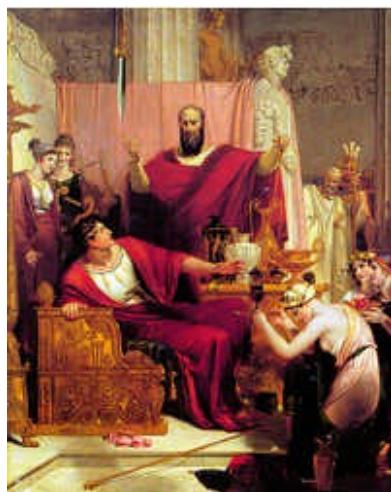


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### Holy War as a Sword of Damocles

**Today jihad, or Islamic holy war, is hanging by a thread over the nations. It is a war that not only wants to wipe Israel off the map but also attempts to impose Islam on the western world.**

By Ludwig Schneider

Damocles was a courtier in the palace of King Dionysius II of Syracuse, a 4th century BC tyrant. After Damocles flattered him, the king let the courtier exchange places with him for a day.

As he feasted, Damocles suddenly noticed he was sitting under a sword hanging from a single horse hair, illustrating the danger that could overtake him at any moment.

**Today jihad, or Islamic holy war, is hanging by a thread over the nations. It is a war that not only wants to wipe Israel off the map but also attempts to impose Islam on the western world.**

Thousands of Americans have protested against the Iraq war, but why aren't there any protests against the Islamic fundamentalists who are arming themselves for holy war? Is the western world so afraid of Moslems that it no longer dares to protest against the holy war they are promoting?

Do they feel that the jihad is hanging over them like the Sword of Damocles, and that any tremors, any protest, could cause the thin thread to snap?

Even at the Temple Mount compound in Jerusalem, no one has tried to stop the Moslems from destroying artifacts from the period of the biblical Temples. They are trying to wipe out evidence of the Temples and yet the Israeli government is afraid of stepping in because the thread from which the jihad Sword of Damocles hangs is so very thin.

Despite all precautionary measures taken to avoid a holy war, at some point the thread will break. This war is prophesied in the Bible just as it is predicted that the Jews will return home to Zion and the desert will bloom.

We are often like the courtier Damocles effusively flattering "peace and security" because it complies with our wishful thinking.

God, on the other hand, is calling us to tell the nations that a holy war will come: "Proclaim this among the nations: prepare a war; rouse the mighty men! Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up! Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, 'I am a mighty man.' Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations [surrounding Israel], and gather yourselves there" (Joel 3:9-11).

Joel is speaking here of a holy war—the holy war, dealing with the holy places, namely Jerusalem the holy city of God, and the Temple Mount that must be cleared for the building of the third temple.

The nations are not called to beat their swords into plowshares, as Israel's Peace Now movement, with all of its good intentions, urges. Instead, the nations are to beat their plowshares into swords—a clear call to arms.

The armies of the Arab and Islamic states, strengthened by their huge numbers against tiny Israel, are planning to come against Jerusalem. But this mighty army is being led by God into the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2) where God will judge them for their hatred of the Jews and Israel. They will only realize too late that Allah was not with them because their Allah is not God.

The current war in Iraq is included in the end-time events described here, for we are dealing with Babylon, the root of the enmity against Jerusalem. Just as Babylon sought to obliterate Jerusalem in biblical times, the same is true today.

This "axis of evil" includes Iraq (Babylon), and neighboring Iran and Syria.

In Revelation 16, the sixth bowl of wrath is poured out on the River Euphrates (in Iraq). At that point unclean spirits come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. Thus, in a threefold way, the world falls into the clutches of the forces opposing God: the dragon as the spirit of Satan, the beast as the political world power and the false prophet as the one, watered-down world religion.

However, God will save His people and will spread out His hands over Israel. He will prepare a table for His people in the presence of their enemies and anoint their heads with oil (Psalm 23).

So it is not surprising that, according to a survey, 83 percent of Jews and 71 percent of Arabs are either satisfied or very satisfied with their lives in Israel. They are not afraid of the Sword of Damocles, the holy war.

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