WHY ISRAEL MUST OVERCOME THE PALESTINIAN MENACE
“Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.”

Isaiah 41:21,22.

WRITTEN OVER 100 YEARS AGO
John Thomas considers the Moses-like prophet PAGE 3

DOCTRINE
The Origin & Remedy of Evil (Part 3). When we come to years, what are we ashamed of? PAGE 26

EDITORIAL
The Terrible Burden of Sin PAGE 8

PROPHETIC SYMBOLS
The Roman Beast: A Wolf in Sheep’s clothing! Identifying the remarkable features of the Roman system PAGE 5

HISTORY REVIEW
The Vatican & The Jewish Return: Opposition to Balfour and the concept of a Jewish State PAGE 10

PROPHECY FULFILLING
Israel’s New Friend: An Eastern Tarshish —India PAGE 19

News Analysis: Gaza Re-engaged PAGE 21

Milestones Update: Current affairs round-up PAGE 22

ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY
Shiloh Revisited. Where the tabernacle once stood PAGE 14

Napoleon & The Restoration of the Jews (Part 2) PAGE 28

BIBLE MAGAZINE NOTICE BOARD
Prophecy Days & other items PAGE 31

BACK PAGE FEATURE
What we can learn from a bird-brain & the Bible

Quotables: from various writers PAGE 13

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”
John 17:17.

THE VATICAN & THE JEWISH RETURN

Why a continuing Palestinian terror campaign cannot succeed against Israel

Did Napoleon want a Jewish State?

MILESTONES UPDATE keeps an eye on events as they relate to Bible prophecy.
A Moses-like prophet was expected for sixteen centuries and a half. During all that long period, though many prophets appeared in Israel, not one of them was accepted as the one like unto Moses. None of them claimed to be like him, not even Elijah. Yet why should he not, if a great miracle working prophet were the sum of the similitude to Moses? At length Jesus came, “a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people;” and some of them said, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph;” while others said, “This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world;” and as the result of their conviction mediated the taking of him by force and making him a king (John 6:14, 15). This shows what sort of a Moses-like prophet the people expected, to wit, a prophet-king; hence Nathanael, when he saw the man announced by Philip as the prophet foretold by Moses, recognized him as Son of God, and Israel’s king.

Zacharias, the father of John, thus defines the mission of the prophet-king: “Jehovah hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been from the beginning of the age: that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant—the oath which he sware to our fathers in the holy covenant, and to perform the good thing promised to our fathers, the subjects of a salvation which is no similitude between him and Moses as a prophet; hence Nathanael, when he saw the man announced by Philip as the prophet foretold by Moses, recognized him as Son of God, and Israel’s king.

These are the ideas imparted to Zacharias by the Holy Spirit with which he was filled. They define the work to be accomplished by the Moses-like prophet, who is styled “a Horn of Salvation for Israel.” This is just the sort of prophet Moses was. He was a Horn or power through whom Jehovah saved the tribes from Egypt. Moses was raised up in the house of Levi, but the Horn or power like unto Moses was raised up in the house of David. His mission was as stated. It was Mosaic: first, to deliver Israel from their oppressors; and secondly, to perform the good thing promised to their fathers in the holy covenant, and confirmed by an oath to Abraham. The work which Moses performed was but the earnest of that to be executed by the Moses-like prophet. Moses delivered Israel, but the deliverance was not the everlasting salvation of the nation. They fell under the power of their adversaries again, and their condition has become worse than Egyptian. In the days of Jesus ten-twelfths of the nation were outcasts among the nations beyond Parthia; and the other two, though still occupants of the land, were oppressed by the Roman power. The Holy Spirit in Zacharias taught them to expect that the child about to be born would complete the work that Moses had begun in saving the Twelve Tribes with an everlasting deliverance, so that they “might serve Jehovah without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their life.”

A Restorer

The mercy promised to Israel’s fathers is the execution of judgment and righteousness in the land of Israel by the Branch of righteousness which was to grow up to David.

Israel Not yet Saved!

When this goodly child attained to manhood did he save Israel from all, or even any of those that hated them? Did he not on the contrary strengthen those very enemies, and send them against them to slay them, to burn up their city, and scatter them abroad? O, but we hear some word-corrupting mystic of world-wide celebrity “piously” observing, that their real enemies that hated them were their sins and the devil, not sinners; and that when the Jews “confessed the Lord,” and “obtained a hope,” or “got religion,” or were “baptized for the redemption of sins,” they were “the saved;” and consequently “saved from their enemies and all that hated them,” in the spiritual sense of the words!

We pray for patience when we hear such stupid nonsense.

The spiritual sense of the words is the obvious sense, which is in strict accordance with the grammatical or literal. “The Lord added to the church daily,” not the saved, but “tous sozomenous,” the present participle passive, “the being saved” (Acts 2:47)—persons, the subjects of a salvation which begins with the remission of their past sins, and is perfected when, having been raised from the dead, they inherit for ever “the kingdom restored again to Israel” at their national reconciliation with Jehovah, and deliverance from their enemies, and the power of all that hate them. Hence Paul says, “we are saved by...”
the hope.” (Rom. 8:24) if we be not moved away from it (Col. 1:22, 23), but keep in memory what he preached (1 Cor. 15:1, 2).

But granting that salvation is complete at baptism, in some sense, the baptized of Israel were certainly not saved from all that hated them, which is the salvation under Jesus the words of Zacharias call for. The opposite is true; for those that hated them prevailed against the saved, delivering them over to torture and death, as they have prevailed against them to this day, and will prevail against them till the Ancient of Days come, and the saints possess the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom for ever under the whole heaven (Dan. 7:18, 21, 22, 27), not above it.

Seeing, then, that Israel is not saved, but continue “a people scattered and peeled—a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land invading armies have spoiled;” that there is no king in Israel executing judgment and righteousness in their land; and that the holy covenant sworn to Abraham has only been dedicated with the precious blood of his Seed, and beyond this no more performed than in the days of Moses; the conclusion is inevitable, that the Lord Jesus has not yet accomplished his mission, and that he has not yet appeared as a prophet like unto Moses.

Occasions of Stumbling

Now because this conclusion is true, and cannot be refuted, the Jews of our time refuse to confess Jesus as their ruler and judge; “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:1,2). Gentile theologians rightly affirm, that He is the prophet of whom Moses wrote; but they do not affirm the truth in maintaining that in his appearing he resembled, or was “like unto” him. So long as they occupy this ground the conversion of Jews by them to any respectable extent is impossible. “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of the prophecy”—the testimony of the prophecy is the spirit which testifies of Jesus (Rev. 19:10; John 15:26; 16:13, 14; 6:63; 1 John 2:27). This spirit-testimony defines the mission of Christ which the apostolic history plainly demonstrates was performed by Jesus to a very limited extent; and they who affirm it was fully accomplished, aver what they cannot prove; and convict themselves of profound ignorance of the spirit-word, and exclude themselves also from that worthy company styled “the brethren of John having the testimony of Jesus.” Instead of giving “death-blows to Jewish infidelity,” they are stumbling-blocks in the way of Jewish acceptance of Jesus as the prophet like unto Moses, whom Jehovah promised to raise up in the midst of Israel.

“Admitting,” say the Jews, “that all affirmed of Jesus in the New Testament narratives be true, proving him to be a true man and no impostor, still he is manifestly from that account not the Messiah promised in Moses and the prophets, if, as Gentile philosophers teach, he is to appear no more upon earth, and to do no more for the Twelve Tribes of Israel, as such, than feeding a few thousands at two meals, and

healing the diseases of a few sick Jews, as reported of him.”

This is an impregnable position, well fortified by the testimony of God. The New Testament history proves Jesus to have been Son of God, a great prophet, mighty in deed, Son of David raised from the dead and translated from the earth; but, deny that he is to appear in Palestine again and to reign there in the midst of the Twelve Tribes of Israel on David’s throne, wearing the crowns of all earth’s kingdoms—deny this, and prove that he is to remain for ever where he is, and you deny that Jesus is the Christ, the prophet like unto Moses, concerning whom Jehovah hath testified in his word since the foundation of the world was laid.

Affliction Necessary

On the other hand, that our Jewish friends may not boast themselves against Jesus, however justly they can exult over his preferred friends, which we admit they have ample grounds to do, we remark that if any prophet should appear among them, and establish them in Palestine, and make them a great nation, rebuilding the temple and restoring the law, and reigning over them in Jerusalem; yet he would not be the person of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, if he had not previously been the subject of all the New Testament narratives concerning Jesus. He might be Moses, or Elijah; but the Messiah of whom Moses wrote, impossible. Such a king could not maintain them in everlasting possession of their land; he could not give them rain from heaven and fertility of soil; he could not blot out their transgressions as a thick cloud; neither could he bestow upon any of them eternal life, etc.; in brief, he could not perform the oath sworn to Abraham by God, that “they might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of their life”—as a nation to die no more by the hand of hating Gentile tyrants; and as individuals under their own vines and fig-trees, none daring to make them afraid. Jesus, the great power of God, alone can accomplish this. It is the great work for which he has been prepared—a preparedness to which he has attained through suffering into obedience and perfection.

Moses suffered affliction before he was exalted to the throne of Israel. He was an abscondant homicide keeping sheep in the desert—a fugitive from his people before he exchanged his crook for the sceptre of Jeshurun’s king. This is Jehovah’s rule—probation before exaltation. Israel’s Messiah cannot be exempt from this law—a principle working out its results to this day in the experience of all who with him are “the heirs of God.”

War on Falsehood

Gentile philosophy denies the reappearance of Jesus in Palestine to build again or restore the kingdom and throne of Israel. Against all this philosophy we proclaim implacable and unending war. It is the philosophy of rantized and baptized infidelity, miscalled “religion.” It blasphemes God, destroys the Messiahship of Jesus, nullifies the gospel, falsifies the prophets, stultifies the apostles, and makes men infidels; all of which we are prepared to prove at a moment’s notice. The cause of this universal corruption with all its fruits is ignorance of the sure prophetic word. Talk of philological theologians being great and wise who are ignorant of the prophets! Great and wise men, and yet ignorant of the foundation of the faith they pretend to preach! Ridiculous. Persevere a little longer, ye wise, in the deeds of your fathers; a few more brief years and your wisdom will become foolishness, and he that is coming will come and take you captive in your own craftiness. It will be ours to harass you as we best can as the “enemies of all righteousness, who cease not to pervert the right ways of the Lord.”

The Herald of the Kingdom 1853
As we watch the developments with the European Union, we see the Catholic Church increasing its status and influence. Not only was Pope John Paul II persistent that Christianity (by which he meant the Roman Catholic Church) be given a place within the European Constitution, the Church sought and received a unique status within the United Nations:

“The UN General Assembly, in a unanimous vote, has confirmed the status of the Holy See as a ‘permanent observer’ and expanded the rights of Vatican representatives to participate in UN debates. The UN resolution gives representatives of the Holy See the right to participate in debates of the General Assembly without seeking permission, the right to reply to other interventions and the right to circulate documents. The UN resolution confirms the status that the Vatican has now enjoyed for forty years as a ‘permanent observer,’ able to participate in UN debates but not cast votes at the General Assembly.”

As ‘permanent observer’ the characteristic of Daniel’s little horn with “the eyes of a man” is most appropriate — Daniel 7:8 (The newspaper of the Vatican is The Roman Observer). The UN resolution invests the little horn with “a mouth” which we may be sure will utter blasphemies against the purpose of God, and against the Jewish people. The subversive activities of the little horn to “make war against the saints and prevail against them until the Ancient of Days came” will continue. Though no longer a war of persecution and inquisition, it is nevertheless a war to retain its power. “Authority was given him over every people, tongue and nation” (Revelation 13:7). The UN decision confirms this authority and we may expect to see further pronouncements. We may not see, for some time at least, the intrigue as the “inhabitants of the (European) earth are made drunk with the wine of her illicit alliances” (Revelation 17:2).

How has the Church managed to attain such position and acceptance, despite her known crimes and intrigue? From the moment Emperor Constantine accorded imperial organization it had taken over and whose official language Latin, it still maintained in its services, records and literature. Both were international in character. Everyone recognized the Pope as everyone had worshipped the Emperor. The Church had its legal system and courts. Its missionaries and crusaders on the frontiers of Christendom were like the ancient legionaries on the Roman borders. Its monasteries were scattered over the face of the land as thickly as had been the administrative bureaucracy of the Empire and at the head and centre of it all, watching over the whole world, interfering in everything, exercising temporal as well as spiritual power, receiving reports and questions and appeals from all quarters and retaining to himself the settlement of all questions in the last resort, sat Innocent III, with an authority quite comparable with that of a Trajan or a Diocletian.

“The church built up its organization on the pattern of the Roman State. The great city centres forming the key points of the Roman administration became the seats of the

Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Holy See permanent Observer to the United Nations

favours to the Church, the Roman Bishops worked hard over the years to secure advancement by fair means and foul. This is well recognised by all historians, including historians of the Catholic Church.

“In many ways, indeed, the Church was comparable to the Roman Empire of old, whose territorial and administration

Emperor Justinian depicted at the centre of worldly and spiritual power—on the left we see the army (the temporal sword) and on the right, the power of the Church
patriarchs and archbishops to whom the bishops of their regions were subordinated. The Christian Romans showed themselves as much endowed with the Roman talent for administration as their pagan counterparts. The strict sense of the Romans for right and justice found its expression in the very early establishment of legal norms, out of which the canonical law evolved.

"Though Roman power collapsed in the west, the Christian Church lived on, providing some continuity of culture and even of administration during the centuries of violent change... Although coming from the East, Christianity took possession with remarkable assurance of all those elements in the ancient world which were essentially European. For in the end it is not enough to say that Europe evolved out of a compound of classical civilisation and Christianity. Europe emerged because Christianity absorbed into itself and kept alive all those elements in classical antiquity that were European in their essence. The idea of Europe existed before Europe itself. Christianity realised this idea. Rome and Byzantium were the two halves of the stage on which this world drama was enacted."

That is the key to preserving the Roman character of Europe. Despite Europe being divided in its latter phase (subsequent to the Holy Roman Empire) "partly of potter's clay and partly of iron... so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile" (Daniel 2), the iron strength of Rome is the dominant factor. When we examine the traditions and practices of the Roman Church, we are amazed at how successfully the Church has plagiarized the customs of Rome, so that they are accepted as the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Roman roots of these same customs are only remembered by historians.

We will look at a little known link in one particular item of clothing.

The Pseudo-Lamb

The Pope wears a pallium, which is a circular band about two inches wide, worn about the neck, breast, and shoulders, and having two pendants, one hanging down in front and one behind. The pallium is made of white wool, part of which is supplied by two lambs presented annually as a tax by the Lateran Canons Regular to the Chapter of St. John on the feast of St. Agnes, solemnly blessed on the high altar of that church after the pontifical Mass, and then offered to the Pope. Embroidered on the pallium are six small black crosses (Six is the basic number of the “man” in Revelation 13:18). The use of the pallium is principally reserved to the Pope, and generally worn only on special occasions, though archbishops may use it with the permission of the Holy See. In the sixth century (the earliest it began to be used) the pallium was considered a liturgical vestment to be used only in the church, and indeed only during Mass, unless a special privilege determined otherwise.

The pallium particularly symbolises the pastoral power of the Pope as supreme head of the Church. For this reason, Pope John Paul I received the pallium as the mark of his office, refusing to be crowned with the triple Papal crown. He even abandoned the titles—Vicar of Christ, Supreme Pontiff, Head of the Church—that theologians had identified as being unscriptural or even pagan. He believed that the church needed to return to its function as a "shepherd," and expressed the wish to see the Church divest itself of much of its regalia and wealth so that it could concentrate upon its shepherding role, which he saw more in...
The Order of the Golden Fleece.

Here is a remarkable link.

what about the other “horn,” the Emperor of conversion or death!

to bring all men under the aspirations of the pope, led his armies through Europe to bring all men under the yoke of the new Holy Roman Empire. It was conversion or death!

The Order of the Golden Fleece was a chivalric order comprising twenty-four noblemen, who swore to defend the Christian (which always means ‘Catholic’ in Europe) cause and be loyal to their sovereign. Noblemen were marked by wearing the insignia of the order—a collar of golden links from which was suspended the symbolic fleece. Emperor Maximilian had a predilection for chivalry and in 1478 awarded himself with leadership of the Order of the Golden Fleece. On the day that Maximilian was inaugurated as Grand Master of the order, he replaced his father-in-law who had fallen in battle, taking to himself the collar of the Order. From that day, a Habsburg would always be Grand Master. Emperor Maximilian was succeeded by his grandson Charles V, the Emperor who fought the spread of the Protestant cause. Charles’ aunt was Queen Katherine of England (wife of Henry VIII), and therein lies another story.

Thus the beast of the earth which had the appearance of a Lamb, had its two horns directly linked to the fleece as the covering of a sheep. The office of both Pope and Emperor were each linked to the lamb, or the sheep.

Religion Entwined with European History

In 1988 when Pope John Paul II was invited to address the European Parliament, an ardent Protestant (Dr Ian Paisley, Member of the EU representing Northern Ireland) decided to do a one man demonstration. As the Pope rose to speak, he unfurled a banner denouncing the Pope as “Antichrist.” Dr Otto von Habsburg strode across the Chamber and wrenched the banner from his grasp before the astonished onlookers.

The journalists were quick to see that this was a “medieval scene” being re-enacted. In fact both Paisley and Habsburg were responding to their deeply held beliefs—Paisley that the power of the pope must be protested against, because it runs counter to all Bible teaching, and Habsburg who was simply doing what he believed—that it is his role to protect the Church, and the Pope in particular. Paisley escaped the fate of his Protestant ancestors only because the general acceptance of freedom of religion is tacitly approved. But in the mind of Dr Habsburg and the Catholic Church, there is no room for any religion apart from the Mother Church. The Catholic Church has been able to advance her position more than ever in Europe and it was the Pope that did much to further it.

When Benedict XVI was voted in as a new Pope, a newspaper article had the following:

Pope appeals for Christian unity

“Benedict XVI has marked the formal beginning of his reign as Pope by appealing for Christian unity. In the sermon at his inauguration Mass in a packed St Peter’s Square, the Pope said: “Let us do all we can to pursue the path toward the unity.” He also sent greetings to the Jewish people who he said shared a joint spiritual heritage with Christians. He said his task was not to pursue his own ideas, but to listen to and be “guided by the will of God.” “Like a wave gathering force, my thoughts go out to all men and women of today, to believers and non-believers alike,” he said, addressing the crowd of 350,000 people gathered for the open-air service in front of St Peter’s Basilica. In the most significant moment of the two-hour Mass, the Pope was presented with the Papal ring and the pallium—a narrow stole of white wool.

Symbols of Power

The Pallium, embroidered with five red crosses representing the blood of Christ is made from lamb’s wool, signifying the role as shepherd, reserved for archbishops and popes. When worn by a Pope this is the symbol of pontifical power.
Elsewhere in this issue we have written about the shame that is brought about through disobedience to God’s Law. The first to experience it was Adam and his wife Eve; but many since then have had to bear the heavy burden brought about through sin. It is an embarrassment.

Some people will be more conscious of this than others. There are those who can be completely overwhelmed by the burden of sin as Cain was, saying (Genesis 4:13 K.J.V. margin) “Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven.” Judas Iscariot hung himself and Ahithophel committed suicide. Others seem to develop the capability of simply blocking out their guilt—they become blind to it. Perhaps Zedekiah was of this kind—and most apostates who abandon the Faith and pervert the Truth seem to be completely unaware of their offences before God. Others again, who are intensely aware of their sins (as David was) hope in God’s mercy. Such hope does not remove the burden however—David admitted this saying “My sin is ever before me” (Psalm 51:3). The apostle Paul also, even though he had the knowledge that he had obtained mercy, was never able to forget that he had persecuted the ecclesia of God (1 Cor. 15:9).

The things that we might have done cannot be erased. In other words, history cannot be changed—however much we may wish to do so. We have to live with the fact of it—and with the consequences. Those consequences can be very severe and long-lasting; they can be very painful as they were in David’s case. And sometimes they affect other people which makes the burden even heavier—and it may be said, rightly so! As we read in Lamentations 3:39, “Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?”

No Forgiveness?

Was Cain right? Was his iniquity greater than could be forgiven? Well, Cain not only brought an unacceptable sacrifice, but his heart became so hardened that he murdered his brother. It seems that an attitude of mind thus developed which saw no point of repentance because there was no belief that iniquity could be forgiven. We know that such a frame of mind does exist in some people—as, for example, in the man who laid up his one talent in a napkin, saying to his Lord: “I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow” (Luke 19:21). He saw the Lord as a hard man and severe. That, however, is a view that must be carefully considered.

The apostle John tells us that “There is a sin unto death” (1 John 5:16), but he does not tell us just what this unforgivable sin is. We may notice his reference to idolatry (verse 21) and wonder about that. There are many situations in the Bible that we find difficult to explain—it seems that God tolerated polygamy—multiple wives and at different times forgave the most serious of crimes, including murder. Yet it seems that none of these were unforgivable even though some of them were irreversible. In fact Jesus says “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men... whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come” (Matt. 12:31,32).

What about sinning wilfully (by choice—Hebrews 10:26,27)? Is there some connection between choosing the way of sin, and blaspheming against the Holy Spirit of the Truth? Common sense itself tells us that if anyone knowingly chooses the path of sin (as opposed to obedience), and so does despite to the spirit of grace, he can hardly expect to escape the obvious results. Falling because of weakness is one thing (and sometimes weakness affects choice), but deliberate and wilful sin is another matter.

The wilful sinner could not say with Paul “...the evil which I would not, that I do” (Romans 7:19). If the evil is done by choice, then it is not “what I hate” (verse 15).

Is it Lawful?

There can be uncertainty about this sometimes, especially for the novice and inexperienced. On some matters there are a variety of opinions—and opinions can change, even long after choices have been made. That is one problem with law; it is often open to interpretation, even by experts. Anyone who doubts this should consult the Jewish Talmud and the authoritative Rabbinical commentaries such as appears in the Chumash—not to mention the dabbling of Christian churches.

The apostle Paul says that, “the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (Romans 7:12), but he says, it was “weak through the flesh” (chapter 8:3). In other words, because “the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41) it cannot render perfect obedience to the Law, hence the Law has the effect of highlighting sin: “that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful” (Romans 7:13). The Law makes us conscious of sin (verse 7), and so has the effect of eliminating any trace of self-righteousness. Let us understand that in demanding a righteousness based upon the Law we, as human beings, automatically condemn ourselves (James 2:10-11).

This question—“Is it lawful?”—expresses a frame of mind that is itself boxed in by law, and which therefore stands guilty—so declares Paul in Romans chapter 3: “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth,
however will always want to see legal solutions—and so it is that the practice of lawyers is to “lade men with burdens grievous to be borne” (Luke 11:46).

When David had sinned in the matter of numbering Israel, he was offered different forms of punishment. Knowing the character of human nature his response was: “I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man” (1 Chron 21:13).

So for those who carry heavy burdens brought about by their own foolishness and sin, they can only throw themselves upon the mercy of God, in the knowledge that—“shall not the judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18:25). Whatever He might decree will be just. The important thing is not what might happen to the individual wrong doer, but that God is honoured. That His name be glorified and His righteousness declared.

“When forsake me not...”

No one should presume upon God’s mercy, but those who may be afflicted with the terrible burden of sin can look to others who may have suffered similarly in the past, and left their faith and hope on record—such as we find in many Psalms. There is reason to believe that the pleading of Psalm 38 was heard (O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath... Forsake me not, O LORD...”). If it was heard in the past, then it can be heard today. And why should it not be?

“Cast me not away from thy presence... Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation...” That is the petition of Psalm 51. Speaking of Jesus Christ as a high priest, Hebrews 7:25 says:

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he goeth into the horns of the altar; for he that sitteth at the right hand of the Majesty on high; shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption:...” (1 Corinthians 4:5). In the meantime there is much to be done by way of helping others along a difficult and up-hill road. The burdens that we make for ourselves can be very heavy, but we do not have to lose faith as some have done—we must plough in hope:

“Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy” (James 5:11).

Let all burden-bearers ask themselves a simple question: Will the LORD hear those who cry unto him in confession and anguish of soul? Cries such as that in Psalm 13?

“Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning. Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.”

On Bearing Burdens

Galatians 6:1-9 has the following:

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”
In the southern suburbs of Jerusalem beyond the walls of the Old City, there is an area called the German Quarter. It is not attractive in any significant sense. Its buildings are rather gray and somewhat drab. It earned its name from the fact that when German Jews returned to the Land in the early 20th century they tended to find residence in this district. Most of the Jews who returned to the land in the last thirty years of the 20th century were from more eastern countries of Europe; Russia, Poland, Rumania, the Ukraine etc where persecutions and pogroms for many years had bedeviled the life of Jewish communities. In their poverty and continual harassment they yearned for peace so that when the gates of the Holy Land opened to them they took the opportunity to migrate to the land of their fathers. Some of them were aware that their return to Palestine was in fulfillment of the words of the prophets (Ezekiel 38:8, 26:9-10, Heb 31:8, Isa 11:11).

The Jews of Germany were not nearly so interested in emigration; in fact the Jewish Community in the newly united country of Germany (1870-71) represented quite a phenomenon in the history of their people. Generally speaking they were wealthy, accomplished, cultured and influential, and whilst involved in their own peculiar society there were many who favoured assimilation and had thrown their resources and enthusiasm in the expansion and growth of their host country, Germany. They had the best of two worlds, Jewish and German, why would you swap this for the struggling life of Palestinian Jews?

Germany and Palestine
There is always tension between present ease and loyalty to faith. This tension grew in 1914 when the German Kaiser Wilhelm was embraced by the Sultan of Turkey. The Kaiser was no lover of the Jewish people, yet the new Jewish colonies in Palestine were part of the Turkish Empire. To further increase the drama, Britain had maintained a controlling influence in Egypt, on Turkey’s behalf, since 1882. With that went the management of the Suez Canal which was of great significance to the sprawling British Empire with its numerous Asian colonies. Suddenly Britain found herself alongside her European enemy. Turkey had espoused Germany and only the narrow waters of Suez separated them from Britain. That is why Britain came into Palestine, she had to hold both banks of the Suez Canal! Yet where does it stop? For the steps of British forces into Palestine brought increased resistance from the Turks—ably abetted by their German officers and the clash of arms continued until Britain stood master of Syria and Damascus! Palestine—the ancient Land of Israel was, miraculously, in the hands of the British Empire. The German Kaiser had thought to take an interest in the Holy Land and in fact had been given the red-carpet treatment when he visited in 1898, ten thousand Turkish troops being assigned for his safety and convenience as he travelled through this wasted Land. Alas, come December, 1918, the whole of the Levant was in British hands.

Britain and the Holy Land
This amazing turn of events was a great surprise to all but Bible students. It is not to be imagined that British aristocracy had a history of love for the Jews or any native volition to put themselves out for the emancipation of their land or their people. Yet the Bible had indicated that this is exactly what they would do. The following quotation from Dr John Thomas, in 1848, makes this clear:

PIUS X: “We Cannot be in favour of it.”

By Brian Luke South Australia.

Herzl meets the German Kaiser, but gets no support

“I know not whether the men who at present contrive the foreign policy of Britain, entertain the idea of assuming the sovereignty of the Holy Land and of promoting its colonization by Jews; their present intentions, however, are of no importance one way or the other, because
they will be compelled, by events soon to happen, to do what, under existing circumstances, heaven and earth combined could not move them to attempt. The present decisions of “statesmen” are destitute of stability. A shooting star in the political firmament is sufficient to disturb all the forces of their system; and to stultify all the theories of their political astronomy. The finger of God had indicated a course to be pursued by Britain which cannot be evaded, and which her counsellors will not only be willing, but eager, to adopt when the crisis comes upon them.”

John Thomas understood this only because the Bible’s prophets had foretold it. The Bible passages involved were Isaiah chapter 17, chapter 60 and Ezekiel 38 etc. So clearly was the future intention of Britain described! The British aristocracy were generally aloof from the non-Christian Jew; in 1848 they would hardly be seen having company with a Jew. But in 1917 in the peak of World War 1 pressures, the British Empire flung its full weight into the occupancy of Palestine effectively blocking German, French and Russian interest, who had all shown a desire to influence the outcome of Israel and the Middle East.

The Balfour Declaration
Yet the British went a step further, and it was a step of the greatest significance! On the last day of October in 1917 the British foreign minister, Lord James Balfour, submitted to the War Cabinet a proposal that Britain give her support to the establishment in Palestine of a Jewish home for the Jews. Against all odds the city was wrested from the Turks and the victory by Australian, New Zealand and British soldiers was so phenomenal that the Turkish forces never regained their ascendancy, right through to Damascus. Their German advising officers, too, shared the shame of this sweeping defeat.

The Mandate for Palestine
At the end of World War I the League of Nations met together to stabilise the world and sort out the ownership and governance of various lands. By far the most significant question was the controlling mandate for Palestine; to whom would it be given? Although the War finished in 1918 it was not until July 1922 that the Mandate for Palestine was handed to Britain—even though in the eyes of most nations Britain was the obvious choice. British forces had taken the Land, thousands of her sons had fallen in the great battles and she had the power and ability to handle such a prickly responsibility. Who else could afford to jeopardise their standing in the eyes of the Arab world just as oil was becoming more significant to the nations?

So why did it take four years before the Mandate was handed to Britain by the League of Nations?

The Vatican and Zionism
When the Jewish visionary, Theodore Herzl was seeking for support for a Jewish State he sought interviews with significant world leaders of influence on this issue. Anti-Semitism was flowering all over Europe and he had come to the conclusion that there would never be a peaceful arrangement for Jews until they had their own land. In 1904 he obtained a hearing with Pope Pius X and the following comments are his response to Herzl.

“We cannot encourage this movement. We cannot prevent the Jews from going to Jerusalem—but we could never sanction it. The Jews have not recognised our Lord, therefore we cannot recognise the Jewish people.”

“Jerusalem was not to get into the hands of the Jews”
**Herzl**—“We are not asking for Jerusalem but for Palestine.”

**Pope**—“We cannot be in favour of it.”

The papal Cardinal Secretary of State had to say to Herzl:

“The Church was prepared to offer the Jews protection, that is it would help them stay alive as sufferers, for they are indispensable to the Church as *witnesses of divine punishment*. But the Church could not agree that the Jews would again rule Palestine” (The Vatican and Zionism p100).

The opinion of Pope and Cardinal was consistent with what the Vatican had earlier stated. In the Jesuit journal *Civilta Cattolica*, 1897, the following statement was printed:

“According to the sacred Scriptures, the Jewish people must always be dispersed and wandering among the nations so that they may render *witness to Christ*, not only by the Scriptures—but by their very existence. As for a re-built Jerusalem, which could become the center of a reconstituted State of Israel, we must add that this is contrary to the predictions of Christ Himself” (p96).

When in 1916 Nahum Zokolous, an ardent Zionist obtained audience with Pope Benedictus the 15th and put to him the same propositions as Herzl in 1904, the Papal response was simply “Non possimus,” “Not possible!”

Now here is an amazing thing! Just 30 years before, the Pope had declared himself infallible and yet we can see today how wrong the Pope was in respect to the Jewish nation and Jerusalem. The Jews have returned—five million of them! They have restored their nation, Jerusalem is their capital and their witness among the nations is not of their grovelling inferiority but of their amazing preservation, persistence, prowess and prosperity. And all this is a witness provided by God in the prophets that the return of Christ as their Saviour and King is near at hand. Many Bible Students openly proclaimed for centuries that a return of the Jews to their land would be the key evidence that the judgements of God and His kingdom were near at hand.

Who has been shown correct? The vibrant nation in the Land of their fathers is the most profound rebuke upon the doctrine of the Catholic Church. In the wonder and excitement of Israel’s return and rebirth, they showed nothing but enmity and ignorance. The Bible speaks of “the Hope of Israel” (Acts 28:20), of the “restoral of the kingdom to Israel” (Acts 1:16), of “the regeneration when the apostles will sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt 19:28). “Hath God cast away his people?” asks the apostle Paul, and answers with a resounding “God forbid! going on to state “And all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, ‘There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob’” (Romans 11:26).

In the Papal theology the Jew is alive just to witness that God is true for He said that they would be punished, and when they are then that shows that God was right! The Pope sees no future hope for the nation of the Jews and does not believe that they should ever have Jerusalem as their capital city. Even today, sixty years after the historic horror of the Holocaust, the Papal position remains the same! Pope John Paul II had fourteen audiences with the fanatical Arafat, arch anti-Semite, before he had any with a Jewish prime minister. He refused diplomatic relations with Israel and finally placed his consul in Tel Aviv rather than Jerusalem. The whole wonder of what God is doing with Israel has been lost to his eyes. He has no gospel of the Kingdom of God and never speaks of the imminent return of Christ, the King of the Jews.

**Papal Anti-semitism—Legacy of Constantine**

This teaching of no hope or a future of glory for the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob goes back 1600 years to the era of Emperor Constantine. He was the Emperor who rewarded those Christians who joined his legions and used the sword to conquer the pagan Roman Empire and replace it with his own united Christian empire. Christianity foolishly grasped Constantine’s rising empire and lost the hope of the kingdom of Christ with his throne in Zion. This had been the ruling sentiment of the Christians, and the concept was shared with the Jews. Constantine’s totalitarian ‘Christian’ Empire could not allow for the Jewish hope and so in AD315 the Jews were prohibited from preaching their religion. Leading church Bishops promoted violence against the Jews and many laws were passed which discriminated against them. Bishop Ambrose called them “swine” and “mad dogs.” In the early 5th century the famous Augustine Jewish home in Palestine. The Pope was devoid of statehood at this time (since 1870) and was unable to attend the League of Nations and other international conferences on the future of Palestine. But his emissaries and agents were extremely active. He sought to work through France, Spain, Belgium and even South American countries. Catholic papers and Catholic political parties were everywhere active in Europe to prevent a British mandate. Evil and sinister documents were produced and distributed in many countries. 1920 saw a vast rise in anti-Semitism. The long discredited document, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* were mass produced in England and America and every stop was pulled out to scare the governments of the world with the horror of a Jewish nation in their ancient home!

Christian churches of all kinds were aroused by the Papacy to link with the Arab Muslims and stir them against a Zionist homeland. Even the House of Lords in London...
was destabilised by all the anti-Semitic hysteria being sent through the corridors of power: If it had not been for Winston Churchill’s paper to the Commons, the opinion of the United Kingdom may have been reversed!

All this evil furor placed terrible pressure upon the pent-up hopes of world Jewry. Their leader Chaim Weizmann saw through the whole campaign in these words, “the Vatican was the leader of all the dark forces which it was trying to organise into an anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist campaign assuming the dimensions of the Dreyfus case” (‘Vatican and Zionism’ p.184).

So the Papacy set itself against the words of the prophets! The set time to favour Zion was upon them and they knew it not. Every priest, bishop and cardinal of the church was instructed to do whatever they could against the establishment of a homeland for the Jews and to instruct their congregations the same way. They even threatened a “Catholic International” to militate against the Zionist theme. “To this end a Catholic International may be established, which would unite all Catholics in the world in the defence of the Holy Places and against Bolshevik Judaism in Palestine”! (E’Osservatore Romano, June 1922).

Without any reference to the great number of Bible references to the establishment of the people of Israel in their own home, the Pope was employing every provocative argument he could find to prevent the hand of God in the return of His people. Any wonder that it was in these very years that a young fanatic called Adolf Hitler was writing in a Munich jail of his conviction that the Jew needed to be eradicated from society. He would later be confirmed by a European populace who sprang readily to implement his theory in practice.

**Lesson for us All**

On 22nd July 1922, despite all the fanatical opposition, the Mandate went to Britain who openly affirmed its determination to implement the terms of the Balfour Declaration. During the 30 years of British control, the Jewish population in Palestine multiplied ten times, from about 60,000 at the end of World War I to 650,000 on 14th May 1948.

The Catholics opposed the Mandate, so too the Lutherans of Germany, the Arab Muslim world and even the British House of Lords!—but it went through the League of Nations at San Remo successfully.

Why?

Because the God of Israel had determined that the time had come for the re-establishment of Israel in their land, according to His promise. Jerusalem was to be “trodde[n] down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24).

It is time to prepare ourselves for the return of “the King of the Jews”!

---

**QUOTABLES**

“No one has any right to set up his own ignorance as the limit of what God hath revealed.”

**JOHN THOMAS**, *Elpis Israel*, written in 1849

“Britain herself, with all her national sensitiveness and pride, will have to submit to them (the Jews).”

**Robert Roberts**, in *Christendom Astray. Lecture XIV on The Hope of Israel and the Restoration of the Jews.* Robert Roberts died in 1898

“The essence of the Hope of Israel is selection; God’s selection. And men hate the idea of selection...”

**Graham Pearce**, in a little booklet entitled “Simplicity towards Christ” published in 1961

“God has control of all chance; but all chance is not controlled. It is controlled when His purpose requires it.”


“Protestants were the people of the Book; but they have now denied the authority of the Book.”

**John Carter**, in “The Oracles of God” published in 1944 by The Christadelphian Office

“That Rome and Russia will come to some form of agreement is implied in the prophecy of Daniel 2 in that the image stands up as a united whole.”

**H.P. Mansfield**, in the “Logos” magazine February 1967 in answer to an enquiry

---

**ANTI-SEMITISM EXPORTED AROUND THE WORLD, AND BY THE WORLD**

A recent article made a valid point when it said: “When civilized nations fail to rise up against the Jew-haters in their midst, it is often just a matter of time before the Jew-haters in their midst rise up against them.” This was seen all over Europe during the Hitler period and its aftermath. Today a new form of anti-Semitism has appeared, called anti-Zionism, and it is not only seen in the Arab world but also in (again) Europe. Now it has surfaced in the United Nations, involving all nations (Zech 14).
There is something very special about visiting a genuine Biblical site, where you can, as it were, walk in the steps of Joshua, of Elkanah and Hannah—where you can see in your mind’s eye the procession of pilgrims who would come to worship before Yahweh. It is also sobering to consider the desolation that is evident now—and why it came to be. Here in Shiloh, faithful characters were formed—and unfaithful ones. And so it is today with us.

Tel Shiloh, the place where the tabernacle stood (Joshua 18:1), is a haunting place. It has been identified since the 1920’s, and more recent excavations have been carried out by Yisrael Finkelstein in 1980. Coins, storage jars and other artifacts were found. The most recent dig was carried out in 1998. Stone plaques (shown here) identify sites for the visitor.
WHERE DID THE TABERNACLE STAND?

There has been some difference of opinion as to exactly where the tabernacle was pitched, but most now believe that it must have been on the “Tabernacle Plateau” shown in the picture above. “There is no other level space sufficiently large to receive a tent of the dimensions of the Tabernacle” wrote Wilson.

In 1981-1982 ceramics and other figures were dug out from the bedrock. Later, a preserved mosaic floor was found. The poster of the tabernacle (shown right) is on display at the centre today.

“But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.”

Jeremiah 7:12

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”

Genesis 49:10
nyone who understands the Gospel of the Kingdom (outlined in both Old and New Testaments) will appreciate the Truth that the true Messiah will at some point in time “restore again the kingdom to Israel” (Acts 1:6). Jesus of Nazareth said that this would also be the work of Elijah the prophet, who “truly shall first come, and restore all things” (Matthew 17:11).

Now there are some consequences that arise from this which must directly effect the current Israeli-Palestinian tangle of circumstances.

Israel’s Return

For over a century, Jews have been migrating to the ancient homeland of their forefathers in fulfillment of the well-known predictions of the Bible. The political developments which led to the formation of the modern State of Israel were not mere accidents of history. There is an unseen hand at work behind the scenes as it were—an underlying purpose being worked out; and that purpose will not fail. That is why, against all odds, Israel has survived all the attempts that have been made to drive her into the sea. This nation has withstood many attacks—both politically as well as militarily. She has suffered many set-backs, has seen her people slain, hi-jacked and kidnapped—but she still lives; and she will continue to live until the purpose of God is fulfilled in her, and her kingdom restored.

Here then, is the first reason why the Palestinian objective cannot be realized. According to this Gospel, Israel, the Jewish nation—the “house of Jacob”—must not only be revived physically and spiritually, but the throne of David is to be re-established and given to him “whose right it is” (Ezekiel 21:25-27); that is to the Messiah. This cannot be prevented, not by Palestinians, not by Arabs, Iranians, Europeans, Moslems or the combined forces of Christendom.

Preparing a People

Another reason why the Palestinians cannot gain the upper hand on any permanent basis, is because God has said of Israel through His prophet (Ezekiel 34:13, 14):

“And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.”

So God has brought the children of Israel out from among the nations, and to their own land (including “the mountains of Israel”) because He intends to “feed” them there. It is not that God has simply brought the Jewish people to these mountains of Israel so that they may be scattered yet again—He intends to do something with them. As He says through the prophet Jeremiah:

“Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding” (Chapter 3:14-15).

It is difficult to see this spiritual education of the Jewish people proceeding effectively upon the mountains of Israel if a Palestinian state exists there! There is another circumstance that also suggests that there will not be a Palestinian state upon the mountains of Israel (the West Bank), and that is the fact that Ezekiel fails to notice one in his 38th chapter, which does describe a situation there “in the latter days” (verses 8 and 16). In fact, Ezekiel says that the people that are gathered there will “dwell safely.” The wording of verse 11 is very specific:

“...the land of unwalled villages...”

This is a very different picture to what

Hamas Poster reads:

“ISRAEL WILL NO LONGER EXIST”

...But that objective cannot be realized. It is incompatible with the Good News, or Gospel of the Kingdom.
and gold to the cattle and goods. We cannot just pass over this information. Gog comes “to take a great spoil”—so there must be considerable wealth accumulated in Israel at the time. It is therefore reasonable to expect that the great latter-day trading nations—the United States, Britain, various Commonwealth countries including India, will develop close trading links with Israel, and that these connections will produce the thriving and successful nation that is described by Ezekiel.

It is human that we want to see everything come together instantaneously—we tend to await the dramatic “break-through,” wanting to see the sensational headline in the newspaper. Well there are some spectacular happenings from time to time, but it is when we see these as part of a much bigger picture that the work of God is better understood. We must stand back as it were, and try to view the flow of events that are slowly developing the situation described in the Bible. We must not expect it to happen all at once, even though there will be clear milestones along the way from time to time. It is the gradual development of God’s purposes that we must try to make ourselves aware of—and it is when we are conscious of this that it can impact upon our daily lives, developing within us a spirit of obedience so that we might be prepared for the moment of truth when the Lord gathers together those who know and believe the true Gospel. There are many different aspects of Bible prophecy that can be viewed in this way—but here we are focussing upon the Palestinian question, which must itself be seen against the broader issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Middle East Reality

The Arab-Israeli conflict had actually commenced before there was a Jewish State—it erupted during the days of the British Mandate. The Weizmann-Faisal agreement signed in London in 1919 spoke of “the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish people” and went on to promise “the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and Palestine.” It all sounded rather wonderful, but as Brian Luke has shown in the article on page 10, there were those forces at work which were quite determined to quash the idea of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine. We can leave the details for another time, but let us note the fact that the whole concept was an anathema to some—it was not in everyone’s interest that “the closest possible collaboration” between Jew and Arab should be realized. And so it was that the year 1920 saw a rising tide of anti-Semitism, and it also brought the first violent attack by Arabs upon Jews in Palestine. Seven Jews were killed.

The first objective of the Arabs at that time was to prevent the implementation of the Balfour Declaration—but the point is that their purpose failed. The long anticipated fulfillment of Bible prophecy was realized and the national home became a reality in the Middle East.

That reality was then given political

A Developing Situation

The situation that we describe may be rather different to what some have thought—but we cannot dismiss the plain testimony of Scripture just because we have not considered it before. Ezekiel’s prophecy is very clear on the matter—there is to be a “dwelling safely” in the land and upon the mountains of Israel before the invasion of Gog. How will this come about? Further, it is to be a time of remarkable prosperity, when the people that have been gathered out of the nations will have “gotten cattle and goods.” The context here (Ezekiel 38:12-13) suggests that this involves the merchant or trading nations—“Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof.” Verse 13 adds silver

we see at present, with a Hamas terrorist leadership in control and Jewish settlers being abducted, shot at and expelled from their homes. Today it is a land of walls, bars, gates, check-points, unrest and lack of security. We can be sure that Ezekiel has not made a mistake however—If there are any Palestinians upon the mountains of Israel at the time he speaks of, they must have become very docile and tranquil. It suggests that by one means or another Israel will have overcame the Palestinian menace and none will make them afraid (Ezek. 39:26). In fact, a situation will have come into existence which will be conducive to the spiritual education or “feeding” that is to take place “upon the high mountains of Israel,” (Ezek. 34:14).

We must understand that Ezekiel 38 will not be fulfilled until after this pre-Armageddon phase of stability and preparation has been achieved, and teaching will have been proceeding—with some developing a measure of faith, whilst others continue to trespass as we read in Ezekiel 39:26.

The Middle East Reality

The Arab-Israeli conflict had actually commenced before there was a Jewish State—it erupted during the days of the British Mandate. The Weizmann-Faisal agreement signed in London in 1919 spoke of “the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish people” and went on to promise “the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and Palestine.” It all sounded rather wonderful, but as Brian Luke has shown in the article on page 10, there were those forces at work which were quite determined to quash the idea of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine. We can leave the details for another time, but let us note the fact that the whole concept was an anathema to some—it was not in everyone’s interest that “the closest possible collaboration” between Jew and Arab should be realized. And so it was that the year 1920 saw a rising tide of anti-Semitism, and it also brought the first violent attack by Arabs upon Jews in Palestine. Seven Jews were killed.

The first objective of the Arabs at that time was to prevent the implementation of the Balfour Declaration—but the point is that their purpose failed. The long anticipated fulfillment of Bible prophecy was realized and the national home became a reality in the Middle East.

That reality was then given political

A Developing Situation

The situation that we describe may be rather different to what some have thought—but we cannot dismiss the plain testimony of Scripture just because we have not considered it before. Ezekiel’s prophecy is very clear on the matter—there is to be a “dwelling safely” in the land and upon the mountains of Israel before the invasion of Gog. How will this come about? Further, it is to be a time of remarkable prosperity, when the people that have been gathered out of the nations will have “gotten cattle and goods.” The context here (Ezekiel 38:12-13) suggests that this involves the merchant or trading nations—“Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof.” Verse 13 adds silver
substance with Ben Gurion’s declaration of the State of Israel in May 1948. Again, many political and ecclesiastical forces were opposed to it, as was seen in the 1947 U.N. vote on partition. But it happened. Many saw it as a miracle—especially when the combined Arab forces tried to strangle it at birth. The War of Independence, as it is called, saw the invading Arabs defeated in an incredibly close struggle, but Israel survived and the nation was established—and the word of God was vindicated. By 1956 Israel was an established military power in the Middle East.

During the 1960’s as events moved towards an Arab-Israeli war, there were those who thought they saw in prophecy an Arab victory over Israel. That of course was the “Arab walk-over of Israel” scenario that never happened. It was the result of commentators being blind to the long-range picture, while focussing their attention too heavily upon the immediate and apparent circumstances of the day. Israel’s remarkable victory over the forces of the entire Arab world when they moved against Israel in 1967 was a shock from which many of them never recovered.

The exception was Egypt who, joined by Syria, launched another war in 1973. Despite initial losses, the war ended with Israel’s victorious forces occupying a superior and dominant position. It was following that defeat that Egypt decided to break ranks with other Arab countries and sign a peace treaty with Israel—and although it has been a very cold peace, there has never been another serious military threat made by Egypt. The Middle East reality had to be recognized, and Israel was part of that reality.

Jordan, after much hesitation, signed a peace agreement with Israel in 1994. Syria has never taken that path, but is not strong enough to act against Israel alone. Iraq has been eliminated as a potential aggressor as a result of the U.S. led invasion and the fall of Saddam Hussein. So the Middle East reality is that the Arab nations have been virtually neutralized as a military danger to the existence of the Jewish State.

Iran is not an “Arab” country of course, and for all its hostile noises, it is unlikely to launch a strike against Israel without being challenged by the U.S. Iran will play its part when the time comes—but she is not going to do that on her own. It is far too dangerous.

So while hostile sentiments towards Israel are certainly harboured in the Arab world, there is little or no scope for their expression in a military sense. The only way that violence can be continued against Israel today is via the Palestinian terrorist, or one of the other terror organisations. It is the only card left. This is where 60 years or more of the Arab-Israeli Conflict has arrived. The Arab cause is like a ship struck on the rocks; it has run aground and has no means to refloat.

Israel however has become firmly established as a reality in the Middle East. It has to be seen that this is the point at which the purpose of God has arrived.

Where it is Leading?

The circumstances that we have seen developing over many years are moving in a particular direction. The last obstacle to the “peaceful” situation seen by Ezekiel is the Palestinian issue. This problem must be solved—and when it is solved, we shall see something like the time described in 2 Chronicles 20:29-30.

“And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel. So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.”

The Arabs will have been brought into submission. As we have seen, there will be a time of rest (Ezek. 38:11), one that may be likened to the pastoral scene described in Ezekiel 34:13-15, and also in Jeremiah 23:3-4. But what we have to realize is that when this is achieved, the LORD (Jesus) will be in the earth preparing his people as the nucleus of the kingdom that is to be restored to Israel (Acts 3:20, 21; Psalm 102:16).

These are the circumstances that must now be formed—a stable situation during which many in the Land will be fed with knowledge and with understanding. But before that teaching commences Christ (the Messiah) will come and gather together his saints. It is not intended to suggest by this that we can identify
every step in the Divine programme—we cannot do that of course. But as we look at what is required by the prophetic Scripture, and as we note the trend in which events are leading, we can only conclude that the scene is set for Israel to solve the Palestinian issue so that a period of tranquility may come into being. As to how it might be solved, we must simply watch events. But looking past that, and on to the next stage of development in Israel, there are signs that the ground is being prepared for the spiritual education — the “feeding” — to commence very shortly.

In a tape-recorded address given in July 1967 this preparation for instruction was seen as a necessary preliminary to the coming of the King. Basing his remarks on a consideration of several prophecies, the late Graham Pearce said that there must be a preparation of those in the Land:

“They will need to have been brought along the road of increasing faith for quite a time, from the present position that they are in. I am speaking now only of those who are in the Land, therefore before Armageddon...

According to Time magazine (July 3, 06), India, the world’s biggest democracy is to be the next great economic superpower. That should not be surprising to those of us who have an eye on Bible prophecy; it has been expected for a long time.

So too has India’s trade relations with Israel. Over 150 years ago India was identified as the eastern Tarshish of the Scriptures—the place where King Solomon obtained some of his exotic symbols of wealth. In 2 Chronicles 9:21 it is written:

“For the king’s ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Huram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.”

So it was with this identification in mind that the writer John Thomas, in 1849, wrote of Israel’s trading relationships in the latter days. In the book Elpis Israel he wrote of the then future Jewish return to the Land:

“They will emigrate thither as agriculturists and traders, in the hope of ultimately establishing their commonwealth, but more immediately of getting rich in silver and gold by commerce with India, and in cattle and goods...”

Another eastern friendship that is developing is that with Pakistan (a neighbour of India). It is interesting to watch relationships forming — for Pakistan has interests in Great Britain (a western Tarshish). It is quite amazing that while Britain herself seems to be so enchanted with her European connections, imagining that to be the direction from which her future wealth will develop, there is another corner of the world that she would be far more familiar and comfortable with. And do we not see the seeds of future alliances already implanted in many English-speaking countries where so many Pakistanis and Indians have settled?

The Scriptures have told us in advance about these things, and especially where it is that Israel will find her friends and trading partners.

Israel’s New Friend
AN EASTERN TARSHISH

According to Time magazine (July 3, 06), India, the world’s biggest democracy is to be the next great economic superpower. That should not be surprising to those of us who have an eye on Bible prophecy; it has been expected for a long time.

So too has India’s trade relations with Israel. Over 150 years ago India was identified as the eastern Tarshish of the Scriptures—the place where King Solomon obtained some of his exotic symbols of wealth. In 2 Chronicles 9:21 it is written:

“For the king’s ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Huram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.”

So it was with this identification in mind that the writer John Thomas, in 1849, wrote of Israel’s trading relationships in the latter days. In the book Elpis Israel he wrote of the then future Jewish return to the Land:

“They will emigrate thither as agriculturists and traders, in the hope of ultimately establishing their commonwealth, but more immediately of getting rich in silver and gold by commerce with India, and in cattle and goods...”

Another eastern friendship that is developing is that with Pakistan (a neighbour of India). It is interesting to watch relationships forming — for Pakistan has interests in Great Britain (a western Tarshish). It is quite amazing that while Britain herself seems to be so enchanted with her European connections, imagining that to be the direction from which her future wealth will develop, there is another corner of the world that she would be far more familiar and comfortable with. And do we not see the seeds of future alliances already implanted in many English-speaking countries where so many Pakistanis and Indians have settled?

The Scriptures have told us in advance about these things, and especially where it is that Israel will find her friends and trading partners.

Warming up for full Diplomatic relations?
Pakistani Foreign Minister Khursheed Kasuri (left) shakes hands with Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom at a meeting in Turkey.
there will be a developing of Israel’s faith, and a degree of obedience—not completely so—in the things of God. Just to direct your attention to Ezekiel 36 which deals with the softening of Israel’s heart, (it) comes before (chapter) 38—as though that is something going on under the work of the good shepherds already…”

Those words were spoken almost 40 years ago! And today we are seeing signs of it happening on the mountains of Israel. Several past issues of The Bible Magazine have drawn attention to this, as have recent prophecy days and talks in Australia and New Zealand where we spoke of “Israel’s New Zionists.” Recent visits to Israel, and especially to Judea and Samaria (the West Bank), have equipped us with some awareness of the situation there—a situation that is not reported in the main-stream media, or if it is mentioned it is heavily prejudiced against the Bible (Old Testament) culture that is now emerging there. The picture of Israel that many have, is that of an atheistic, humanistic and unbelieving society that has no interest in the things of God. That certainly has been the case, but today things are changing—and especially among the rising generation. In a section of the population there is something akin to a reformation taking place, and that has great meaning for us—it tells us where we are in the Divine programme.

Seeking the Lord

In Hosea chapter 3 there is a prophecy about Israel’s long period of captivity and isolation:

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim:” (Verse 4).

That has been the situation for some 2,000 years. But the next verse goes on to say:

“Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God; and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days” (Verse 5).

Here are three distinct steps: first the return, secondly a seeking phase, and thirdly they “shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.” The seeking phase is what we are beginning to witness now. There are prayer rallies, sometimes attended by thousands. There is a belief in the Tanakh (Old Testament) and a genuine attempt on the part of some individuals to try and understand its meaning, quite independently. Some prominent beliefs found among these Jewish people include a recognition of many prophecies relating to the Return. There are groups who would like to see the Torah (Law of Moses) as the basis of Israeli law and action—Manhigut Yehudit for example. Many—especially young people—look for the coming of Moshiach ben David, for the building of the third temple “with the throne of David in the midst.” There is an expectation that Eliyahu (Elijah) will come prior to Messiah himself. Ideas are often hazy, but we can clearly see the picture that is forming. It is a picture into which the idea of a Palestinian State just does not fit. So there has to be a solution to it. Israel must somehow overcome the Palestinian menace—and all the signs are that it must happen soon.

This does not mean that the deep hostility of the Arab world—and of the world at large—will be eliminated. By no means. That will continue and will increase as events move to the Armageddon show-down and to the settling of the “controversy of Zion.” What we might expect is a circumstance in which the nations have no choice but to tolerate and accept for the time being the developing Zionist State together with its new religious inclinations. Strategic considerations, trade and other international circumstances could mean that there will be no alternative. While Gog and company are turned back (Ezekiel 38:4), we can anticipate that religious Zionism in the Land will flourish. It is this development of true Zionism that will antagonize the world—and especially the Catholic world. As this happens the youth of Israel will go forth singing:

“This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory?...”

Who is he indeed?

“Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke...?” (Song 3:6).

“Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?...” (Song 8:5).

“Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel...?” (Isa. 63:1).

“Who is this that forgiveth sins also?” (Luke 7:49).

“Who is this Son of man?” (John 12:34).

When these questions are asked in the near future the Palestinian question will be history. Hamas will be about as relevant as Hitler, and the great King of glory shall come in.
his crisis is a passing chapter (or perhaps paragraph) in the story of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but in light of the preceding article—which was written before Israel sent forces into the Gaza strip, it is appropriate that some comment be made.

Whatever comes out of this “re-engagement,” whether it be temporary or more long-term, it must begin to dawn upon many that last Summer’s “disengagement” from Gaza has turned into a political disaster. Unilateral withdrawal policies are not the solution. As the Israeli former chief of staff, Moshe Yaalon has publicly stated: “We cannot barricade ourselves behind walls and fences. There is no such thing as unilateralism.”

An article in TIME magazine (July 10,06) had the heading: “Gaza is freed, yet Gaza wages war. That reveals the Palestinians’ true agenda.” The writer continued:

“Before the eyes of the whole world, Israel left Gaza. Every Jew, every soldier, every military installation, every remnant of Israeli occupation was uprooted and taken away. How do the Palestinians respond? What have they done with Gaza?...On the very day of Israel’s final pullout, the Palestinians began firing rockets out of Gaza into Israeli towns on the other side of the border... a thousand rockets have fallen since....”

How can anyone deal with these people? When former Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered Arafat 98% of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), it was refused. Negotiation failed; now unilateral withdrawal is seen to fail. The fact will have to be recognized sooner or later that to cry “Peace, Peace; when there is no peace” (Jeremiah 6:14) is self delusion.

Disengagement, Realignment, Convergence—put whatever label you like on it, the fact stands out like a smoking volcano: “There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked” (Isaiah 48:22); “... the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt—There is no peace, said my God, to the wicked” (Isaiah 57:20 21).

But God has said that He will heal His people. He has promised to bring them back to their own Land—to the mountains of Israel—and this has been happening. Can we think that the Palestinians, the Fatah or the Hamas will now prevent God from carrying out His declared purpose? It will happen whether they like it or not. It will happen in spite of Israeli Government policies that promote withdrawal and the eviction of Israeli religious settlers.

As we write these lines it is not yet clear what the immediate outcome of the Gaza crisis will be. A compromise “prisoner swap” may defuse it, and heal “the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly” as Jeremiah puts it; but that will not change anything as far as the conflict itself is concerned. But this crisis may inspire some re-thinking as to Israel’s overall strategy. In any case, it is a moment of opportunity for the settler community, and for the opponents of withdrawal policies, to make their voices heard loud and clear—for it is at such a time that the Israeli public may, just possibly, take notice, and listen.

Israel must surely come to recognize sooner or later, that the idea of “peaceful co-existence” on a voluntary basis is not possible. Whether they like it or not, the world must also wake up to this reality and prepare itself to live with facts rather than dreams and mirages of the desert.

The conclusion is gradually forced upon us that eventually, stability and a peace of sorts will probably have to be imposed—whether by Israel itself, or by some other power, or powers. However this peace comes we must understand that the God of Israel will cause it to happen, and He will cause it to happen for the sake of religious Zionists who He intends to purify.

One other factor must be borne in mind. Terrorist activity cannot be effective if the weaponry becomes unobtainable. This points the finger in the direction of the suppliers, and in the direction of those who support and even encourage that deadly activity.

The Gaza re-engagement is one more indication of just how close we are to the last chapter.
T he world of the future is to be seen with the eye of faith that accepts the Divine origin of the scriptures. As we witness the daily rocket bombardment of Israel from the Gaza Strip, we marvel at the surety that this will not last forever. The conflict between Abraham’s children will not last much longer. Isaiah made it clear that Israel would have a troubled history—God’s hand of judgement upon a wayward people, but they would never be totally consumed.

“But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour” (Isa 43:1-3).

They would have to walk through the floods and the fire, but they would not be fatally harmed. Like the burning bush that Moses turned aside to look at (Ex 3:2), Israel would be burned but NOT consumed!

The day will come when Abraham’s children will live peaceably side-by-side—Israel in the land and his other sons to the east of Israel. What a change when the eyes of Jew, Christian and Moslem will be opened to the truth of God’s word and made to realise how vain were the traditions of their fathers which caused their eyes to be shut to the real truth (Isaiah 25:7; Jeremiah 16:9).

At the moment Isaiah’s description applies: “...the darkness shall cover the earth (Gentiles), and gross darkness the people (Jews): but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be upon thee” (Isa 60:2).

What a glorious picture is then painted by Isaiah: “...And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fail, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian (Abraham’s son by Keturah) and Ephah (his grandson by Keturah); all they from Sheba (ditto) shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD. All the flocks of Kedar (Abraham’s grandson by Hagar) shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth (ditto) shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory” (Isa 60:3-7).

The Temple will indeed be glorified as the children of Abraham live at peace, worshipping together, and the Gentiles acknowledging the God of Israel.

This is far from the situation today! We will look at the current Middle East situation and then update with matters concerning Germany, Russia, and the Vatican.

The situation in Israel

Olmert’s government is the first in modern Israel’s history that is led by civilians instead of military men. Israel’s military leaders have found the new situation very difficult, increasingly chaffing under the restrictions they have been forced to work under. Olmert’s determination to avoid confrontation and take a more negotiating approach has however taken a hammering. As the worsening situation unfolds, events seem to be propelling Olmert upon a pathway that he had not planned.

Kassam rockets continue to explode around Sderot, close to the Gaza border and even on Ashkelon. For the settlers in Sderot the situation is unbearable. Several inhabitants have been on hunger strike in protest at their government’s inaction over dealing with this threat.

Olmert wants to press ahead with his plans to withdraw Jewish settlers behind defendable borders. This could involve the uprooting of many thousands of settlers, although no clearly defined plan has been put forward. The majority of Israelis do not want to see running battles with the settlers, should the government push ahead with its plans. In June, Olmert visited Britain, France and Germany to sell his plans. He had earlier been to Washington to consult President Bush. Mr Blair and his fellow leaders did not share his enthusiasm for unilaterally defining Israel’s borders independent of Palestinian wishes.

With his limited success in the Israeli elections it would not be easy for him to push through large-scale dismantling of settlements. As has nearly always been the case in Israeli politics, the coalition of parties that give him a parliamentary majority is only loosely bound together.

“Will there be a Palestinian Civil War?”

This headline in The Jerusalem Issue Brief, 25th June was by no means the first to raise this possibility. The struggle between what was Arafat’s party, Fatah and the more militant group, Hamas, who are backed by Iran, is reaching a crescendo. The killing of each other’s military hardly raises a mention in the daily press, unlike Israel’s attempts to bring down the militant leaders which is critically covered. Mahmoud Abbas, Arafat’s successor is in a difficult position. Hamas were elected to power, even though it was by a minority vote, such is the Palestinian political system. There is little love lost between the two parties; many foresee a showdown, ending with the emergence of one or other victors. Israel and the West back Abbas, Iran the Hamas Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniya.

“Imagine Peace in the Mideast”

This was the headline to an article in the Washington Post by Paul Greenberg, published June 26, 2006, which also hinted at the possibility of civil war amongst the Palestinians. Here are a few extracts.

“If things have to get worse in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict before they get better, then things must be about to get much better because they’re definitely getting much worse. If that doesn’t make any sense, neither does the Mideast.

“Why do things have to get worse before...
they get better? Because by now only a civil war may produce a single, accountable Palestinian government—and a single army subject to its control.

"Right now, neither of the major factions in this always a-borning, never born, Palestinian state seems able to take responsibility—either for terrorist attacks or peace negotiations.

"The Israeli government continues to talk about a unilateral withdrawal from the West Bank, too, but after what has happened in Gaza, it would be foolish, not to say suicidal, to relinquish military control there. To do so would expose most of Israel, a tiny country with no strategic depth, to constant attacks.

"The whole notion of the Israelis' retreating behind their fence and imposing peace unilaterally becomes more dubious daily. Fences do not stop rockets. And the Israelis will still have to control the coastal ports and airports in Palestinian territory if they are to keep far more sophisticated weapons than these amateurish Qassam rockets from reaching the terrorists.

"Israel's dream of disengagement is looking more and more like a mirage, for there can be no disengagement from a people who share the same land, air and water. There can be only confrontation or co-existence—or something uncertain in between, which is what both sides now endure.

"At the moment, various Palestinian factions, notably Hamas and Fatah, are waging an undeclared civil war in Gaza and on the West Bank while vowing there will be no civil war. How little things change in that part of the world: the voice may be the voice of Jacob, but the hands are still the hands of Esau."

The Prisoners Document

This much trumpeted scheme was aimed to reign in Hamas, but that looks far from the case. This agreement is supposed to make Hamas recognise the existence of Israel, but this is not contained within the document. It is called the Prisoners Document because many of the Fatah and Hamas leaders who drew it up are in Israeli prisons! It does call on Hamas to recognise Fatah's PLO as the umbrella organisation for continued "resistance," but mentions nothing about recognising Israel's right to exist. Its opening statement is a rallying cry to liberate the land.

"1. the Palestinian people in the homeland and in the Diaspora seek to liberate their land and to achieve their right in freedom, return and independence and to exercise their right in self determination, including the right to establish their independent state with al-Quds al-Shareef as its capital on all territories occupied in 1967 and to secure the right of return for the refugees and to liberate all prisoners and detainees based on the historical right of our people on the land of the fathers and grandfathers and based on the UN Charter and the international law and international legitimacy" (MidEastWeb for Coexistence http://www.mideastweb.org).

Far from being a "peace document" it is a call for the continuation of their intifada! If Hamas do not accept the document the PA chairman, Mahmoud Abbas has said he will hold a referendum to decide the matter—this is scheduled for the end of July. As we write it is reported that Hamas have accepted it but with various amendments which Abbas is not happy about. We wait and watch!

It is not a document that brings any hope or comfort to Israel! They could not accept a return to the 1967 borders nor the right of return of the many thousands who fled when the Arab nations attacked the newly formed State of Israel in 1948.

The Strong Chinese-Hamas Intelligence Connection

This was an eye-catching headline to a Debka report (19-06-06).

One doesn't associate China with Middle East affairs let alone helping the PA, but rationally it would be part of their desire to work against American interests. Israel does trade with China and a few years ago was described as second only to Russia for arms sales to China. One cannot imagine they would have been too pleased at this revelation. The intelligence world is a murky one indeed!

Israel's Eastern Neighbour

Israel's relationship with Jordan is on a different level. Trade between the two countries has been steadily increasing and at a recent meeting the leaders of the two countries pledged to move forward on some joint schemes. One was to construct a joint airport at Aqaba on the border that divides the two countries.

"The planned new international airport would have two terminals, one Jordanian and one Israeli. It would serve international carriers, and would probably lead to the closure of the small Eilat airport" (A7 News 22-06-06).

Eilat is a growing tourist resort, and is also increasingly important as a transit point. Deep-water ships can come up the Gulf of Aqaba and discharge their cargos for onward transportation by road into Israel. The Jordanian port of Aqaba is less sophisticated, but is a gateway for Jordan and onwards to Iraq.

Vice premier Simon Peres also had talks with the Jordanian King.

"In addition to the airport issue, Peres and King Abdullah also discussed plans for Israeli-Jordanian cooperation in copper mining, and a joint project to build a canal that would carry water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea. In addition to their discussions of joint projects, the two also exchanged opinions on the current situation between Israelis and Palestinians. Vice Premier Peres stressed the problem of the large number of disparate armed factions operating in the Palestinian territories, whose presence made daily life problematic" (ibid).

The Red Sea – Dead Sea Canal has been discussed in the past. (See Milestones 1993 p 9,23) It would halt the constantly falling water level in the Dead Sea caused by so much of the River Jordan’s water being diverted for irrigation and drinking. It would be a source of hydroelectric power due to the big difference in elevations. However it is a long-term project—what is being proposed is merely a feasibility study.

We can read of God’s solution to the problems of the Dead Sea in the pages of the prophets! It is to be elevated at the time of the great earthquake that splits Jerusalem and healed with the twin rivers that will flow from Jerusalem at that time. It appears that the River Jordan reverses its direction, flowing from the newly healed Dead Sea, in this day teeming with fish, and flows northwards and then from a new course into the Mediterranean! (Ez 47:8-12).

Iraq

With the June 7th killing of Abu Musab Zarqawi by an American military strike, the possibility of more stability in Iraq became possible. He was the second or third most wanted terrorist in the world with a $25m bounty on his head. His Sunni followers had been wreaking havoc in Baghdad.

The rapid reversal, two days after his death of many of his rulings pointed to a betrayal by his own party, who were seeking a more peaceful outcome. It probably was not a coincidence that within a few hours of his death the new Iraqi government announced that they had at long last filled all the vacancies.

The situation at the moment has much improved—how long this will continue is not clear, but it offers a glimmer of hope.

The Damascus-Tehran-Moscow Axis. A Military Collaboration Pivoting on Syria

Another Debka report, 23-6-06, indicated that Iran and Syria had just signed a new military pact. Joint exercises between their air forces and navies are due to take place in the autumn. It is planned that Iranian ships will use the Syrian Mediterranean ports.
Some agreements revealed by Debka are:—

- The two signatories will share intelligence.
- Their anti-air alert and defense commands will be integrated and operate as a single system. This accord affords Tehran its first forward early warning and intelligence resource against American air or missile attack from the eastern Mediterranean or from Israel.
- Tehran will send missile and artillery instructors to Syria to train Syrian units in the use of Iranian weaponry and combat techniques.
- The assembly lines of the subterranean facility turning out Scud missiles in the northern Syrian town of Homs will be doubled in size. Tehran has guaranteed funding for the expansion, as well as new equipment, technology, engineers and technicians.
- A new factory will go up in Syria for manufacturing Iranian armored cars.

Russia too is working with Syria to upgrade her ports. The same Debka report gave these details.

“Alongside Iran’s massive incursion into Syria, Russia is revealed by DEBKA-Net-Weekly’s military sources as having targeted another strategic Syrian resource, its naval bases at Latakia and Tartus. They report 600 Russian naval officers, engineers and technicians busy at work on transforming the two bases, which the Soviet Union made good use of in the 1960s and 1970s, into thoroughly up-to-date installations capable of accommodating submarines.

“Russian ships have begun making brief calls at Latakia and Tartus now being converted to serve the Russian fleet as its permanent Mediterranean bases.

“Consequently, a powerful Iranian-Syrian-Russian military axis is evolving on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea under the noses of America and Israel.”

The Indian paper the Hindu said, 5th June, that the move would dramatically increase Moscow’s presence in West Asia and shift the balance of forces in the region.

We know from Daniel 11:40 that the King of the North comes forth with many ships. With problems in the Ukraine where a substantial proportion of her navy is berthed, it makes great sense for her to move some of her ships forward, avoiding too the transit through the narrow Bosporus. A Russian news source explained:—

“Tartus, the second most important Syrian port on the Mediterranean, could be transformed into a base for Black Sea Fleet warships when they are redeployed from the Ukrainian port of Sevastopol, Kommersant daily said, quoting sources in Russia’s diplomatic service and the Defense Ministry. Russia’s Black Sea Fleet currently uses a range of naval facilities in the Crimea under a 1997 agreement that allowed Russia to continue its presence in its neighboring former Soviet republic for rent of $93 million per year.

“The fleet is scheduled to withdraw in 2017, but Ukraine has recently voiced concerns that Russia is not paying enough for the facilities and also demanded that a new agreement be signed on inventorizing the bases. Russia has said it will make no concessions over rent or withdrawing the fleet and talks have stalled. “The Defense Ministry source told Kommersant that a Russian naval base in the Mediterranean would not only help Moscow strengthen its position in the Middle East—

where it is currently also involved in negotiations on the Iraqi nuclear crisis and the Israel/Palestinian issue—but also ensure Syria’s security” (RIAN.com 2-6-06).

America maintains part of her navy on Crete and Britain on Cyprus. Russia seems to be trumping them by getting even closer to Israel! Things certainly seem to be moving forward!

“Germany, Russia Redraw Europe’s Frontiers”

This was the challenging headline in the May 2nd issue of the Asia Times, which summarised the very successful summit meeting Angela Merkel held with Putin in the Russian oil city of Tomsk.

“Before the Tomsk summit, some had questioned whether Germany’s opening to Russia was a transitory phenomenon of the previous Social Democratic government or whether its successor would pick up the initiative and deepen and broaden the relationship. The meeting cleared up any doubts on that score and thus marks a turning point in Russian-German relations.

“The US strategy involved rallying European countries under its leadership in a common stance vis-à-vis Russia. Merkel has now driven a huge hole into this strategy by breaking loose and proceeding to firm up some massive new energy deals for German companies with Russia, while in turn conceding to Russia’s Gazprom new opportunities to make acquisitions in the European energy-distribution network.

“Without doubt, the Russian-German summit in Tomsk has rewritten the ABCs of the global energy dialogue. Germany has asserted that it reserves the right to work out its long-term energy security with Russia on a bilateral, mutually beneficial, pragmatic footing—and that it brooks no outside or third-party intervention.”

A Russia news source used the term “truly stunning” to describe what had been achieved!

“Both sides are happy about their two-days summit in Tomsk. They have signed a number of bilateral agreements on economic cooperation, which are a breakthrough in the history of Russia’s relations with Western Europe. These are agreements on major investment projects in power engineering, communications, transportation, aviation, and space. Universal attention was drawn to the asset exchange agreement between Gazprom and BASF. In addition, they are going to set up a joint venture, Vingas-Europe, for trade in natural gas in Europe. The scale of achievement is truly stunning. A couple of years ago nobody could even imagine that the Germans and Russians would go that far” (RIA Novosti 2-6-06).

We are seeing the rising again of Germany. As we saw in our last update (Vol 19.2 p14) where we quoted more fully from the Stratfor Review of 2006 published 14-1-06, this is now the 4th rise to power of Germany. The 1st— Charlemagne’s Holy Roman Empire; the 2nd— Imperial Germany (1870 until its fall in World War I); the 3rd— Nazi Germany of the 1930’s until its fall in WW II. We are now seeing her 4th rise to power as the dominant constituent of the beast in its final phase and linked to Russia through Gog’s association with the land of Magog (Ez 38:2).

Preparing to Ride the Beast

It is significant that we have a German Pope at his time. His election last year gave a boost to the Roman Catholic Church in Germany.
But the resurrection is the answer to that, the answer to the single greatest challenge the West faces: the need to rediscover a sense of God's presence in the public square.

To understand Benedict's message, we must look at the current state of Europe. The continent is facing a crisis of faith, as witnessed by the growing appeal of extremist political parties. The Pope's recent visit to Poland and his speech at Auschwitz are symbols of his resolve to restore the Christian roots of Europe.

The Pope's message is clear: Europe needs a dominant Vatican, and the restoration of Europe to its Christian roots must be a priority. As he surveys Europe's ailing landscape, he calls for a reminder that the center-right dominates EU agenda, but that it also has the support of the Vatican.

Benedict's Blasphemy: Accusing God of silence in the Holocaust!

During his visit to Poland he visited the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz. “Pope Benedict XVI prayed on Sunday at the cells and crematories of the concentration camp complex here, on a visit he called “particularly difficult and troubling for a Christian, for a pope from Germany.””

“Words fail,” said Benedict, born Joseph Ratzinger in Bavaria in 1927. The son of a policeman, he was inducted unwillingly into the Hitler Youth and the German Army. In the end, there can only be a dread silence, a silence that itself is a heartfelt cry to God.

“Why, Lord, did you remain silent?” he said, his voice wobbling. “How could you tolerate this?”

Benedict has marveled that a German could have been elected to lead the world's Catholics only 60 years after the horrors at Auschwitz. His visit thus marked one more milestone of reckoning over the more than one million people who died there, most of them Jews, as well as a significant stop in his mission to seek Europe's Christian roots.

On March 30, the pope addressed some of Europe’s most prominent right-wing leaders at a conference in Rome that was sponsored by the EU’s largest and most influential conservative group, the European People’s Party. Comprised of 38 political parties from all over Europe, including several Christian Democrat parties, Benedict’s speech before the EPP was more than a message to a group of Christian supporters; it was a message to the European leadership.

And the media were there to make sure it was reported. The Financial Times (30-3-06) reported that the pope had joined forces with leading European Union conservatives “to call for a restoration of Christian values at the heart of the EU”.

The conference clearly furthered the courtship presently occurring between Europe’s conservative parties and the Vatican. It was a day on which European conservation over future EU enlargement mixed with the Christian Democratic movement’s religious roots, symbolized by Pope Benedict XVI granting an audience to its members” (ibid.; emphasis added throughout). With such European heavyweights as German Chancellor Angela Merkel, and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso in attendance, the summit in Rome was not only a “reminder that the center-right dominates EU agenda,” but that it also has the support of the Vatican (The Trumpet 12-4-06).

During his visit to Poland he visited the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz. “Pope Benedict XVI prayed on Sunday at the cells and crematories of the concentration camp complex here, on a visit he called “particularly difficult and troubling for a Christian, for a pope from Germany.””

“Words fail,” said Benedict, born Joseph Ratzinger in Bavaria in 1927. The son of a policeman, he was inducted unwillingly into the Hitler Youth and the German Army. In the end, there can only be a dread silence, a silence that itself is a heartfelt cry to God.

“Why, Lord, did you remain silent?” he said, his voice wobbling. “How could you tolerate this?”

Benedict has marveled that a German could have been elected to lead the world’s Catholics only 60 years after the horrors at Auschwitz. His visit thus marked one more milestone of reckoning over the more than one million people who died there, most of them Jews, as well as a significant stop in his year-old papacy. While he spoke eloquently about “forgiveness and reconciliation,” he did not beg pardon for the sins of Germans or of the Roman Catholic church during World War II. He laid the blame squarely on the Nazi regime, avoiding the painful but now common acknowledgment among many Germans that ordinary citizens also shared responsibility” (New York Times 28-5-06).

Knowing that the Roman Church was instrumental in bringing Hitler to power, these words of remorse ring very hollow. There were several critical articles in the Polish and Jewish press of this concentration of blame solely on the Nazis.

“Giving Europe a soul. The Mission and Responsibility of Churches.”

The other area where we are seeing progress is in the working together of the Russian Orthodox and Vatican churches. Alexy II the Russian patriarch is also a German. How remarkable! Although there are still big differences between the two churches, they have decided to emphasize what unites them rather than their differences. Re-instating Christianity into the heart of Europe is one of these common aims. There were two significant meetings at the end of April and early May.

“The statements of Alexeii II came at the end of important meetings between the highest ranking Catholic and Orthodox religious leaders, who reflected on the shared commitment in defence of Christian values in Europe. At the end of April, in Rome, the annual Forum of Italy-Russia dialogue, desired by the Russian President Putin and the then Italian Premier, Silvio Berlusconi, chose as a theme: “The Church and secularism in today’s society: the position of the Roman Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church.”

The final report of deliberations behind closed doors cited the words of Mgr Giampaolo Crepaldi—Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace—and Bishop Mark—deputy chairman of the External Relations Department of the Moscow Patriarchate—who talked about very strong prospects of concrete “ecumenical collaboration between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches.”

“From 3 to 5 May in Vienna, a conference organized by the Pontifical Council for Culture and the External Relations Department of the Moscow Patriarchate was held. The title was: “Giving Europe a soul. The mission and responsibility of Churches.” It was the first time an organism of the Holy See organised such an event in collaboration with the Orthodox Patriarchate in Moscow” (Asia News 10-5-06).

We are certainly living in fast-moving times. So many areas are coming more clearly into focus it is hard to watch them all! We are rapidly approaching the closing stages of the times of the Gentiles. Zion’s coming King is about to return—first to his followers, then to his nation, then to the world.

“For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd” (Ez 34:11-13,23).
Speaking of a lower form of wisdom—which is of course far more sophisticated when manifest in the more complex human mind—James says (James 3:15)

“This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual (R.V. margin: natural or animal), devilish.”

James says it is of earthly origin (“not from above” as would be the case with a supernatural devil or fallen angel); that it is sensual, natural, or animal, and “devilish” or Gk. demoniacal.

It is interesting that James uses the word “demoniacal” here, meaning of a false or inferior god. The serpent had said “Ye shall be as gods” which seemed a desirable condition. The impression that this wisdom made upon Eve is revealed by her admission that “the serpent beguiled me” (Gen. 3:13). Moses has written the Hebrew word nasha (to beguile, to lift or raise up) here, indicating that she was caused to be carried away or led astray in her aspirations. Demoniacal is thus a fitting word to describe the character of this earthly wisdom—for it seeks to glorify the creature, causing him to see himself as a god or genius.

In this context the Oxford Dictionary has the following to say on the word Genius: “Tutelary spirit of person... demon, supernatural being... exalted intellectual power, person having this.” We have in fact already met the word earlier when discussing the mythical Genii of Babylon.

Eve became attracted to the idea of becoming a Genius. Thus, “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof...”

The woman first reasoned upon natural principles. This excited desire or lust, and when she acted in order to satisfy those desires it produced sin. As James says:

“Every man (or woman) is tempted when he is drawn away (lit. dragged away) by his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

It is just this process which occurred in Eve’s case. “The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16) were all excited in her as she beheld the tree. Note the following parallels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genesis 3:6</th>
<th>1 John 2:16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The woman saw that the tree was good for food</td>
<td>1. The lust of the flesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. That it was pleasant to the eyes</td>
<td>2. The lust of the eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. That it was—to be desired to make one wise</td>
<td>3. The pride of life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Her faith in the word of God having been neutralised through erroneous philosophy, God’s word became of none effect, and its guiding influence therefore had no power in her mind. This produced within her the principle of lawlessness—or in other words, sin.

In this way then, Eve, being deceived was in the transgression. Adam was not deceived, but Eve we are told “gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.” The experiment was a disaster. The immediate results were self-consciousness and shame for the now mortal Genius!

Sin in the Flesh

Now there arises an important question at this stage of our study: How was the principle of sin and death transferred from Adam and Eve to the entire human race?

In Romans 5:19 we are informed that “by one man’s disobedience many were made (constituted or accounted) sinners.” How can this be? The clue is given to us in the words of
Jesus when he said (John 3:6),

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Like produces like; so that Adam and Eve passed their nature on to their children. In Ephesians 2:2-3 Paul writes of "the spirit that now worketh disobedience," and reminds Christians that prior to their enlightenment and faith in the truth they were all natural partakers of it.

"...we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

In what way has this streak of disobedience been passed on? Let us consider the evidence; Adam and Eve, having eaten of the fruit of the tree which God commanded them not to eat, attained to the knowledge of good and evil. This resulted in their eyes being opened, and a conscious awareness of their nakedness, and a need for clothing. They thus became self-conscious. This self-consciousness was due to a fracture in their previous union with God. A breach had been caused in this union or friendship, so that they became estranged from God.

Look now at the peoples and races of the world! They all suffer a natural embarrassment. They all seek to clothe their nakedness. There is a "something" deep within our psychological make-up that causes this—and it is passed on to every member of the human race without fail. Adam and Eve, having attained to the knowledge of good and evil, became ashamed of themselves. It is a truly remarkable fact that at a certain age children become aware of the same thing. If ever proof was needed for the literal interpretation of the Genesis account, it surely lies in this fact.

By the very nature of things these principles must of necessity be passed on through the normal channels of human reproduction. Seen from the biological aspect, this means that the organisms from which the entire human race has been developed were in Adam at the time of the fall. Both the psychological and physical effects of his transgression (not the transgression itself) have therefore been passed on to us in the development of his line or progeny. Thus Paul says in 1 Cor. 15:22 "In Adam all die." By natural descent we originate from a transgressor or sinner—we inherit the characteristics of a sinner, and are therefore vulnerable to sin (disobedience) ourselves.

It is against this law of nature that every follower of Christ has to battle. His enlightened mind strives to follow Christ, but his natural weakness remains. This is precisely the apostle's experience which he describes for us in Romans 7:14-24. The following is extracted from the passage in order to make the point.

"For we know that the law of (God) is spiritual: but I am carnal (lit. a nature of flesh), sold under sin... what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I... Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing... I find then a law (that is a natural law), that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of (God in) my mind... who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Paul, as the example of a true Christian, draws attention to something in his nature, which he calls sin, being at war with the law of God in his mind. All those who commit themselves to the Name of Jesus Christ have this same experience, for in attempting to develop the attributes of the Divine character (see Ex. 34:6-7) a conflict is initiated against their natural inclinations. These inclinations are naturally inherited. They were in Adam and Eve our first parents, and having become sinners, their nature was passed on to us.

There is then two senses in which we should understand the word sin. One is actual sin—the action of transgression, the other is what Paul calls "sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3).

Actual sin is well enough understood, but let us consider further the sin-nature.

We have seen that a natural state of mind is common to mankind, and that this mind is in conflict with the law of God. This is a fundamental doctrine of the Bible, and an understanding of it is essential if we are to correctly identify the scriptural devil and satan. As we have already pointed out, the words devil and satan signify a false accuser, opponent, or adversary. Now notice what Paul says in Romans 8:7 (quoting the R.V.)

"The mind of the flesh is enmity against God."

And to certain Christian disciples he says (Colossians 1:21), "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, you now hath he reconciled."

From these scriptures the reader should be able to perceive the truth that the natural mind is fundamentally opposed to God's ways and thoughts. As He says through Isaiah the prophet (Isa. 55:8),

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD."

This is the reason for so much confusion over this subject. Man cannot see himself as God does, and believing himself to be a genius, that is being "wise in his own conceit" (Prov. 26:12), he fails to recognise the devilish nature which is his.

Jesus however, says John, "knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (John 2:24-25). Let us therefore learn the truth from his lips:

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thieves, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23).

All these sins are latent within our nature. Not that we necessarily commit them, but if unrestrained we would naturally do so. Each of us has an awareness of this—we know our innermost desires or lusts, and we seek to hide them from the view of others. In other words we put on an outwardly respectable appearance—fig leaves—in order to cover our shame. Through weakness our latent nature sometimes expresses itself in actual transgression, and so as Jesus says "these evil things come from within."

In Galatians 5:19-24 Paul calls these things "the works of the flesh" and contrasts them with "the fruit of the spirit" saying "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." In the light of so much testimony it ought to be clear that Paul's statement defines the adversary in the most unmistakable terms. He says, and I quote his words again:

"The mind of the flesh is enmity against God."

This is the enemy. As the Bible teaches—and as I believe I have demonstrated from these scriptures—it originated from the serpent in Eden, was brought to fulfillment in Adam and Eve, and from thence passed on to all mankind. The enmity thus dates back to Genesis chapter three, and became a fixed principle in the fifteenth verse where it is written:

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The real adversary, opposer, enemy, Satan or devil, is thus un-masked by the scriptures of truth. What we must now seek to understand is the prescribed remedy for it, and after that we shall discuss two more ways in which the adversary is manifested in the world.

To be Continued.
On August 13th, 1798, Napoleon heard news of the latest setback in his ongoing war with the British. The French fleet under Admiral Brueys, waiting at Aboukir Bay, was destroyed by Admiral Nelson in what came to be known as “The Battle of the Nile.” The good news, if there was any, was that Admiral Villeneuve with a few ships had escaped to fight another day.

Napoleon and his army were now in isolation. What should he do now? His actions indicate he was unconcerned with the state of the fleet that was to have carried him and his army home. The focus was on controlling Egypt and the Holy Land, and stifling British trade. The Mameluke armies had been subdued, but a threat soon appeared from the north-east. The British persuaded the Ottoman Sultan to declare war on France on September 11th, partly on the strength of Nelson’s victory. The forces of the Ottoman Empire were being marshaled against the foreign army.

Successful on land, but not at sea—Napoleon turned his back on Egypt, leaving key men and an occupying force in charge of the country, and headed toward Palestine and Syria. Followed by a loyal but weakened army, he also took with him part of the group of scientists and scholars recruited in France. Those who were to produce the Description de l’Égypte had not received any of the special treatment they appear to have been promised when they were recruited, but they continued with their mission. While in Egypt, Napoleon founded the Institute of Egypt, which had the responsibility for

“1) The progress and propagation of the sciences in Egypt, and
“2) research, study, and publication of natural, industrial, and historical data on Egypt.”

From our vantage point, we find it hard to believe that there was ever a time when the history of Egypt was a great void. The exploration work which this group carried out in Egypt was responsible for the beginnings of archaeology in the Middle East, and the scientific approach to the work which was to be taken up by most of the other European nations. During one of the Institute meetings on July 19, 1799, the members were told of “the discovery at Rosetta of some inscriptions that may offer much interest.” The Rosetta Stone, as it came to be known, was the key to the deciphering of Egyptian hieroglyphics by Champollion 32 years later. Another branch of their work was to make a significant step forward on this excursion into Palestine. In 1799, Napoleon ordered the compilation of a map of Egypt. This formed the atlas of the Description de l’Égypte. With the invading force was Colonel Pierre Jacotin, who headed the Survey Corps. With previous experience on the continent of Europe, Jacotin now set to work to produce the first scientific map of Palestine.

In spite of his expedition beyond the borders of Egypt, Napoleon’s position in Egypt was precarious. The French controlled only the Delta and Cairo; Upper Egypt was still controlled by the Mamelukes and the bedouins. As well, Britain and the Ottoman government had now joined forces.
in an attempt to defeat Napoleon and drive him out of Egypt. Sultan Selim III declared war on France, and on October 21st, the people of Cairo rioted against the army they regarded as occupiers, and not liberators. The rebellion had a religious character, and was led by the religiously trained scholars, who Napoleon had tried to woo to the French side.

Concerned about a Turkish attack, Napoleon invaded Syria (now Israel and Syria) to disrupt any Turkish action. In February, 1799, Bonaparte personally led 13,000 French soldiers, quickly taking the coastal towns of El Arish, Gaza, Jaffa, and Haifa from their Mameluke, Arab, and Turkish defenders.

The storming of Jaffa was a grisly affair. Jaffa (now part of Tel-Aviv) had experienced centuries of war before Napoleon arrived. It was originally a Phoenician city and was occupied by Egypt in 1472 B.C. Alexander the Great had conquered Jaffa, and the Roman emperor Vespasian destroyed it. During the twelfth century, several battles between the Crusaders and Muslims were fought in and around the city. Here Richard the Lionheart had confronted Saladin. When Napoleon invaded, Jaffa was controlled by the Ottoman Empire. Although the Empire had begun to contract, it was still the great power of the Middle East. On March 7, 1799, Jaffa was captured and ransacked by the French. The army was particularly brutal to the inhabitants. Although they took control of the city within a few hours, the soldiers robbed and murdered with wild abandon for three days. Over the next few days, Napoleon also ordered the execution of 3,000 Turkish troops who had surrendered believing they would be held as prisoners of war.

During the action in Jaffa, the first French soldiers became delirious with severe fevers and headaches. After a few days, hundreds had the telltale swellings under their arms. Plague had come to Jaffa. During the Syrian campaign, the mortality rate from plague was 92%.

Earlier the plague had made appearances in Egypt, but it affected only a few of the smaller garrisons. At Jaffa, however, plague threatened the entire French army. On the second day after the occupation, 31 soldiers were hospitalized with the disease and 14 were already dead. The doctors assured the men that it was not the plague, but the sudden deaths and violent fever and other symptoms led some of the victims to commit suicide.

Although the French doctors knew they were dealing with bubonic plague from the beginning, they did not want to panic the soldiers. Napoleon recognized that it could destroy his entire army. As he said later, “The best way to preserve the army from the disease was to keep on the march and occupied. Diversion and fatigue were found to be the best prevention.” To show his soldiers that he did not fear the disease he visited the hospital in person and spoke to his men. Morale was bolstered, and three days after his visit to the hospital, he and the main army left to take Haifa and Acre. General Grézieu, who remained in charge of Jaffa, contracted plague and died within a day. Half of the garrison already had been stricken, and about thirty men died every day, although the doctors did the best they could to prevent the spread of the disease.

After taking Haifa, Napoleon laid siege to Acre, a fortified coastal city on March 18th. Strong Turkish forces, under a Bosnian, Djezzar Pasha, held the city. Napoleon was at a great disadvantage because the coastline near Acre was controlled by the British Navy. They continually supplied Acre with food, ammunition, and soldiers. Napoleon was also not in the best position to conduct a proper siege. Plague had followed the French army to Haifa, and it was also present inside the besieged city. A plague hospital was set up on Mount Carmel, near Haifa, and more patients arrived every day. Napoleon tried to take Acre for two long months.

Following Nelson’s overwhelming victory at the Battle of the Nile, Sidney Smith was sent to the Mediterranean as captain of Tigre, a captured 80 gun French ship of the line. He was ordered to place himself under the commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean, who made him a Commodore with permission to take British ships under his command as required. He also carried a military and diplomatic mission to Istanbul where his brother was now a Minister to the Sublime Porte, attempting to strengthen Turkish opposition to Napoleon and to assist the Turks in destroying the French army stranded in Egypt. This dual appointment caused Nelson, the senior officer in the Mediterranean, to resent Smith’s apparent superseding of his authority. This resentment did no good for Smith’s reputation in the navy.

Sir Sidney Smith was one of three men responsible for withstanding Napoleon at Acre. Smith effectively commanded the defense of the city, with Louis-Edmond Phelipeaux—a Frenchman—and an artillery officer who had actually been a classmate of Napoleon. Djezzar Pasha, the Muslim leader, was responsible for the execution of some 300 Christian prisoners in Acre. Those of the French army who were taken captive during the assaults were usually decapitated at his command. The three each played a critical role in the defense of the fortress. Smith and Phelipeaux helped the Turkish commander reinforce the defences and old walls and supplied him with additional cannon manned by sailors and Marines from his ships. Smith was also able to capture the French siege artillery being sent by ship from Egypt and denied the French army the use of the coastal road from Jaffa by bombarding the troops from the sea.

Once the siege began in late March 1799, Smith anchored HMS Tigre and Theseus so their broadsides could assist the defence. Repeated French assaults were driven back, and several attempts to mine the walls were prevented. By early May, replacement French siege artillery had arrived overland and a breach was forced in the defences. However, the assault was again repelled and Turkish reinforcements from Rhodes were able to land. Napoleon could not overcome the formidable defenses. A long siege and more plague victims caused morale to sink to a very low level.

We have no record that Napoleon visited Jerusalem during this time. The population of the province was small, and Jerusalem itself held less than 10,000 Jews. A story was later circulated that, on April 20th of 1799, during the siege, Napoleon prepared “...a letter to the Jewish nation.” This letter did not ask the Jews to join the French army but only “to take over that which has been conquered, and with that nation’s [France’s] help to remain master of it, to maintain...
it against all comers.” On the same day, ‘Rabbi Aaron in Jerusalem’, who described himself as “after the passing of numberless generations, again first Rabbi and Priest in this Holy City” called on all the “men of Israel capable of bearing arms [to] gather and come up to us.” His aim was to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. There is no record of Napoleon actually issuing this declaration at the time of the siege, and both letters may have been forgeries. This proclamation if it had been made would have declared a Jewish state in Palestine more than a century before it actually happened. If it was simply propaganda, it was apparently connected with rumours at the time that many thousands of Jews had joined the French army. Napoleon was seen by the Jews as very much in favour of their national aspirations, and their freedom, and as a saviour. The siege of Acre was lost to the British, however, and the plan was never carried out. Some historians believe that the proclamation was intended purely for propaganda purposes, and that Napoleon was not serious about the creation of a Jewish state.

Napoleon was very conscious of his exposure in a hostile foreign territory. Forces began to come together in the rear of the French besiegers. In early April, patrols under Generals Kleber, Junot and Murat had encountered with various Turkish forces near Nazareth, and Cana, and throughout the Galilee. On April 16th. General Kleber with 2,000 men was unfortunate enough to meet up with the army of the Pasha of Damascus, the main Syrian army that was coming south to relieve Acre and then help push the French out of Egypt. For 10 hours Kleber and his men fought off 10,000 infantrymen and 25,000 horsemen until a force under Napoleon himself came to his rescue. The sound of his cannon alone was enough to cause the Turkish army to disperse, and Napoleon was responsible for a major victory at Mt. Tabor, which allowed him to accomplish one of his objectives in Syria.

After losing a third of his forces outside Acre, Napoleon finally lifted his siege after a final unsuccessful assault and bombardment on May 9th. He began making plans for the withdrawal of the army. On May 20, 1799, unable to take Acre from the British and the Turks, he led the retreat to Egypt. This was the first major land defeat of his career.

Napoleon used plague as an excuse for lifting the siege of Acre. He told the Directory back in France that plague was ravaging the city, but failed to mention that plague was already ravaging his own army well before they laid siege to Acre. Later he told them that plague had actually broken out earlier in Egypt.

On the grueling return to Cairo, more men contracted plague and died on the desert sands. Ships were not available to transport them, and plague-stricken men were abandoned by the roadside. When the army reached Jaffa, Napoleon was clearly worried about the survival of his army, and on May 27, 1799, he ordered that the 50 or so remaining plague patients at Jaffa be poisoned. The chief pharmacist administered the doses of laudanum, but the Turks apparently found seven soldiers alive at the hospital when they entered the city.

The Syrian campaign was over. The province had not been taken, but the forces from Damascus had been dispersed. Napoleon and the remains of his army returned to Cairo.

In mid-July of 1799, the Turks were successful in landing their army at Aboukir Bay with the help of the British Navy and Sidney Smith. Several small French outposts were taken and the Turkish army dug in to wait for Napoleon’s army. He did not disappoint them, as he quickly organized his response and raced to the battle. On July 24th, the French attacked the Turks who were dug in on the Aboukir Peninsula. With their back to the sea, they could only choose between the sea and its ships, or a small fort for their retreat. As they were pushed back, especially by the cavalry under Murat, only about 1,000 reached the fort, about 2,000 were cut down by sword or bayonet, and about 4,000 chose the sea. Very few were able to reach the safety of the ships. One of those few was Mehemet Ali, who a decade later was to rule Egypt, found a dynasty and cause even more trouble for the Turks.

Shortly after this, on August 22nd, Napoleon abandoned his army in Egypt and secretly sailed back to France with a very small company, evading the British ships patrolling the Mediterranean.

General Kléber succeeded Napoleon as the unwilling commander in chief of a dispirited army with a bankrupt treasury. His main preoccupation was the evacuation of his troops to France. Smith attempted to negotiate the surrender and repatriation of the remaining French forces and signed the Convention of El-Arish, but Nelson believed that the French forces in Egypt should be annihilated, and not allowed to return to France, and the treaty was abrogated by the British.

The British decided instead to land an army under Abercromby at Aboukir Bay. Smith was involved in the preparation of the landing forces and as the contact with the Turks, but his unpopularity with Nelson and the Navy resulted in him losing his position. The invasion was successful and the French defeated although Abercromby was wounded and died soon after the battle.

The French occupation was finally ended by an Anglo-Ottoman invasion force. The main French forces in Cairo surrendered in June of 1801, and the last at Alexandria in early September. By the end of the month, the last French forces had left the country.

The major impact of the French invasion was the effect it had on Europe. Napoleon’s invasion revealed the Middle East as an area of immense strategic importance to the European powers, thus inaugurating the Anglo-French rivalry for influence in the region and bringing the British into the Mediterranean to protect their interests. The French invasion of Egypt also had an important effect on France because of the publication of Description de l’Égypte, which detailed the findings of the scholars and scientists who had accompanied Napoleon to Egypt. This publication became the foundation of modern research into the history, society and economics of Egypt.

Although the figures are incomplete, the archives of the French Ministry of War indicate that of his force of approximately 50,000 men involved in the expedition to Egypt, less than half survived. French casualties in Syria included at least 1,200 killed in action, 1,200 dead from disease, and 2,500 ill or seriously wounded. In all, 2,000 soldiers may have died from bubonic plague during the entire Egyptian expedition.

Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt did not achieve his objectives. Unable to overcome the stronghold of Acre, he was not able to bring the Syrian forces over to his side for a march on Constantinople. Because of his defeat, and his desire to be in France to pursue his career, the remnants of his army were not able to withstand the British and Turkish forces which eventually cast them out. The process of the French invasion is depicted in Revelation 16, which refers to the gradual decline of the Ottoman Empire. Napoleon’s destruction of the Mamelukes who controlled Egypt accelerated the process in this part of the empire. The Jewish presence in Palestine during his invasion was very small, and those in the land were unable to be of any practical help. But Jews in Palestine and throughout Europe were encouraged by the actions and declarations of Napoleon. Just as the French Revolution is depicted as an earthquake in scripture, the French invasion caused disruptions politically and economically that were to affect the area for many years. The attention of the world had been focused on Palestine.

To be continued—Napoleon and the Great Sanhedrin
PROPHECY DAYS IN AUTUMN 2006

PROPHECY DAYS ARRANGED AS OF PRESS DATE:

UNITED KINGDOM: Northern Prophecy Day October 28th, to be held in York. For information contact Philip Jones. Phone 01226-286026.

UNITED STATES: HOUSTON TX. Prophecy Day. Saturday October 14th. For information contact Shannon Strickland (281) 794-9932.

CANADA: BRANTFORD PROPHECY DAY Saturday November 4th. For information contact Gary Smith (519) 758-0362.

NEW ZEALAND: contact David Archer Phone: 04-232-6192 david.archer@xtra.co.nz

AUSTRALIA: contact Neville Bullock (Brisbane area), John Elton (Sydney), or Brian Luke (Adelaide)

ISRAEL BIBLE SCHOOL NOV 2006

We understand that the school is now at full capacity: Contact Philip Hunt. e-mail: philipbowenhunt@hotmail.co.uk

NEW DVD NOW READY:

CONFLICT IN THE PROMISED LAND

Technical problems in production delayed delivery of this DVD, but they are now solved and we apologise for any inconvenience.

ORDER FROM THE BIBLE MAGAZINE OR YOUR LOCAL AGENT

“The Conflict in the Promised Land” shows us the amazing truth behind events in Israel today. A Truth that is revealed in the Bible, and which describes the very situation that we are seeing before us in the news. Filmed on location.

ORDER FROM THE BIBLE MAGAZINE OR YOUR LOCAL AGENT

Jerusalem
David Wilder in Hebron
Tovia Singer of Israel National Radio
Frank Abel at Capernaum

READ OR LISTEN! THE BIBLE IN THE NEWS ON THURSDAYS:
listen in Realplayer or as an mp3 file.

www.Biblemagazine.com
Did you know that famous composers like Beethoven, Bach and Vivaldi transformed bird songs into instrumental music? Mozart turned a bird’s song into one of his best known piano compositions. Handel used them too!

It takes a bird-brain of course to invent good music, but the strange thing is that canaries, such as above, lose their song-memory at season’s end because their brain-cells die off, and then develop new cells during the winter for singing next year! “...the cells undergo a wave of rebirth” says a researcher. “Scientists study how these song-birds perform this miracle” says a recent children’s book on the matter. Also, in commenting on chickadees (left) we are told that “they grow whole new areas of brain. Think of a chickadee’s brain in computer terms—each autumn chickadees upgrade their Random Access Memory, or RAM, from 4 MB to 8 MB!” Zebra finches undergo a process that a writer has called “death fostering life!” Sounds a bit like resurrection doesn’t it!

Many people don’t believe in resurrection of course—but then they probably don’t know about bird-brain research either, or how this is helping in new methods of treating people who have suffered strokes and other illnesses which affect the brain. But for those who do believe, they will understand what spring is all about. The Bible describes it beautifully: “...lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle (dove) is heard in our land...” (Song of S. 2:11,12). Who would equate bird-songs with resurrection?— The designer and Creator...? New brains will “Sing a new Song...” Look at Psalm 149:1 and others. Look at Revelation 14:3—Better than Mozart!!