

Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. But the book of *Kinot*—or “wailings”—has been updated to include almost every major Jewish tragedy since. Massacres by the Crusaders in the Twelfth Century are mentioned. The expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290 is in there. So, too, are the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492 and the Holocaust of World War II.

There is, however, one notable exception. The expulsion of the Jews of France in 1306 by King Philip the Good is never mentioned in the *Kinot*. Indeed, the scholars of academia today similarly profess to know nothing about the specifics or details of that expulsion nor what happened to the expelled Jews or where they went, if anywhere, other than the grave. Entire books on the subject of Medieval French Jews offer nothing but pathetic speculations on the fate of the French Jews following the “expulsion” of 1306 (see, for example, R. Chazan, *Medieval Jewry in Northern France*, Baltimore 1973).

One desperate Jew who made himself immortal under the guise of a prophetic prognosticator, Nostradamus, preserved the bloody truth that is missing in every other source. The truth is that the French Jews, with few exceptions, were massacred in 1306.

6—The Theme of “Eyes Gouged Out”

One of the most famous of Nostradamus’ poems is Century One quatrain 35 which appears to foretell “the tragic and dramatic death of...Henry II” (Leoni, *op. cit.*, p. 575-6). This was the same king to whom Nostradamus addressed the epistle from which we learned about the “City of Achem” in the preceding section. Leoni (*ibid*) thoroughly debunks the prophetic accuracy of the quatrain in question. Here is what it says:

The young lion the old will surmount
 On field of battle by single combat:
 In a cage of gold his eyes he will gouge out:
 Two fleets one, then to die, cruel death.
 (Le lion jeune le vieux surmontera En champ bellique par singulier duel:
 Dans cage d’or les yeux lui crévera: Deux classes une, puis mourir, mort
 cruelle.)

Henry II died in a tournament joust. The Captain of the Scottish Guard, Montgomery, struck Henry's helmet with his wooden lance and a splinter got through the visor and lodged just above Henry's right eye. Henry died after many days of agony. This quatrain has justly been called the one that made Nostradamus famous in his own lifetime. It really seems to apply, in a poetic way, to the death of Henry, but many critics have rightly pointed out discrepancies between the details in this verse as compared with what actually happened to Henry. Leoni (*ibid*) doubtless makes the best point, however, which is that if this quatrain predicts the death of Henry II then it contradicts all the glowing prophecies Nostradamus wrote concerning a glorious future for Henry II (with which the Epistle is replete).

Henry died in a freak sporting accident. His eyes were not "gouged out." In fact, neither of his eyes was put out. But this verse established Nostradamus as a prognosticator and launched his career in society. It was a lucky hit. Without this lucky hit we probably wouldn't be reading about Nostradamus in the tabloids today, or writing a book to show what he really intended. Since this is historically the most notable of all the Nostradamus quatrains it would be lucky for us if we could find out what Nostradamus was really talking about.

Nostradamus touches on the theme of gouging out eyes in a couple of other places in *The Centuries*. Century One quatrain 27, for instance, speaks of someone "struck from heaven" or "struck from the sky" ("du ciel frappé") under an oak in the region of Guienne (in what is now southwestern France) near a hidden treasure. The lurid scene concludes: "The one who had been gathered for long centuries, Found will die, his eye put out by a spring." ("Qui par longs siècles avait été grappé, Trouvé mourra, l'oeil crevé de ressort.") Since Nostradamus wrote this nothing has happened to make this quatrain famous. But around the year 900, six and a half centuries before Nostradamus was published, some spectacular eye gougings actually took place.

For example, "One of the great ecclesiastical princes of the South [of France], Arnuste, the archbishop of Narbonne... was attacked by unknowns who gouged out his eyes..." ("L'un des plus

grands princes ecclésiastiques du Midi, l'archevêque de Narbonne Arnuste...fut attaqué par des inconnus, qui lui crevèrent les yeux...") (Poly, *op. cit.*, p. 18). Or again, an Archbishop Bérenger had his eyes gouged out, too (*ibid*, p. 24). A third case is that of Emperor Louis III who in 905 "...was surprised by Berengar, who blinded him and sent him back to Provence..." (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1946 edition, XIV, p. 411.) After that Louis was surnamed "the Blind." From these three instances one gets the impression that blinding people was a veritable craze around the turn of the Tenth Century. Not surprisingly, there may even be a discernible echo of some Jewish involvement in this bloody phenomenon.

In Century Three quatrain 92 Nostradamus speaks of someone's eye being "plucked out" ("arraché") at Narbonne by a goshawk. A goshawk is a large hawk the name of which derives from "goose" and "hawk." The French word is "autour." I was present when a notable Orthodox Jewish rabbi recounted an old Jewish story of a "spiritual combat" between a Jew and a Christian. The outcome of the duel was decided when the Jew called down two hawks from the sky, each of which plucked out an eye of the Christian. I have been unable to find any written source for this orally preserved legend. Its significance is less historical than anthropological, for it shows that this hideous settling of scores by gouging or plucking out an opponent's eye(s) is indigenous to Jewish culture. We recall that in the example from Nostradamus' Century One quatrain 35 the victim who was blinded was "struck from the sky." The victim in Century Three quatrain 92 was blinded by a hawk. Both of these elements are united in the Jewish rabbi's legendary account.

The "coat of arms" presented by Nostradamus' family (see illustration) as their ancestral shield shows two eagles' heads, beaks open as if ready to gouge out someone's eyes. Significantly, the shield shows *two* attacking birds, just as in the rabbi's version.

Equally significant from a Jewish perspective is the presence of the city of Narbonne in Nostradamus' example. We recall that the archbishop of Narbonne was blinded long before Nostradamus. Also, around the year 676 (?) a certain Duke Paul rebelled against the Gothic King Wamba of Spain. Paul tried to take over

Narbonne, but was captured by Wamba. Wamba had Paul's eyes gouged out. Narbonne was the most important Jewish town in Provence, long before Nostradamus. The Jews, under the leadership of descendants of King David, had established a seat of royal power at Narbonne. The most conservative estimate of Jewish influence there concedes that the Jews controlled one of three "lordships" in the town (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1946 edition, article "Narbonne"). According to the archives of France, however, the power of the royal Jews was considerably greater. There was a man named Bonomancipius who was called "Jewish King." The personage of the Jewish King resided at Narbonne at least as late as the year 1252 (J. Régné, *Étude sur la condition des Juifs de Narbonne du V^e au XIV^e siècles*, Narbonne 1912, p. 184; and G. Saige, *Les Juifs du Languedoc*, Paris 1881, pp. 42-44, 74, 75, 156, etc.). We will return later to the Jewish royal family of Davidic descent in Provence and its relevance to certain popular—and best-selling—accounts of Jesus and St. Mary Magdalene in Provence.

Eye gouging in Nostradamus first appears in Century One quatrain 27 which Nostradamus concludes with a reference to "The one who had been gathered for long centuries..." The word "gathered" has a special significance for the Jews. This word is applied in the Old Testament to the gathering of Jewish exiles and the return of the latter to Zion. "And He [God] will certainly raise up a sign for the nations and gather the dispersed of Israel: and the scattered of Judah will He assemble from the four quarters of the earth" (Isaiah 11:12). By this roundabout theological means Nostradamus manages to direct our attention to Jewish history, not future events. "The one who had been gathered" in Provence "for long centuries" refers to none other than Nostradamus' own people, the Jews.

We began this section with three examples in Nostradamus of eyes being gouged out. We also examined three cases of eyes being gouged out from a period of Provençal history half a millennium before Nostradamus, each of which examples occurred within a few years of the other. An oral account by an Orthodox rabbi describing hawks descending from the sky to pluck out eyes was presented to enrich the texture of our reconstruction. The family

“coat of arms” of Nostradamus also shows rampant raptors ready to pluck out eyes. We found the highly significant city of Narbonne present in Nostradamus and in history, and we also found a reference in this same context to the Biblical concept of the ingathering of Jewish exiles. There are thus plenty of pointers provided by Nostradamus. These pointers become easy to follow once we realize that Nostradamus had a purpose, a goal, a specifically Jewish mission that we can now understand.

7—The Fishing Boat

Nostradamus mentions the Papacy repeatedly. St. Peter, the first Pope, was a fisherman, so the Church he founded with a mandate from Christ is called “The Fishing Boat” by Nostradamus. On seven occasions Nostradamus’ quatrains refer to the Church as “the boat” but only once as “the fishing boat.” His *Centuries* presents this phrase almost from the outset, in Century One quatrain 4:

There will be made one Monarch of the Universe,
Who will neither be at peace nor alive for long:
Then will be lost the fishing boat,
Which will be ruled in greater detriment.

(Par l’univers sera fait un Monarque, Qu’en paix et vie ne sera longuement:
Lors se perdra la piscature barque, Sera régie en plus grand détriment.)

All subsequent references to “the boat” in Nostradamus’ quatrains are assumed (*e.g.*, by Leoni, *op. cit.*) to be references to the Papacy, following the precedent set by this first reference. Notably, in Century Six quatrain 22, Nostradamus says, “The boat will then become schismatic...” (“La barque alors deviendra schismatique...”) Thus far, Nostradamus is saying nothing extraordinary about the Church, at least from an historical perspective. However, his phrase, “Monarch [or King] of the Universe” is used in almost every Jewish prayer. Even the most common Jewish blessings, before meals, for example, for any kind of food or drink, begin with the Hebrew words, “Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, King of the Universe...” (“Barukh Atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melekh ha Olam...”).