



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

The Quest for Freedom

February 2014

For the Jews in Babylon the most devastating thing was to hear their Babylonian masters or their neighbours say that Nebo and Marduk, the gods of Babylon, had overcome the God of Israel. Their conquerors tormented them, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!" But this made their plight all the more unbearable. "How can we sing the songs of the Lord in a foreign land?" It sharpened the hopelessness of their situation and made their longing for freedom all the more acute.

Surviving Institutional Collapse

If they were to survive as a people they had to learn to live without the material structures of the nation which had all collapsed - the Temple, the daily sacrifices, the priests, the City of Jerusalem, the Government of the nation, the Monarchy and even the Land of Israel. Nothing remained of the socio-political and religious structure of the nation in which they had grown up.

The miracle of the exile is that they did survive! They not only grew in number but in character, determination and spiritual stature. Their faith that had once depended upon the physical reality of the Temple now became a living faith within each individual and in their family life and the life of the community. This was the transformation that created a redeemed people who would go back to the land to rebuild the City of God in preparation for his Messiah and for raising a people of faith who would be a light for the Gentiles: taking the truth of God to all the nations - in the words of Jesus: "*Beginning in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth*" (Acts 1.8).

Across the world today the institutions of state are crumbling: in the Islamic world and in the Western world the foundations are disintegrating and the old certainties are collapsing.

Desire for Freedom

The 'Arab Spring' began with the most basic human desire - the longing for freedom - but nowhere has it produced the kind of Utopia for which the people longed. In Egypt, having successfully overthrown a political dictator, they found themselves further enslaved by an authoritarian religious regime. Once again they revolted and overthrew their religious masters only to see them replaced by a military dictatorship.

Battle for the Young

In the Western world a great battle for the minds of the young has not yet been recognised by the majority as a battle for the soul of the nation. In both America and Europe the battle is the same - the total secularisation of society: the desire to abolish God and to achieve full human freedom. But what they do not realise is that like the Egyptians they are simply exchanging one form of repression for another.

Destroying the Family

Led by the homosexual activists the secularists are intent upon brainwashing the young by changing their social values on the most basic of all institutions - that of the family. Back in 1972 when homosexual acts between consenting males had only recently been decriminalised, a London based group of homosexual activists published a manifesto in which they declared "**The family as the source of our oppression must be destroyed.**"

That declaration of war against traditional family life began the most revolutionary period of social change in history.

They have been incredibly successful in undermining family life and bringing misery to millions through the breakdown of marriage and couple relationships and the colossal emotional and psychological damage to the nation's children.

Civil War in the USA

America today is said to be a more divided nation than it has ever been since the Civil War. The battle is raging on many fronts but none more bitter and with more far-reaching consequences than the battle for the minds of children. 17 of the states in the USA have already passed laws allowing same-sex marriage and the battle is raging in the remaining 33.

California and New Jersey have gone much farther and passed laws forbidding the counselling of children in anything contrary to the State's viewpoint that homosexual attractions are healthy, normal, and desirable. In New Jersey the lawmakers have even been likening Christian teaching to 'child abuse' and there are threats that the state should remove children from their homes if they are subjected to what are regarded as 'harmful therapies'.

Government Misuse of Money

In Britain the Government is openly giving support to homosexual teaching in schools. Last year they gave more than £200,000 to train young people to go into schools and promote homosexual practices under the guise of sex education. The latest move is for our Government to give taxpayers' money to Stonewall to undertake some action in the forthcoming Winter Olympic Games to counteract the Russian President Putin's policy of protecting young people from homosexual teaching in schools.

Brainwashing

The battle for the minds of the young will determine the future direction of the Western nations. In essence it is a battle for truth. Without truth whole nations can easily be brainwashed to accepting even the most bizarre and harmful doctrines in the same way as Hitler and the Nazis promoted their evil philosophies with tragic consequences which plunged the whole world into a bloodbath of conflict.

Good News

It is only the truth that can set us free. This is why Jesus began his Ministry in the synagogue of his native town of Nazareth by quoting from Isaiah 61, announcing the good news that he had come to proclaim freedom for the captives and to release those who lived in darkness. Paul describes the whole of creation as being in need of liberation from its bondage to decay and to be brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

This is the task God has given to those who know him. It was revealed in a unique way to the remnant of Israel in slavery in Babylon who discovered God despite the restrictions and hardship that they were enduring. God is allowing the crumbling of the old institutions around us in the 21st-century in order for us to be released from the old commitments to institutional structures and to discover a new and wonderful spiritual freedom of those who have discovered God, freed from the materialistic, acquisitive-driven, celebrity-idolising civilisation that we have created. Only God can set us free and this is what he has done through Jesus, and what we are rediscovering in the small groups and little communities of believers that are being formed all over the country.

Transforming Society

God is calling the faithful remnant to come out from the modern Babylon of material wealth and institutional corruption and debt into which Western civilisation has degenerated. But as believers are responding to the call of God something amazing is happening. They are rediscovering the faith that characterised the vibrant community life of the Early Church which they inherited from the Hebrew community of over-comers who survived Babylon. As the Lord poured out blessings upon the company of the redeemed from Babylon and poured out the Holy Spirit upon the believers in Jesus after Pentecost so today we are already seeing the beginnings of a new church: a new company of the redeemed whom, in his own time, he will empower to transform a broken society.

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