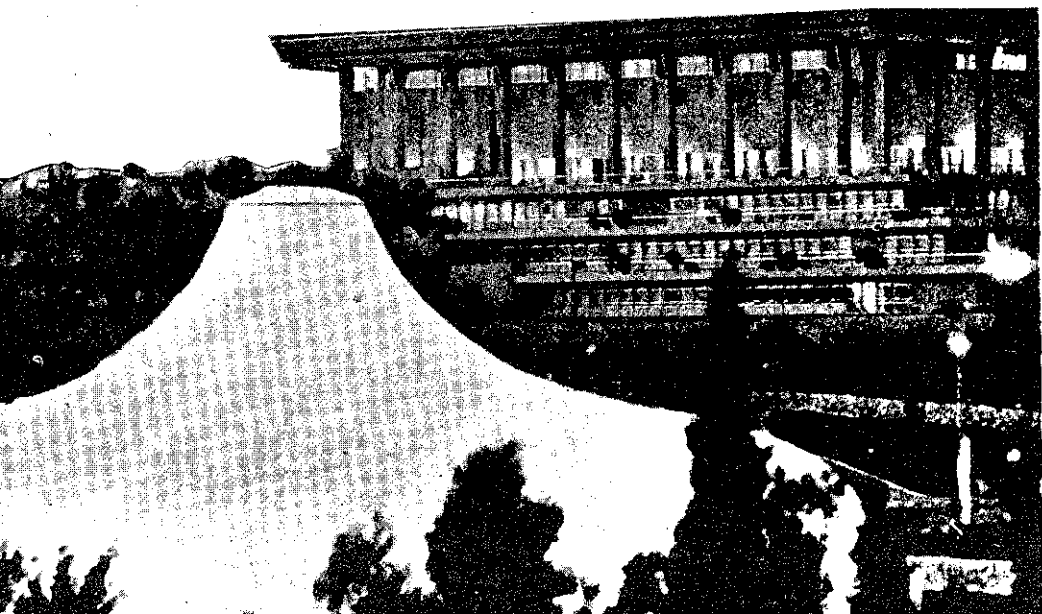


WHAT'S AHEAD FOR ISRAEL?



Ray Brubaker



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WHAT'S AHEAD FOR ISRAEL?

INTRODUCTION

While on one of our tours, I was invited for an interview at a television station that carries our program. Before we went on the air, a group of us gathered for prayer when suddenly one of the guests being interviewed turned to me and said, "The Lord has just shown me you will have a worldwide ministry."

This brother had never met me before, and I don't believe he was acquainted with our ministry. A few moments later he returned to say, "I believe it is your messages on Israel that will be used of God to bless and expand your ministry."

We especially sensed God's anointing as we prepared these commentaries for our latest book, **WHAT'S AHEAD FOR ISRAEL?**

We have always believed that as God raised up this broadcast, He will raise up friends vitally interested in the propagation of this message so that we will never lack for funds in the sending forth of His Word.

Perhaps someone reading this book will be especially led to help us expand this message worldwide. You can help promote the coming of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords. What greater investment is there?

Wim Malgo, writing in **THE MIDNIGHT CALL** magazine, refers to prophecies as they relate to Israel, saying: "The Rapture of the Church of Jesus Christ must be near at hand." He notes we are seeing "these things in the process of fulfillment, things which were predicted thousands of years ago."

To that end and purpose, this program is a "voice crying in the wilderness," destined to become a giant shout to proclaim our message.

If becoming a partner with us, please call or write at once. We will talk to anyone wanting to help get the broadcast on more stations. Call area code 813 and the number 347-2463.

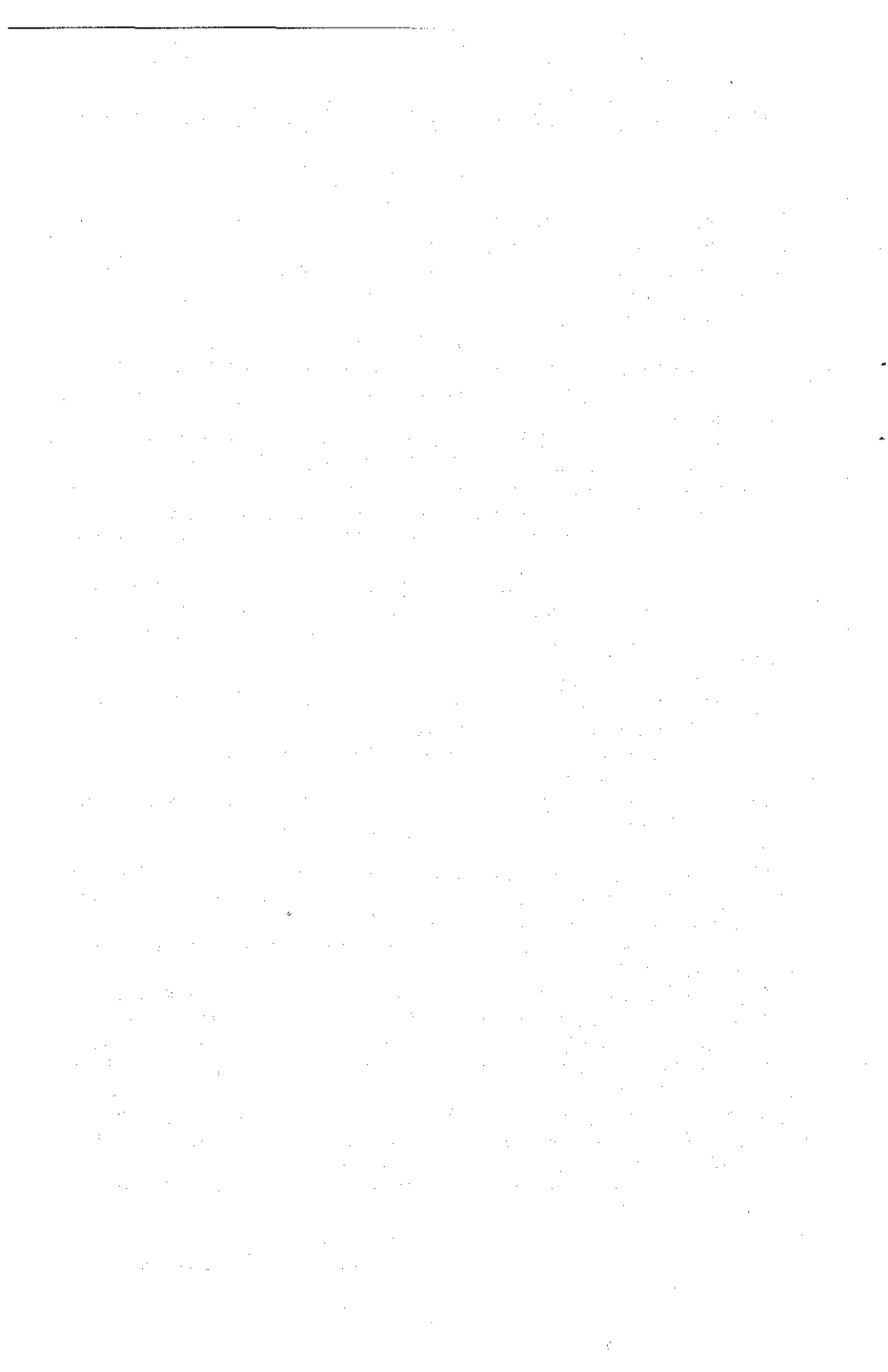
Or write us. Let us know you will be a Prophecy Partner to help with the production of these programs.

A gift of \$1,000 will enable us to produce one of our telecasts.

Then too, we have hundreds of radio stations that carry our weekly broadcast for \$100 a year which we call "broadcasting's biggest bargain." Think of being able to reach an entire community for less than \$2.00 a week via radio.

A Prophecy Partner is one who sends \$10 or more each month (although any amount that you can send is needed and appreciated). Don't let this opportunity slip by without doing something to help us reach the world with the good news that "Jesus is Coming Soon. Be ready!"

Ray M. Brubaker



THE ISRAELI ELECTION



In Israel during the recent election we had 26 parties in all fighting for 120 seats in parliament, the Knesset. Can you imagine what that would be like in this country?

Since no single party has ever won an absolute majority in an Israeli general election, even the smallest parties campaign hard.

Testified Major General Israel Tal, who heads up the country's tank industry, "We now disagree among ourselves on everything."

Can't you see that what is needed is the Messiah? For only He could bring order out of the chaos that has characterized this past election.

Says Knesset Speaker Menachem Savidor: "It appears we have returned to the tribal period, to the days of Joshua and the Judges . . ."

The last verse of Judges reads: "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (Judges 21:25)

Perhaps this is true in Israel today. For without a king, and without the Messiah, there is lack of direction bordering on confusion.

Orthodox Jews continue to pray daily, "I believe with a firm faith in the coming of the Messiah, and although He tarry, yet will I wait for Him to come."

It was Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who took over from the ailing Menachem Begin, who sought to rally enough support to keep his party, the Likud, in power. Shamir, like the judges, declared of every voter, "It is in his hands to decide the fate of the land of Israel."

Thus, the predicament in Israel today.

Shamir's main challenger was Shimon Peres, the 60-year-old leader of the Labour Alignment. It was Peres who maintained, "It is not that the ship of Israel fell apart, but that it is sailing in the wrong direction."

Some of the main election issues that Shimon Peres promised to deal with included the removal of the Israeli army in southern Lebanon. Peres would withdraw some of these forces, although it is known that the Israeli army has given stability wherever it has gone.

Peres also wanted to stop building settlements in the densely populated Arab area of the West Bank. Some \$3.5-billion was spent there over the past seven years with a modest increase of 15,000 Jewish settlers.

Then there was the question of how far Jewish religious law should be observed in everyday life.

Israel's return to her land, we know, is in fulfilment of Bible Prophecy. However, in order to maintain the Jewish State, there is great need of financial support. Friends of Israel are invited to serve the country by making a financial investment in the building of the State. It's a continuance of the old ideal that Israel exists primarily to provide a homeland for the scattered Jewish nation.

Jews and Arabs live together in Israel, but not if some party leaders in Israel have their way.

Rabbi Meir Kahane, formerly from Brooklyn, now leader of the Kach party, says he has the answer to Israel's Arab problem -- "Move them out."

"Whoever is willing to leave, great," he says of the 700,000 Arabs living in Israel proper and the 1.3-million in the East Bank and Gaza Strip.

Kahane, who founded the Jewish Defense League in the United States, has been arrested more than 20 times since coming to Israel. He says of the Arabs, "Whoever won't leave: We will kick him out. We have the power . . ."

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek is frankly worried that "Kahane is liable to become the symbol of Israel and Judaism in the eyes of the world." He sees him becoming an "asset to the haters of Israel and the Jewish people."

Here in Hebron the tension has increased between Arabs and Jews because of a new phenomenon – attacks by Jewish militants against the local Arabs.

In 1980, the Arab mayors of Hebron and Ramallah were the targets, men who were regarded as moderates in the spectrum of Arab nationalism.

The two mayors were hit by car-bombs, detonated when the driver tried to start the engine. Both men had to have their legs amputated. But both survived and remain defiant.

Then there was the attack upon the Islamic University of Hebron in 1983 by a group of militant Jews. They entered the campus in Arab dress, then attacked with automatic weapons and hand grenades, leaving three Arabs dead and 33 wounded. The attack was in retaliation for the killing of six Jews in Hebron a couple of years earlier.

Thus, antagonism between the offspring of Jacob and Esau goes on.

Former Prime Minister Begin said of Kahane, "I reject categorically everything that man says."

Less aggressive, but just as devout, is the Tami Party. Broadly speaking, Tami represents the Sephardim or Oriental Jews. Many of them represent the predominance in the world of politics and finance of Jews who came from central and eastern Europe. It was this group that precipitated the recent elections by voting against Likud's austerity measures.

In contrast we might mention the Yahad party formed by Ezer Weizman, a former defense minister under Likud, who saw the need of a "middle-of-the-road" political alignment. Yahad means "together" and was an attempt to woo the Arab vote. Weizman maintains Israel can survive only if Jew and Arab learn to live together in peace. His party won three seats in the election.

Israel is referred to as a democratic state, but as the NEAR EAST REPORT says, it is "democracy gone wild," with nothing else like it in the middle East.

One news article that grabbed my attention was this front page headline in the JERUSALEM POST, "Slouching towards Armageddon: Links with Evangelicals."

Naturally, the mention of Evangelicals and Armageddon linked together would create curiosity.

Mention was made of most Israelis as being apathetic about the Temple Mount, the site of the First and Second Temples, of the rectangular rock where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice at God's command.

In this article it is noted, "This apathy is what prevented the Jewish terrorist underground from carrying out its central mission: to blow up the golden Dome of the Rock, the Moslem shrine built around that piece of granite, which in Jewish lore, is the foundation-stone of the universe."

It is further explained, "The plan was to hasten the advent of the Messiah and of Redemption, by setting off the war between Gog and Magog, the last jihad, and ushering in the End of Days."

Anyone familiar with the Scriptures knows that the mention of Gog

and Magog in Ezekiel 38 is a reference to Russia. At least, the Scofield Bible notes have this to say: "That the primary reference is to the northern (European) powers headed up by Russia, all agree." Then it is pointed out, "Gog" is the prince, "Magog" the land.

Now what is it we read concerning Gog and Magog?

We read, "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him."

We might add that Scofield suggests: "The reference to Meshech and Tubal (Moscow and Tobolsk) is a clear mark of identification. They are two famous Russian cities.

What is this prophecy in Ezekiel? It is a prophecy that relates to Soviet involvement in the Middle East.

A moment ago we referred to attempts by radical Jewish elements along with evangelical zealots working together to hasten the coming of the Messiah by calling for the rebuilding of a Jewish temple. And, in order for this to happen, there is believed to be a necessity for the destruction of the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque, two of the Islamic World's most hallowed shrines.

Fanatical Jewish groups have attempted such acts of violence. As TIME magazine (July 9, 1984) observes, "Had the attack succeeded, it would have had violent repercussions throughout the Middle East."

In other words, demolishing these Islamic shrines would bring on Armageddon.

Jan Willem Van der Hoeven, chief spokesman of the Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, is quoted in the JERUSALEM POST as saying the Mount should be returned to the Jews - "even if it means Armageddon."

Having known Mr. Van der Hoeven, I have questions as to whether he really said this, or maybe his remarks were misinterpreted. He was quoted as saying the fundamentalist Christian does not condone violence. Stated Van der Hoeven "I don't think God needs violence or illegality to accomplish his ways."

A most controversial figure in all of this is Rabbi Meir Kahane, leader of the militant Jewish Defense League. He claimed he received a call some months ago from Van der Hoeven of the Christian Embassy in Jerusalem but says, "I repulsed him - he's a missionary." He added, "The Christians would love me to bomb the mosque because they believe it would bring Jesus."

We would like to point out in our discussion, it will not be Christians or Jews bombing the Mosques atop the Temple Mount that will bring about the Messiah or Armageddon.

As Rabbi Shlomo Aviner says: "The Temple is the top of the pyramid of the Jewish people." But he notes, (quoting the JERUSALEM POST) "The time to build the Temple hasn't yet come. First, it's important to bring about Jewish revival."

He adds he is not concerned about the involvement of the Evangelicals, saying, "It depends on us, not America."

Indeed, revival must come. Many see this reiterated in Ezekiel 37. We have commented on the reference to Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38

which speaks of armies from the north coming down to the land of Israel and reaping destruction from the hand of God Almighty.

Now, in Ezekiel 37 we read verses 21-24, "And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all."

We have seen partial fulfilment of this prophecy in our day. At the time of the establishment of the nation of Israel, it was David Ben Gurion who said, "The most remarkable event of our generation has come to pass. The nation, scattered over the world, cut off from their land for centuries, but preserving in their hearts their faith in redemption, have returned."

However, the Jewish people who have returned are greatly divided. Some 26 different parties thrive in Israel. It's a reminder of the different denominations in Christendom. If Israel is a type of the church, you surely can see fragmentation that needs healing.

There are two main divisions. But there's coming a time when we read they shall be divided no more.

Look at verse 23 to see this revival of repentance that is here predicted. We read, "Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them; so shall they be my people, and I will be their God."

Did you hear it?

Returning to their land is followed by a return to God, not in outward show but inner manifestation. There must come cleansing of sin and forgiveness wherein the Lord acknowledges them as His people, and they acknowledge Him as their God.

Verse 24 says, "And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them . . . my servant David shall be their prince forever." (V. 25b)

Dr. Wilbur Smith, noted author, comments: "This, of course, can be none other than the Son of David, the Lord Jesus Himself." He then quotes the biblical scholar, Keil, who writes, "The true return to the Lord cannot take place without a return to David their king, since God has promised the kingdom to David and his seed forever. This king, David, however, is none other than the Messiah . . ."

Increase Mather, who served for sixteen years as president of Harvard, published a volume entitled, **THE MYSTERY OF ISRAEL'S SALVATION EXPLAINED AND APPLIED**. In this volume he says, "When once God shall begin this work of Israel's salvation, it shall be carried on with speed and irresistible might . . . All motions when they come near their center, are most swift: He quotes Isa. 11:14, saying, "The Israelites, at their return, shall even fly." Of course, this was written in 1669 before the airplane.

Declares Mather: "The Lord Jesus is eager in His pursuit, when once He is near unto the possession of His glorious kingdom upon earth . . . Christ will do more work, and destroy more adversaries in a few years in the last time than in many years in former days."

In fact, when references to Gog and Magog become a reality, and nations allied with the Soviet Union invade the Middle East, it is recorded that the Lord becomes furious.

Look at verse 18 of Chapter 38 of Ezekiel, "And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face." We read of man-made destruction along with divine intervention. The chapter ends with the Lord saying, "Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord."

In Ezek. 39:22 we read, "So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God, from that day and forward."

Beloved, all we can say is that events we have discussed today reveal we are fast approaching that day whereof the prophets wrote. We visualize that day not too far distant when Russia will invade Israel.

The Soviet Union is faced with a choice whether or not to become involved in the Middle East conflict. If she does become involved, she will be destroyed. But, we face destruction, too, for the United States has committed herself to Israel's preservation.

In Ezekiel 39:6 we read where the Lord says, "I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles; and they shall know that I am the Lord."

Dr. Charles Taylor says this is a reference to the third world war when Russia and the United States are involved in a nuclear conflict.

Magog is the land of Russia. And perhaps we are those seen dwelling carelessly in the aisles, or as the margin suggests - "coasts." U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT says the United States has a shoreline of nearly 95,000 miles.

It behooves every thinking American to ponder our future. How safe are we from missiles exploding overhead in a nuclear confrontation? There is no safety, no security from this kind of destruction except to those who put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Himself said, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

What about your relationship with Jesus Christ? Do you know Him as your personal Saviour and Lord? Have you invited Him into your heart and life? As an act of faith pray this prayer: "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive you as my Saviour. I need your forgiveness and your cleansing of all my sin. Your Word says you died for my sin. I receive you as my Saviour to live for you, love you, and serve you until you come."

Pray that prayer and mean it.

And be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

THE FUTURE OF



It was President Dwight Eisenhower who once said, "The future of this republic is in the hands of the American voter . . . politics ought to be the part-time profession of every American."

The same might be said for the nation of Israel.

Election day there is a very important day. As President Herzog explains, "For hundreds of years, Jews dreamed of having the privilege of voting for a government in their own state. Thus, every election day is a moving event."

What makes Israel's future so decisive is not her politics as much as her position on a world map . . . the only democracy in a sea of hostility . . . with the Soviet Union looking on with covetous eyes.

Why should Russia be envious of Israel?

Could the attraction be modern cities such as Tel Aviv which could become part of a tourist paradise for Moscow's elite?

Though situated in the oil-rich Middle East, Israel has yet to discover any great amount of its own oil deposits. Some see Deuteronomy 33:24 as an indication that oil will yet be discovered in abundance and Christians are investing heavily in the scheme. For Moses, in blessing Asher, said, "Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren and let him dip his foot in oil."

I recall being in Israel when inflation resulted in a devaluation of their money. I brought back a poster, received from one of the Post Offices, showing a ten-for-one exchange that took place. For every note worth \$10, you were given a \$1 bill in exchange.

Knowing our own money is planned for an exchange of some kind, we can't help but wonder what will happen and what our reaction should be.

The number one problem in Israel is her national security and how to maintain the peace with her neighbors—while having a strong national defense. Because all the nations surrounding Israel's borders have threatened to force her into the sea, a great deal of her national income

devoted to the defense of the country.

The resultant arms build-up can't help but affect the economy which has undergone rampant inflation of 400% . . . possibly the largest in the world. It's only the fact that salaries are index-linked to the inflation rate that makes life bearable.

Israel imports nearly all of its luxury goods . . . and faced with the inevitable erosion of wages caused by inflation, many Israelis have gone on spending sprees. Last year, for example, the national external debt rose to 22.6 billion dollars . . . the second highest per capita in the world.

Some statistics seem boring and uninteresting. But it must be explained that the average Israeli faces this hyper-inflation. Even the cost of food can rise as much as fifty percent from one month to another.

As already stated, the main cause of Israel's economic woes is the huge cost of equipping the armed forces. As long as there is no lasting peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors, the arms bill is likely to remain high. It is a situation they will have to live with . . . and pay for.

A crisis in the Israeli stock market has made things worse. One big factor is the loss of international confidence in the shekel which has dropped to a third of its original value. The public has been buying up 10-million U.S. dollars a day . . . many of them flourishing on the black market . . . to try to cut their losses.

While the Bible asserts, "The love of money is the root of all evil," without it, nations like Israel cannot survive.

In Israel, the economic dilemma is far worse than ours. Finance minister, Yigal Cohen-Orgad, has on his hands a nightmare situation. He took over after the economic crisis a year ago, and was forced to introduce measures to cut the balance of payments deficit and lower government spending.

Will the government be able to solve its economic problems? Demonstrators in the street call attention to the crisis which is indeed grave.

A wave of strikes has plagued the country with the hotel and tourist industry affected. The main complaints are the erosion of wages. But the government insists that pay raises must be less than the rate of inflation . . . otherwise, this monster will never be cut down to size.

What are some of the staggering challenges which lie ahead for Israel?

First, we see the need of unity. No party since the founding of the State of Israel has ever won an outright Knesset majority.

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, of American Reform Judaism, says, "Jewish unity must never become a bargaining chip on the table of political power."

In sending identical cables to Yitshak Shamir and Shimon Peres — Israeli political leaders—the rabbi urged rejection of any pressure to take such steps as amending Israel's "Law of Return" to gain support in forming a coalition government. The present Law of Return gives every Jew the right to enter Israel and receive automatic citizenship, and applies to born Jews and converted Jews, without establishing criteria for such conversions.

Orthodox political leaders want to change the law to accept only conversions approved by Orthodox rabbis. Doing so "would do violence" to Jewish unity, maintains Schindler.

If only Israel would heed the words of their great King David who wrote, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Ps. 133:1)

This is also true of the church of Jesus Christ which is marked with a multitude of denominational divisions. The Apostle Paul encourages the true body of believers to seek to accomplish Christ's prayer that we may be one in Him. Or, as he put it: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3)

In Israel, there will eventually come this unity as expressed by Ezekiel, who writes: "Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whether they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation . . . and one king shall be king to them all." (Ezek. 37:21-22a)

Hence, Israel awaits her Messiah who will bring unity and stability to the nation.

Second, in search of unity and peace, we foresee Israel seeking the help of men instead of turning to God.

Daniel is the one who reminds us of the Romans who he prophesied would come to destroy the temple in Jerusalem, which was fulfilled in AD 70. From this people we read a prince shall arise, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate." (Dan. 9:27)

This is the one who will come from the European sphere of influence who will be the Antichrist.

Notes Schofield concerning the Antichrist: "He will covenant with the Jews to restore their temple sacrifices for one week (seven years) but in the middle of that time, after three and one-half years, he will break the covenant."

Thus will begin a period of calamity never known before in Israel.

Daniel writes: "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." (Dan. 12:1)

Jeremiah, too, exclaims, "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."

"For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." (Jer. 30:7 & 11)

God wants to make a covenant of peace with Israel.

In Ezekiel 37 we read, "My servant David shall be their prince forever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant." (Ezek. 37:25-26)

This will ultimately happen under the Lord the Messiah. But until then there will be attempts to unite with earthly kingdoms and a false Messiah.

Mr. Shamir, spending several days in Brussels, sought to work out an agreement with the Common Market countries. He said the European Common Market was Israel's most important trading partner. In view of Israel's economic dilemma we see her turning to Europe and America for help.

Many scriptures could be given relating to Israel's return to her land followed by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

In Ezekiel 37, once again we have a pictorial view of a valley of dry bones. We read verse 11: "Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you . . ."

Did you hear it?

"And ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." (Ezek. 37:11-14)

Joel's prophecy, which refers to the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days upon all flesh, includes Israel. As one writer suggests, Joel 2 was not entirely fulfilled at Pentecost. Rather its ultimate and greater fulfillment relates to the days preceding the coming of the Lord when "the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Acts 2:20-21)

At Pentecost, there were 120 in the upper room. Is it coincidental that in the Israeli Knesset there are likewise 120 seats? We await the day of the coming of Messiah when all who share His reign will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Hear me, you can get in on the blessing. This is the day of fulfillment for Israel and for you.

Let me read the prophecy from Acts 2:17, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh . . ."

As Dwight L. Moody said of Pentecost, it was a specimen day.

If your heart is hungry, you can be filled with the Holy Spirit. In fact, you must be filled with the Spirit to fulfill the command in Eph. 5:18. If not a believer in our Lord Jesus Christ . . . if you have not called upon His name . . . do it right now.

Pray this prayer, "Lord, I call upon your name. You promised to save all who call upon your name. Save me, I pray. I believe that you died for my sins and rose again and my determination is to live for you and serve you until you come." Pray that prayer and mean it.

Be filled with the Spirit by allowing Christ to become Lord of your life, guiding, comforting and giving you direction in your life.

Indeed, this is the life of joyous victory.

And be ye therefore ready also for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh .



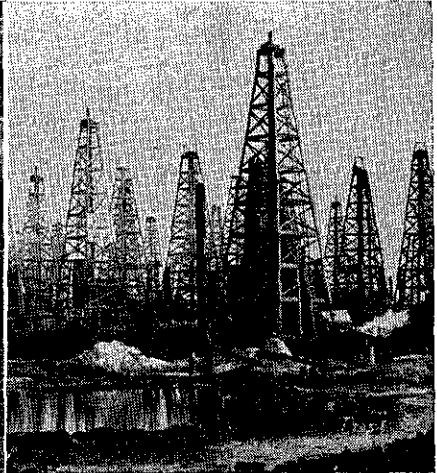
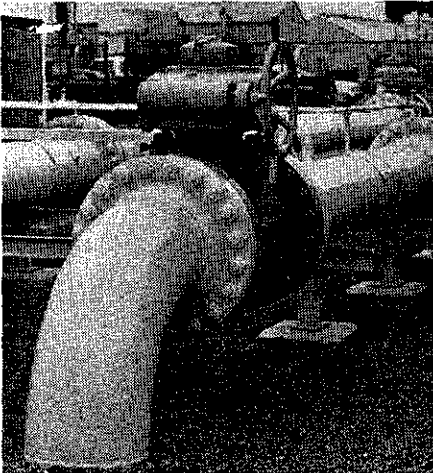
President Reagan, in one of his radio addresses, called attention to Soviet involvement in the explosive Middle East.

Asked the President, "Can the United States, or the free world, stand by and see the Middle East incorporated into the Soviet bloc? . . . And didn't we assume a moral obligation for the continued existence of Israel as a nation back in 1948?"

A defense of so-called "spheres of influence" has been a major concern of the President.

U.S. troops went into the Lebanon area to oversee the departure of the vanquished Yasser Arafat and his Palestine Liberation Organization. When they left, the Syrians stepped up their role in the area, so American troops went back. They got caught up in the civil war.

Max Lerner, noted news columnist, says Russia is simply using Syria "to expand its Mideast presence and keep the area in turmoil until it can get control of the Persian Gulf and its oil."



The Marines, while in Lebanon, were sent to keep the peace. They were not allowed to retaliate.

But under increasing pressure, the massive guns of the U.S. battleship, the New Jersey, opened fire on the Chouf Mountains above Beirut.

The U.S. was no longer seen as an impartial observer. The real blow came when suicide bombers attacked the American and French headquarters. Two hundred and forty-one U.S. and 58 French soldiers died.

Our Vice President, George Bush, was sent to view the devastation. Who was behind these acts of terrorism? Could Syria and the Soviets both share responsibility?

Soon after, promises of support for the Lebanese government of Amin Gemayel were shelved. The U.S. forces were pulled out, thus leaving a divided and devastated country, and leaving Syria and the Soviet Union to further increase their influence.

The NEAR EAST REPORT suggests, "There is one proper response to the Soviet-Syrian challenge. It is to upgrade our military-strategic relationships with the State of Israel. It is to help Israel strengthen its own defense industry. It is to let the Soviets know—and make them understand—that the U.S. strategic relationship with Israel is a permanent and growing one."

The President has let it be known that we will stand by Israel and that the Soviet Union is behind much of the unrest generated in the Middle East.

On one occasion he stated that the only chance for real peace is a military balance between the Soviet Union and the United States.

That Moscow continues to make preparations for war seems obvious from its actions. Thus, the United States sees its role as matching strength with strength.

The President has called the Soviet Union "the evil empire," knowing it has declared its aggressive intentions, exhibiting such moves in Afghanistan, and has made known its desire to become more firmly entrenched in the Middle East.

A headline in our local newspaper suggests: "Alliance with Israel is our best bet!"

The article is by Ira S. Youdovin, an associate rabbi, formerly director of Israel and world Jewry affairs for American Reform Judaism.

In the article he calls attention to the media involvement when Israel sought to deal with the P.L.O. in Lebanon.

He writes, "The Lebanese civil war was already seven years old and had claimed several hundred thousand casualties before Israel moved against bases of the P.L.O. in June, 1982." He adds, "The massive media blitz that accompanied Israel's entry misled many Americans into believing that a previously tranquil situation had been suddenly disrupted."

Says Youdovin: "Casting Israel as a destabilizing factor denies the reality that the Middle East has been unstable—from well before the birth of Islam 12 centuries ago. Arabs have always been at one another's throats."

He asks, "Were Israel to drop out of the picture tomorrow, would the Ayatollah Khomeini and Saddam Hussein lay down their arms? Would

Moammar Khadafy renounce terrorism against "brother" Arabs? Would Syria abandon its appetite for annexing all of Lebanon? Would Egypt's Mubarak be any safer from the Moslem Brotherhood, or Jordan's Hussein from a host of elements harboring long-standing grudges against his family?"

"Anti-Israelism," he notes, "is one point upon which all Arab factions agree." And as one observer put it: "If the Arabs didn't have an Israel, they would have to invent one."

Zev Chafets, in **NEWSWEEK** magazine, called attention to the media's condemnation of Israel—"The only Mideast nation that practices freedom of the press." He comments, "Rarely has a country been more criticized for its press policy—and never with less justification."

While on one hand we see criticism of Israel, on the other hand, you see praise where you might least expect it.

In an Opinion Column of a journal called **MILITARY ELECTRONIC/COUNTER-MEASURES** is an article by Martha Smith, Executive Editor, entitled "Israeli threat to its neighbors is perceived, not real."

The article begins as follows: "Israel's Plain of Armageddon is set forth in Revelations as the stage upon which the last human drama will be played. The law of probabilities, applied to our world situation with no reference to any scriptural prediction, would indicate that Armageddon has a fair chance of playing its apocryphal role." (In other words, if you didn't have a Bible, you could still visualize the possibility of an Armageddon.)

The question is asked, "What makes Israel, a physically and demographically tiny nation, so important?" It is noted, "Politically she lies at the furthestmost end of the NATO alliance, and geographically she is located at one of the most important areas of commerce of any historical period, certainly including the present. Culturally and socially, Israel's influence on the world cannot be exaggerated. Whether through Christianity, Islam or by herself, Israel's legacy of supplying the fundamental moral code to much of the world has established her in a position that makes any other nation's world domination, even over the course of several centuries, minuscule by comparison."

It is observed, "The Soviets correctly perceive Israel's strategic value and its ability to hold off, at least temporarily, an onslaught—even from the mighty U.S.S.R. The time factor is an important element affecting the Soviet Union and nations allied with her."

TASS, the Soviet News Agency, has announced the Russian government is concerned over what it called "the remaining explosive situation in the Middle East."

Of course, the Middle East has always been "explosive," but with Moscow wanting to become involved, it can be considered dangerously "explosive." Bible students know too well the role prophesied of the Soviet Union and nations allied with her seen coming to the mountains of Israel where they will meet their doom! However, this does not happen until Russia becomes embroiled with Mid-Eastern affairs that ultimately lead to an invasion of the area.

The Soviet call for an international conference would involve the

major nations such as the United States and Russia, along with Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and the P.L.O. would be included.

The TASS statement said: "The Soviet Union is profoundly convinced that the vital interest of the peoples of that region and likewise the interests of international security as a whole urgently dictate the need for the speediest attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict."

Moscow is seeking to take a more dominant role, and even a forceful hand, to bring about a solution to what they call the "explosive situation in the Middle East."

We repeat—if the Middle East is explosive, it is largely because of such factors as Russian involvement in furnishing weapons to the P.L.O. and fortifying Syria, an avowed enemy of Israel.

The Russian proposal specifically mentioned that Jewish settlements established in Arab territories since 1967 should be dismantled. Incidentally, it was during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war that the Soviet Union broke off diplomatic relations with the Jewish state.

Territories involved in the discussion would include Syria's Golan Heights, Jordan's West Bank of the Jordan River, and the Gaza Strip.

The Soviet proposal called for a Palestinian homeland under the control of the United Nations for a transition period of several months.

It was a surprise move that found a senior government official in Jerusalem commenting: "A country that has no relations with a side in a conflict has lost its main role in a peace process, and it is clear that such a proposal is not serious."

We can't help but be reminded of our Lord's parable in Luke 21 and beginning to read with verse 29 where we read: "Behold the fig tree, and all the trees: When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is nigh at hand,. So, likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away." (Luke 21:29-33)

Here you have what is believed to be one of the most important prophetic passages in all of scripture. Whereas other gospels of Matthew and Mark refer to the parable of the fig tree which is believed to be symbolic of Israel, in Luke's gospel we have the added dimension of other nations which become involved in Israel's destiny.

The word "know" appears three times in this chapter, so we are not to be in ignorance about this tremendous prophetic event.

In Luke 21:20 we read, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."

This scripture had a partial fulfillment during the siege by Titus in AD 70 when Roman armies entered the city. But as the Scofield Bible notes suggest: "That siege and its horrors but adumbrate the final siege at the end of this age, in which the 'great tribulation' culminates."

We are willing to go out on a limb and say that what we are seeing today is preparatory and leading up to this eventful day spoken of by Jesus. He said that when ye see nations involved with the future of Jerusalem, then "know" that the desolation thereof is nigh. We

continue to read, "Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains . . . for these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

Now, in order to know what has been written, turn back to Zechariah 12:2-3 where we read this prophecy spoken of by God through His prophet. "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it."

Did you hear it?

We could go down the list of nations of those who are concerning themselves with Israel's future and the future of Jerusalem.

There is French President Mitterrand, who visited Jordan and Egypt and expressed support for a Middle East peace conference involving all the interested parties including the Palestinians.

Also, President Hosni Mubarak from Cairo urged the nations to gather for peace talks, saying: "I hope there is a strong push to the peace process in the region after an Israeli government is formed and after the American elections are finished."

What did Zechariah say? He said there's coming a day when Jerusalem will become a burdensome stone for all people. We believe that day is now. Furthermore, the prophet declared, "All that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it."

Bible scholars interpret that the cry for Israel to give up or give in will be universal. Although the United States declares it is a friend of Israel, a day may come when she will call for Israel to surrender the West Bank to Jordan even as they gave up territory to Egypt in the interest of peace.

What will happen?

Verse 8 says, "In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem." The Bible says, He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. He will not be caught off-guard but will come to the defense of this nation."

Verse 9, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."

Naturally, we think this is a reference to Armageddon and nations that will meet their doom in the valley of Megiddo.

This is referred to in verse 11, "In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon."

What a sad day for the world!

Time does not permit us to elaborate further except to point out again in the words of Jesus that when nations gather together and armies meet encompassing Jerusalem, then "know," said Jesus, that the desolation thereof is nigh. Or, we would say that the tribulation is near.

Israel's return to her land is a sign of Christ's return.

Israel is pictured as a fig tree beginning to blossom. And as ye see Israel come into being as a nation, you can know that the day of Christ's coming draws ever closer.

In fact, we have the third "know" in verse 31 where we read, "So, likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

In the Lord's prayer we are taught to pray, "Thy kingdom come," so we can expect fulfillment as God keeps His Word.

If you'll turn back to Mark's Gospel, we have an added admonition. After relating the parable of the fig tree, our Lord declares, "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."

How appropriate is the warning to be ready for Christ's coming, for we know not when the time is.

The signs all around us, however, would remind us that this event of our Lord's Return isn't too far away. Every passing day brings us closer to His coming, and one day He will burst through the blue of heaven and come for His own who are ready to meet Him.

We would ask, are you ready were Jesus to come right now?

Jesus said to His disciples, "The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. . . . For as the lightning then lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in His day." (Luke 17:22-24)

How sad for anyone to miss the rapture and be left behind to go through the awful coming great tribulation.

How glad for those who make preparation—who come to Christ, believe on Him, and are found ready for His coming!

The choice is yours and mine to make.

Actually there are two days described when our Lord is seen coming. In II Timothy 4:1 we read, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." (II Timothy 4:1)

Did you notice the two times of His coming?

First, when He appears in the air to catch away those who are ready to meet him, we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and thus shall we ever be with the Lord.

Then, on earth is the era of the Antichrist—seven awful years of tortures under a diabolical world ruler who will require allegiance and worship or be killed.

At the end of that period called "the tribulation" our Lord returns from heaven with His saints, destroys the wicked host at Armageddon, and establishes His millennial kingdom.

Are you ready for His appearing?

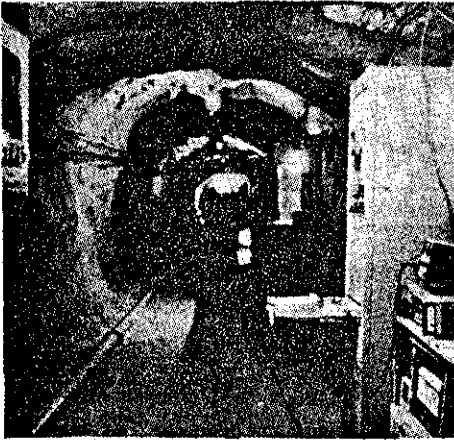
Remember His promise, "To those who look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Hebrews 9:28b)

Let us pray: "Lord, we are looking for your coming. Keep us ready, we pray, by living lives of purity and faithfulness and watchfulness for your return. Amen."

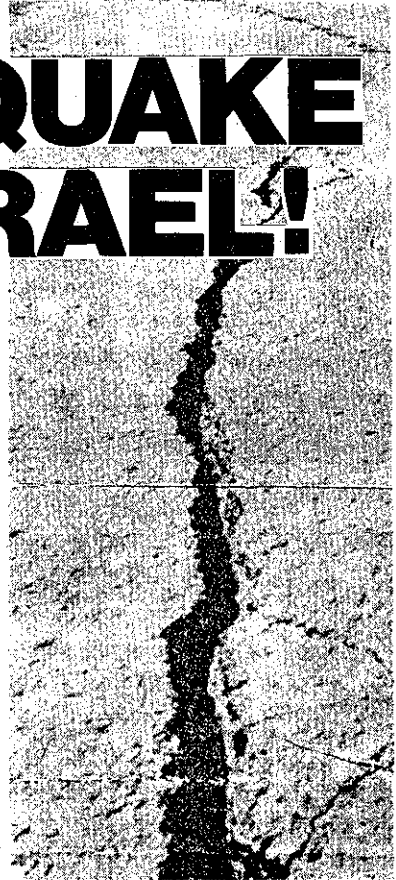
Indeed, be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.



EARTHQUAKE HITS ISRAEL!



Carved into the heart of a mountain, the Weizmann Institute's Geophysical Observatory near Eilat is one of the most important seismological laboratories in the world — where the Mount of Olives earthquake will first be registered (Zech. 14:4, 5). (Rosenblum, Starphot)



Recently an earthquake shook Israel, causing power outages and damaging houses in Haifa. For a time frightened residents jammed police telephone lines. There were only a few minor scratches and bruises; otherwise, there were no serious injuries. The earthquake measured 5 on the Richter scale and lasted 10 seconds. (UPI report, Aug. 24, 1984) Is this an omen of what's ahead for Israel?

We are reminded of what it will be like when the Two Witnesses appear in Jerusalem and prophesy for forty-two months. You may recall how after their testimony they are killed and their dead bodies lay in the streets of that great city. And the people of the earth see their dead bodies and rejoice over their death by sending gifts to one another as we do at Christmas time.

Finally, after three days and a half the spirit of life from God enters into them, and they ascend up into heaven in a cloud; and their enemies behold them.

Then we read, "The same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven

thousand." (Rev. 11:13a)

Think of it!

Here's an event described in detail, including the number of casualties, when as yet the event has not taken place.

Zechariah seems to relate an earthquake to the time when our Lord is seen returning to earth, coming to Jerusalem to establish His millennial kingdom.

In Chapter 14, verse 4, we read: "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east, and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south."

Now notice, too, verse 5, where the residents of Jerusalem are told, "And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

Did you hear it?

This earthquake is linked to the coming of the Lord with His saints. Now, in order for the Lord to come back with His saints, He must first come for His saints. Of course, in death we rise to meet the Lord as our spirits are united with Him so that Paul could say, "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." But at the time of rapture it is believed we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and caught up with the Lord in the air, and thus shall we ever be with the Lord. (See 1 Thes. 4:17; 1 Cor. 15:51-52)

The Scofield Bible comments as follows: "Verse 5 implies that the cleavage of the Mount of Olives is due to an earthquake, and this is confirmed by Isaiah 29:6 and Revelation 16:19." The note adds, "In both passages the context, as in Zech. 14:1-3, associates the earthquake with the Gentile invasion under the Beast . . . Surely, in a land seamed by seismic disturbances it should not be difficult to believe that another earthquake might cleave the little hill called the Mount of Olives." It is further noted, "Not one of the associated events of Zech. 14 occurred at the first coming of Christ, closely associated though He then was with the Mount of Olives."

Mention was made here of two other passages that speak of earthquakes in relation to Israel's future.

In Isaiah 29:6 we read this prophecy concerning Jerusalem. The chapter begins, "Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt." Ariel is a reference to Jerusalem.

According to the prophets, including Zechariah, Jerusalem is the one city mentioned more often as witnessing an invasion from all the nations of earth leading up to the battle of Armageddon.

For a glimpse of what's ahead, let's read from Zech. 12:2 where the Lord is saying: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it

shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of earth be gathered together against it."

Did you notice that while Jerusalem will become the target of this invading host, all the nations that concern themselves with the problems relating to Jerusalem will meet destruction. It won't be necessary to have armies in pursuit, rather "all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces," saith the Lord.

However, we read in verse 9, "And it shall come to pass, in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." And in verse 11, "In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon." It is in the valley of Megiddo that the battle of Armageddon will be fought.

Armageddon will not be a battle in which Russia and China will be on the side of the Arabs fighting against the United States, Israel, and nations allied with them. Rather, it is a battle in which the nations of earth rally as one and fight against the Lord seen coming from heaven.



Turn to Zechariah 14, and beginning with verse 2, we read where the Lord says, "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall be cut off from the city."

Notice verse 3, "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle." There have been times when God came to the aid of Israel and fought against their enemies. As we read in Judges 5:19-20, kings came and fought by the waters of Megiddo when God intervened on behalf of Israel. We read, verse 20: "They fought from heaven: the stars in their courses fought against Sisera."

Now in Psalms 83 you have the plight of Israel today with the enemies of the Jews saying in verse 4, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." This is the cry of Israel's enemies today. Verse 5 says, "They have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee." Get these nations together and they can't agree among

themselves, but when it comes to the nation of Israel, they "together with one consent" agree to her destruction.

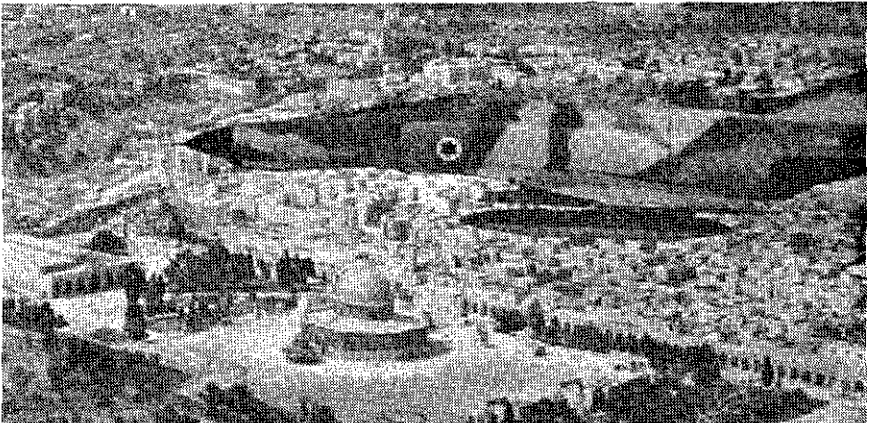
What does the Lord say about this? He cries out, "Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera . . ." We just read where the stars fought against Sisera.

Concerning Israel's enemies we read: "So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm. Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O Lord. Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish; that men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth." (Ps. 83:15-18)

God is going to reveal to the nations that His love and grace extends to Israel and, in particular, Jerusalem. For it is there that He has ordained that His Son, the Messiah, shall set up His government and rule for a thousand years of peace and righteousness.

Now, in order to bring this about, He must defend Jerusalem and drive off the enemy. And in Isaiah 29:6 that we referred to a moment ago, we see where God uses the storm and the tempest and the earthquake to drive off and defeat the enemy of Israel.

We read, "Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire." Who knows whether or not there will be nuclear weapons used, for Israel is known to possess such weapons.



What happens is unbelievable. It would appear that when all of the nations come against Jerusalem, Israel must be defeated. But the opposite is true. The tiny nation of Israel comes through this conflict victorious while all the nations of earth suffer defeat.

Isaiah declares it is like a dream. Listen, "And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel (Jerusalem), even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision. It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against Mount Zion."

Can't you see the picture? It's like a lion wetting his chops, waiting for the prey but is devoured by the lamb — the Lamb of God. Hallelujah.

The other reference to an earthquake that Scofield comments on in reference to the endtime is found in Revelation 16 where mention again is made of the Battle of Armageddon.

We see Satan with his henchmen, the beast and the false prophet, working miracles, enticing them to battle against God Almighty.

Verse 14 says, "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."



Then comes mention of the earthquake in verse 18. We read, "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great."

Beloved, all I can say is that I don't want to be on earth when that happens. Concerning Jerusalem, we read, "And the great city was

divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell." Think of skyscrapers tumbling, high-rise apartments falling, and tidal waves sweeping over the land.

In fact, so great is this quake that we read, "And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found."

Do you want to be left behind to go through the coming awful great tribulation? Earthquakes so powerful that they will level mountains and reduce cities to rubble will affect the whole world in the day when the nations come against Israel at the battle of Armageddon.

Now it is in the midst of these verses describing these events that a warning is sounded. Hear the Lord as He says, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

Did you hear it?

We keep repeating that when the Lord comes, there's going to be those void of the righteousness of Christ so that they will walk naked and in shame.

How will it be when Jesus comes?

In 1 John 2:28 we are told, "And now, little children, abide in him, that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

Could it be that we might be ashamed when Jesus comes? The word means to be "disgraced," or as Dr. Wuest, the Greek Scholar, says, "In shame shrink back from Him at His coming."

On the other hand, we can come to Christ, repenting of our sins, trusting His forgiveness, and then be found living a life of holiness and readiness for His coming.

Thus we are encouraged, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Is that what you want — an abundant entrance into His presence at His coming? Do you want to hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," for you have invested in His work? Or, will He say, "Depart from me." Will you make it "so as by fire," which could mean suffering the anguish of the coming tribulation?

Let's believe for the "abundant entrance" through our faith in Jesus Christ, who loves you and gave Himself for you so that if you want to be ready, you will be ready.

Pray this prayer: "Lord Jesus, I believe you died on the cross for my sins, that you were raised from the dead and are now seated at the Father's right hand from which you will one day soon come for all who are ready that we might be forever with thee. I here and now receive you as my Saviour and Lord, to live for you, serve you, love you, and do your will with the help of the Holy Spirit which you have given me. Keep me ready for your coming, I pray. Amen."

Pray that prayer and mean it.

And, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

ISRAEL'S RETURN



A Sign of Christ's Return

The International Institute for Strategic Studies reports that Israel, with a population of only four million, is the fourth strongest military power in the world. The other leading major powers include the United States, the Soviet Union and China.

Per capita, the Jewish State is the world's most heavily armed nation and spends more proportionately on defense than any other country, including the superpowers, according to this report.

Analysts agree that Israel's military might lies "not only in the motivation of its forces and their combat-tested weaponry, including some of the most sophisticated non-nuclear hardware in the world, but in its ability to improve and develop armor, aircraft and electronic weapons from lessons learned in combat."

While we would agree with this analysis, we must also accept the fact that God is looking out for Israel. It's not that there are more Israelis than anyone else, or that they are better than the other nations of the world. In fact, Paul writes, "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes." (Romans 11:28)

The reason Israel has been so successful in warding off their enemies who surround them on all sides might be summed up, "If God be for you, who can be against you?"

If it comes to any single sign that God controls the destiny of men and nations, it would have to be that of Israel.

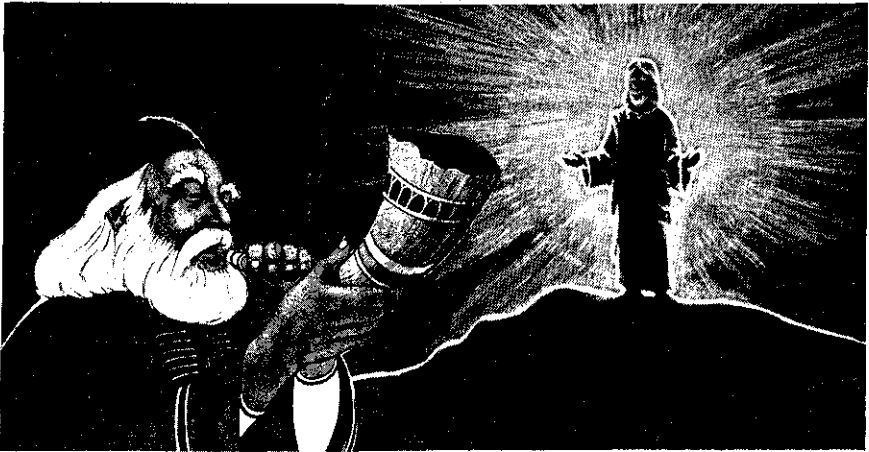
As Frederick the Great, who asked members of his court for proof of the Bible's inspiration, found General Zieten, replying: "The Jew, Sir."

Wim Malgo, noted author of *THE MIDNIGHT CALL*, writes, "The indisputable end-time signs which the Lord is giving us through His people, Israel, in our days are being ignored by the world news media and collectively by Christianity too."

Could it be that many are blind to these signs? As Jesus said to those in His day, "Ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?" (Luke 12:56)

Says Malgo, "We, as believers, have only one sign that indicates the end of the end-time, namely, Israel."

Notes Malgo, "The sign, Israel, has a strong, trumpet-like warning to the Church of Jesus Christ. It is this warning which will climax in our Rapture when we will be taken out in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump of God. Then the time of Israel's full spiritual restoration will have begun."



Then he quotes our Lord who speaks of the blossoming of the fig tree as representative of Israel's restoration. Said Jesus, "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled."

What generation is He referring to? It is believed that the generation that sees Israel come into being will see the climax — the coming of Christ. In fact, declared our Lord, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21:28)

We are a part of that generation. So we can expect to see in our lifetime the return of our Lord for His own. The Rev. Joe Ford, Southern Baptist leader, says, "Today we are not living by a word from God but by a word from the Media." Ford is evangelism executive of the denominations Home Missions Board.

A leading church theologian also believes the Church is largely blind to the role Israel plays in Bible prophecy. Dr. Paul Van Buren, Professor of Religion at Temple University, says, "I do not see how anyone can love the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Holy One of Israel, blessed be He, the God and Father of Jesus Christ, the Creator of this actual world, Who wills the redemption of this world He has created, and Who called His people Israel and His Gentile Church to join Him in His purpose — I do not see how one can love this God without giving thanks for the existence of the State of Israel and without praying daily for the peace of Jerusalem." (Bible Light Star, Vol. 24, No. 1) Do you agree?

Mike Elkins, writing a column in the JERUSALEM POST, tells of receiving a cartoon booklet issued by the Baptist Publications Association. It is emphasized as we find in Genesis 12:3 where the Lord says to Abraham, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

The history of the world has been affected by the way Jews have been treated, according to this booklet.

For example:

"Ancient Egypt (was) the envy of the world, the most powerful nation on earth. She made one mistake — Egypt did not support the Jews. Egypt is now a backward nation."

"When mighty Rome ruled the world, the Jews were mistreated. Where is the Roman Empire today?"

"Babylon, Persia, Alexander the Great — the Jews suffered under each of them; and each empire crumbled . . ."

"Judgment fell on Germany! It is now a divided nation, never to rise again . . ."

The booklet predicts that Russia will attack Israel and set off World War III. "How badly the U.S. will be hit depends on how loyal we are to Israel."

Then Elkins notes the final pages tell how "After World War III, Israel enters the time of Jacob's trouble, the worst seven years of existence." He quotes Zechariah to show that "two-thirds of all Jews will die." It is then that the Messiah appears. Israel gets her greatest shock, (for) her Messiah will have nail prints in His hands. How does that grab you?" (end quote)

Quite an article from the JERUSALEM POST. (June 5-11, 1983)

Perhaps you may wonder about the passage quoted in Zechariah. You may ask, where does it mention nail prints in the hands of the Messiah — in the Old Testament? Surely this must be some kind of a prophecy?

Let's turn to Zechariah 12:10 where, after Israel returns to their Land, God pours out His Spirit. We read: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son . . ."

Here is a prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit related to recognizing it was Jesus who was pierced. His side was pierced and

from it came forth both blood and water.

Then Zechariah 13:6 where we read: "And one shall say unto him, what are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."

So you have the wounds of Christ identified — His pierced side and the nail prints in His hands whereby He will be recognized as the Messiah.

Who is the Messiah? How can he be recognized?

We would refer to an article by Dr. Charles H. Stevens, D.D., of the Piedmont Bible College, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The article is from the CHOSEN PEOPLE magazine. (June, 1964)

It is noted the word "Israel" means "he shall rule as God." Writes Stevens: "The true Israelite is destined to rule the world . . . A future of glory in association with her Messiah is most certainly promised to the Jews."

Stevens asserts, "According to the world's opinion, their position and destiny is no different from that of other peoples of the earth. The world sees only their national eccentricities and racial peculiarities. Like all upon whom God lays His hand, they are hated by Satan, despised by the world.

"Even most Christians do not comprehend the significance of their presence, or the magnitude of their destiny as they view them in their present rejection."

Dr. Stevens writes, "Now we are beholding before our eyes this very thing, the miracle of history, the rebirth of a nation. The long-exiled people are returning to the land after an absence of nearly two millenniums. Like the migratory bird or the homing pigeon, Israel is responding to a deep and abiding instinct. When we read of the developments in Israel, our hearts rejoice, for we know the time of our redemption draweth nigh. Yet with this abounding joy there is a note of sadness, since the same Bible that predicts her return tells of the tribulation that awaits Israel ere the Son of righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings."

He goes on to explain, "There must come first the rapture of the church." From thence the Lord will begin His rule upon this earth. The character of His Messianic Kingdom will find a time of unparalleled blessing and prosperity.

1. Evil will be restrained. Satan will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit. Under Christ's reign, there will be universal peace.

2. Wars will cease to the ends of the earth. Isaiah 2:4 says, "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

3. There will take place remarkable changes. The land of Israel will receive the early and latter rains. The desert will bloom. As we read in Isaiah 35:1, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

4. There will be a change in the animal kingdom. We read, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little

child shall lead them." We're reminded, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:9)

5. Human life will be prolonged. We read, "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." (Isaiah 65:20)

6. Israel will be united into one kingdom under one king, in the land promised to Abraham nearly 40 centuries ago. Zechariah reminds us, "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." (Zechariah 14:9)

In this coming kingdom, the Jew will unmistakably be the center of blessing.

We read, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you." (Zechariah 8:20-23)

Beloved, this is what's ahead for Israel.

There's coming a day when Israel will be the head nation and no longer the tail. The land occupied will be nearly twenty-five times as large as Israel today or two-thirds the size of the United States.

Declares Dr. Stevens, "If the Bible is true, and true it must certainly be, Israel must be restored to the land, which according to the promise God gave to Abram was to be, ' . . . from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates,' and this is a vastly greater area than the present State of Israel."

The Word of God is true.

And to think our generation is the one to witness this phenomenon with Israel in her land, awaiting the promised Messiah.

For our Lord said, in the parable of the fig tree, believed to be representative of the re-establishment of the nation of Israel, "This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." (Luke 21:32)

We are the generation that has seen Israel come into being, and we now await the fulfillment of the prophecies as they relate to our Lord's coming as the Messiah to Israel, and returning to catch up His waiting bride, the Church.

We might put it this way — Israel's return to her land is a sign of Christ's Return for His own.

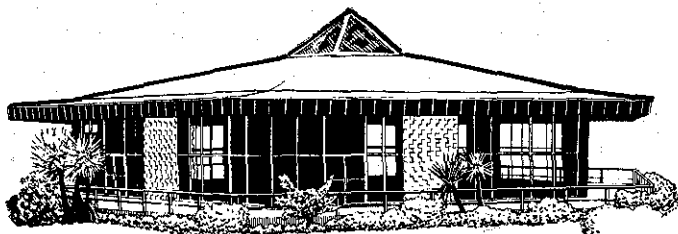
The question we try to not fail to ask, are you ready if Jesus were to come right now?

Remember, "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John 1:12)

Receive Him now as your Saviour if you have never done so.

Pray this simple prayer: "Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner and you died to save sinners. I believe you went to the cross and shed your blood for me that I might be saved. In simple faith I receive you as my Saviour and Lord to live for you and serve you 'til you come."

Receive Christ today. And "be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."



Tierra Verde Christian Center
Tierra Verde, Fla.

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Christian Center,**

Tierra Verde, Fla.

Sundays at 11:00 A.M.

7:00 P.M.

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**Hear Ray Brubaker, God's News Behind the News
director and radio/TV commentator**

