

THE INTRACTABLE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM

PART II

GOD'S NATIONAL FIRSTBORN SON, RETURNING BEFORE THE TIME

By Arlen L. Chirwood

"Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son,
even my firstborn:

And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he
may serve me..." (Ex. 4:22b, 23a).

If that seen in Part I wasn't already too much for man to even begin to deal with, there is still more. And man can't deal with that which remains any more than he can deal with that previously seen. It is all outside of and completely beyond his control. God alone, in His sovereign control of all things, controls the present Middle East situation; and He will bring matters to pass, in His way and time, exactly as they are outlined in His infallible Word.

An Existing Israeli Nation in the Middle East

In the preceding respect, there is the matter of Israel having been driven out among the nations in time past, *because of unbelief, to effect repentance*. And a remnant has returned to the land *before the time*. *The slayer*, "Israel," typified in Numbers chapter thirty-five, has returned to the land of her possession *before it is time for the nation to return*.

The Slayer, according to the type in Numbers chapter thirty-five, *cannot* return to the land of her possession before Christ completes His present high priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary and comes forth as the great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek (*cf.* Gen. 14:18-20; Ps. 110:1-7; Heb. 5:6-10; 6:20; 7:1-21). And because a remnant has returned *before the time*, before Christ completes His

high priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, *a major Middle East problem has resulted*.

It is the age-old story of a disobedient Jonah asleep on board a ship headed away from God's calling and then finding himself in the midst of a raging storm out on the sea, a storm so severe that it struck fear in the hearts of those men on the ship, a storm so severe that it was about to destroy the ship. *That is the picture which Scripture presents of the dire situation in the Middle East today*.

(For information on the preceding, in relation to the antitype of that seen in Numbers chapter thirty-five, refer to the author's two pamphlets, "'Time' of Israel's Restoration.")

Then, as if the preceding addition to the existing problem wasn't enough, add something else. God pictures Israel as *having been wounded, as being sick, because of past disobedience* (Isa. 1:2ff). And God states concerning Israel's condition in this respect that the One Who brought about this condition (God, because of the nation's disobedience) is *the only One Who can cure the nation* (Hosea 5:13-6:2).

The present nation of Israel in the Middle East is an outgrowth and result of a Zionistic movement which began under Theodor Herzl (an ardent Zionist) and others toward the end of the nineteenth century. Then, the catalysts to bring this Zionistic movement to fruition were, centrally, events occurring during and following two subsequent world wars, WWI and WWII.

The former (WWI) provided England with the Mandate to Palestine ("the administration of the territory of Palestine" given to England by the League of Nations in 1922). And England, prior to this time, had become sympathetic toward the Zionists' aims of a homeland for the dispersed Jew in the land to which they now held the Mandate, resulting in numerous Jews, during particularly the next two decades, returning to the land of Palestine.

And *the latter* (WWII), resulting centrally from the actions of the Third Reich in Europe — seeking to produce a Jew-free Europe, slaying some 6,000,000

Jews in the process, in what is called *The Holocaust* — provided the Jewish people with the catalyst, with that which was necessary among themselves and world opinion, to bring about events of May 14, 1948.

On this date, the current Israeli nation was born. A remnant of Jews, for the first time since Rome had ruled the known world, once again existed as a nation in the Middle East. And since that time, with Jews worldwide continuously streaming into Israel, the nation to date is almost 6,000,000 strong. And it is *this return* of the Jewish people from a worldwide dispersion (referred to through the name, *Aliyah*) that Bible students often associate with the prophesied Biblical return.

The fact of the matter though is that the Jewish people have sought to return *through man's own power and strength during a time in which the nation remains in disobedience and unbelief*. God scattered the Jewish people among the Gentile nations *because of disobedience, to effect repentance*. However, *an unrepentant and a disbelieving remnant returned before the time*. A nation resulted, and that nation has grown over the past sixty-five years to where it comprises a sizeable percentage of the world's Jewish population (about two-fifths).

A people described in the words of Isa. 1:4-6 ("a people laden with iniquity") presently reside in the land. And the land itself is described in the verse immediately following, in verse seven ("desolate...strangers devour it").

Numerous verses in Scripture deal with Israel's restoration (*e.g.*, Deut. 30:1-3; Isa. 1:4-2:5; 6:1-8; Ezek. 36:24ff; 37:21ff; 38:8ff; 39:25ff; Matt. 24:30, 31). And that stated in the text and context of verses of this nature clearly presents *numerous insurmountable problems* for anyone attempting to associate the present return of a remnant with God's promised restoration of His people.

The same prophecies which deal with Israel's restoration also deal with the reason Israel was driven out among the nations (*because of disobedience*), along with that which must occur before God will remove His people from the nations and place them back in the land — *repentance*. *And the latter has yet to occur*.

Thus, in this respect alone, *it is not possible* that the return of a remnant *at a time before repentance occurs* can be looked upon as God restoring the Jewish people in accordance with the numerous Old Testament prophecies.

If the present restoration of a remnant to the land is the beginning of the prophesied Biblical restoration of the Jewish people to the land, *God, within this restoration, would be seen acting contrary to His revealed Word*, not only relative to repentance but in numerous other realms as well — *an impossibility*.

Aside from the fact that the restoration of the Jewish people *can occur only following Israel's repentance*, this restoration *must occur in accordance with the chronology of that foreshadowed by each of the seven Jewish festivals in Leviticus chapter twenty-three* (which means that it can only follow Israel's national conversion at the end of the Tribulation).

This restoration *can occur only after Christ completes His present high priestly ministry in the sanctuary*.

This restoration *can occur only after Christ has returned at the end of the Tribulation*.

This restoration *can occur only after two days, on the third day* (only after 2,000 years, in the third 1,000-year period, which comprises the Messianic Era).

This restoration *can occur only after the Times of the Gentiles has been completed*.

This restoration *can occur only after Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy has been fulfilled* (and seven years yet remain to be fulfilled in this prophecy).

The Complete Picture

Thus, the complete Middle East picture, as it exists today, could be succinctly depicted:

On the one hand, God's firstborn son, the one whose right it is to hold the sceptre, the only nation with a God, is sitting wounded in a place where the nation is not even supposed to be today, in the midst of Moslem nations, with the nations raging and the whole situation about to tumble out of control (cf. Ps. 2:1ff).

And on the other hand, Satan, through existing conditions, is doing all within his power to destroy

Israel through using the surrounding Gentile nations, which are under his control and sway.

This is why there is a situation rapidly becoming uncontrollable, with the nations raging, in the Middle East today. *This is why* the world heard the cry from Nasser over five decades ago that the primary goal of a war between Egypt and Israel was to drive Israel into the sea, doing away with the nation. And, as well, *this is the reason why* the present ruler of Iran and others are openly and defiantly continuing to call for this same destruction of Israel today.

None of the basics behind these things are being taken into account in the nations' endeavors to effect Middle East peace. They can't take these basics into account. The intractable Middle East problem has both *a Biblical base* and *a false religious base*, and the nations seeking to effect peace cannot operate in either realm.

Both bases are *spiritual* and involve *supernatural powers* — one emanating from the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the other emanating from the god of this age. Man's best efforts in either supernatural realm would be as powerless as trying to extinguish the flames of a burning skyscraper with an empty eyedropper.

And even if the nations could operate in the spiritual realm, the nations *couldn't* cure Israel of her current condition. *Only God can do this*, something which He clearly states that He will do following Israel being brought to *the place of repentance*.

The Middle East is a *powder keg with a burning short fuse*. It is going to blow, and man can't stop it, for the prophets have already spoken. *This is simply what GOD HAS DECREED that it will ultimately take to bring Israel to the place of repentance*, something that has been in the offing for over 2,600 years of Gentile rule and persecution of Israel.

How soon will it be before the Middle East tumbles completely out of control in the preceding manner? We're not told. So there is no need to speculate. Such would be useless anyway. Suffice it to say that *it is later than most care to think, imagine, or admit*.

Then, There Is Something Else

The preceding outlines the bad news. The preceding shows why a report such as The Baker-Hamilton Report *can't even begin to touch the problem, as it exists*. And this is not to speak negatively of the report. Rather, it is simply to say, from a Biblical base, as previously outlined, that *there is an existing problem in the Middle East which man can't deal with*.

But there is good news. *The more the matter deteriorates, the brighter things become in another respect*. The dawn always follows the darkest hour of the night.

The time is rapidly approaching when the Church will be removed, and after that God will allow conditions to deteriorate to a point, particularly in the Middle East, where Israel will have no place to turn other than to the God of their fathers. Scripture describes that time as a day "that shall burn as an oven" (Mal. 4:1), and Scripture also speaks of conditions deteriorating during that time to a point where "no flesh" would survive apart from Divine intervention (Matt. 24:22).

It will be the story seen in the Book of Exodus all over again. *Israel, through Gentile persecution, will be brought to the place of repentance, a Deliverer will be sent, Israel will be delivered, and Gentile world power will be destroyed*.

That coming day will see the "Sun of Righteousness" arise "with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4:2). *Christ will return, Israel will be cured of her wound (her sickness), Gentile world power will be destroyed, and God's firstborn Sons (Christ, Israel, and the Church [following the adoption]) will then exercise the rights of primogeniture, with the Gentile nations being blessed through Israel*.

Then and only then will the intractable problem in the Middle East be resolved. *Then and only then* will there be peace in the Middle East.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee" (Ps. 122:6).

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