

**PALESTINE RE-PEOPLED:
OR, SCATTERED
ISRAEL'S GATHERING,
A SIGN OF THE TIMES**

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Palestine Re-Peopled: Or, Scattered Israel's Gathering, a Sign of the Times by James Neil

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JAMES NEIL

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PREFACE.

At a moment when all eyes are turned to the East, it cannot be unimportant to learn that, after the slumber of ages, Palestine is awakening to new life, and Israel are actually returning to its shores in such numbers, and at the same time in such a way as they have never been known to do, or could have done, since their formal banishment by the Emperor Hadrian, in the year A.D. 135. Many Jews, it is true, driven ruthlessly out of Spain in 1492, found a home in the Holy Land. To go still further back, the celebrated Hebrew traveller, Benjamin of Tudela, tells us in the twelfth century that he found considerable numbers residing in the various towns of Palestine which he visited—descendants, perhaps, amongst others, of some of the 80,000 who joined the arms of Chesroes the Persian in his capture of Jerusalem, A.D. 616, or even of the Jews whom Julian the Apostate restored A.D. 363, when he vainly endeavoured to discredit Christianity by rebuilding the Temple. But there is this all-important difference between what happened in the case of those who then returned, and those who

are now flocking back to the land of their forefathers. While in the former instances, whether under Pagan, Christian, or Muslim masters, they were, as all history shows, equally the subjects of extortion, oppression, and contumely; now they are beginning to hold a position of comfort, independence, and power. This remarkable change is in itself significant, and the whole movement should surely be watched by the student of prophecy with eager and expectant attitude.

The writer cannot doubt that Israel's partial restoration marks an all-important epoch. Mr. Bickersteth has well said: "The restoration of the Jews is the warning note on the clock of God's providence that the mystery of God is about to finish. We have the oath of God Himself (Daniel xii. 7) that at the termination of the time, times and a half, or 1,260 years, a period commencing with the rise of popery (Daniel vii. 25), the enemies of Israel shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, and the mystery of God shall be finished." No sign of the "time of the end" is now wanting to convince us that we are living amidst the closing scenes of this dispensation.* "The night" of six thousand years of sin and sorrow "is far spent, the day" of millennial peace and glory, is "at hand!" Albeit the hour before dawn is the

* See Appendix A.

darkest, and warning on this subject is most necessary now.

While taking care to "prove all things" let us "*despise not prophecies*" (1 Thessalonians v. 20). In the midst of modern scepticism the ever accumulating fulfilment of the prophecies will be found, next to the "moral and experimental evidence of God's Word," one of the most convincing witnesses to inspiration. But more than this, a heart-knowledge of them has now become essentially needful to save us from complicity with evil, and to comfort us in suffering for the truth. How profitable an acquaintance with special prophecy was found by Caleb and Joshua, Rahab, the Ninevites, the believing Jews in the days of Cyrus, and again in those of Alexander, and at Titus' siege of Jerusalem; and so, beyond doubt, it will be with us, if we know the "scripture of truth" in the "perilous times" upon which we are entering. May the blessing of Israel's God, for the sake of Messiah, rest upon this feeble endeavour to make known His present providential dealings with His ancient people! May every reader be led to search the scriptures of the Prophets, and be awakened to a due concern as to his own individual part in the tremendous events now daily drawing near!