

JUDAH BUYS ARMAGEDDON

Because God selected the little land of Palestine to be the cradle of the Christian religion, including its earlier Hebrew revelations, any authentic reports of developments in that land are read with interest by many Christian people. The following article by Evan A. Watkins appeared in a recent issue of *The Bible Today* and contains some important findings in regard to the advancement being made by the Zionist movement in Palestine:

"At last, after a most determined struggle covering a period of forty years, Jews in the name of Zionism, have completed the purchase of 290,000 dunam on the Plain of Acco, and in the Emek Jezreel, at a cost of \$4,500,000.00. The land was owned by Moslems, and permission had to be secured from the Grand Mufti at Jerusalem and the Moslem Council before a foot of this land could be sold to Jews or Christians. Finally, permission was given for the sale, but the owners insisted that spot cash must be paid in toto for this valuable land or the sale would be off forever. The money was quickly raised and paid to the Islamic owners, so that the title deeds for the Emek Israel are now in the hands of the representatives of a people to whom God in His covenant with Abraham gave the original title deed "forever," nearly four thousand years ago. This is the most important purchase that has been made in the name of Zionism since that historic day in 1917 when the late Theodore Hertzl brought organized Zion into existence. The construction of the Port of Haifa at a cost of \$5,250,000.00, loaned by the British Government, with the railroad running over Esdraelon and through the Valley of Jezreel, on its way to Semakh and its connection with the Hedjaz railroad running to Medina, makes the purchase of the Emek something more than a human move towards the final and complete rehabilitation of Judah in the Land of Promise. In it, we must see, unless hopeless blindness makes vision impossible, another grand and glorious step towards the consummation of the sublime prophetic program of the Old and New Testament.

This Emek land purchase involves the greatest battle field of human history. Here the Canaanites (Lowlanders) in the pre-Hebrew occupation of the land fought their greatest battles. This was the old stamping-ground of Jabin, King Hazor, whom Joshua crushed after a swift march into the Jordan Valley. It was here that Allenby and the Egyptian Expeditionary Force broke, beyond repair, the last remnant of the Turkish army struggling to maintain themselves in the land of sacred story, and in a dying effort to keep the Star and Crescent on its field of blood flying over the sacred soil of Jehovah's special choice. Here the Crusaders dyed the soil of the Emek scarlet with the blood of Christian knights. Here Napoleon, the little Corsican of inordinate political ambition, drunken with the copious draughts of marvelous victories, and obsessed with a desire to conquer and rule the world, was compelled to order his bugler to sound the "retreat," following ignominious defeat. If the precious Word is to be accepted, and our interpretation of prophecy accurate, here, on this recently purchased piece of land, will occur the last great struggle of human armies and bloody conflict, after which swords will be beaten into plowshares, and spears into pruning hooks, and nations shall teach war no more. Over this Valley,

baptized with blood and tears, will shine the glory of Him who shall make Israel glad, and cause Judah to be filled with wonderful joy. From Megiddo, in the midst of Jezreel, shall go forth the declaration of world peace from the lips of our coming King, and peace like a mantle of heavenly glory, exceeding the brightness of the Shekinah, shall cover the earth, and the trumpet-call to praise shall take the place of the bugle-call to arms.

"It is in the territory of the Tribe of Issachar, but this Emek Valley and eastern Plain was never occupied by this tribe, because it failed to drive out the Canaanites. Issachar became satisfied with the mountain section of his division. It is crowded with sacred and profane history too lengthy to detail in any magazine article. Its future is pregnant with mighty events. Great armies will again shake its fertile soil, and out of it will come the divine solution to every human problem * * * Jezreel will indeed be the cradle of a new world and a new people, for there shall be "a new heaven and a new earth."

From Haifa, the railroad runs into the Valley eastward towards the river Jordan, and then turns at an angle northward, about thirteen miles south of the Sea of Galilee. Coming out of the City of Nazareth, nestled among the charming hills of Galilee, the Christ, nineteen hundred years ago, made His way to the Jordan to be baptized by the herald from the desert beyond the river who was telling the people of the coming of Him who should save Israel, probably through this same Vale of Jezreel to Bethabara (Bethshan-Beisan). It looks more reasonable than the Jericho Ford or El Maghtas. How easy it would be to reach John the Baptizer from Nazareth—just over the hill south, or more easily out of Nazareth from the north right into the battle-stained valley to the river, which in winding, foaming cascades precipitated its headlong course towards Bahr Lut. If twenty-seven years of life of the Christ were spent in preparation in Galilee for His great ministry; if the first sermon was preached in Galilee by the Greatest of preachers; if the first miracle was performed there; if the Christian Church was organized there by Him who said, "I will build my church," perhaps He was baptized in Galilee too. Galilee, the land of the prophets, "Galilee, sweet Galilee, where Jesus loved so much to be."

What an edenic garden spot is Jezreel today! Jewish colonies are flourishing everywhere. Farms and gardens dot the Valley and climb the enveloping hills. The people of the "weary feet" are crowding into the Emek. The courage and determination of the Chalutzim have prepared the way. The thorn and the bramble have almost entirely disappeared. The desert ground, watered so copiously with blood and tears flowing over it for centuries, is now giving food to the hungry, hope to the depressed, and rest to the wandering child of Judah. Our brethren are gathering home. We can see the end mirrored in the eternal, un-failing promises of God's Word. A few more years, and a few more tears, and then shall the King come in His glory."—The Wesleyan Methodist.

"A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all the other virtues."—Cicero.

I begin to suspect that the common transactions of life are the most sacred channels for the spread of the heavenly leaven.—G. MacDonald.

SPIRITUAL ENTHUSIASM

You are familiar, perhaps, with the statement: "It is faith in something, and enthusiasm for something that makes life worth living." We would apply it to a spiritual aim in life and say: "It is faith in God and enthusiasm in His service that makes life worth living." We are not willing that ball games and shows should have the benefits of all the human enthusiasm. God's cause needs some shouting, too, and God's people need the joy that comes from being lifted on the tide of a great cause and carried forward with the zest and zeal of making a great investment.

The resurrection of their Lord and the coming of the Holy Spirit according to promise made the early church a body of religious enthusiasts. They had a story to tell that had redemption in it, and a joyful life, and human development, and heaven at last. The Holy Spirit can make extraordinary Christians out of ordinary people. He proposes to come with the fire of God, bringing warmth, and zeal and will do for the soul in general the good things the sun does for the earth.

Phillips Brooks says: "Let us beware of losing our enthusiasm. Let us ever glory in something, and strive to retain our admiration for all that would ennoble, and our interest in all that would enrich and beautify our life." "Men are nothing," exclaimed Montaigne, "until they are excited," and Dr. Marden exclaims: "What a power there is in enthusiastic adherences to an ideal! What are hardships, contumely, slander, ridicule, persecution, toil, sickness, the feebleness of age to a soul throbbing with an overmastering purpose?" "When one has the spirit of a composer," said Mozart, the great musician. "He writes because he can't help it." "Every great and commanding moment in the annals of the world is the triumph of some enthusiasm," says Emerson, and another writer states: "There are important cases in which the difference between half a heart and a whole heart makes the difference between signal defeat and a splendid victory."—The Wesleyan Methodist.

ETERNITY WHERE?

Eternity is before us, at the end of life's road. Every day we are drawing nearer to it. This is the year that many will know what lies next beyond the line of worlds. And since we know we must continue conscious existence throughout eternity, it is the one great, sensible thing to do in life to make adequate preparation for the future.

"A lady having spent an afternoon and evening at cards and in gay company, when she returned home found her servant-maid reading a pious book. She looked over her shoulder and said, 'Poor, melancholy soul! What pleasure canst thou find in pouring so long over that book?' That night she could not sleep, but lay sighing and weeping very much; and her servant twice asked her what was the matter. At length she burst into tears and said, 'Oh! it is one word that I saw in your book that troubles me. There I saw the word 'eternity.' Oh! how happy I would be if I were prepared for eternity!' This led her to seek earnestly to be ready for the eternal world."—The Wesleyan Methodist.

"Praise preserves us from being envious of others, for by blessing God for all we have, we learn to bless God for what other people have."—*Heart and Life Bulletin*.