

ing meetings, by partaking of the sacrament, renewing our covenants that we may have his Spirit to be with us. For paying tithing the Lord has said,

. . . Prove me now herewith . . . If I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. (Mal. 3:10.)

Further, the Lord says in the Doctrine and Covenants, 84th Section,

And also all they who receive this priesthood receiveth me . . .
For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me;
And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father;
And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom;
therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.

And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.

Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved. (D. & C. 84:35-40.)

The gospel is full of many such glorious blessings. May the Lord bless us that we may so live to receive them and teach them to others, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

The radio audience undoubtedly will be interested to know that the tabernacle is crowded beyond capacity, men and women standing in the aisles of the main body of the hall and in the gallery. The building is filled with eager listeners. We are informed that the Assembly Hall also is crowded with people attending these services by radio and television.

All will now join in singing "Do What Is Right." Following the congregational singing we shall be favored by remarks from Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve.

The congregation sang the hymn "Do What Is Right."

ELDER EZRA TAFT BENSON

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My beloved brethren and sisters: If I may have an interest in your faith and prayers and a portion of the Spirit of the Lord, I desire to give expression to a few thoughts which I have had in my heart since returning from the shores of war-torn Europe some three years ago.

A MIRACULOUS DRAMA

I should like to speak with reference to a rather miraculous drama that is taking place today before our very eyes. In large

measure it is unobserved, particularly by spiritual leaders, and yet it has been predicted by prophets anciently thousands of years ago, and in modern times has been referred to frequently by Latter-day prophets during the past one hundred and twenty years.

In spiritual matters mankind seems inclined to worship the past and ignore new revelation of the present. People generally revere prophets dead and persecute or ignore the living while disregarding current fulfilment of ancient and modern prophecy. This condition was evidenced in the Meridian of Time as the people proclaimed Moses and Abraham and rejected the greatest of all prophets—yea, even the Redeemer of the World. In large measure the same spirit characterizes the present.

This great event of which I speak is one of the signs of the times, and is very important, it seems to me, particularly to all Christian people. It is transpiring in a small strip of country about one hundred and ten miles long and fifty to sixty miles wide, in an area about the size of the state of Vermont. This little section has a population of approximately three million, divided as follows: about 1,700,000 Arabs; approximately 140,000 Christians and other relatively minor sects; and about 1,000,000 descendants of Judah, the son of Jacob.

The number of Jews has multiplied in recent years in this area in a rather remarkable manner. Plans are underway for the incorporation of about a million and a half more during the immediate months ahead, and projected plans call for an eventual population of some four million in this small area.

This one and a half million to be added during the next few months according to plans, will bring approximately two hundred thousand Jews from displaced persons' camps throughout war-torn Europe; about seven hundred thousand other European Jews; some six hundred thousand now living in Moslem countries; and approximately one hundred thousand from other continents.

In connection with this great drama, it seems to me that the words of the Lord through Isaiah are being fulfilled again, namely that in the last days the Lord would proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder, that the wisdom of their wise men should perish, and the understanding of their prudent men should be hid. (See Isa. 29:14).

THE JEWISH PROBLEM

While in Europe in 1946, when mention was frequently made in the European papers of the Jewish problem, I received a comment from one of our great industrial leaders in this country who is a student of this particular problem, in which he said the only salvation the Jew has is to be as good a citizen as he possibly can of whatever country he is a resident.

Then later, one of our prominent business leaders quoting a high church authority whose church numbers into many millions in

the South American countries, stated that the Jewish people would do their cause much more good if they attempted to move their people from places where they are not wanted to places where they are wanted, for example, South America, where there is ample room.

As Latter-day Saints, familiar with ancient and modern prophecies, we of course do not agree that some other more suitable place should be and will be found for the descendants of Judah. We believe in the over-ruling power of Providence in the affairs of men and nations. We believe that the Old Testament prophets clearly predicted the dispersion and scattering of Israel and the eventual gathering of Judah in the land given to their fathers.

LACK OF WISDOM

Some of our magazines have commented editorially on this same problem. I have before me a quotation made in 1948 from one of our most popular magazines and reprinted in the New York *Herald Tribune*, which has a wide circulation through their European edition printed in Paris, in which the author states:

What the Jews really need is not a national state, but the right sort of world. "If the nations carried out the provision in the United Nations charter for universal respect for, and observance of, human rights, and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion," it would do far more to solve the Jewish problem than any multiplication of the Jewish population in Palestine.

In 1949, about a year ago, the *United States News and World Report* commented on the miscalculations of government officials and military experts with reference to the outcome of the struggle then being waged in Palestine, and reported that the "prophecies of the military experts, in particular, have had to be revised." Then it continued by outlining the predictions of military authorities in our own country and in Great Britain particularly, to the effect that it was only a matter of a very brief time until the Jews would be overcome and be wiped out and "the Arabs would win quick control of Palestine. Now," the article continues, "these official but private forecasters are in a state of confusion," and the "U. S. and Britain, as a result, have to adjust their diplomacy, their military strategy to this fact of a strong Israel in the midst of Arab weakness."

It seems as though this probably is one more evidence of the fact that the wisdom of the wise shall perish. The prophecies of economists, wouldbe statesmen, and military experts fail, while those of the Lord through his prophets are vindicated.

An interesting sidelight on this recent development is the fact that many of the descendants of Judah who have assembled in Palestine seem to look upon the events of the last few months as being nothing short of miraculous. It is a common comment among them that victory, in their eyes at least, was a miracle which cannot be explained in purely military terms. Some of our recently returned

missionaries from Europe who have visited that land bring back the same report.

PROPHECIES CLEAR

Now the prophecies are very clear with reference to the dispersion and scattering of Israel and Judah. Moses, Ezekiel, Amos, Jeremiah, and others made clear predictions that Judah would be scattered. The Master referred to it when asked by his disciples for a sign as to the end of the world. The Lord said,

And they [referring to the Jews] shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke 21:24.)

Jeremiah made it clear that they, the Jews, would be persecuted with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence and that the Lord would

deliver them to be removed to all kingdoms of the earth to be a curse, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them:

Because they have not hearkened to my word, saith the Lord. (Jer. 29:18-19.)

Is it possible that the times of the Gentiles are nearing their fulfillment, that the time is approaching when the gospel will be carried to the descendants of Judah? I think one of the saddest chapters in history is the account of the dispersion and suffering of Judah.

SUFFERINGS OF JUDAH

I have before me a quotation of Will Durant in his book, *The Story of Civilization*, in which he states that "no people in history fought so tenaciously for liberty as the Jews, nor any other people against such odds." He says further, "No other people has ever known so long an exile, or so hard a fate."

Then referring to the siege of Jerusalem under Titus, lasting for 134 days, during which 1,110,000 Jews perished and 97,000 were taken captive; he states that the Romans destroyed 987 towns in Palestine and slew 580,000 men, and a still larger number, we are told, perished through starvation, disease, and fire.

Nearly all Judea was laid waste. So many Jews were sold as slaves that their price fell to that of a horse. Thousands hid in underground channels rather than be captured. Surrounded by Romans they died one by one of hunger while the living ate the bodies of the dead.

Scarcely eight thousand Jews were left in all of Palestine. And even their banishment and scattering didn't end their persecution. Efforts were made to drive them from various countries. Some nations made an effort to banish them completely. They were accused of causing the "Black Death" that spread through Europe in 1348, and many Jews were crucified therefor.

I have said nothing regarding the Crusades and the dastardly deeds perpetrated in the name of Christianity upon the remaining Jews in Palestine. Yes, the prophecies regarding the dispersion and the suffering of Judah have been fulfilled. But the gathering and re-establishment of the Jews is also clearly predicted.

GATHERING OF ISRAEL

The gathering has three phases: the gathering of Israel to the land of Zion, the American hemisphere; the return of the Ten Tribes from the countries of the north; and the re-establishment of the Jews in Palestine as God's chosen people.

This miracle of the return of the Jews was to be one of the events to precede Christ's second coming, and the scriptures are very clear with reference to this fact. Isaiah said that they shall gather "the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" and "set them in their own land," that they will "build the old waste," and "repair the waste cities." (See Isa. 11:11-12.)

Jeremiah, who predicted so clearly their dispersion, also states that the Lord will "cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it," and "build them, as at the first." (Jer. 30:3; 33:7.)

The prophets of the Book of Mormon even more clearly predict the conditions under which they will gather. These prophets also foresaw the time when they would begin to believe in Jesus Christ, that the kings of the Gentiles would be as nursing fathers and their queens nursing mothers in helping to bring about their return. These prophets make it clear that eventually the fulness of the gospel will be carried to Jerusalem and to the descendants of Judah.

In our day, in that first visit of Moroni to the Prophet Joseph, mention was made that the "dispersed of Judah would be gathered from the four corners of the earth." Thirteen years later, when Moses delivered the keys for the gathering of Israel and the Kirtland Temple was dedicated, the Prophet Joseph made further reference to the promises made to Judah and appealed to the Lord that the time may soon come when the children of Judah would return to the land promised to their father, Abraham.

In some of the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, particularly the 133rd Section, reference is also made to the fact that the elders would go to the nations of the earth, to the Gentiles first, and also to the Jews, that the Jews would "flee to Jerusalem," and that "Judah, after their pain shall be sanctified." (D. & C. 133:8, 13, 35.)

DEDICATION OF PALESTINE

As Latter-day Saints, from the very inception of this latter-day work, we have had a deep interest in this group of our Father's children, the descendants of Judah. One hundred and ten years ago,

at this very conference, two of the elders of the Church, Elders Orson Hyde and John E. Page, were called to go to the land of Palestine and dedicate it for the return of the descendants of Judah.

Ten years before, the Prophet Joseph had predicted on the head of Orson Hyde that in due time he should go to Jerusalem, the land of his fathers, and be a watchman to that people. History tells us that Elder Hyde did go and dedicate the land in 1841, and in 1873 Elder George A. Smith went to that land and again dedicated it for the return of Judah.

In Elder Hyde's prayer of dedication on the Mount of Olives, he prayed that the barrenness and sterility of the land would be removed, that springs of water would burst forth, that the land would become fruitful again, that the Lord would subdue their unbelief and "incline them to gather in upon this land." He also prayed that God would inspire the kings of the earth to help bring about the promises made to Judah.

Other prophecies were made in connection with this event. Great Britain was referred to particularly as one of the nations which would play a very prominent part in helping to bring this about. And almost immediately following the visit of George A. Smith to this land, organizations began to come into existence, the purpose of which was to sponsor the return of the Jews to the land of Palestine.

PROPHECY OF WILFORD WOODRUFF

At about this same time, President Wilford Woodruff uttered a very important prophecy, prayer, and testimony with reference to this people, in which he said,

... the Lord has decreed that the Jews should be gathered from all the Gentile nations where they have been driven, into their own land, in fulfilment of the words of Moses, their law-giver. And this is the will of your great Elohim, O house of Judah, and whenever you shall be called upon to perform this work, the God of Israel will help you. You have a great future and destiny before you and you cannot avoid fulfilling it; you are the royal, chosen seed, and the God of your father's house has kept you distinct as a nation for eighteen hundred years, under all the oppression of the whole Gentile world. You may not wait until you believe on Jesus of Nazareth, but when you meet with Shiloh your king, you will know him; your destiny is marked out, you cannot avoid it. (*Wilford Woodruff, Matthias F. Cowley, p. 509.*)

Then he said further that the time would come when the armies of the Gentiles would be gathered against them, but he promised further that

the time is not far distant when the rich men among the Jews would be called upon to use their abundant wealth to gather the dispersed of Judah and purchase the ancient dwelling places of their fathers in and about Jerusalem, and rebuild the holy city and temple. (*Ibid.*)

It is rather significant that up to 1948 more than seven hundred million dollars had been expended by American Jews alone in helping to bring about the fulfilment of this prophecy by President

Wilford Woodruff. The part that Great Britain played in the liberating of Palestine from Turkish rule is a matter of history which occurred during World War I in a remarkable manner. Then Lord Balfour, secretary of foreign affairs for the British government, made a very significant statement of policy to the effect that his Majesty's government would view "with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object."

This statement of policy was later supported by the Congress of the United States and was endorsed by President Wilson and all of his successors that it is the policy of our own land to look with favor on the establishment of a national home for the descendants of Judah in Palestine.

RETURN OF THE JEWS

So today, my brothers and sisters, in fulfilment of these ancient and modern prophecies, a great drama is being enacted in Palestine. The Jews are returning as one of the events of the last days. Resources are being built up through reclamation, rehabilitation, and modernization.

I read the other day of one authority who stated that there is more scientific "know-how" concentrated today in Palestine than in any similar area upon the face of the earth. I wonder if there isn't purpose behind it. I noted, too, in the report of the Anglo-American Commission which was made of their study in 1946, that they commented that considerable numbers of the Jews are being converted to Christianity and that their attitude toward the Christ as the Redeemer of the world is rapidly changing. There has been much confusion over the Palestine question—much talk of division of the land, of quotas, import restrictions—but out of it all I cannot help feeling that we will see a complete fulfilment of the prophecies which have been made regarding this people. These prophecies are in rapid course of fulfilment before our very eyes today.

PERSECUTION OF JEWS

While in Europe, traveling through the war-torn countries, I was deeply impressed with the fact that the Lord had used, as a means of prodding the Jews and bringing about a fulfilment of his purposes, legalized persecution under the great and terrible Nazi program. The Jews were persecuted and driven, I presume, like no other people under heaven.

I remember standing on the ruins of what was the largest Jewish ghetto in Europe, in the Jewish section of Warsaw, Poland, in August 1946. There we were given a description of what had transpired as being somewhat typical of that which had gone on in various parts of Europe through the establishment of the medieval ghetto.

Here 250,000 descendants of Judah had lived prior to the war. Under the Nazi rule, through forced labor, they were required to

build a wall around the ghetto. Later some 150,000 Jews from other parts of Europe were brought into that area. Then finally the entire section was destroyed, wiped out by bombing after the people had been robbed and ravaged.

As we stood on the crumbled brick and mortar and the rubble some fifteen feet deep, with only the spire of one burned synagogue showing—no other building in that vast area—we were told by the guide that some two hundred thousand bodies, it was estimated, still remained under the rubble of those once great buildings in this section of Warsaw.

We visited some of the concentration camps and the crematoriums where it is estimated, six million of the sons and daughters of Judah lost their lives, reducing their world population from seventeen to eleven million.

DETERMINATION TO RETURN

We were impressed almost to tears as we visited some of these wanderers, these persecuted and driven sons of our Heavenly Father, to find how doggedly they were determined to return to Palestine. Ofttimes, as they would come into relief agencies to get temporary help, we would ask them why they did not settle nearby. Sometimes they were invited to stay. But they had one desire, and that was to return to the land of their fathers.

I recall that a survey was made by UNRRA, United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, in which they interviewed 3,629 Jews in displaced persons' camps to determine what they would like to do if they were given their freedom to move and locate as they pleased. Of this number, 3,619 indicated that they would like to go back to Palestine. Nine of them expressed a desire to come to the United States, and one to Australia. This desire—which is almost a passion—was so great that it was as strong as life itself.

Of course, much of the movement then was done through the underground and by smuggling. I hold in my hand a short clipping, one of many we took from the papers in London. This one is entitled, "One Hundred Jew Ships Now." It is taken from the London *Evening News*, November 5, 1946. It is an Associated Press dispatch and reads:

British Naval Intelligence Officers in Jerusalem revealed today that Jewish underground has bought at least one hundred ships, many paid for with U. S. funds, to carry refugees to Palestine from southern European ports.

Crews are promised £10 a head for each refugee smuggled into Palestine.—A.P.

FUTURE EVENTS

Yes, my brethren and sisters, this great drama goes on before our very eyes, in large measure unnoticed by the Christian world. One hardly ever hears reference to the prophecies regarding Judah's

return. Yet, the promises are clear that it would be one of the great events of the last days. And, of course, we know from modern revelations and prophecies that much more is yet to occur. Read the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah and the eleventh chapter of Revelations with reference to other great events that are yet to come, affecting directly this chosen people, the House of Judah. Eventually their city will be encompassed by Gentile armies. Yes, during their last great struggle, the Master will make his appearance as the Mount of Olives cleaves in twain for their protection.

Then, no doubt, will be realized the fulfilment of the glorious statement made by the Lord in the Doctrine and Covenants through the Prophet Joseph with reference to Judah, which I read in conclusion:

And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet?

Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God.

And then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king. (D. & C. 45:51-53.)

God help us, my brothers and sisters, to realize the importance of these great and stirring events as signs that the second coming of the Master is approaching rapidly, and may they be the means of emphasizing to us the importance of putting our own houses in order, maintaining the faith, and doing all in our power to help further this glorious work of the latter day, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve has just concluded speaking. He will be followed by Elder Alma Sonne, one of the Assistants to the Twelve, who has but recently returned from presiding over the European Mission.

ELDER ALMA SONNE

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters, it seems most proper and fitting that I should follow Elder Ezra Taft Benson as the speaker this morning, for I followed him to Europe, and I followed him as the president of the European Mission, which I consider was a great privilege and certainly a great honor. It was my second mission to Europe. I went there first in the year 1910.

KINGDOMS SHAKEN

At that time, as a missionary in Great Britain I delivered a gospel tract which had been written by President Charles W. Pen-