day* was the presence of *a disobedient Jewish prophet on board a ship headed in an opposite direction from that which God had told him to go.*

And the reason for all of *the unrest among the nations today*, more particularly the unrest among the nations which is about to occur, is *the presence of a disobedient Jewish nation in the land, completely out of place in relation to the nation's calling.*

Jonah was out of place then, and Israel is out of place today. Jonah had to be dealt with 2,800 years ago, effecting correction, in order that he might ultimately fulfill his calling. And Israel has to be dealt with during modern times, effecting correction, in order that the Jewish people might ultimately fulfill their calling.

Thus, the trouble among the Gentile nations in the Middle East today, spreading out into the world at large, can be traced to *ONE THING, exactly as the storm during Jonah's day could be traced to ONE THING.*

And it has all been made known in the Book of Jonah (among other places in the Word) through events which the Lord, in His sovereign direction and control of all things — declaring “the former things from the beginning” (Eccl. 3:14, 15; Isa. 48:3-5) — allowed to come to pass in the life of one of His prophets almost three millenniums ago.

The type has been set, and NOTHING can ever change. EVERYTHING will come to pass EXACTLY as seen in the type.

As well, *EXACTLY* as in the type, *EVERYTHING* revolves around *ISRAEL!* It always has, and it always will!

But, again, keep one thing in mind about all of this. That foreshadowed by the type in Jonah, as previously stated, is *NOT presently being fulfilled in the antitype*. That presently occurring in the Middle East, extending out into the world at large, forms only a precursor, a setting of the stage, for that which is about to occur.

That foreshadowed by God sending out “a great wind into the sea,” resulting in “a mighty tempest in the sea,” is *future*, not present. But the future time when this will occur *CANNOT be a time in some distant future*, even though some 2,800 years have passed since Jonah’s experiences, penned in his prophecy.

From that which Scripture reveals about the time immediately preceding that future day, and from all corresponding indications surrounding us on every hand, the time when the sea will be as tumultuous as seen in Jonah — turmoil among the nations so great that a destruction of all the nations would ultimately result apart from Divine intervention (Matt. 24:21, 22) — *CAN ONLY BE in the immediate future, the VERY immediate future*. We can only be living *very, very near the time when the events that Jonah dealt with in his prophecy will begin to occur*, events that will begin occurring during the last seven years of Man’s Day, extending into the subsequent Lord’s 1,000-year Day.

(Note where enlightened man today is headed during what can only be a few short years comprising the remainder of Man’s Day. *It’s not toward nations progressively getting along with one another but toward nations increasingly in conflict and discord with one another; it’s not toward world peace but toward world war*. And the whole of the matter moves more on an exponential scale in this negative respect than not.

And the whole of the matter has *ONE CAUSE* and *ONE CAUSE ALONE*: *a disobedient, out-of-place nation — the NATION OF ISRAEL — which has re-entered a house left desolate at the wrong time and under*

the wrong conditions.

Then, beyond the preceding, there is *NOTHING WHATSOEVER* that man can do about the matter. All man’s efforts to effect some semblance of peace between Israel and the surrounding nations, a type peace which would, of necessity, leave Israel in the land in the nation’s current condition, can only exacerbate the problem.

And the latter — seeking to bring about a type situation which would allow the Jewish people to remain in the land, in some semblance of peace, under the nation’s current condition [unrepentant, unbelieving, seeking to emancipate themselves apart from their Messiah] — is the reason why the problem could only be exacerbated. This is man’s way of solving an existing problem, which runs completely counter to God’s revealed way of handling the matter.

The men on the ship during Jonah’s day tried to do as the nations are trying to do today. *NOTHING* was gained, with the storm continuing, producing a dire situation which they had absolutely no control over. Then, out of desperation, they finally did what God’s prophet had told them to do in the first place — *CAST HIM INTO THE SEA*.

THEN, and ONLY THEN, did things change; THEN, and ONLY THEN, was Jonah in the place where God could deal with him relative to repentance — IN THE SEA.

The preceding is *NOT* to say that the nations should support Israel being moved out of the land today, for that day is not only yet future on God’s prophetic calendar but God will take care of matters Himself, in His Own way, when the time arrives.

But it is to say that *the nations today can NEVER, NEVER succeed in doing what the men on the ship during Jonah’s day couldn’t succeed in doing. The nations today can labor, as the men on the ship labored, but they can NEVER, NEVER rise above what those men on the ship accomplished by their labors, which was ABSOLUTELY NOTHING except prolonging and possibly increasing the intensity of the storm.*

In the meantime though, apart from attempting the impossible, the Gentile nations *CAN be kindly deposed toward Israel APART FROM trying to help the Jewish people circumnavigate God’s plans and purposes for the nation.*

God’s Dispensational Dealings

Aside from all of the preceding, God’s present dispensational dealings with man have to do with *Christians, NOT with Israel*.

The heavens ARE PRESENTLY CLOSED relative to God’s dispensational dealings with Israel, dealt with in the Book of Jonah; and the heavens will remain closed in this respect until His dispensational dealings with Christians have been completed and Christians have been removed (the rapture [Gen. 23-25]).

THEN, and ONLY THEN, will the heavens reopen relative to God’s dispensational dealings with Israel (Gen. 28:15-31:3). *ONLY THEN will God effect correction, resulting in repentance, salvation, and the restoration of a cleansed people to a healed land* (Ezek. 34-39).

Thus, that foreshadowed by *the great storm* out on the sea in the Book of Jonah — Israel and the nations, exactly like Jonah and those with him, being caught up in the storm — awaits the Tribulation. It will be *DURING THIS FUTURE TIME* that God will resume His dealings with Israel and bring matters to pass *EXACTLY as seen in Jonah, taking matters to EXACTLY the same extremes, and carrying matters to EXACTLY the same conclusion*.

But, even though these things from the Book of Jonah are not presently being fulfilled, witnessing the build-up to that which is about to occur — *because of the presence of a disobedient Jewish nation back in the land* — one can almost hear the approaching hoofbeats of the four horsemen in Rev. 6:1-8, and one can readily see the storm clouds rising over the Middle East and spreading out across the remainder of the world.

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