

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE

Who is there that does not admire the great apostle Paul! After his miraculous conversion to the Faith, he labored untiringly, amidst the greatest sufferings for his divine Master. Yet St. Paul calls himself the least of the apostles. It is this truly humble opinion of himself that makes the Apostle great. It brought to him extraordinary help from God; it was a great act of penance for his persecution of the infant Church before Christ made him see the light; it was the principal reason for God exalting him so: "God giveth His grace to the humble."

We know not what to admire most in this great Apostle. Besides his humility, which shines forth so strikingly, there is his unlimited sacrifice of comfort, his patient loss of former human friendship, his earnestness and zeal for the glory of God, his courage under difficulties, and, finally, his willingness to give up his life for Christ. Wonderful, indeed, is the grace of God! It was by this grace, as St. Paul says, that he was what he was. Truly, he need not have told us so, for it is only divine grace that could ever have worked such a transformation in this former enemy of the early Christian Church.

What St. Paul teaches us in his Epistles is enough to fill us with heavenly wisdom, if only we could read it with the proper spirit and be filled with its sacred unction. But even for those who seem to find a certain dryness in the reading of the Bible, there is a lesson of infinite value in the life of St. Paul, as gathered from his own writings. No one can peruse the Epistles of St. Paul without becoming a great admirer of this grand and wonderful personage, or without finding many examples in his life for imitation. Not only do we find great truths—religious, moral, and social—in St. Paul's writings, but we also find a great life. The man, as the old saying goes, writes himself. No one has written himself more efficaciously than has St. Paul; and no one has less intended to write himself than he. We may feel perfectly justified in saying that one of God's intentions in inspiring the Apostle to write, was that we Christians could have before us the example of a truly magnanimous, holy, self-sacrificing life.

There is one lesson that should be considered of great importance in this life of St. Paul. Thousands should learn it as soon as possible. It is this: With God's grace, every man can rise to eminent sanctity. We do not say that all can attain the same heights, but certainly all may arrive at a high degree. But this is not all. Man can rise from the depths of sin to the heights of holiness. This is said for those who imagine that, because sin has conquered them, there is little chance left for them. Surely, those who have never fallen are more blessed; but even to the lowest we will say: "Arise with earnestness, imploring God's help, and the day will come when you will walk the earth one of God's redeemed children."

You may say that habits are formed, and nature is now punishing you. That may be very true, but God's grace is a stronger habit, which will conquer the weaker, and it will overcome the failings of nature. To many a bleeding soul that the demon of drink or of gross immorality has wounded, we say: "Why do you not, at least now, become a man! Your wickedness has taught you that there is no real enjoyment in a bad life. Your faith, if nothing else, tells you that an eternity of suffering awaits you beyond, unless you reform; your gnawing conscience lets you know of your ingratitude to God who made you and gave you what no one else could give you—life. Acknowledge your faults to God and man, as did St. Paul, but do it humbly; and God will gradually supply the strength by which you can rise from your sinful state."

You, also, who are leading a good Christian life but think that you can go no higher, learn from the life of the Apostle that such an idea is false. Action, with God's help, will cause you to rise a step higher. In our religious life, once God's grace enters into our soul in its abundance, the past can not influence us toward sin; it will rather make us strive and work more sincerely, and keep humility blooming within our heart. The point, then, is this: Are we trying to have God's grace come on us as He would like? If so, the rest will follow; if not, we are hazarding our souls.

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THE ZIONIST REGIME IN THE HOLY LAND

A. Hilliard Atteridge in America

Monsignor Barlassina, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, has come to London to lay the grievances of his people before the British Government, which represents the "mandatory" power in possession of the Holy Land. He is the fifth in succession to the see of Jerusalem, since Pius IX. restored the Latin Patriarchate of the Holy City in 1847. He has held his high office through three critical years.

He had honored me with a long interview in which he spoke freely of the present situation in Palestine. Before dealing with the points to which he called my attention, it will be well to note the statistics of the population of Palestine and some points as to the origin of the existing Zionist Government of the Holy Land. This will make it easier to appreciate the significance of what follows.

A census taken on March 31, 1919, showed that the population of Palestine, i. e., of the territory west of the Jordan to be included in the British mandate, was 647,850. Of these 515,000 were Moslems; 62,500 Christians and 65,800 Jews. The remainder, about 5,000, belonged to various minor sects or were returned as "of no religious denomination." But the British Government had already pledged itself to give the Jewish minority, some ten per cent. of the total population, a privileged and dominant position in the country. The pledge had been given by Mr. Balfour on November 2, 1917, in these terms:

"His Majesty's Government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of that object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

We shall see presently what has been the practical value of the proviso which purported to safeguard the rights of Moslem and Christian. As for the further proviso that nothing should be done to prejudice the status of Jews in other countries, this was inserted in the declaration because many prominent Jews in Western Europe had opposed the Zionist agitation for the creation of a Jewish State on the ground that the existence of such a State might well lead to their being reduced to the position of the alien residents in countries where they now enjoy full citizenship.

From the day when Jerusalem was occupied by General Allenby the British Government began to give effect to the Balfour Declaration. Its terms were embodied in the Treaty of Sevres and on April 20, 1920, at the San Remo Conference, the Supreme Council of the Allies, i. e., Mr. Lloyd George and the French and Italian Premiers, formally conferred the mandate for Palestine on Great Britain. By this time a Zionist Government had been organized at Jerusalem; thousands of Jewish immigrants, mostly from Eastern Europe, were arriving in Palestine; and a distinguished Jewish politician, Sir Herbert Samuel, was sent out from London to take charge as British High Commissioner. Thus, as the result of the British conquest of Palestine and its annexation under the form of a mandatory protectorate, the small Jewish minority in its population has been made the predominant and controlling force in its Government and administration.

What has been the result? In the interview with Monsignor Barlassina I heard the facts from a first-hand witness. I shall try to set down some of the most significant of these facts as he gave them to me. I do not of course mean to make the Patriarch responsible for the conclusions I deduce from them, but I think that given the facts these conclusions necessarily follow.

Perhaps it will be said that the Latin Patriarch speaks from the narrow standpoint of the interests only of his own flock, and is influenced by prejudice against the Jews. One could not speak with him for five minutes without feeling that any such suggestions are utterly baseless. The grievances of which he complains affect not only the Christians of Palestine but also the great Moslem majority of its people. More than this, not a few of the Jews of Palestine, amongst them rabbis and other prominent men, have joined in the protest of Moslem and Christian against the methods and proceedings of the new Zionist Government.

As the Patriarch himself puts it the grievances of the Latin Catholic community in Palestine are also those of every other community outside the privileged circle of the Zionists. Under the old regime for hundreds of years the special status of the Christian and Jewish bodies as well as of the Moslems, was recognized by the Government. Each had its own legislation, especially in matters relating to the laws of marriage and inheritance. For instance, divorce was recognized by the Moslem and the Jewish communities each under its own religious code, but was non-existent for the Christians. The Latin and Greek Patriarchates had both special powers for safeguarding

public morality among their people. Nominally the new regime assures equality of treatment for all but in practice the church authorities find their action hampered and their work impeded by Jewish officialism.

Nominally there is freedom of immigration and settlement, but as the officials of the new Government have the right to veto in each individual case and there is an organization for promoting Jewish immigration, in order to strengthen the Jewish minority, the practical result is that the immigration is entirely Zionist. The new arrivals, who have come in their thousands, are drawn almost entirely from Eastern Europe. Even the orthodox Jews of Palestine complain that these new colonists are largely made up of the free-thinking Bolshevik element of the Slav countries.

These orthodox Jews, old residents whose families have been in the Holy Land for centuries, refuse to recognize the Zionist Government as representing Judaism in its religious aspect. Numbers of them refused even to vote for the candidates to the Zionist assembly which is officially known as the "National Council of the Jews of Palestine," and the local body known as the "Council of the Jews of Jerusalem." They complain that in the new Government schools for the Jews the teaching is not orthodox, and that the whole policy of that Government is inspired, not by the religious ideals of genuine Judaism, but by political and financial ambitions. A deputation of the old Jewish population interviewed Lord Northcliffe during his recent visit to Jerusalem and stated their grievances. After his departure they were exposed to something like persecution. As for the influence of the new immigrants who are being settled in the country Monsignor Barlassina declares that they have notably lowered the moral condition of the country. "I could give terrible details," he says, "as to how in various ways the Holy City and the Holy Land have been desecrated."

Amongst the non-Zionist majority in Palestine there is not without reason, a feeling that, despite all the pledges of equal treatment for all races and religions, there is a fixed policy of gradually making the Zionists the sole possessors of the country and impoverishing the rest of the people. "Palestine should be the national home of the Jew," say the Zionists. "There are other wide countries near at hand for the Arab."

But, as Monsignor Barlassina explained to me, this name for the majority of the people of the Holy Land can easily be made the basis for misleading fallacies. Arabic is the common language of Palestine and all Syria. The average man when he hears of the Arabs of Palestine thinks of them as a foreign Moslem element and of the Jew as the native element in the country. But many of the Arabs are Catholics, and Arab means now only Arabic-speaking. The people are of mixed descent. There are Arab families in Palestine whose ancestors were in the country long before those of many of the Jewish people who are there today. The Arabs of Palestine are the wandering Bedouins but small farmers, laborers, villagers and townsmen. They have as good a right to the country as the old Jewish residents and a better right than the new arrivals brought in by an organized system of Zionist immigration.

Yet they find themselves facing a system that is depriving them of their property and handicapping them at every turn. If land is for sale they cannot buy it, for it always goes to the Jew. Thus, to take a glaring example, when the large landed property given up by the Russo-Greek Patriarchate was disposed of, it was announced that the sale would be by public auction and open to all bidders. But it was useless for the Moslem and Christian Arabs to compete with the Zionists. Most of the land was put up at auction in one big block, five lots being combined. These were sold for £250,000 sterling. The purchaser was the agent of the Zionist Land Committee. The property was then resold on easy terms and in small lots to Zionist Jews. The Arabs are obviously helpless in competition against a wealthy Zionist syndicate. They complain that land transfer is systematically worked so as to substitute at every turn new Zionist owners for the former holders. Further they allege that in marketing their produce they find that Zionist officials put difficulties in their way, make them lose the favorable markets, and exposed them to such loss that in many cases they are being driven to sell their land.

One more of the illusions of the war years is gone. When in December, 1917, the news came that Allenby had captured Jerusalem, there were Te Deums in the churches of Europe, ringing of bells and rejoicing that a "new Crusade" had liberated the Holy City and that the "liberation of the Holy Land" would soon be an accomplished fact. What has happened is that the Holy City and the Holy Land have been handed over to the Zionist political organization and the vast majority of the people of Palestine, Moslems, Christians and the old orthodox Jews find themselves under the arbitrary rule of a Zionist committee which governs in the interests of its

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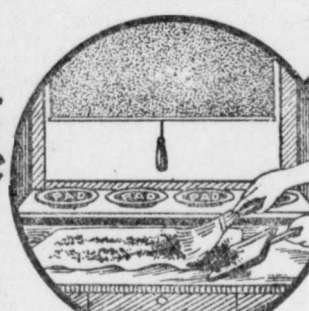
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