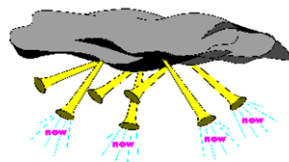


# TRUMPET SOUNDS

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In these days, when Israel is so heavily condemned by the world, we need to remember that Israel is back in the 'Promised Land because that is the foreordained will of God. In the following quote from J C Ryle's book 'Are you ready for the End Times', he makes the point that the return of the Jews is an essential part of prophecy.

"...however great the difficulties surrounding many parts of unfulfilled prophecy, two points appear to my own mind to stand out as plainly as if written by a sunbeam. One of these points is the second personal advent of our Lord Jesus Christ before the Millennium. The other of these events is the future literal gathering of the Jewish nation, and their restoration to their own land. I tell no man that these two truths are essential to salvation, and that he cannot be saved except he sees them with my eyes."

"But I tell any man that these truths appear to me distinctly set down in holy Scripture and that the denial of them is as astonishing and incomprehensible to my own mind as the denial of the divinity of Christ." J. C. Ryle, 1867.

In this issue:

	page
<b>Is Worldwide Jew Hatred Setting The Stage For The Tribulation Period?</b>	2
<b>The Promised Land</b> – 4 maps and a false story.	3
<b>The Smart Christian</b> – SMART as an alternative to TULIP	7
<b>The Old Testament Prophecies</b> – more J C Ryle	9
<b>Dehamasization</b> – is it possible?	13
<b>The International Court of justice</b> – a farce	15
<b>Prepare to Stand</b> – The story of Andrew and Noreen Brunson.	16

## The Jews a mirror of our values

"Antisemitism can be met in the Academy of Sciences or in the playground in the games children play. It is the mirror. Tell me what you accuse the Jews of and I will tell you what you are guilty of." Douglas Murray quoting Vasily Grossman.

*"And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye but do not consider the plank in your own eye".* Matthew 7: 3. Many nations need to remove that plank before they decide to advise Israel.

## **Is Worldwide Jew Hatred Setting The Stage For The Tribulation Period?**

Part of an article by Dean Dwyer printed in Prophecy News Watch 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023

"In 2022, Deborah Lipstadt, a noted historian and the US Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, said this: "Antisemitism is like the canary in the coal mine of democracy. It is a threat, a warning. If you're an antisemite, then you think, well, the justice system isn't fair because it's controlled by Jews. The government isn't fair because it's controlled by Jews. The media isn't fair because it's controlled by Jews. You lose faith in the democratic institutions. As a historian, I can think of no democracy that tolerated antisemitism and remained a vibrant democracy."

"Deborah is correct. But the peril is even greater than that. Embracing Jew-hatred is not only an indicator of cultural decline but also of God's impending judgement. The evidence of this is found not only in the Bible but also the history books. Egypt, Philistia, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, the Byzantines, the Crusaders, the Spanish Empire, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. They all touched the apple of God's eye and felt God's hand of judgement. As Christians, we must not only pray for Israel but pray for our own nation."

### **The islamisation of the public space**

Part of a longer article by Melanie Phillips 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023

"The baleful truth is that most people simply have no idea what has been unleashed in their own western societies by the Hamas pogrom. As Ed Husain observed in his book *The Islamist*, the goal of Islamic jihadis such as the Muslim Brotherhood and its Hamas offshoot is the "total Islamisation of the public space".

"That is precisely what these demonstrations are doing — which is why they are also taking place on the streets of America, Canada, Australia and other western countries. In Britain, they are becoming more and more brazen, more and more extreme, more and more violent because the main protagonists can see that the police and politicians are paralysed by fear, ignorance and moral confusion. That excites these proponents of jihad against the west and genocide against the Jews because they believe they are now within spitting distance of taking over the country — and the west. That's why the signature emotion on these demonstrations is warlike triumphalism".

God is taking note of individuals and nations who are cursing His people.

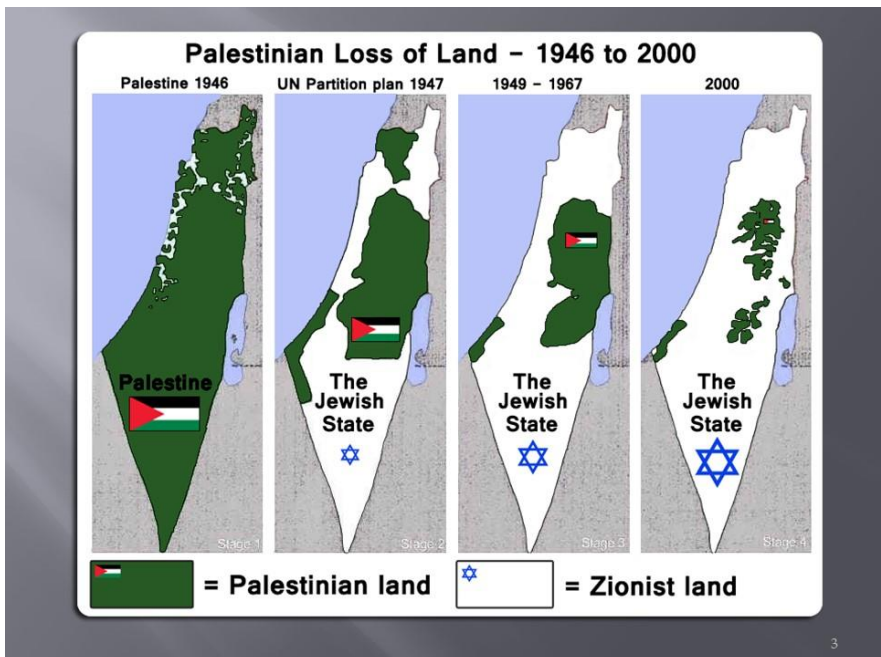
## The Promised Land

The question of who has a right to the land of Israel is a perpetual issue which sees no sign of going away until our Lord returns.

The Palestinians claim Israel stole their land. The Israeli's claim that the land was legally acquired under international law. Who is right?

The maps below might be displayed at a Palestinian Solidarity week at a University or at an anti-Israel protest. They may even be seen at a pro-Palestinian meeting in a church. They purport to tell a simple story. In 1946 prior to the establishment of the state of Israel nearly all of the land belonged to the Arabs. As time progressed the Arab lands have been squeezed and squeezed until little of their land has been left.

Today it is claimed that the Palestinians are a distinct people who have lived in the land for generations. Their culture and heritage was destroyed when their people were expelled by the Jews in 1948. **Is this the true story or is it in reality total fiction?**



Palestine has never been an independent state. From 1517 to 1917 it was part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. Going back in time it had been ruled by

various Islamic dynasties, the Crusaders, the Byzantine Empire and at the time of Christ the Romans.

From the beginning of the Ottoman rule until 1850 the population was stable at just over 300,000 Muslims, 13,000 Jews and 27,000 Christians. About a quarter of the population lived in the main towns of Jerusalem, Gaza, Safed. Nablus, Ramle and Hebron<sup>1</sup>. The rest were peasant farmers scratching a living from the land.

The Jewish population of the Holy Land was concentrated in four towns: Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberius and Safed. According to the British Consul in Jerusalem report to the House of Commons, the Jewish population of Jerusalem had by 1874 risen to 10,000 out of a total Jerusalem population of 20,000.

### **The Arab Peasant**

To unravel whether the maps represent true or fake history, we will start with the people who may be considered to have a legitimate claim to the land. The Arab peasant has supposedly lived on and cultivated the land for generations.

### **The Sultans Domain**

In his study 'The Land System in Palestine' **Abraham Granott**, wrote "The **sultans regarded Palestine as their personal domain**, acquired by the law of arms and war. The inhabitants, except a few tribes like the Druzes who were never conquered, could not pretend to real or personal property. Even private inheritance reverted to the Sultan. Though the peasants were not serfs, as under the feudal system, and under no obligation of service, all the country was crown land. ....The individual could not be imprisoned for debt though the village, as a unit, could be made to suffer for its collective obligation. The struggle, therefore, was between the land and the tax collector. If the assessor arrived at the right moment he seized what he claimed, and satisfied his demand. The peasant had no interest in thorough cultivation, or in the fertilization of the soil. His primitive tools were evidence of his poverty and indifference."<sup>2</sup>

### **Impoverished**

Historian **Bernard Lewis** adds; "Harsh, exorbitant, and improvident taxation led to a **decline in cultivation**, which was sometimes permanent. The peasants, neglected and impoverished, were forced into the hands of money-lenders and speculators, and often driven off the land entirely. With the steady decline in bureaucratic efficiency during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries ... the central government ceased to exercise any check or control over agriculture and village affairs, which were left to the unchecked rapacity of the tax-farmers, the leaseholders, and the bailiffs of court nominees."<sup>3</sup>

## **Always moving on**

Recording his travels in the Holy Land in the early 1800's **John Lewis Burckhardt** wrote: "The oppressions of the government on one side, and those of the Bedouins on the other, have reduced the Fellah of the Haouran (Syria and Palestine) to a state little better than that of the wandering Arab. Few individuals ... die in the same village in which they were born. Families are continually moving from one place to another; in the first year of their new settlement the Sheikh acts with moderation towards them; but his vexations becoming in a few years insupportable, they fly to some other place, where they have heard that their brethren are better treated, but they soon find that the same system prevails over the whole country. . . . they are always permitted to depart."<sup>4</sup>

## **Exploited**

Another problem for the peasant was that an estimated **98% were illiterate**. **Bernard Lewis** referring to the wider Ottoman Empire describes the consequence of illiteracy: "The widespread illiteracy sustained and fed the coffers of the feudal extortionists. The peasant had to borrow to pay the taxes, and the debts he incurred from outrageous usurious rates of interest forced him to sell his land, often to the wealthy *effendis* -- landlords -- in the town."<sup>5</sup>

## **The woes of the Arab peasant farmer didn't stop there.**

**Burckhardt** writes: "[The] most heavy contribution paid by the peasants, is the tribute to the Arabs [Bedouin]. ... who visit the country only in the summer, [they] are, from remote times, entitled to certain tributes called Khone (brotherhood), from every village in the Haouran. In return for this Khone, the Arabs abstain from touching the harvest of the village, and from driving off its cattle and camels. Each village pays Khone to one Sheikh in every tribe; the village is then known as his Ukhta or Sister, as the Arabs term it, and he protects the inhabitants against all the members of his own tribe. ...The amount of the Khone is continually increasing, for the Arab Sheikh is not always contented with the quantity of corn he received in the preceding year, but asks something additional, as a present, which soon becomes a part of his accustomed dues."<sup>6</sup>

## **Neglected**

In 1865 **H B Tristram** wrote; "A few years ago, the whole ghor (Jordan Valley) was in the hands of the Fellahin and much of it cultivated for corn. Now the whole of it is in the hands of the Bedouin, who eschew agriculture except in a few spots, cultivated here and there by their slaves. And with the Bedouin, come lawlessness, and the uprooting of all Turkish authority. No government is now acknowledged on the east side; and unless the Porte (government) acts with

greater firmness and caution than is his wont ... Palestine will be desolated and given up to the nomads.”

“The same thing is now going on over the plain of Sharon, where, both in the north and south, land is going out of cultivation, and whole villages rapidly disappearing from the face of the earth. Since the year 1838, no less than 20 villages have been thus erased from the map and the stationary population extirpated. Very rapidly the Bedouin are encroaching wherever horse can be ridden; and the Government is utterly powerless to resist them or to defend its subjects”.<sup>7</sup>

### **There are many other eye witness accounts of the deplorable neglected state of the Holy Land in the 19th Century**

**Mark Twain** describes his travels in Palestine in ‘Innocents Abroad’.(1869)  
“Of all the lands there are for dismal scenery, I think Palestine must be the prince. The hills are barren, they are dull of colour, they are un-picturesque in shape. The valleys are unsightly deserts fringed with a feeble vegetation that has an expression about it of being sorrowful and despondent. The Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee sleep in the midst of a vast stretch of hill and plain wherein the eye rests upon no pleasant tint, no striking object, no soft picture dreaming in a purple haze or mottled with the shadows of the clouds. Every outline is harsh, every feature is distinct, there is no perspective, distance works no enchantment here. It is a hopeless, dreary, heart-broken land.”

Mark Twain’s comments on the land are confirmed in a series of paintings made by **artist David Roberts** in the 1830’s. They show a desolate land with few trees and little vegetation.

### **A proud historic people?**

None of the above gives an impression of a proud people who have lived on and cultivated the land for generations. The reality was of **an impoverished people**, who increasingly left the land uncultivated, seeking a better life in the cities.

In the next article we will look at how the Ottoman land reforms of the 1860s made matters worse. Their effect as to speed up the abandonment of the land.

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographic\\_history\\_of\\_Palestine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographic_history_of_Palestine)

<sup>2</sup> A. Granott, ‘The Land System in Palestine’ (1952).

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Lewis, ‘The Emergence of Modern Turkey’ (1961).

<sup>4</sup> John Lewis Burckhardt, ‘Travels in Syria and the Holy Land.’ (1822)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> H B Tristram, The Land of Israel: A Journal of Travels in Palestine SPCK (1876)

## The SMART Christian?

Calvin's followers distill their theology into five main points, under the acronym **TULIP**. I propose an alternative under the acronym **SMART**. The acronym came together as I prayed over the main elements which contrast my own beliefs and those of the Calvinist. I did not start with the word and then force my theology into it. Quite the reverse it came about by reflecting on why I do not accept TULIP.

We live in an age in which everything has to be 'smart'. We have smart cars, smart phones, smart TVs, smart meters and even smart motorways. Maybe now is the time to have the SMART Christian? First we will look at TULIP.

### **TULIP.**

**T** is for **Total depravity** that mankind is totally depraved and dead in sin and therefore has no means of responding to God. Only through the work of the Holy Spirit can a person's spirit be awakened to seek God.

**U** is for **Unconditional** election whereby God has chosen those to whom he will extend mercy (the rest of mankind being destined for the wrath of God). This choice was made by God before the creation of the world.

**L** is for **Limited** atonement whereby only the elect, who have already been chosen, will benefit from the atonement purposed by Jesus' sacrifice,

**I** is for **Irresistible** grace, whereby the human resistance of the elect will be overcome by the power of God to save them.

**P** is for **Perseverance** of the saints, whereby there is a continuance of the elect in communion with God to the end (this too being a work of God alone). Because God has decreed who will be saved He will not allow any to fail to persevere in living a life consistent with their salvation. This is the origin of 'Once saved always saved'. A believer once saved cannot fall away from the providence of God. That is the logical conclusion flowing from the statements above. But only those who endure to the end are saved.

"No true child of God perishes—hold that fast; but this is the badge of a true child of God: that a man endures to the end; and if a man does not hold on, but slinks back to his old master, and once again fits on the old collar, and wears again the Satanic yoke, there is sure proof that he has never come out of the spiritual Egypt through Jesus Christ, his leader, and hath never obtained that eternal life which cannot die, because it is born of God". C H Spurgeon 14<sup>th</sup> February 1864.

Therefore anyone who professes faith in Christ but then falls away was never saved. This belief destroys the assurance of salvation, for who can know if they are saved until that day when they pass away from this life.

## SMART

**S** is for **Sinners** who fall short of God's standards

*"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God".* Romans 3: 23.

The world of the Bible is divided into two types of people, the righteous and the wicked. Both sin. The righteous aware of their sin seek God. The wicked in rebellion turn away from God. We see this dynamic in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis. Righteous Abel brings a sacrifice acceptable to God. His brother Cain brings an inferior offering which God cannot accept. The Lord speaks plainly to Cain that it is his choice. If he does well his sacrifice will be accepted. If not then sin lies at the door (Genesis 4: 7).

We are all sinful of that there is no doubt. Abel in his sinful state was able to respond to God. Cain was also given the opportunity to respond. This story does not speak of total depravity. It sets the tone for the rest of the Bible. We are able to choose.

**M** is for **Mercy** the outworking of grace to all who repent of their sin.

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* 1 John 1: 9. When we repent of our sin and accept God's mercy, bought with the shed blood of Jesus Christ, at that time, we are saved. God's mercy is extended to all who turn from their sin and put their trust in God.

**A** is for **All-encompassing atonement**, a sacrifice which covers the sin of all mankind. *"And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins and not ours only but also for the whole world"* 1 John 2: 2. It is God's desire that all are saved (John 3: 16, 2 Peter 3: 9). The effect of the atonement bought by Jesus becoming the sacrifice for our sin is unlimited. It is sufficient for all who turn to Him.

**R** is for **Resistible** grace, man is free to serve God or reject Him.

*"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words has that which judges him, the word that I have spoken will judge him on that last day."* John 12: 48. We are predestined according to the foreknowledge of God (Romans 8:29, 1 Peter 1:2). By foreknowledge God knew in advance who would trust in Him. Foreknowledge is not the same as determining in advance. If we accept foreknowledge is the mechanism by which God determined who were among the elect, we preserve mankind's free will and also refute any accusation that God was the originator of sin.

**T** is for **Tested** and true. *"He who endures to the end shall be saved"* Matthew 24: 13. There are many places in the Bible which promise that all who endure to the end will be saved. To endure is to remain, not give up. We are warned by



Jesus that the Christian will encounter opposition and persecution. Lawlessness will abound to the extent that the love of many will grow cold (Matthew 24: 12). By grace we will overcome through the strength of the Holy Spirit within us. So long as we remain in Christ our salvation is secure. He will watch over us preserving us to the end. Our salvation is a living day by day experience not a formal transaction concluded before the creation of the world. I trust God to preserve me while aware that for Him to do this I must remain in Christ.

Can we fall away? There are many warnings in the Bible about those who fall away. Hebrews 6: 4 – 6, and elsewhere, speaks plainly that people who have received the Holy Spirit, who is the seal of our salvation, can fall away.

See also: <https://www.trumpetsounds.net/library/arminianism/> for John Wesley's comments on whether predestination is absolute or conditional.

## **The Old Testament Prophecies**

Are they speaking of blessing for Israel or the church?

In this series of articles we are looking at the Prophetic Creed of J C Ryle. Can his creed form a consensus on the interpretation of prophecy and so dispel confusion? In this next item Ryle deals with the consequence of an error which entered the church very early on. The error is the spiritualising of the Old Testament prophecies.

The statement reads as follows: "I BELIEVE that the literal sense of old Testament prophecies has been far too much neglected by the churches, and is far too much neglected at the present day, and that under the mistaken system of spiritualising and accommodating Bible language, Christians have too often missed its meaning. (Luke 24: 25, 26)."

### **Spiritualising Bible language?**

In AD 155 Justin Martyr debated his Jewish opponent Trypho. He asserted that Christians are the true Israelite race. Within only a few years from its birth Christians were believing that the church had replaced Israel. The judgements which fell on Israel in both AD 70 and AD 135 were interpreted as God ending His special relationship with the Jews. After these judgments the Jews were a scattered people and no longer a nation.

Gentile Christians now saw themselves as the true inheritors of the Israel's relationship with God. As for the Jews, the gentiles believed that they had brought God's judgment on themselves by rejecting Christ.

A problem existed in that the Church shared the Jewish scriptures: Scriptures which contained many promises to the nation of Israel. The solution to the

problem was to 'spiritualise' the promises. For example Irenaeus writing in about AD 180 explained that, "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24) were not Jews who are carnal Israel, but Christians who are heavenly Israel.

### **The allegorical approach**

Therefore the promises to Israel were no longer seen as having a literal fulfilment in future blessings on the nation but had spiritual fulfilment in blessing on the church. Origen (185 – 254) developed an allegorical method of interpreting scripture which influenced Augustine of Hippo and the Roman Catholic Church. Allegory allows the literal meaning to be ignored, with a spiritual message substituted. An example is Augustine's rejection of a literal reign of Christ on earth. Treating much of the Old Testament as allegory with a spiritual rather than literal meaning continues to this day.

### **The Literal Truth**

We should always accept that the primary and true meaning of Scripture is the natural and obvious meaning. J. C. Ryle recognised that spiritualising the Bible was mistaken. It has resulted in Christians missing the true meaning of God's word.

Failure to understand what the Scriptures revealed caused Jesus' disciples distress. In the account of the road to Emmaus, Jesus rebukes two of His disciples. *"Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"*" Luke 24: 25 – 26. They were foolish because Jesus had, before the crucifixion, explained to them that He must suffer. On the night of His betrayal He quoted Zachariah, *"I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."* Matthew 26: 31. A prophecy which was shortly to be fulfilled. To Nicodemus, He had pointed forward to the crucifixion by using the illustration of the serpent in the wilderness (John 3: 14,15). There are many other prophecies He may have quoted which tell of His suffering, death and resurrection.

### **All that the prophets have spoken**

In this article we will not try to cover all that the Old Testament prophets reveal about the coming kingdom and reign of Christ. We will focus on one topic which is generally ignored today, that is the Lord as judge. Due to spiritualising God's word the intensity and seriousness of His judgment is down played.

### **Coming with all His saints**

The words of the first prophet to reveal that Jesus would come to judge the earth are not recorded in the Old Testament. We turn to the book of Jude to read

that Enoch prophesied about the Lord's return. He will come with ten thousand of His saints to exercise judgment on all (Jude 1: 14, 15). From the beginning of history God has declared that one day the Lord will come with His saints as judge of all the wicked.

### **Intervening in history**

The reality of a future time of judgment, is confirmed by history. Genesis gives an account of the time when God flooded the earth to remove all the wicked. The flood is real history which becomes a warning to us that God will not flinch from what has to be done.

### **Mercy has its limits**

Later in Genesis comes the account of the judgment which fell on Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham intercedes for the cities. He approaches God with the words *"shall not the judge of all the world do right"*. Genesis 18:25. Abraham knew that the flood judgment had fallen on the earth. He accepts that God has the right to judge and will be just in all that He does. The cities and people were destroyed as punishment for their wickedness.

### **The righteous rejoice**

In Psalm 96 the Lord's coming to judge the earth is a reason to rejoice. All creation, the heavens, the earth, the sea and the fields are all called on to be glad and be joyful. The families of the peoples are to give Him glory and tremble before Him because He is holy. We are to rejoice because He is coming to judge the world in righteousness and truth. A similar theme is repeated in Psalm 98 with the added reason to rejoice in that God has remembered His mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel.

### **Peace following judgment**

Isaiah was given a vision of the last days. It will be a time when all nations go up to worship on the mountain of the Lord. They will learn His ways and be taught how to walk in His paths. Prior to this time, *"He shall judge between the nations and rebuke many people."* The result of His judgment will be, *"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation and neither shall they learn war anymore."* Isaiah 2: 4

### **Anger toward the wicked**

A vivid description of the Lord's judgment is given in Isaiah 66: 14 – 16. Many will be slain on that day. The Lord will render His anger, fury and rebuke, with flames of fire.

## **Judgment then blessing**

The closing chapter of Amos looks forward to a time when Israel will be restored. It will be a time of abundance with the reapers not having time to gather crops in before it is time to sow again. Before this time of blessing comes judgment. There will be no escape. Where ever the wicked and idolaters seek to hide God will search for them and find them (Amos 9: 1-4).

## **When Jesus returns**

The prophet Joel sets a time and place for the judgment that takes place when Jesus returns. It happens at a time when the Lord has restored Israel to her land. The place is the valley of Jehoshaphat. Although the final conflict undoubtedly takes place in Israel, there is nowhere in the land which has ever born that name. The use of the name Jehoshaphat is to remind us of the great victory recorded in 2 Chronicles 20. In that battle the Lord fought for Israel causing their enemies to fight amongst themselves and destroy each other. It will be the same when Jesus comes again in judgment.

## **The lesson acted out**

In considering the Old Testament prophecies we must not ignore what is referred to as a type. A type can be a person, action, event, ceremony, feast, object which prefigures something which is to come.

The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23: 26 – 32) which comes between the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of Tabernacles is a type which represents the Day of Judgment. Primarily it looks forward to the atoning work of Jesus in which He took our judgment on Himself.

Between the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement there are 10 days which are referred to as days of awe. They are days in which to examine our lives and repent of our failures in preparation for the Day of Atonement. On that day we read, *“For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people.”* v.29. Those who refuse to humble themselves are cut off. They will have no part in God’s kingdom.

The days of awe also represent the time when God’s wrath is poured out on the earth. During this time there is still hope, for *“whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* Joel 2: 32. The outpoured wrath is a final call to repentance before the Day of Judgment.

## **Don’t miss the point**

These prophecies from the Old Testament are given to warn us of what is to come. They will have a literal fulfilment. We are not to, as Ryle points out, mistakenly spiritualise or treat them as allegory. If we do, we will miss the point and perhaps be unprepared.

## **De-Hamasization**

In 1945 Germany was crushed. Death, hunger, destruction, prostitution, looting, rape, the black market and foreign soldiers were everywhere. Nazi Germany was wiped off the face of the earth. The total defeat of Germany had been seen as essential by the Allies. Until that happened, no rehabilitation efforts could begin.

Before the Second World War had ended the US State Department had determined that a principal objective of the war was the denazification of Germany. The Office of the Historian US State Department lists the following objectives of denazification programme:

- a. Arrest and detention of Nazi leaders and influential Nazi supporters and any other persons dangerous to the Allied occupation or its objectives;
- b. Removal and exclusion from public office and from positions of responsibility and importance in quasi-public and private enterprises of members of the Nazi Party who have been more than nominal participants in its activities, active supporters of Nazism, and other persons hostile to Allied purposes;
- c. Eradication of Nazism from German legislation and decrees;
- d. Liquidation of the Nazi Party, together with its affiliated and subsidiary organizations, and the prevention of their revival;
- e. Elimination of Nazi symbols, anthems, flags, and insignia;
- f. Prevention of Nazi propaganda in any form and the removal of Nazism from German information services, education, and religion.

The denazification programme was never fully completed. Those who were against it argued that denazification was hindering the recovery of Germany. With the developing cold war Britain and America felt the need to have West Germany as buffer against Soviet Union. Nazis still in post were considered a lesser threat than communism. Many in Germany recognised that they had a choice either reject Nazism and accept America and its allies rule or be crushed by Joseph Stalin.

### **Gaza what next?**

According to Israel their objective in Gaza of eradicating Hamas will take months to achieve. One day the war will end. Then the question arises what next? A number of different scenarios have been proposed. The United States and Britain are pressing for the Palestinian Authority to take over the administration of Gaza. Israel is resisting this. For survival it has to be realistic. There is little difference between the PA and Hamas. Both are committed to the destruction of Israel.

Could the German example work in Gaza? Would it be possible to bring about a dehamasization? The principal reason why it will not work is that the Gazans are part of a much larger Arab community. Within that community there are many who are radicalised. They share the same ideology which is intent on bringing about Israel's destruction. If it were possible to remove every member of Hamas from Gaza there would soon be others to take their place.

None of the options for Israel's future relations with Gaza are very promising.

Israel could return to the pre-war status quo but with a more heavily secured border. Rocket attacks and tunnels would soon resume. Following the 7<sup>th</sup> October massacre Senior Hamas Leader Ghazi Hamad spoke on Lebanese news outlet LBCI. "We will teach Israel, and we will do this again and again. The Al-Aqsa Flood is just the first time, and there will be a second, a third, a fourth, because we have the determination, the resolve and the capabilities to fight". No matter how secure the border, Hamas or their successor will in time find a way of attacking Israel.

The more right wing members of Israel's government favour a new Nakba. They would expel thousands/millions of people from Gaza to be resettled in other nations. There is no way that the international community would sanction such actions. Would any nation accept a large influx of people from Gaza?

The next option is the permanent reoccupation of Gaza. This might even allow the return of settlers. The IDF would have to provide permanent security. One of the reasons for withdrawing from Gaza was the heavy burden it placed on the security forces.

There could be an International mission to secure and administer Gaza. It would need to be strong enough to ensure comprehensive disarmament and security. This would come under the United Nations. From past experience of such missions they are too weak to fulfil their mandate and withdraw at early sign of trouble.

A final suggestion is for the states which have adopted a new relationship with Israel, within the framework of the Abrahamic Accords, to take responsibility for Gaza. This is unlikely to get very far. When the Egyptians negotiated with Israel for the return of the Sinai they were adamant Gaza was not included. After 19 years governing Gaza they had had enough.

Will any of the above work? I don't think so. Only in Jesus do we have a solution. We pray that many in Gaza will be repelled by the violence they have witnessed and in rejecting Islam they turn to Christ. In Christ both Jew and Muslim can be reconciled. I believe that in these last days many Muslims will turn to Christ. The salvation of Jews and Muslims is our primary prayer.

## **The International Court of Justice** by Alan M, Dershwitz

“The blood libel accusation against Israel has now begun in The Hague. The failed nation of South Africa has brought genocide charges against Israel in the International Court of Justice.”

“What is the International Court of Justice? It is not international, because it excludes judges from certain countries. It is not a real court, because the judges are selected by their countries and many of them simply follow the instructions of those who appointed them. And it has never done justice, because it has long been biased against Israel. The United Nations has become the megaphone of bigotry and anti-Semitism. Both the United Nations and its court are shams.”

“As an Israeli diplomat once put it, if Algeria introduced a resolution that the earth is flat and that Israel flattened it, it would win 120 to 27 with 32 abstentions. And you can name the countries in each of the groups before any evidence is presented.”

“The evidence is indisputable that Hamas has committed numerous war crimes. First, it attacked Israeli civilians attending a music festival and living in peace. Second, it ordered its terrorists to rape and sexually assault its victims, thus weaponizing sexual assault during wartime. Third, it has fired thousands of rockets at Israeli civilian targets. Fourth, it has built tunnels with exits near Israeli civilian areas, whose purpose it is to murder and kidnap civilians. Fifth, it has deliberately placed its rocket launchers and command centers in civilian areas, in order to induce Israel to cause collateral damage among civilians. Sixth, it has used children and even babies as human shields to prevent Israel from rescuing its hostages. Seventh, it has taken over hospitals, schools, mosques and other civilian resources and turned them into military assets. Eighth, it has recruited 13- and 14-year-old boys and girls to become terrorists. Ninth, it has coerced women into becoming suicide bombers targeting Israeli civilians. Tenth, it arranged for civilian workers from Gaza to get jobs in Israel in order to provide them information they used to murder Israeli civilians.”

“Were the International Court of Justice to falsely conclude that Israel was guilty of genocide, it would destroy whatever remaining credibility that court might have. If that were to happen, the United States and some other nations should and probably would leave the court: it would not deserve the legitimacy afforded by membership of any decent country.”

Alan M, Dershwitz, Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law, Emeritus at Harvard Law School. Part of a longer article published by The Gatestone Institute 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

## Prepare to Stand

Andrew and Noreen Brunson lived as missionaries in Turkey for 25 years. One day they were invited to the local police station and told that there was an order to arrest and deport them. Noreen was released after 2 weeks, but Andrew was kept in prison for two years. He was accused of being a military spy, a terrorist and of trying to overthrow the Turkish government. None of this was true. The government's intention was to make an example of Andrew in order to intimidate other Christians. He was threatened with three life sentences in solitary confinement.

Andrew thought of himself as a tough missionary. He had faced threats before but he was not prepared for what he faced in prison. It was much tougher than he had imagined. He confesses that he almost didn't make it through. Persecution almost knocked him out. It is because he knows how difficult and dangerous persecution can be that he has a sense of urgency. A dark tidal wave is on the horizon. A wave of hostility and persecution which is about to crash onto the church.

There are two wedge issues which will drive persecution. First is the exclusivity of Jesus and salvation. Jesus is the only way to God. Second, Jesus demands obedience from His followers in a number of areas which are hotly contested in our present culture. Those who are faithful to Jesus in these two areas will be labelled as evil people. Those who persecute Christians will justify their actions by saying that we are hate groups. Many will say that the followers of Jesus are a threat to safety.

The link below will take you to a series of talks by Andrew Brunson on the lessons which he learned from experience on how to stand firm in the face of persecution.

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