

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 20

2 Nephi 25

The Jews and Jerusalem

We have come to those chapters where he talks about Isaiah. We are not going to read all the Isaiah chapters. They take up a good deal of the book of 2 Nephi. He gives his explanation in chapter 25, and that's what interests us. Let's start at chapter 25 where he gives his explanation of Isaiah which is very important for understanding these things. "Isaiah spake many things which were hard for many of my people to understand." Isaiah himself often mentions the fact that the people ask him to speak smooth things. They want to hear smooth things. I am not going to teach you smooth things, he says. If I just gave you the smooth things you want, you wouldn't need them [paraphrased]. If the scriptures told us only what we wanted to hear, of course we wouldn't need them.

You notice it all changed under the rabbis; the interpretations became different. Isaiah is much too literal [for them], etc. Then, of course, they accepted the University abstractions and became more philosophical and intellectual in the interpretation of everything. That happened after the fall of the temple. But the temple hadn't fallen in Lehi's day. He said that it was hard for many of his people to understand, and he is talking about his own people now. They had an even harder time because they didn't know "the manner of prophesying among the Jews." Now, prophecy is a special idiom. There are various ways [of prophesying] that he is going to tell us about. He [Isaiah] has the special type; he does not follow the established lines of prophecy which have to do with chants and incantations. They had to have a special meter and be pronounced in a certain rhythm, depending on where you find it. That's what the oracle is. Like the Norns, where their oracle is, they speak in *runes*; they speak in rhymes. When you are inspired, you are swept away. This was supposed to be a sign of inspiration to speak in that inspiration language.

In a Greek tragedy, for example, which is a religious play, the common people speak in the Attic dialect—whereas the choruses, which are inspired, speak in Doric, an old archaic language. And the Egyptians always write in two colors, as you know. They have the rubric which is their commentary. That's what you put in, the rubric; that's men speaking. The black is the *mdw ntr*, the divine words, the inspired words, the words of God. They have to be written in a different type of ink, so you have sort of a stereo effect. You see two worlds when you see an Egyptian manuscript. The *red* is humans speaking, and the *black* is divine inspiration speaking.

Here he talks about that language. Notice, he says the Jews had this kind [of prophecy] like the witch of Endor, resembling the witches in *Macbeth*, who speak in rhymes, as you know.

Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine—
Peace!—the charm's wound up.

That sort of hocus-pocus—and notice he refers to it here in verse 2: “For I, Nephi, have not taught them many things concerning the manner of the Jews; for their works were works of darkness, and their doings were doings of abominations.” That’s the sort of thing.

Tell me, you secret black and midnight hags,
What is it you do?

He calls Satan the “fiend that lies like truth.” These are the witches in *Macbeth* that come out.

But ’tis strange:
And oftentimes to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths;
Win us with honest trifles, to betray us
In deepest consequence.

They win us with honest trifles telling our fortunes. “The instruments of darkness,” says Shakespeare. And this says, “For their works were works of darkness.” I don’t prophesy that way, he says. That’s the way the Jews wanted it, and I’m not going to give it to them that way, he says.

“I write that they may know the judgments of God, that they come upon all nations, according to the word which he hath spoken.” This is a prophetic section we are going into. He is going to prophesy what is going to happen—not only up to the time when the Book of Mormon is revealed, but thereafter. So we can check on that part. Verse 4: “For because the words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy. But I give unto you a prophecy, according to the spirit which is in me; [notice this] wherefore I shall prophesy according to the plainness which hath been with me from the time that I came out from Jerusalem with my father.” He doesn’t use rhymes and that manner. He is going to do as Prospero did when he gave up his magical prophecy, etc.

But this rough magic
I here adjure: and, when I have required
Some heavenly music,—which even now I do,—
To work mine end upon their senses, that
This airy charm is for, I’ll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I’ll drown my book.

He was getting rid of all his works of darkness. Prospero was a great magician and wizard. And, of course, Teiresias comes out right at the beginning of *Oedipus Rex* when he first appears. He stares right straight at the audience, and he says this. He is not talking to people on the stage. It’s Sophocles speaking here as the priest, you see. Sophocles was a priest. “All of you know nothing,” he says. Then he gives his charms which throw everybody into convulsion fits. Well, that bothers Oedipus, who kicks him out. But you notice Nephi says, “I shall prophesy according to . . . plainness. . . . Yea, and my soul delighteth in the words of Isaiah. . . . I know that the Jews do understand the things of the prophets, and there is none other people that understand [them—only the Jews

understand that particular idiom that they talk in]. . . . But behold, I, Nephi, have not taught my children after the manner of the Jews [the Jews had strayed; they left just before Jerusalem was destroyed]; but behold, I, of myself, have dwelt at Jerusalem, wherefore I know concerning the regions round about.” (See, he has the cultural background; he knows the setting and how they do it.)

The Jewish influence [is evident among the Indians], everything has been lost in the Eastern United States. The most civilized and advanced Indians were in the Mississippi Valley and the Eastern United States—more advanced and civilized even than those in the Southwest who built cities, the Pueblos. They are called that because they are city Indians. For example, the early founding fathers—Jefferson, Franklin, and Washington—were not only very fond of and close to the Indians, they were often visited by them. They would often come and visit Washington, the “Great White Father,” and live and talk with him. Those men were all convinced that those people [the Indians] were that close to the [Jews]. The Hopi says this: “Hopi this way; Pomonah that way. We’re like this.” Well, they’re not that way anymore. They [the founding fathers] were very impressed, but that’s all gone now—we don’t know. But the Hebrew connections used to be found. There’s a very interesting book here. I suppose I should put it on reserve. It was written in 1820, before the Book of Mormon. It’s Boudinot’s *A Star in the West*. He gives the accounts of all the earliest contacts between the people living on the coast and the Indians living east of the Appalachians and in the Mississippi Valley before the white man ever came to them. It includes accounts by the first people to go in there, men like Abraham Wood that went in and settled with the Indians. The Indians were very Jewish, they said. Everything gave that strong impression; whereas, other people, like the Navajos, show a strong Mongol background. But they are very mixed up; we mentioned that before. The Book of Mormon has a lot to say about that too.

He is talking to his audience now in verse 7: “But behold, I proceed with mine own prophecy, according to my plainness. . . . Wherefore, they are of worth unto the children of men, and he that supposeth that they are not, unto them will I speak particularly, and confine the words unto mine own people [if you say these prophecies are not important, I’m speaking to you, he says, and I’m speaking to my own people]; for I know that they shall be of great worth unto them in the last days.” In the last days they shall understand them. Wo to the generation that does understand them because it will be the last days.

In the old 1957 priesthood manual called “An Approach to the Book of Mormon,” which is on reserve here, I put questions after every lesson. They asked me to put in questions, so I did that. One of the questions was “Wo to the generation that understands the Book of Mormon.” Boy, did that get the phone ringing off the hook. They were all asking, “Didn’t you mean, ‘Wo to the generation that does *not* understand the Book of Mormon?’ ” Well, don’t fool yourself. When I was a kid, my generation didn’t understand it at all. We took it as a romance and this sort of thing; we tried to get interest in the Hill Cumorah. It seemed overdrawn and too extravagant. [We thought:] Nations don’t actually wipe each other out completely the way the Jaredites did, or disappear completely the way the Nephites did, or end in everlasting war the way the Lamanites did, etc. Things like that don’t happen. People aren’t that cruel, and they’re not that excessively wicked. And such terrible upheavals of nature don’t happen. By that time, however, there had been such things as Krakatoa, and people decided that pretty big things did happen. It was the Victorian idea of a slow, gradual, steady, natural development of everything with nothing much to worry about. What a different picture now! When you understand the Book of Mormon, you know what it is talking about and

you recognize it. And when you recognize what was going on is going on in your world, it's time to beware. Look out! Of course, the Book of Mormon is for us and for the generation that understands it.

Now, here comes a very important passage. He is talking about Jerusalem. The Book of Mormon has a lot to say about Jerusalem as the central city that gets destroyed and then is rebuilt again. Verse 9: "And as one generation hath been destroyed among the Jews because of iniquity, even so have they been destroyed from generation to generation according to their iniquities [destruction doesn't mean wiped out to the last man; it means *destruo—destructured, broken, shattered, scattered*, etc.] and never hath any of them been destroyed save it were foretold them by the prophets of the Lord [they were warned and they paid no attention, of course]. Wherefore, it hath been told them concerning the destruction which should come upon them, immediately after my father left Jerusalem [587 is the date given to it now; the date was moved around a lot, but that's where it has finally settled—just 13 years after they left Jerusalem. It was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar in 597, and then he went back again. He had put Zedekiah on the throne, and Zedekiah tried a revolution. Then back he came and really destroyed it the second time]; nevertheless, they hardened their hearts [and wouldn't listen]; and according to my prophecy they have been destroyed . . . [but] they shall return again . . . [this is the situation when they return:] they shall have wars, and rumors of wars [boy, have they had that, and do they have it]." Then it says they will crucify the Lord. This is talking about the wars at the time of the Romans and between them, after the Old Testament times, second temple. Then it tells about the Lord after he has risen from the dead and manifested himself unto his people, "unto as many as will believe on his name." That's an important limitation, as we will see. Verse 15: "Wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered among all nations [well, this had all happened; anybody could know that in Joseph Smith's day, but now it goes on and tells us a few things]. . . . And after they have been scattered, and the Lord God hath scourged them by other nations . . . until they shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God, and the atonement, which is infinite for all mankind . . . [he talks about the atonement here—then]. And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men [the reestablishing of Jerusalem]."

Now, this is a question I've never talked about in the class before, but since I've done a lot of work on it, I might as well cash in on it someday finally. I went into it in considerable detail, and it was reprinted in Jerusalem as a sort of pamphlet book. It's from the ninth volume of the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, and this is just the last part of the article. It's a long article on Christian Jerusalem. This is about the restoration and reformation of Jerusalem—coming back to Jerusalem after 1830 and what has happened there. It has been a very interesting thing. The great reformers, especially Luther and Calvin, mildly condemned pilgrimages. "You should not go to Jerusalem," they said, but they didn't do it very roughly. First let me read what President John Taylor said about that. This is something from the *Journal of Discourses*. I don't know what volume; I'll have to find out. This is one I just happened to come upon. It's a loose one; unfortunately, I don't have the following page. I shouldn't even bother with it now except that it's very much to the point. He says, "I remember some time ago having a conversation with Baron Rothschild, a Jew." A Jew to be sure. Who is Baron Rothschild? Founder of the Rothschild banking family, the richest man in the world in the nineteenth century. He was the one that financed World War I for the English; he was everything. He was French originally, and the Rothschilds are still going. They make wine, and they are still fabulously rich.

There's a classic Jewish joke about him. A Jew in New York was weeping when he read a notice in the paper. Someone asked, "What are you weeping for, Isaac?"

He said, "Well, Baron Rothschild died."

"Well, what are you weeping for? He was no relation of yours."

"That's just why I'm weeping."

Anyway, President Taylor said, "I was showing him the temple here." Baron Rothschild was visiting Salt Lake City, and he said, "Elder Taylor, what do you mean by this temple? What is the object of it? Why are you building it?"¹

Said I, "Your fathers had among them prophets who revealed to them the mind and will of God, and we have among us prophets who reveal to us the mind and will of God as they did. One of your prophets said, 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple. But who may abide the day of his coming, for he shall sit as a refiner's fire and a purifier of silver.' Sir, will you point to me a place on the face of this earth where God has a temple?"

"I do not know of any."

"Do you remember the words of your prophet that I have just quoted?"

"Yes, I know the prophet said that, but I do not know of any temple anywhere. Do you consider that this is that temple?"

"Oh, no Sir, not at all—this is not."

"Well, what is this temple for?"

"The Lord has told us to build this temple so that we may administer therein baptisms for our dead [which I explained to him] and also to perform some of the sacred matrimonial alliances and covenants that we believe in that are rejected by the world generally, but are among the purest, most exalting and ennobling principles that God has ever revealed to man."

"Well then, this is not our temple," said Baron Rothschild.

"No, but," said I, "you will build a temple, for the Lord has shown us, among other things, that the Jews have quite a role to perform in the latter days—that all the things spoken of by your old prophets will be fulfilled, that you will be gathered to the old Jerusalem."

That's where the page ends, so we will resume with the article.² But the point is that the Jews are going to have their own show, and we have ours. We don't interfere with them or seek to counsel them. They are doing their own. Here I said, the great reformers condemned pilgrimages to Jerusalem, just as all the fathers of the fourth century condemned pilgrimages to Jerusalem. They didn't like it because it looked like bad faith in Rome if you had to go to Jerusalem to be inspired. Rome was supposed to be the center, and they tried to stop it but it never worked because people would be drawn to Jerusalem. It's an irresistible magnet and has always been. As Rousseau says, they were determined

adversaries of pilgrimages, but they imitated them in their old Hebrew aspect. In his works, Luther says he can conceive of honest pilgrimages of the old type, and he is impressed by the unique holiness of Jerusalem. Calvin's objection to pilgrimages was primarily to the physical impossibility of gathering the saints at Jerusalem. He wrote in his work called *The Minor Prophets*, "It's impossible to have the city of Jerusalem be built. For one thing, as it's described in the Bible, the New Jerusalem will be fifteen miles long. Now, what city could ever be fifteen miles long?" He wasn't born in Los Angeles, was he? It's a small city today that isn't at least fifteen miles long. But that was his objection; it was a physical one. He said, "No city would be big enough to hold all the people that would have to go back to Jerusalem. That couldn't be possible." Well, they had very small cities in those days.

"This was necessary to counteract the tendency to apocalyptic excitement and deference to the Jews attendant upon the Reformation's intensive preoccupation with the Bible . . ." People like Reuchlin, for example, in getting deep into the Old Testament, committed the people to more serious study and more sympathetic study of the Jews. And I quote quite a number of passages from Luther and Calvin here in which they have this great respect, but they have to hold it down—we mustn't give too much credit to the Jews. They are through, their temple fell, they are gone. The only way they can possibly be saved or do anything else is to be converted again. This was the belief. If they were ever to go back to Jerusalem, it could only be as converted Christians. But there was the tendency to sympathize with them, and both Luther and Calvin tried to check it, "as various group of enthusiasts took to building their own local New Jerusalems."

Throughout Europe, with the Reformation, everybody started building his own New Jerusalem—there are all sorts of versions of it—or preparing to migrate to Palestine for the task. The Mennonites, for example, and the Anabaptists in Munster were going to build their own Jerusalem, their own Zion. There were Zions and Jerusalems springing up all over the place with various cults. Then there were some of them prepared to migrate to Palestine to rebuild the Jerusalem. They were to be the pilgrims back there. John Evelyn's famous diary is about that. He tells you all about going back to Jerusalem. And George Fox, who wrote *The Book of Martyrs*, tells in his journal about his intention of going back—that the Christians should go back and rebuild Jerusalem. This was the project all throughout the seventeenth century. Most of them were writing in the seventeenth century, "building their own local New Jerusalems or preparing to migrate to Palestine for the task; such groups flourished down through the 19th century."

I think especially of Jung Stilling. I will put him in here because he was a remarkable person. He lived in southern Germany, in Bavaria. He believed that they should get together and go and build the New Jerusalem—they should go settle Zion again. He was granted a million acres in Bessarabia by Czar Alexander III who was an idealist. As people got in their covered wagons and started moving toward the east (the Bessarabia is on the coast of the Black Sea), halfway there, he had a vision in a dream. He said, "No, we are making a mistake. The building of Zion is not going to be moving in this direction. It's going to come later, and it will move in the other direction. It's going to be toward the West, and it will be led by a man who bears my name, *Jung*. This was a very interesting vision he had. So they gave it up and went back because the real settling was to be in the West and led by a man called *Jung*. But Jung Stilling was a remarkable man.

Incidentally, Professor Edward Benz, has written about that, and it's very interesting. He has written interestingly about the Mormons too. I mean he is very sympathetic and has

visited us here. There is Christian Hofman and Johann Lange and the Jerusalem Friends of the Temple. These are various movements of people going back to Jerusalem and trying to rebuild it in the nineteenth century.

Back in 1620 in the seventeenth century, James I threw Sir Henry Finch into jail because he called for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and take complete temporal dominion over the whole world. This plan had considerable influence for over three hundred years, the plan of Sir Henry Finch for which he was imprisoned. The Protestant James I jailed him because that looked like heresy. Everybody gets interested in rebuilding Jerusalem, first with the Reformation and then in the nineteenth century. The Protestants talked about the older pilgrimages as mummery. They [the participants] were superstitious and very interesting; I have some marvelous accounts of them. But they had their own ecstatic brand of dramatization. The Roman Catholics saw the real thing in every object they saw. For example, they were always collecting nails and wood from the original cross all over the place. Well, it was like the Shroud of Turin, which the [Catholic] church has now admitted is from the fourteenth century. They would put on display such things as the farthing that the woman lost in the parable of the Lord, where he said the woman searches the house for the lost penny and finds it. Well, the lost penny was on display in Jerusalem; you could see the penny the woman lost. It was just a parable, but the Catholics made everything very literal that way and identified all the archaeological remains of the very objects mentioned in the Bible—they had everything.

The Protestants were no less zealous. They detected proof of the scriptures in every type of object observed in the Holy Land. George Fox, who was a Quaker, insisted, “We cannot own no other, neither outward Jerusalem.” Yet they risked life and limb to reach the physical Jerusalem. It’s funny. They denied that they were affected by the superstition at all—they weren’t going to go back on pilgrimages. This hadn’t happened for centuries, of course. That was the presager about getting back to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple. Yet they risked life and limb to reach the physical Jerusalem and purchase a famous work called Purchas’s *Pilgrim* (It’s several volumes; we have it here. I hope you’ve all read it.) He said, “To ascribe sanctity to the place is Jewish.” That’s wrong [according to him], yet he was a pilgrim; he insisted on going there. “And others who poured contempt on the holy places and rites were transported at the sight when they saw one.” There are some good examples here.

Edward Robinson was the first person to make any scientific study of Palestine at all. Before that it was fantastic; nobody knew what it was like at all. So Joseph Smith couldn’t have picked up anything before 1840, like their Orientalism which we will mention later. This is typical: Edward, being very scientific, met with some of the elders of his church. He says he was “overwhelmed by the coincidence of time, place, and number when twelve American missionaries met in the large upper room in Jerusalem.” They met in Jerusalem, and there’s something to that. The same symbolism as the Lord meeting in the upper chamber with the Twelve. He would have nothing to do with any superstition or anything like that, but when it happened to him, he sees there is something very special there. Philip Schaff edited the Schaff-Herzog *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, the big Presbyterian classic which we refer to. It’s a good one. He said he abhors the superstition and mummery of pilgrimage, but he went and immersed himself ten times in the Jordan. He said, “I almost imagined I was miraculously delivered from rheumatism.” You see, Professor Schaff is free of superstition, but he allowed himself to be dunked ten times (why ten times?) in the Jordan and almost imagined that he was miraculously delivered from rheumatism.

So people are always playing with this; they can't leave Jerusalem alone. For one thing it is quite romantic; you understand that. We get that with Chateaubriand. His much publicized visit to Jerusalem in 1806 started Orientalism. He describes it in his famous literature. He visited Jerusalem and wrote up Palestine, giving it this glamour and Orientalism, this the Scheherazade picture that lasted for a hundred years. They didn't have any real idea of what it was like. It has been evident ever since. Everybody over-romanticizes and over-glamorizes it, though some things can't be over-glamorized. But he combined religious, literary, and intellectual interests and established a romantic appeal of the Holy Land that has lasted almost through the century. This is a very interesting thing. Bassand, who has done a very thorough work on Chateaubriand in the Holy Land that was published quite recently, said, "All the French travelers to Jerusalem between 1800 and 1850 represent a completely fantastic idea of the Orient." Everybody followed along with that. Remember, the Book of Mormon was written twenty years before 1850, but everybody was strapped with that. Nobody could see the real Orient. It's the real Orient you get in the Book of Mormon, not any of the glamorous Orientalism that people were putting into romances in the manner of Chateaubriand.

In 1830 Mohammed Ali became the ruler of Islam. He was the most powerful man in Egypt and reformed everything. He opened Palestine to outside travel. "When Jerusalem was thrown open to the West in the 1830s by Mohammed Ali, European and American missionaries hastened to the spot with ambitious projects of converting the Jews, with an eye to the fulfillment of prophecy and the ultimate restoration of [Jerusalem] the Holy City." In 1835 church missions to the Jews were set up in Jerusalem; there were many of them. And there's a classic study of this by Toynbee. You all know Arnold Toynbee, but he is not the "big noise" he was a few years ago. He wrote *A Study of History* [twelve volumes]. He was a Cambridge man. One person who knew him very well is Arthur Henry King, a close friend of Toynbee. He said that he wasn't a phony, but very near. But he has an interesting thing to say. His grandparents were those that participated in this missionary movement to Jerusalem. They were going to go back and refound Jerusalem as a Christian Jerusalem of the Millennium. That was their idea. He said that the only people that weren't sensibly moving in the direction of Jerusalem were the poor deluded Mormons who thought they should go west and have their own Zion while they left it to the Jews to refound Jerusalem. They [the Mormons] thought the Jews would found Jerusalem again. Of course, they turned out to be right. It was the Jews who resettled Jerusalem—not all these many efforts that were very expensive, fabulously financed, etc., by people like Rothschild to go back. But, of course, his money had a lot to do with Zionism—Herzl and the rest.

So they hastened and they were going to set up their missions there, as I said. Toynbee actually scolds the Mormons for doing a silly thing, not the sensible thing. They went in the wrong direction to found Zion and left it to the Jews to reestablish Jerusalem. "Even the ill-starred Anglo-Lutheran Bishopric of 1841 had that in view." A very interesting thing happened in 1841. The Episcopalians and the Lutherans were competing for it, and they got together and said that they would make a common bishopric. They appointed a converted Polish Jew to be bishop of Jerusalem in the United Episcopal and Lutheran Church in Jerusalem. Later on the Kaiser gave them the land. What dominates Jerusalem in all the pictures is that big tower, the highest point. Well, that's the Lutheran Church that Kaiser Wilhelm II built in Jerusalem as a Lutheran. He comes a little later; this is just the generation before. It was Gladstone and Bunsen who put their heads together for this. Bunsen was the German prime minister, and Gladstone was the English prime minister under Victoria. They decided to put an end to the squabbling and to make a common

cause. It was they who selected the new bishop of Jerusalem, who was a converted Polish Jew. Well, that flopped; it didn't work at all. John Henry Newman denounced it passionately in his *Apology* later on as a plan of base concession to the Jews and the Protestants. He was the great Catholic convert. (The Newman clubs you find at universities all over the country represent the Catholic students there.) Newman really fought it because the Catholic Church has always fought the return to Jerusalem. He "indicated the stand of the Roman Church, which in 1847 appointed a resident patriarch for Jerusalem." They decided to catch up, so in 1847 the Catholic Church appointed a resident patriarch of Jerusalem.

"This move," says Moret, "counterbalances as much as possible the influence of Russian schismatics and German Protestants." Everybody was out for grabs now. The Catholic writer, Moret, calls them the "Russian schismatics." This move [by the Catholics] counterbalances attempts of the Russians and German Protestants at getting the holy places. So in 1847 the Catholics set up their own official to preside there. They called him the "resident patriarch."

The mounting rivalry became terrible then. It became ferocious and ended very soon in a horrible thing that happened. In 1553 Francis I, the flamboyant king and rival of Henry VIII, signed the *Capitulations* which gave France the right, under the Franciscans, to protect the holy places of Jerusalem. It was the privilege of France to protect the holy places and to take over. Then it became a political plum a little later. It was renewed in 1740. Then to advance her interests in the Orient, Napoleon III (Napoleon the Little) decided to really go in and occupy. He claimed on the basis of the *Capitulations* of Francis I in 1553 and in 1740 that France had exclusive right to protect the holy places in Jerusalem. Well, the Russian pilgrimages had always been the most ardent. They had been coming there since the tenth century. They were the most fervid pilgrims, and the Russians weren't going to let that happen at all. This brought on the Crimean War between France and Russia in 1854 and caused the death and misery of millions. It was because of the vanity of Louis Napoleon. It was to oblige his Catholic constituents [though he was an atheist] to reactivate French claims to holy places which France had long neglected and the Russians long cherished. What he called "the foolish affair of the holy places" brought about the terrible Crimean War and its portentous chain of disasters and calamities.

"In the second half of the nineteenth century the major powers and churches were stimulated by mutual rivalry to seek commanding positions at Jerusalem through the founding of eleemosynary institutions over which they retained control." Now they were going to try not to protect the holy places but to found eleemosynary institutions, like hospitals going way back to the Crusades. There were the Hospitalers and the Templars who were to protect the pilgrims to the temple. It was a long tradition. So everybody started founding their hospitals, libraries, and schools—the things that we found where we want to get a foothold. They were charitable, eleemosynary institutions, but they were backed by the major powers. Then they went there in a big way and started pushing each other. The government retained control over the institutions. Somebody would fund or finance a school, but the government would retain it. They started moving in on each other. "Beyond the hard facts of geometry and economics, the religious significance of the city continued to exert steady pressure on the policies of all the great powers."

Remember Queen Eugenie, the wife of Napoleon III? (We don't have the Eugenie hats anymore.) Napoleon III sent Maximilian over to become king of Mexico and lost that.

But Eugenie had a grand project. She said, “Let all the crowned heads of Europe pitch in and make a charitable contribution and we will have one big, common, charitable fund [like a United Fund] in Palestine to take care of everything.” She had this idealist plan that fell through. The French government saw in the pilgrimages the force to be utilized in penetration of the Orient; even the Anticlerical Party supported them accordingly. It was to meet the growing power of France and Russia, which established a Jerusalem bishopric, that the Protestants of England and Germany were appealed to for support “in the name of national interest and prestige.”

So everybody was getting into the act—Russia, England, France, Germany. If you were a great power you had to be involved, and that was ever since the *Assizes of Jerusalem*. Remember, we went back to Baldwin of Jerusalem. They were all intermarried back then and involved in the Kingdom of Jerusalem until it fell to Saladin. (The notes are longer than the text; that’s why I jump back and forth here.)

Now, the story of the German Kaiser Wilhelm II. He said when he was a little kid, his Aunt Louisa gave him a beautiful wooden model of the New Jerusalem. It was one where you put together blocks with golden domes, houses, walls, and everything. You could build it, and it was a big thing. He used to play with it by the hours. Of course, this fascinated him—Jerusalem with its golden domes and its towers and its churches and everything. It was a model Jerusalem on a grand scale for a kid to play with. This set his heart on it. Then in 1898 [Theodor] Herzl, the founder of Zionism, recognized Wilhelm II (the World War I Kaiser) as an emperor of peace, making a great entry into his eternal city. The Kaiser went to Jerusalem and dressed up in a complete suit of white armor. He got on a white charger and entered through the Jaffa gate in all magnificence to liberate Jerusalem, with all the idealism from when he was a little kid. He always dreamed of the time when he would come as Lohengrin on a white charger (very Wagnerian), dressed completely in white armor. It was very typical of the German Kaiser entering to deliver Jerusalem. Kaiser Wilhelm II was a very pious man, incidentally, and he dreamed of converting the Jews. So he was right in with Herzl there, who was the Zionist. What spoiled it all, according to Herzl, was the arrogance of his staff. Of course, there is nothing more arrogant than a Prussian Junker. Wilhelm’s staff was all composed of Prussian Junkers. They spoiled the whole thing, and this led to World War I. There was unspeakable arrogance.

But he did do this. He was the one who built that tall church. Whenever you see a picture of Jerusalem at a distance, you always see that big tower sticking up. That’s the Lutheran church, the tower that sticks up. That made the Catholics mad, but he appeased them. There were a lot of Catholics in the empire, after all, so he gave them the “Dormition.” That was the oldest house in Jerusalem, supposedly surviving from the time of Christ, the house of John Mark’s mother. That was greatly prized, and he gave that to the Catholics. The Catholics got the “Dormition,” and the Lutherans got the big church on the top of the hill. He promoted Protestant unity by the dedication of the great Jerusalem church and the patronage of Palestinian Zionism, which was thwarted by his advisors.

Then there was the taking of Jerusalem by Allenby in 1917. You all remember that if you’ve read *Lawrence of Arabia*. “The Seven Pillars of Wisdom” talks about this. “The taking of Jerusalem by Allenby in 1917 was hailed throughout the Christian world as the fulfillment of prophecy, and deplored by the Moslems as a typical Crusade against their holy city.” That was the famous General Allenby. We really hailed this in the Church. I remember that my parents and everyone was quite exhilarated about it. This showed that

prophecy was going to be fulfilled, and it was a very important step. Then came the Balfour Declaration that the Jews would have the right to return to Jerusalem. Then Zionism thought they had a green light, but they had an awful lot of trouble.

“World War II was followed by increasing interest in Jerusalem as a center of ecumenical Christianity.” Here’s an interesting thing: In 1928, for example, there was a Jerusalem meeting which recalled, not inaptly, the period of the great ecumenical council. They started this ecumenical movement already in 1928 by a meeting of many churches in Jerusalem. This gave impetus for the creation of an International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews; it was founded at that time. Then the YMCA International Prayer Week was started at Jerusalem in 1951. Everybody wanted to get into the act. Then the Grand Mufti wanted to get into it, and he was really something. He was going to stop the Jews. In 1955, he gave a tea inviting all the Christians and was going to unite all the religions, except the Jews. Then there was a world conference of Pentecostal organizations. They held their great meeting in 1960 at Jerusalem. They were all expressive of the idea: “We want to go back and be the refounders of Jerusalem. We’ve got to unite and keep Jerusalem Christian.”

The “old religious and national rivalries of long standing and great variety, continued to flourish.” This is astonishingly set forth. John of Wurzburg from the Middle Ages still survives in Jerusalem. American Jesuits from Baghdad and Presbyterian ministers grouped around the American University of Beirut, where I spent some time. “They multiplied schools and attracted students by the assurance of employment in Yankee enterprise,” says a resentful French observer. Today the Benedictine Order seeks recruits in all countries, particularly in the United States, for work in Jerusalem. The Catholics decided to throw themselves into it.

But in 1948, after the Jewish war, President Truman recognized Jerusalem, and he sent his representative, J. G. McDonald, to go back to Jerusalem and give them our blessing. He had a conversation with the pope on the way, and the pope didn’t like it at all. This will never do, he said. In the same year the Vatican, to counter that, appealed for the growth of Jerusalem as a universal Christian religious, cultural, and educational center—everything to keep the Jews out. Make it universally Christian. The Catholics were willing to concede that. The mixture of culture and religious interest is apparent in the pilgrimages of the holy year 1950—the Baptist pilgrimage of 2500 members in 1955, and “the arrival of ever increasing numbers of interdenominational and study groups.” The scholarly emphasis is seen in the founding of auxiliary residences for the Pontifical Biblical Institute at Jerusalem and amusingly demonstrated by the impeccable good taste, we are told, of the Bishop of New York, who notes that World Wars I and II both began as crusades but quickly dropped the illusion. So let’s stop making a crusade here, he says.

Then we go on and get a more sophisticated air here: “Even the old and vexing problem of the priority of Jerusalem, “mother of Churches,” over other Christian bishoprics is now approached in a spirit of mutual concession with respect for the autonomy of various bishoprics in Jerusalem. This liberal attitude may be a response to what is regarded by some Christian circles as the Jewish challenge to the basic Christian thesis that only Christians can possess a New Jerusalem.”

There are very interesting writings on this. The Christians are beginning to yield ground on this. One of them writing here says, “By the dramatic entry of Israel, the Christian tradition of the Holy Land has been violently disrupted.” Israel spoiled everything by just

coming in and taking it over. This is Bishop Blythe who “takes comfort in the thought that Israel is fulfilling scriptures in many ways, even unconsciously.” One writer says, “But they were generally alarmed by the idea that the Jews should come back to Jerusalem.” He says he is just nonplussed—it shouldn’t happen. “That’s not the way prophecy was supposed to be at all,” he says. He goes into quite a tizzy about that.

“While the great powers for over a century cautiously sought to exploit the energies of Zionism and its sympathizers . . .” Way back in 1838 Shaftesbury got Palmerston to appoint a British vice consul in Jerusalem charged with protection of the Jews generally. So way back in 1838 the British wanted to get in on the ground floor and protect Jews coming back to Palestine. And remember, that was just the year after Orson Hyde had blessed the land for the return of the Jews—the year after, Shaftesbury and Palmerston set up the British vice consul in Jerusalem for the protection of Jews generally.

In 1840 they sought cooperation with the Russian Dekabrists, with the Polish liberationists, and with the French statesmen as part of a widespread liberation movement. The Anglo-Lutheran bishopric of the following year (1841, we mentioned that) was denounced by Newman because it made implicit concessions to the Jews in Palestine who evinced a deep interest in Zionism and arranged for Herzl’s audience with the Kaiser which became so sensational. Zionism became a question with which European politics must reckon. “It is now openly conceded that the Jews might indeed rebuild the city, though only as potential Christians [if they become Christians, that’s fine]. Though some Christians are even willing to waive that proviso,” including Albright, etc. Chateaubriand, way back in his day, found the Jewish community in Jerusalem to be the “only wholly admirable and miraculous phenomenon in the city.” The Jews had settled there and were holding their own against the Moslems. But “the fundamental thesis is so firmly rooted that the progress of Israel is commonly viewed not as a refutation of it but as a baffling and disturbing paradox.” It just should not happen [according to them].

You may remember Charles Malik who was in the United Nations and President Reagan’s representative years ago, way back in the beginning? He had such influence. (He has spoken here at BYU a number of times.) He and the World Council of Churches make this official statement: “The continued existence of the Jewish people which does not acknowledge Christ is a divine mystery.” Well, there you are. “It is a mystery and a wonderful phenomenon,” says Berdayev, “refuting the materialistic and positivistic criterion of history,” as does Mr. Toynbee’s theory of history, to his annoyance.

Well, that’s the way it goes in Jerusalem. I see the time is up. The point is we are right in the middle of this coming back to Jerusalem now; it is never settled. The pope said to McDonald, “The Catholic Church can never concede that the Jews should go back because it is against prophecy.” The prophecy was, of course, that the New Jerusalem should be built by people who accepted Christ, so that must be Christians. So this thing has gone on all the time. I have just been reading about these happenings since the Book of Mormon came out—most of them that is.

1. This conversation is taken from “How God’s Purposes Are Fulfilled, Etc.,” in *JD* 18:199.
2. Brother Nibley quotes and paraphrases from “Jerusalem: In Christianity,” in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 16 vols. (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1972), 9:1568–75, and also from his notes on this subject.