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Hitler's Folly

Persecution of the Jew

By

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Hilter's Folly

Persecution of the Jew

By

REV. CHARLES SCHWEIKERT, D. D.

In Madison Square Garden, New York City, on the evening of March 7th, 1934, a great mass meeting uttered the voice of America condemning Adolph Hitler as one who has committed a crime against the civilization of the world.

This indictment was based upon Hitler's record of one year as Dictator. In that one year Hitler has secured absolute control of Germany and brought the nation under complete control of his will and word; he has utterly wiped out the German Republic; destroyed democracy in the German Reich and stifled freedom of speech of press and of worship; he has gone mad on anti-semitism, has propagated Jew hatred on a universal scale, has driven Jews out of political, business and social positions and made them fugitives by the tens of thousands.

It is to this phase of Hitler's dictatorship that I am addressing myself and wish to prove to you that Hitler's cruel and unjustifiable persecution of the Jews is not only an astounding crime against civilization and human brotherhood, but it shows that he is committing a supreme folly,—a folly often committed by kings and rulers when drunken with power,—it shows that Hitler is defying history and prophecy and God.

The Bible tells us that God suffers no man to do the Jew wrong, with impunity, but rebukes even kings for their sakes. Here is a passage concerning the Jew, found in I Chron., 16th Chap. and

21st verse, which has become a remarkable one in the light of history. Was there ever a king or ruler who persecuted the Jews who did not suffer for it?

Go back about 4,000 years and there comes before us Rameses, the Pharaoh of the oppression as he is called. He did his best to crush the Hebrews under the iron heel of slavery and then tried to exterminate them by ordering the slaying of every male child born in every Hebrew home. You know the story; what was the result? The great Pharaoh's land was darkened; the rivers turned to blood; the crops destroyed by hail and storm; Pharaoh's first born and heir to the throne is slain by the avenging sword of the destroying angel and the flower of his army, with their glittering chariots, are drowned and buried in the Red Sea.

Next comes Sennacherib, the great Assyrian king, who with a mighty host, invaded Palestine, ravaged and burned cities, until he came to the plains below Jerusalem. Then God smote the host with a pestilence, and as Isaiah says they lay in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude. Sennacherib escaped to his capital, Nineveh, and there his own sons slew him with the sword.

Then comes Nebuchadnezzar; he oppresses the Israelites and carries them captive to Babylon. And what happened to Nebuchadnezzar? While sitting in his palace, monarch of all he surveyed, he proudly declares in his vanity, "Is not this great Babylon which I have builded? Then God smote him and deprived him of his haughty mind and superior complex. He rushed out of his palace an insane, raving maniac; he crawled like a beast, ate grass like the oxen and for seven years his body was wet with the dews of heaven until his hair grew like eagle's feathers and his nails like bird's claws.

The next monarch who opposed Israel was Bel-

shazzar; young, proud, haughty, vain Belshazzar. He thought himself greater than the Hebrew's God. In his presumption he decided to defy the God of that people. So he orders the sacred vessels of the Temple to be brought to his lustful banquet, so that he and his wives and concubines might drink wine out of them and praise the gods of wood and stone, of brass and iron; thus desecrating the vessels consecrated to the Hebrew's God. The banquet was at its height when suddenly upon the palace walls of the banqueting room, the fingers of God wrote Belshazzar's doom, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin"; "God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it; thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting; thy kingdom is divided." That night was Belshazzar, King of the Chaldeans, slain; as the poet says,

*"That night they slew him on his father's throne,
The deed unnoticed and the hand unknown;
Crownless and sceptreless Belshazzar lay,
A robe of purple 'round a form of clay."*

Some time later when the Jews were under the Medes and Persians, a certain man by the name of Haman determined to exterminate all Jews. He was Prime Minister to King Ahasuerus; his anti-Semitic feeling and Jew-hatred was aroused because of a Jew by the name of Mordecai who refused to bow before Haman when he was parading through the streets. He had the conspiracy all arranged; on a certain day his followers were to fall upon all the Jews in the kingdom and slaughter them; he himself had a huge gallows built upon which he was going to have the joy of seeing Mordecai hang. But God so guided the matter that Queen Esther got word to the king in time and the conspiracy was revealed. Then Haman was hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai.

A century and a half before Christ came, Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian king, invaded Jerusalem, desecrated the temple, made a systematic attempt to crush out the Jewish religion. A few years passed and he was smitten with a loathsome disease, became a raving manic and ended his life in remorse and terror.

A little over half a century after Christ, the Roman Titus invaded Jerusalem, leveled the city to the ground, leaving not one stone upon another; he slaughtered half the population. This Titus, so young and strong that the Romans called him "The delight of the human race",—this Titus perished miserably, poisoned by the hand of a brother.

Coming down to modern nations we have some sad stories of Jew-hatred and Jew-persecution, but the nation most guilty has been Russia. Russia under the Czars has persecuted and slaughtered more Jews than any earthly power of modern times. But the inevitable hour of Retribution came. When the Russian revolution broke out the Czars were hurled from their thrones and they and their families were most unmercifully slaughtered.

If Hitler thinks he can persecute the Jew and get away with it, he does not know history. Frederick the Great, who was once emperor of Germany, declared, "I perceive it is not profitable for any government to oppress the Jew." Hitler might well go to the shrine of this great German and kneeling there learn something of which he now seems to be in ignorance.

The finger of prophecy as well as of history points to Hitler and says, God long ago declared of the Jews, "Though I make an end of the nations whither I scatter thee, yet will I not make an

end of thee." This prophecy is found in Jeremiah, chapter 30 and verse 11. You and I today looking back over thousands of years of history cannot but see how true it all is; God would not let an end be made of Israel. The Jewish nation has been crushed under the mill-stone of every great world power yet has survived; the great nations that have persecuted Israel have perished, but the Jew still lives.

How easy it could have been said of Egypt, when in her greatness Egypt shall live forever; or of Assyria when in her power, Assyria will never end; or of Babylon when in her glory, Babylon is eternal; or of Greece, when her art and philosophy ruled the world; or of pagan Rome when her militarism overpowered all nations;—how easy to say of any of these great nations,—they shall not come to an end. And yet if the prophet had declared this prophecy of any of these great and mighty powers, his prophecy could be laughed at today. But having said this of the Jew, his prophecy cannot be laughed out of court, because four thousand years of history proves it to be true. God has wiped these nations off the face of the earth as you would wipe a sponge over a slate and they are no more, but Israel still abides and the Jew is still scattered among the nations of our modern day and it is safe to believe that if these nations attempt to exterminate the Jew, God will make an end of them.

Yes, Egypt, whose pyramids and obelisks looked down with scorn upon Israel, Egypt is gone; the Pharaohs are dead, but Moses the great emancipator still lives, and his laws are at the foundation of the jurisprudence of the civilized nations of the world. Yes, Assyria has gone and her glittering armed hosts are no more; the Sennacheribs and Sargons are dead, but Isaiah, the

Hebrew prophet still lives. Yes, Babylon, her wonder and her glory are gone; Nebuchadnezzar is dead, but Daniel, the Hebrew statesman, still lives. Yes, the Medo-Persian empire is no more; but Ezra and Nehemiah and Esther, Hebrew characters of those days, still live to influence human character today.

It is remarkable that not only in the political realm of the nations, but in every realm of human thought and civilization you will find a Jew among the foremost. In the world of music, Israel has given us a Mendelssohn; in poetry, a Heinrich Heine; in philosophy, a Spinoza; in science, Virchow; in statesmanship, a Disraeli; in finance, a Rothchild; and so we might go on. Yet, here is Hitler, committing the folly of cutting out of his nation a race which has contributed some of the greatest geniuses to the culture and civilization of the world.

Hitler's attitude and action proves him to be a pagan and not a Christian. Some Jews make the mistake of thinking that Hitler represents the attitude of Christians towards the Jews; this is not so. Jews must make a distinction between a Gentile and a Christian; Jews often think of all Gentiles as Christians. Hitler is a Gentile; he may bear a Christian name, but he is a pagan. No true Christian, who has the life and spirit of Jesus, would persecute the Jew as Hitler does.

The thing that proves Hitler to be a pagan is the fact that he is paganizing the Christian church in Germany. He is persecuting the Christian pastors who are refusing to surrender to his pagan ideas. Hitler's followers are paganizing the Bible. They are tearing the Word of God to pieces. They are pulling out of the Bible the Jewish names and substituting for them the names of pagans found in German mythology.

In a certain edict, issued by Hitler's Reich-bishop it was declared, "that no man who has Jewish blood would be allowed to preach in a German pulpit or be pastor of a German church." What does this mean? Why, it means if Jesus Christ came to Germany today He would not be allowed to preach His Christian gospel in a German church. Jesus was a Jew and had Jewish blood.

Yes, Hitler is not only persecuting the Jews; he is paganizing the Christian. Yes, Hitler today not only stands condemned at the bar of civilization, but he stands condemned by the voice of history, the voice of prophecy and the voice of God.

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