

I. the Jewish Sign

by Lewis Sperry Chafer

The sermon emphasizes Israel's central role in God's plan and the prophetic assurance of its restoration to the land.

Scripture: Genesis 13:15, Genesis 17:6, Psalm 72:11, Psalm 86:9, Isaiah 55:5, Ezekiel 37:1, Micah 4:2, Matthew 24:31

Topics: "Israel Restoration", "Bible Prophecy"

Description

Lewis Sperry Chafer emphasizes the significance of Israel in God's plan for the earth, highlighting how all other nations are considered in relation to Israel in the Bible. He distinguishes the heavenly nature of the Church as strangers and pilgrims, while Israel is destined to abide and possess her land forever. Chafer discusses the prophecies of Israel's restoration, emphasizing the literal fulfillment of past prophecies and the miraculous preservation of the Jewish people for their final restoration. He points to current events and the Zionist movement as indications of nearing fulfillment of prophecies regarding Israel's restoration and the reign of Israel's King in righteousness and peace over the earth.

Transcript

Whatever importance man may give to the various nations, it is evident that God, in His program for this earth, has primarily but one nation before His eyes. Gathered about Israel are all the eternal purposes of God for this earth and other nations are recognized and considered in the Book of God only as they are related to the one-nation Israel. The Church, on the other hand, is heavenly. Her people are said to be "strangers and pilgrims in the earth," "ambassadors" in the enemy's land, "citizens of heaven," and heaven is their home. The nation Israel occupies five-sixths of the Bible. This is certainly a great emphasis upon one subject and no one can expect to understand God's Book who is not prepared to give Israel the important place assigned to her of God,-- past, present, and future. It is an unworthy judgment and most misleading to suppose that, because this earthly people is now scattered, peeled and afflicted, she has been abandoned of God, or that her earthly covenants have been transferred to the Church. This nation is to abide for all time and she is to possess her own land for ever (Gen. 13:15; Gen. 17:6-8). It was also predicted that this nation should three times be dispossessed of her land and three times be restored to the land (Gen. 15:13-14; Gen. 15:16; Jer. 25:11-12; Deut. 28:62-65; Deut. 30:1-10). Bible history tells us that Israel is now in the third dispossession of her land.

Every prophecy that has been fulfilled up to this hour has been fulfilled literally. They were "plucked off from the land" and "scattered through all the nations" as has been predicted in twelve great prophecies.

They are yet to be restored, and for the last time, as predicted in many important prophecies. To this end they are being miraculously preserved as a separate people.

To their final restoration all earth movements are tending. As God has literally taken them off the land, so will He literally place them back in the land which He has given them for an everlasting possession.

In Matt. 24:31-34 we read in connection with "The day of the Lord," when He will return in power and great glory:

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation [nation] shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."

This passage is about Israel. She is the "elect" to be gathered. She is typified by the fig tree. She is preserved until all these things are fulfilled. As a fig tree was cursed, she has for many centuries been dry, withered and fruitless. In this passage it is prophesied of her that she will yet put forth the tender shoots of her national life.

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is another prophecy of the restoration of Israel (Ezekiel 37:1-14). Here we are told that the dry bones are "the whole house of Israel" and the vision is said to be concerning their restoration to national life and to their own land (Ezekiel 37:13-14).

Such is a small portion of the body of prophecy concerning the future of God's chosen people. Are there any indications that we are nearing the fulfillment?

It is estimated that there were about fourteen million Jews in the world at the close of the war. To have been without a national home during these past four years has meant the most terrible distress to these people. They are mostly of the poor and suffering people of Europe; yet, as a nation, they are fast becoming the people of greatest influence in the world. Today, out of all proportion, they are the financiers, statesmen, scientists, artists and leaders. We are told that, at the opening of the war, England did not possess the formulas for high explosives and that a prominent Jewish scientist provided her with them. When asked to name his reward, he requested only that Palestine be given back to the Jew. There has always been a Jewish question among the nations since this homeless people left their own land. The question will never be settled until that nation is restored to that land. Then this and all other national problems will be settled, for Israel's King will then reign in righteousness and peace over the whole earth as King of kings and Lord of lords (Psa. 72:11; Psa. 72:17; Psa. 86:9; Isaiah 55:5; Micah 4:2).

Within our generation the Zionistic movement has been started. It has as its purpose the restoration of Israel to Palestine. This movement made feeble progress until the convulsions of the world-war. Through the various steps of its development we need not now pass. Today we behold the victorious Allies at work adjusting the nations and their possessions. All of these Allies are committed to the restoration of Palestine to the Jew. Though there may be delays which we cannot foresee, Palestine will be given to Israel again, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Zionism will triumph. Since the days of Christ nothing of such Biblical importance has happened to this people as a nation. The fig tree is budding and the dry bones of the valley are arising.

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