



The tribe of Issachar understood the times and knew what Israel should do

Issachar Ministries UK seeks to be a people who understand the times, listen to the Lord and know what should be done

Issachar Comments Papers

Expounding biblical concepts on the world scene today

ARABS, JEWS AND BRITAIN

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"Come, they say, let us destroy them as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more." No! This was not a statement issued by Hamas last month when they began launching thousands of rockets randomly across the border from Gaza to terrorise the towns and villages of Israel.

It comes from Psalm 83 where the next verse says *"With one mind they plot together; they form an alliance against you - the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites of Moab ... Ammon and Amalek, Philistia, with the people of Tyre. Even Assyria has joined them to lend strength to the descendants of Lot."*

This Psalm was written around 165 BC in the time of the Maccabees when all the neighbouring nations around the tiny state of Israel were conspiring to destroy the Jews. That is over 2000 years ago and now history is being repeated.

Britain's Role

Britain bears a lot of responsibility for the present terrible conflict between Israel and Gaza. At the end of the First World War Britain was given a Mandate to govern Palestine by the League of Nations while France was given Syria and Lebanon. Palestine included Transjordan which today is the independent state of Jordan. In the whole of Palestine there were only 600,000 Arabs and Winston Churchill, as Colonial Secretary responsible for the region, said that it could easily absorb 5 million Jews who would *"develop and cultivate the region that is now barren and make it fertile... creating new jobs and new wealth that will benefit the whole community."*

Churchill

At a conference in Cairo in 1921 Churchill said, *"It is manifestly right that the scattered Jews should have a national centre and a national home to be re-united and where else but in Palestine with which for 3000 years they have been intimately and profoundly associated? We think it will be good for the world, good for the Jews, good for the British Empire, but also good for the Arabs who dwell in Palestine and we intend it to be so; they shall share in the benefits and progress of Zionism."*

Arab Opposition

The Arabs strongly resisted this and in prolonged negotiations Churchill complained that the Arabs were not interested in reaching an agreement - any agreement! Churchill continually reassured them that the rights of Arabs who chose to live in the Jewish homeland would be protected and that they would benefit from the development which the Jews would carry out in *"the wilderness and barren places"* of the land.

But Churchill did not understand that the real basis of Arab opposition was rooted in irrational hatred going back over many centuries, mixed in with a fear that their whole way of life would be changed by the coming of the Jews with their strong work ethic. This contrast in cultures can be seen today in travelling across the land where the tidy order of Jewish villages is in total contrast to the disorder of Arab villages.

Culture Clash

In 1922 Churchill approved hydro-electric schemes put up by a Jewish engineer from Russia that would provide

much-needed irrigation and power to the land. Addressing the House of Commons he said, *"I am told that the Arabs would have done this for themselves. Who is going to believe that? Left to themselves, the Arabs of Palestine would not in a thousand years have taken effective steps towards the irrigation and electrification of Palestine. They would be quite content to live in the wasted sun scorch plains, letting the waters of the Jordan continue to flow unbridled and unharnessed into the Dead Sea."*

Pro-Arab Policy

The failure of the British Government to understand the culture of the Middle East led to constant changing of direction under the Mandate and the lack of clear policy in implementing the Balfour Declaration. Both the British army and the Civilian Administration were openly pro-Arab which encouraged the many acts of civil disobedience and rioting in the 1920s and 30s. Additionally the British administrators restricted Jewish immigration at the very time when the Nazis were stepping up their persecution as a prelude to the Holocaust which claimed so many lives that could have been saved if the Jewish homeland had really been open to them as was intended in the Mandate.

Even after the Second World War survivors of the death camps crammed aboard a leaky old Italian ship were refused entry to Palestine when they tried to dock at Haifa. The ship was turned away by the British Army and soon sank in the Mediterranean with the loss of many lives. Britain has not been a good friend to Israel and to listen to our news reporters interviewing people in Israel and Gaza today with their highly anti-Israeli attitudes is a disgrace to journalism. In their enthusiasm to castigate Israel for tragic civilian deaths they entirely overlook the fact that Israel is under attack from a reckless terrorist organisation that deliberately sites its weapons and tunnels in densely populated residential areas to create the kind of scenes that are broadcast to the world, to try to turn the world against Israel.

Anti-Semitism

Their clever propaganda campaign is producing a huge wave of anti-Semitism spreading across the world which is doing immense harm and may lead to further atrocities. All of this leads to the fundamental question - why are the Jews so hated by so many people with an irrational prejudice that is not open to rational discussion? And why has this hatred lasted for thousands of years?

Special Relationship

The answer can only be understood in spiritual terms. It is because the Jews are seen to be a people with a special relationship to God - a special covenant relationship that has lasted for thousands of years. This not only creates jealousy but it encourages the God-haters to hate Israel. In some irrational way those who do not have a close relationship with the Lord turn upon the people of Israel as a means of venting their resentment of God, of his laws of justice and righteousness that restrict the behaviour of human beings to do what they like, when they like and how they like. They are vaguely aware of the immutable laws of God such as the Ten Commandments and they deeply resent them; so hurting the Jews is a way of hurting God.

Lasting Solution

The only lasting solution to the Israel/Gaza dispute is not the destruction of the rocket launchers and tunnels, or further atrocities against Israeli civilians. The problem is spiritual and the solution is spiritual. There has to be a deep rooted change of mindset such as Paul experienced on the 'Road to Damascus' that changed his whole way of life. He set out on a journey with murderous intentions, but meeting Jesus changed all that. Both Jew and Arab need to hear Jesus saying, *"You have heard it said, eye for eye and tooth for tooth; but I say to you love your enemies and do good to those who hate you."* Jesus not only gives revolutionary teaching, but he empowers its fulfilment.

*This paper comes to you as part of the Issachar Ministries Intercessory prayer e-mail in August 2014
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