THE GREAT VOICE

THE TRUTH BEHIND MEDIA BIAS & MANIPULATION OF PUBLIC OPINION
“Where there is no prophecy the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.”
Proverbs 29:18 (RSV)

WRITTEN OVER 100 YEARS AGO
John Thomas, in an article written in 1857 demonstrates a meaning of blasphemy that is relevant today   PAGE 3

SPECIAL FEATURE
Michael Shterenshis in Israel tells of his journey into the war zone   PAGE 6

STUDY AIDS
Daniel Billington looks at a new version of Strong’s Concordance   PAGE 8

DOCTRINE
The Origin & Remedy of Evil (Part 4) “Putting Sin to Death”   PAGE 10 & 11

Ken Langston discusses why we must have a correct understanding of prophecy   PAGE 28

HISTORY REVIEW
Graham Pearce in “The Papal Conquest” tells us how the Vatican came to terms with the French Revolution & adopting its principles, has regained its power   PAGE 12

Ken Loveridge continues his theme on Napoleon & the Jews. This section looks at The Great Sanhedrin   PAGE 29

PROPHECY FULFILLING
Paul Billington writes of The Great Voice—or, a mouth speaking great things, fulfilling via the media   PAGE 16

Unfinished Business & the war in Lebanon   PAGE 5

EDITORIAL
Governing religion by democracy has always had its problems!   PAGE 22

BACK PAGE FEATURE
Dead leaves in the Fall are not necessarily dead!

Quotables: from various writers   PAGE 21

“When sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”
John 17:17
Blasphemy Against the Jews & The Mountains of Israel

I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume. Thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me: I have heard them. Ezekiel 35:12,13.

In the above passage of Ezekiel’s prophecy the word “blasphemies” in the original text is, naehtzoth, reproaches, contumelies, etc., or, in the words of the prophet, “great things spoken with the mouth against” an object.

In the Greek, neahtzoth is expressed by the noun blasphemiai, which the English or anglo-Saxon reader will readily perceive is the anglicised word blasphemies in its Greek dress. It is derived from the verb blasphemeno, which is itself derived from the phrase blaptein ten phemen, to injure the reputation or fame of any object; which, if undeservedly done, is to calumniate, rail against, revile, reproach it, etc.

In scripture the objects of blasphemy are various, such as “God, his name, his tabernacle, them that dwell in the heaven,” the Jews, the mountains of Israel, the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of God, the word of God, the sanctified of the Father, the king of Israel, etc.

The following passages will sufficiently establish this, In Rev. 13:5-6, it is said, that a mouth was given to the Gentile Beast, or System of Powers, “speaking great things and blasphemies. And he opened his mouth (papal) in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his Name and his tabernacle, and those dwelling in the heaven;” that is, to the injury of the reputation of all these in the estimation of society.

“The Jews” are blasphemed by pretenders to that honorable community who cannot establish their claim to citizenship in the commonwealth of Israel. Thus in Rev. 2:9, the king of the Jews says, “I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan;” and in chapter 3:9, he styles them liars.

The text at the head of this article shows that the mountains of Israel may be blasphemed, and that in blaspheming them Jehovah is himself blasphemed.

Mark testifies to the Holy Spirit being an object of blasphemy in his day, in chapter 3:29, 30; and Paul exhorts or commands that Christians, who are servants and wives, be respectful and obedient to their masters and husbands, that the name, doctrine and word of God be not blasphemed.—1 Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:5.

To blaspheme is, therefore in a scriptural sense, to bring divine things into disrepute; so that whatever words or doings tend to, or really do accomplish this, are blasphemies.

The punishment of blasphemy, by divine law, is death. “He that blasphemeth the name of Jehovah shall surely be put to death, as well the stranger as he that is born in the land.”—Lev. 24:16.

For men to say they are Jews, while yet they are not, is blasphemy, because it is a lie, whether they intend to lie or not. The intention does not alter the fact. Lying is the hypostasis or substance of blasphemy; for no good thing can be injured by the truth. When Gentiles, who are neither Jews outwardly nor inwardly, pretend to be Jews, they calumniate that society of which the King of Jews is the chief; and in so doing they calumniate or blaspheme him: the change of object from the less to the greater only enhances its iniquity. Verbal and practical lying are both mortal sins; but their iniquity is aggravated when the lie is against God, his name, and his doctrine or word. Practical lying is profession contradicted by practice. Thus, “If we say we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.” If a man say I love God, and hatest his brother, he is a liar.”—1 Jno. 1:6; 4:20; and :If ye love me, keep my commandments;” for “ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.” Thus, the truth of men’s professions is made to turn upon the conformity of their actions to the words of God. When those actions are a denial of his doctrine or word they make God a liar, so far as their influence extends. If their words and actions agree, and both give the lie to God or his word, which is the same thing, though less hypocritical, they are not less impious; and the impurity is itself blasphemy.

No greater offence can be committed against God than not to believe what he has promised. The reason of this is because he “HAS MAGNIFIED HIS WORD ABOVE ALL HIS NAME;” and not to believe that word is to treat him as a liar, which is blasphemy; and “he that blasphemeth the name of Jehovah shall surely be put to death,” whether Gentile or Jew; this is the reason why it is decreed that “he who believeth not (the gospel) shall be condemned.” When we do not believe we walk in darkness; and walking in darkness, or unbelief, we do not the truth; for in relation to the truth no man can walk in the light of what he does not see, or do that in which he does not believe.

There is another form of lying or blasphemy against God which is brought out in the text from Ezekiel. It is this: If men in their ignorance or impiety affirm a thing, which in its logical or practical bearing contravene the promises of Jehovah, they blaspheme, or speak evil of the subjects of those promises; and in so doing speak great words against, or blasphemies against the promiser.

If the reader peruse Ezek. 35, in the light of
God’s covenanted promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and their seed, he cannot, we think, fail readily to perceive the truth of our statement. In that writing, Mount Seir, the seat of Edom’s dominion, is addressed as a Power, having perpetual hatred against the descendants of Jacob; rejoicing in their calamities, and in actual occupation of their country, commonly styled THE HOLY LAND. While thus possessed of Palestine as the fruit of conquest, Seir is represented as saying of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, “These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it though Jehovah were there.” Upon this the prophet forewarns them that Idumea shall be recompensed according to its hatred of Israel, who shall be delivered after Idumea is destroyed; “I will make myself known among Israel when I have judged thee, O Mount Seir, saith Jehovah, and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume; thus mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate; “I will make myself known among those who shall be delivered after Idumea is recompensed according to its hatred of Israel, though Jehovah were there.” Upon this the statement. In that writing, Mount Seir, the seat of Edom’s dominion, is styled as saying of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, “These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it though Jehovah were there.” Upon this the prophet forewarns them that Idumea shall be recompensed according to its hatred of Israel, who shall be delivered after Idumea is destroyed; “I will make myself known among Israel when I have judged thee, O Mount Seir, saith Jehovah, and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume; thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me; I have heard them.”

The reader will observe that Jehovah regards blasphemies, or false statements, concerning the destiny of the mountains of Israel, as great words or boastings against himself; the Idumean Seir declares that those mountains, even though Jehovah were there, would never belong to Israel, but to Edom; for it says, “they are mine, and we will possess it though the I SHALL BE were there.” But why is this declaration a blasphemy against the Holy Land; and why, if a blasphemy against that land, is it a boast and multiplication of words against Jehovah? Because it states falsely the destiny of Palestine. At present the two nations of Israel and Judah, and their special divisions of the Holy Land, are in the hands of Esau, Edom, or Idumea, synonyms of the power that in the latter days inherits the hatred of Isaac’s eldest son against Jacob; “for,” says Adonai Jehovah, (the Old Testament title rendered Lord Jesus in the New,) “when the whole earth rejoices I will make thee desolate. As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the House of Israel because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee; thou shalt be desolate, O Mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it.”

Idumea, then, represents a power to be made desolate when the whole earth rejoices with God’s people, Israel, as Moses has predicted. Idumea now triumphs over Israel and their land, and blasphemes them both; the Idumeans decree that Judah and Israel’s two territories shall for ever constitute integral parts of the Ottoman Empire; and, consequently, that the two nations or twelve tribes of Jacob, shall never constitute one independent kingdom and nation in the land; this is pronouncing a sore evil against Israel and their native mountains; but being a lie against their destiny it is a blasphemy against them all.

But why are these blasphemies against the Jews and their inheritance, boastings or calumnies against Jehovah? Because, if it should so happen, that Idumea, in this controversy concerning Zion, were to establish its power in the Holy Land, to the final exclusion and suppression of the kingdom and throne of David there, it would make the promises of Jehovah, which he has sworn by his own life and holiness to fulfill, of none effect. It is impossible that such a result should come to pass; but to attempt to establish it, or to declare such a result, or to believe the declaration, is equivalent to denying and rejecting the contrary, and in effect declaring that Jehovah is a deceiver and a liar.

Now, let us see what Jehovah has said—whether he has given the inheritance to Esau or to Jacob. Read the next chapter of Ezekiel and chapter 37.

From these testimonies, we learn that the following things are decreed:

1. That “the two countries,” or territories of the Holy Land formerly occupied by the “two nations” of the Jews, that is, the kingdom of the Ten Tribes and the kingdom of Judah, are to be exalted to a better condition than when possessed by the Israelites in the beginning:

2. That the Gentile power in possession of Adonai Jehovah’s land is to be finally dispossessed when he makes himself known among Israel’s tribes:

3. That “all the house of Israel, even all of it” are to take possession of the land and to be settled upon its mountains, and hills, and lowlands, and valleys, and desolate wastes, and forsaken cities, after the old estates of their realm, in peace, plenty, security, and great perpetual prosperity:

4. That the nations and kingdoms of Israel and Judah shall be one united nation and kingdom upon the mountains of Israel; so that “Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim” any more: but as a bird of prey, “they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west (the western powers); they shall spoil them of the east together; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them”—Isa. 11:13-14:

5. That when finally resettled in Adonai Jehovah’s land, (his, by covenant made with Abraham and his seed, “who is the Christ,” says Paul) the whole twelve tribes will be under one supreme head or king:

6. That they will then be a purified and sanctified people—“they shall defile themselves no more with any of their transgressions;” this implies that all their past national offences will have been blotted out:

7. That their Shepherd-King will be a David, and immortal; and reign over them during the age of their national glory, however long its continuance may be predetermined of Jehovah—ad-olam.

8. That all these benefits will be guaranteed to the nation by the “covenant of the age;” styled also the “covenant of peace”—berith shalom, berith olam;—the Constitution of the Kingdom, in the phraseology of the Gentiles:

9. That during the age, and for the purposes thereof, a Temple will be placed in the midst of the nation. Ezekiel describes it, chapters 40-42. The mystery of the temple is set forth of the nation. Ezekiel describes it, chapters 40-42. The mystery of the temple is set forth:

10. That Adonai Jehovah, Israel’s Shepherd-King, will dwell with them, and be to them
him. This is the wickedness of all the children cast off the Jews; that there will be no should affirm that God has utterly and for ever
promises of Jehovah, covenanted with an oath, doctrine of Esau’ s progeny be true, then the
their creeds; ignoring Israel and Israel’s land in

and confirmed by the blood of Adonai Jehovah, are a deceit and a bald imposition on the credulity of the Jewish nation and their friends—"affirm the doctrine of Esau is to give the lie to God."

But with the apostles, we say, “Let God be
glorious things” that Jehovah hath spoken concerning her. They love Jerusalem...

The seed of the woman are all on the side of Zion. They believe all “the glorious things” that Jehovah hath spoken concerning her. They love Jerusalem, and rejoice in all the good Jehovah hath sworn to do unto her; while they repudiate with indignation all traditions which reduce the promises to a nullity. This is right in every view; for to make void the future glory of Zion is to rob the faithful of their inheritance; for “salvation,” saith Adonai Jehovah, “is of the Jews:” and when men are robbed of their rights, they do not feel very charitable towards the thieves.

All systems of religion, or forms of faith,
blasphemies or “abominations,” which uphold dogmas subversive of the promises of Jehovah. Piety of disposition in the worshippers, or moral precepts commingled in
their ethics, will not transform blasphemies or indignities into things worthy of God. His doctrine and word are blasphemed when they are brought into disrepute, and contempt is generated in men’s minds respecting the things they set forth. This is characteristic of the thing called “orthodoxy” among the Gentiles; which assigns all the curses of God to the Jews, and all his blessings to their enemies. But all Gentilisms that do this, whether orthodox or heterodox, are blasphemies against God, his name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. They constitute the darkness of this world, and they who walk in them “walk in darkness,” and neither believe nor do the truth.

Herald of The Kingdom, April 1857
Arriving back in Israel from a visit to the United Kingdom, the country I live in was at war, and there was a need to contact some Christadelphian friends. Haifa and suburbs, as well as Nahariya were badly damaged by missiles and Katyusha rockets fired from Lebanon by Hezbollah. Karmiel was being bombed daily and had sustained severe damage. It was not the best touring season!

Our main concern was for a Christadelphian and her 9-year old daughter who lived in Kiriat-Shmona near the Lebanon border (see map). The area was being shelled on a daily basis and this had continued for 18 days. Those inhabitants of the town who had not moved to a safe zone were ordered to live permanently in bomb shelters. Several houses, as well as the local shopping centre had been destroyed; Israeli artillery units were positioned in the town and were returning fire.

The house where our Christadelphian friend, Elena, and her daughter lived had no bomb-shelter, which meant that they would have to use one of the public shelters. We first tried to obtain information from the Kiriat-Shmona municipality via the hot-line, but apparently it had been destroyed.

We prayed earnestly for their safety.

A Rough Drive

During the following week the war intensified. The Israeli army was unable to bring the shelling and rocket-fire to a stop because missiles were being launched from the populated villages. It was a difficult military operation, and we had to find our friends in the middle of all this!

At last, and part-way through the week we called Elena and her 9-year old daughter who were still in Kiriat-Shmona. They had spent 24 days and nights in a bomb shelter. Their mobile phone could not operate due to the thick reinforced concrete. Once we had located them, then we had to drive up to Kiriat-Shmona in order to evacuate them. The road was reasonably safe until we reached the outskirts of the town. Heavy smoke covered the entire area. The sounds of heavy fighting could be heard, with Katyusha rockets falling on the town and Israeli guns returning fire. Police and a military patrol blocked off the motorway to Kiriat-Shmona (see top right opposite), so instead we found an agricultural road leading to the town.

There was an intense sound of battle.

We found Elena and her daughter in a small shelter with another family. They were in a state of shock and afraid to venture out of the shelter. Food and water had been brought to them by a civil defense car every day. The air in the shelter was very heavy because the ventilation system had cut out, leaving them with only an ordinary fan.
The Evacuation

As our friend and her daughter packed their belongings and prepared to leave the shelter, we could hear the sound of battle getting closer to us. Consequently our departure from the smoke-covered town of Kiriat Shmona was a very hasty one! Normally, the highway to this town would be filled with heavy traffic, but now it was virtually deserted.

As we left the town behind us a heavy artillery duel continued and could be heard for some time. We could see Israeli armour being rushed to the battle area as we sped away down the empty motorway. The only vehicles on the road were army trucks and police cars.

Kiriat-Shmona itself had become a ghost-town, with no one on the streets and an eerie absence of traffic. There were no sounds apart from that of gunfire and the thud of missiles exploding.

Prayers Answered

We drove back with the evacuees to the safety of Rishon-Le Zion. It took some time for Elena and her daughter to recover from the long sleepless nights and constant gunfire. Gradually however life returned to normality. Our prayers had been heard, the God of Israel was our strength, our shield, and in Him there is safety.

The war has been a difficult experience for our small Christadelphian community in Israel. Several had been forced to leave their homes and move to a safer place. We are thankful to our God that there was no personal loss of life or property. There was some indirect loss by way of suspension of employment. Government assistance was meagre—for example, our friend from Kiriat-Shmona was offered 130 NIS (about £16 or $30 US) to cover food expenses.

We know that many prayers were offered on our behalf during this difficult time, and we are thankful that our heavenly Father has heard them and brought us through the ordeal.

We now look forward to meeting many of our Christadelphian friends who intend to visit us from overseas, and attend the Israel Bible School in November, God willing.

This article is extracted and adapted from a report by Michael Shterenshis following his journey to northern Israel during the recent Lebanon war.
It is our belief, as discussed in a previous article, that every word, not just the ideas were divinely inspired:

“Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar” (Proverbs 30:5-6; see also Deut. 4:2 and Rev. 22:18,19).

When evaluating a Bible study aid, as with a translation, the right place to begin is the preface. Reading the preface will often give a good sense of the character of the reference and possibly insight into bias that the authors and editors may have had.

**NIV Concordance Project**

For example, when we read the preface to the new Strongest Strong’s Concordance (not to be confused with the New Strong’s Concordance), published by Zondervan for the KJV in 2001, we are told that it is the first major “revision” to Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance (i.e. of 1894). These “revisions”, some of which are helpful, include Hebrew verb forms, frequency of English words used in the KJV and addition of G/K numbers.

We also find something that many probably would not expect:

“The data developed over a twenty-year period for The NIV Concordance Project form the foundation for The Strongest Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance.”

When it comes to selecting Bible study aids, unlike most modern inventions, newer is not altogether better! As we will see, the Strongest Strong’s is no longer “Strong’s”. The project that created the new concordance “rebuilt the original from the ground up”. Zondervan claims this is “the most thoroughly analyzed and most accurate concordance ever produced for the King James Version” and that it is “the only Strong’s compiled and verified by computer technology.” These claims and other slogans, give the reader the false impression that the original Strong’s is a dated and completely inaccurate reference. Although it is true that linguistics and the study of biblical languages have advanced significantly since the nineteenth century, we must also be wary of modern scholarship. While some of it is excellent and while some supports biblical teachings, some is marred by doctrinal bias or higher criticism.

Unfortunately, a review of the revising and correcting done by John R. Kohlenberger and James A. Swanson, would indicate that although some of their work is quite positive, some of the new definitions, particularly those that relate to doctrine, are very disappointing. In fact, to simply call this a “revision” of James Strong’s original work seems dishonest. This is a completely new concordance with more doctrinal bias than ever before.

**Root Words and Contextual Definitions**

Another change revealed in the preface is that of “related words”:

“One popular element of Strong’s original dictionaries has been intentionally omitted in The Strongest Strong’s. Following the majority of nineteenth century scholarship, Strong attempts to explain the meaning of each word by referring to its alleged “root” meaning. Though popularized in many other dated reference books like Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, this practice has been largely abandoned by modern scholars, who often label it the “root fallacy.”

“Instead of attempting such speculative analysis and perpetuating the root fallacy, the Dictionary-Indexes of The Strongest Strong’s list all biblical words that are related by common elements…These related words lists are provided to allow the user to do more thorough word studies. These
studies, however, should be done carefully with more attention paid to contextual definitions than fanciful etymologies.”

Modern linguistic theory about Hebrew (and other languages) disapproves of what is often called the “root fallacy”. This theory is followed by the Strongest Strong’s. Usage is considered more important since it is claimed that often language users loose sight of the original meanings of roots. However, in a number of cases it seems probable that an ancient Hebrew would, for example, recognise that two particular words were cognate (i.e. shared the same root, usually three letters). Therefore, it is hard to believe that an ancient Hebrew would not recognise the fact that the word “lights” in Genesis 1:14 shares its basic root with the word “light” used at the beginning of the chapter. In fact, the parallel between days one and four, and their opening statements (“let there be light” and “let there be lights”) implies this.

The clear implication is that the Strongest Strong’s favours “contextual definitions” (i.e. usage) over etymological ones. While usage should help define a word, a wrongly biased usage (over etymological ones). While usage this.

When considering root words, possibly a warning to be cautious, and to verify Strong’s definitions with another reference, would be appropriate. However, the Strongest Strong’s and the “modern scholars” seem to be throwing out the baby with the bath water. Given the choice of older works possibly tainted by the “root fallacy” or newer highly interpretive works that have been influenced by modern textual criticism, the final analysis would suggest that, in this case, older is still better.

**The On-line Bible**

When it comes to computer software, a preface or equivalent is not always available, making it more difficult to determine the exact source or extent of revision. For example, the widely used free On-line Bible software comes with Hebrew and Greek lexicons, but at first it is not clear what their exact source is. Finally, after much searching an answer to the question of “who authored the definitions” in the lexicons was found on the On-line Bible web site under Frequently Asked Questions:

**1879 – Analytical Concordance to the Holy Bible – Young’s**

| SOUL — | 2. Animal soul, נפש nephesh. | 3515. נפש nephesh, neh'-fesh; from 3514; properly, a breathing creature, i.e. animal of (abstractly) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense (bodily or mental): |
| FLESH — | 7. Flesh, פֶּסֶח sarx. | 4561. פֶּסֶח sarx, sarx; probably from the base of 4563; flesh (as striped of the skin), i.e. (strictly) the meat of an animal (as food), or (by extension) the body (as opposed to the soul [or spirit], or as the symbol of what is external, or as the means of kindred), or (by implication) human nature (with its frailties [physically or morally] and passions), or (specifically) a human being (as such):— carnal(-ly), + -ly minded, flesh(-ly). |
| TOUCH — | 5. To touch, hold on, embrace, אָפַתָּה haptotai. | 680. אָפַתָּה hapto, hap-tow; reflexive of 681; properly, to attach oneself to, i.e. to touch (in many implied relations):— touch. |
| LIGHT — | 5. To light, kindle, אַבָּהַה haptai. | 681. אַבָּהַה haptai, hap-tow; a primary verb; properly, to fasten to, i.e. (especially) to set on fire:— kindle, light. |
| SA-TAN — | ἠτατόν Satan, סָטָן satan, the hater, accuser. | 7854. סָטָן satan, saw-tawn'; from 7853; an opponent; especially (with the article prefixed) Satan, the arch-enemy of good:— adversary, Satan, withstand. |
| WORD — | 11. A word, speech, matter, reason, λόγος logos. | 3056. λόγος logos, log'-os; from 3004; something said (including the thought): by implication a topic (subject of discourse), also reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive: by extension, a computation; specifically (with the article in John) the Divine Expression (i.e. Christ): |
| SPIRIT — | 3. Spirit,πνεύμα pneuma. | 4151. πνεύμα pneuma, pneu'-mah; from 4154; a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively, a spirit, i.e. (human) the rational soul, (by implication) vital principle, mental disposition, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, demon, or (divine) God, Christ’s spirit, the Holy Spirit:— ghost, life, spirit, soul, (spiritual) mind. Compare 5590. |

**1894 – Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance**

| SOUL — | 2. Animal soul, נפש nephesh. | 5315. נפש nephesh, neh'-fesh; from 5314; properly, a breathing creature, i.e. animal of (abstractly) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense (bodily or mental): |
| FLESH — | 7. Flesh, פֶּסֶח sarx. | 4561. פֶּסֶח sarx, sarx; probably from the base of 4563; flesh (as striped of the skin), i.e. (strictly) the meat of an animal (as food), or (by extension) the body (as opposed to the soul [or spirit], or as the symbol of what is external, or as the means of kindred), or (by implication) human nature (with its frailties [physically or morally] and passions), or (specifically) a human being (as such):— carnal(-ly), + -ly minded, flesh(-ly). |
| TOUCH — | 5. To touch, hold on, embrace, אָפַתָּה haptotai. | 680. אָפַתָּה hapto, hap-tow; reflexive of 681; properly, to attach oneself to, i.e. to touch (in many implied relations):— touch. |
| LIGHT — | 5. To light, kindle, אַבָּהַה haptai. | 681. אַבָּהַה haptai, hap-tow; a primary verb; properly, to fasten to, i.e. (especially) to set on fire:— kindle, light. |
| SA-TAN — | ἠτατόν Satan, סָטָן satan, the hater, accuser. | 7854. סָטָן satan, saw-tawn'; from 7853; an opponent; especially (with the article prefixed) Satan, the arch-enemy of good:— adversary, Satan, withstand. |
| WORD — | 11. A word, speech, matter, reason, λόγος logos. | 3056. λόγος logos, log'-os; from 3004; something said (including the thought): by implication a topic (subject of discourse), also reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive: by extension, a computation; specifically (with the article in John) the Divine Expression (i.e. Christ): |
| SPIRIT — | 3. Spirit,πνεύμα pneuma. | 4151. πνεύμα pneuma, pneu'-mah; from 4154; a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively, a spirit, i.e. (human) the rational soul, (by implication) vital principle, mental disposition, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, demon, or (divine) God, Christ’s spirit, the Holy Spirit:— ghost, life, spirit, soul, (spiritual) mind. Compare 5590. |

“Larry Pierce wrote them based on Brown Driver Briggs and Thayer’s. We compared them with several other lexicons also. In doing the lexicons we found the newer lexicons were less accurate than the older ones.”

Other than being qualified to write Bible software, there is no indication that Mr. Pierce has any qualifications to write or revise Hebrew and Greek lexicons! A better choice, from a known reliable source, is the original Strong’s concordance lexicons (revised to correct errors in Strong’s numbers) which are also available for download from the On-line Bible web site. Mr. Pierce’s independently modified lexicons may be useful as a casual reference, but can not be trusted for serious Bible study.

With the alternate Strong’s Lexicons in place, the On-line Bible is a very useful tool. There are many optional modules that can be added including many Bible translations in a variety of languages. Perhaps the most useful feature is the ability to search for phrases, not just individual words.

**Doctrinal Bias**

As well as reading the preface, it is equally important to review a number of entries for doctrinal bias. A good approach is to compare other similar study aids for the same entries.

| 2001 – The Strongest Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance | 5315 נפש nephesh, n.f. GK: 5838 [→ 5314]; breath; by extension: life, life force, soul, an immaterial part of a person, the seat of emotion and desire; a creature or person as a whole: self, body, even corpse: |
| 4561 פסח sarx, n.r. GK: 4922 [→ 4559, 4560]; flesh, body, the soft tissue of a creature, often in contrast to bone, ligament, or sinew; by extension human, humankind, with a focus on the fallen human nature, which is frail and corrupt in contrast to immaterial (spiritual) things, thus the NIV translation “sinful nature”– flesh [1479]; carnal [2], carnally [1], fleshly [1] |
| 680 אפתה hapto, hap-tow, v.i. hapto, hap-tow; to touch, hold, handle; “to touch a woman” means “to get married”; |
| 681 אפתה hapto, v. GK: 721 & 4312 [→ 680]; to touch, hold, handle; (act.) to start a fire; “to touch a woman” means “to get married”; touched [21], touch [13], lighted [2], toucheth [2], kindled [1], light [1] |
| 7854 סותר satan, n.m.[pr.]. GK : 8477 [→ 7853]; (human) adversary, accuser, one who opposes, slanderer; (as a proper name) Satan, the spirit being who is an opponent of God and slanderer of his creation– Satan [19], adversary [6], adversaries [1], withstand [1] |
| 3056 λόγος logos, n. GK: 3364 [→ 3004]; word, spoken or written, often with a focus on the content of a communication (note the many contextual translations in NIV); matter, thing. “The Word” is a title of Christ (1:1), emphasizing his own deity and communication of who God is and what he is like. |
| 4151 πνεῦμα pneuma, pneu'-mah; from 4154; wind, breath, things which are commonly perceived as having no material substance; by extension: spirit, heart, mind, the immaterial part of the inner person that can respond to God; spirit being: (evil) spirit, ghost, God the Holy Spirit– spirit [257], ghost [92], spirits [32], life [1], spiritually [1], spiritual [1], wind [1] |
watching for conclusions which represent Orthodox interpretations rather than Biblical scholarship. Please reference the provided chart for a summary of some relevant examples.

One obvious example, is the definition of the word “touch” (Greek hapto) as it is rendered in the KJV in 1 Corinthians 7:1. Compare the entries in the original Strong’s with the re-written lexicons:

**Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance (1894):**
- 680. ἀπτόμαι hapto, hap’t-om-áhee; reflexive of 681; properly, to attach oneself to, i.e. to touch (in many implied relations):— touch.

**The Strongest Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance (2001):**
- 680. ἀπτόμαι hapto, hap’t-o, a primary verb; properly, to fasten to, i.e. (specially) to set on fire:— kindle, light.


**Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance (1894):**
- 681. ἀπτό hapto, hap’-to; a primary verb; properly, to touch, hold, handle; “to touch a woman” means “to get married”

There is no apparent evidence (certainly not Biblical) to support the theory that hapto or haptomai convey the idea of marriage or celibacy. As with the NIV’s interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1-2, the Roman Catholic doctrine of a celibate elite is promoted without textual support. It should be noted that under the law, not even high priests were celibate (see Exo. 4:20; 6:23, 25 and Lev. 21:10, 13). The NIV’s influence is clearly evident here, and is directly referenced in many other definitions. This is not surprising since the lexicons are essentially that of the “NIV Concordance Project” which was “the foundation for The Strongest Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance.”

**The New Strong’s**

Although some of the changes in the Strongest Strong’s are useful, it would seem that the best choice is still the original Strong’s concordance with necessary revising to correct errors such as in Strong’s numbers. At least as recently as 2003, Thomas Nelson (www.thomasnelson.com) has published The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible in both English and Spanish satisfying this need. These editions are available from major book retailers including Barnes & Noble (www.bn.com) and Amazon.

As with translations, Bible study aids are influenced to a varied degree by the views and scholarship of their authors and editors. Therefore, some careful research must be done to evaluate the sources, theories, and extent of bias that have influenced the entries. The two obvious sources of this information are the preface (or whatever other source information is available) and the entries themselves, especially those that relate to doctrine, “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

Most importantly, we must also remember the key to Bible study, to compare scripture with scripture after the example of the Bereans, who “were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” (Acts 17:11).

---

**The Bible in the News**

...And it can be very confusing as we listen to the various opinions that are offered to us. Sometimes those views claim to be based upon the Bible and offer us dramatic interpretations of events, but turn out to be false alarms which only discourage us. Sometimes we hear so many different news items that it is difficult to decide what is important and what is not.

Keep up to date with The Bible in the News which selects an important item each week, pointing out the relevance of it to us, and the Bible connection. Many people pass it on to others either by reproducing the audio version or printing off copies from their computer. Why not join them and spread the Word?

**Audio Version**
The audio version is available in either MP3 or Realplayer formats. Just click on your choice. The audio version sometimes includes interesting interviews.

**Print Versions**
We have re-instated the popular PDF version as many requested. Use this or the HTML.

[WWW.Bibleinthenews.com](http://WWW.Bibleinthenews.com)
In the light of this, consider the manner and circumstances of Jesus’ temptation.

Jesus, after being baptised of John and receiving holy spirit power from on high, was subjected by his Father to a trial in the wilderness. “Being full of the holy spirit” Luke says, he “was led by the spirit into the wilderness” (Luke 4:1).

This temptation is particularly interesting in the context of our study. The pride of life is here the natural tendency that is being appealed to. Eve had coveted the god-like position that was offered to her in the wisdom that might be obtained by partaking of the fruit. In the passage referred to above, we see that Jesus now had the opportunity of becoming a god-like figure in the eyes of the people of Jerusalem. He was led to the point of temptation—the pinnacle of the temple (God’s house!). If Jesus had cast himself down from that point in the sight of all the people without injury, the people would have worshipped him and there! It would have been the flesh that would have become the object of worship!

Christ’s rejection of the thought was final: “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” Jesus would not set the flesh up in opposition to God—for as can be seen from the scripture he had in mind (Deuteronomy 6:14-16) the worship of a false god would have kindled the anger of the Lord, and could have destroyed the people from off the face of the earth. Jesus did not make his flesh into a god, but rather condemned it that His Father might be glorified!

Jesus Christ, Son of God, thus came in the flesh. He committed no sin despite the fact that he was tempted in all points like as we are—but even this did not absolve him from mortality. Why was this? Well, we read in Hebrews 5:5-8, “So also Christ glorified not himself... Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered.”

James tells us how we are tempted (chap. 1:14), and the writer to the Hebrews informs us that Jesus was tempted likewise—yet in his case no actual transgression resulted from it.

“God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

Jesus then condemned that nature that is common to us all. He demonstrated publicly that this very nature itself was worthy of death, and in submitting himself to the death of the cross he destroyed the devil, alias sinful flesh. In so doing he also declared the righteousness of God, and His justice, from the foundation of the world. God was right to condemn human nature.
During the French Revolution the common people rose against the privileged classes, against the aristocracy and the priesthood. Their cry was Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Many clergy were slain, Church lands confiscated, and the arbitrary power of the Church was broken. But having thus suffered from the first wrath of the revolutionary masses, the Church soon took hold of the very cry of the revolution to win back her freedom and influence again. The cries of “equal rights for all” and “tolerance” were turned to good account by the Church in her adversity. So she adapted herself to the new situation and has made great progress under the banner of “God and the People,” as we shall see later.

The Catholic Church turned the cry of “equal rights for all” to good account in England. In Protestant England in the 18th century there were few Catholics and they were subject to various civil disabilities. They were not allowed in parliament, in the army, or in the professions. From the beginning of the 19th century they began a determined attack to gain their legal freedom. Several Bills failed to get through parliament but in 1829 the Emancipation Act was passed. With increasing boldness and unvarying persistence they pressed forward against a mixture of opposition and increasing tolerance. The foundation of a national church government was laid in 1850. The Pope reconstituted the English Hierarchy after 265 years, with the Metropolitan See of Westminster and twelve suffragan Sees. Parliament declared this illegal, and there was much agitation, but a growing body of tolerance allowed the matter to stand.

The growth of the Catholic position, as measured in buildings, is impressive. The Catholic Encyclopaedia (New York, 1909) describes the position at the beginning of the 19th century: “Chapels were few and far between, and were purposely placed in quarters where they were unlikely to attract observation. It was common to locate them in mews, and in their exterior they were hardly distinguishable from the adjacent stables.” By the beginning of the 20th century Westminster Cathedral, with its imposing architecture, had been built in the centre of London; over 300 monasteries and nearly 800 convents had come into being. Now there are over 1,000 convents, approaching
The caricature of John Bull (symbol for Britain) is seen fast asleep while Roman priests crawl all over him. The original caption read: “The Catholics to the conquest of England”

5,000 churches, and about 1,600 Catholic schools.

The Reaction against the French Revolution

Whenever the Roman church has suffered reverse in past ages, she has been big enough, and deep-rooted, to wait until reaction sets in, and then has pressed forward with the new opportunities. It is like business today. The big companies have sufficient capital reserves to tide them over difficult times. Very soon after the French revolution had wreaked its vengeance on the Catholic Church, it was realised that there was nothing to fill the void created by suppressing the Church. The people soon wanted their familiar religion back again. The majority probably had never ceased to be Catholics. So, although the arbitrary power of the Church was broken, and all men legally had equal rights, the Church soon found opportunity to progress as a religious system, still holding in her hands the hearts and conscience of her members. The rulers for their part found that they needed the Church to help them to rule. Barely ten years after the French Revolution Napoleon Bonaparte made a concordat with the Pope; and in 1804 the Pope came to Paris to crown “his dear son Napoleon” Emperor and successor to Charlemagne. Although Napoleon’s many wars continually and gradually weakened the political power of the Papacy, he always recognised the Pope as head of the Church.

In all the countries where the Revolution went, the same reaction followed in due course, and the Church was restored in part to her old position.

The Papacy turns to Democracy

Rome’s skill has often been shown in taking up a new position and giving support to those political forces which appear to be in the ascendant. Perceiving that feudalism had gone for ever, and that in every country the voice of the people was becoming the source of authority, Rome over a century has harnessed these new forces to her own progress. This is the fundamental and most interesting aspect of her progress.

We are well aware that in every country there has emerged the two opposing parties of “left” and “right,” socialist and conservative, with socialism increasingly making itself felt. The Church has managed to associate herself with the socialist movement and the working classes. She has, as it were, tamed the forces that broke her power, and has harnessed them to her own system. Thus on the Continent there has come into being Catholic-socialist political parties, Catholic Trade Unions, Catholic Civic Committees, Catholic lay preaching, etc. In recent years, since the last war, these have become a powerful, even dominating, force, in their various countries.

The way in which the Catholic Church has, as it were, joined hands with the people is seen in four aspects of life:

1. The creation of a popular Press.
2. The existence of Catholic-socialist political parties.
3. Catholic worker organisations in industry and commerce.
4. The development of a powerful and militant body of ordinary believers who aim to convert their fellows to Roman Catholicism: even the Roman Church now risks putting preaching into the hands of laymen as well as priests.

It is remarkable how the Roman Church has managed to move to the “left” and harness to her system the very forces that overthrew her power a century or more ago. Remarkable indeed that she has adapted her superstitious and dogmatic religion and her authoritarian government to be attractive to this so-called educated and enlightened age. The same four features, are rapidly growing in this country.

But the real hold upon modern society by the Church is shown in the growth of Catholic worker organisations in industry and commerce. This brings Catholic influence right up against the non-Catholic day by day; and also provides a weapon to promote Catholic interests—local and national—through the thousands of factories throughout the land.

Rome has lost none of her skill in working up the feelings of the people: politics and patriotism.

It must be clear to all that Roman Catholicism is not just a sect of Christendom which unfortunately holds some false doctrines: it is an international political system ever seeking power and using the cloak of Christianity. It is the Great City Babylon of Apocalypse ch. 18, and the gorgeously arrayed harlot of ch. 17, deceiving the whole earth.

Most readers will be sceptical at the assertion that an intrusion into all forms of national life is going on here in England. But there is adequate evidence that this is so.

On the question of Roman Catholic indirect influence through books and the press, it is not possible to state a brief answer, and this will be dealt with under a separate heading later. In her direct use of the press there are several Catholic national papers—The Herald, The Times, and The Universe are weekly papers. The Tablet and The Month are well-known monthly journals. The Catholic Truth Society is a publishing organisation devoted to Catholic books, and of course there are several other Catholic publishing houses like Burns and Oates.

A new journal has appeared on Railway bookstalls this year, “The Catholic Teachers Journal.” This is controlled by “The Catholic Teachers Federation, the Catholic Training Colleges, and the Publishers.” Here is a monthly propaganda journal, giving advice and information to teachers who are Catholics. And how many children does one teacher influence?

Catholic teachers are very valuable people. Archbishop Heenan, addressing a gathering of teachers, said:

Catholic teachers regarded their work as a vocation and gave enormous time to it, they rivalled the clergy in zeal for the spiritual lives of their children. The report goes on (Catholic Times, 8-11-57): Archbishop
Heenan urged the teachers to take an interest in the national Union of Teachers or the particular unions to which they belong. If Catholics were not regular in their attendances of union meetings how could they be expected to be elected to union posts? And unless they were elected to office how could they exercise their Catholic influence? That was true of Catholics in all forms of life.

We may understand well enough from this what is going on.

It is plain enough from this that an organised Catholic penetration of Unions and the like is under way. It will perhaps be surprising to know how many Catholic worker and professional organisations there are already in this country. Here is a list from the 1955-6 Catholic Directory.

- Catholic Radio Guild, for B.B.C. staff
- Catholic Teachers Federation
- Catholic Transport Guild
- Catholic Pharmaceutical Guild
- Catholic Musicians Guild
- Catholic Nurses Guild of Great Britain
- Civil Service Catholic Guild
- Guild of Artist and Craftsman
- Printers Guild
- Union of Catholic Students
- Young Christian Workers, for wage earning youth
- Catenian Association, for professional and business men

Altogether 95 Catholic national organisations were listed! And “Catholic Adult Institutions” occupied eleven pages.

So much for the largely unseen hand of the Catholic Church in industry, commerce, and local government. It is a field in which they will soon exert a big influence, because there are no opposing or countering groups, apart from a few Communists.

But is there anything in this country equivalent to the mass rallies and stirring up of public enthusiasm which we saw in Italy? There is no doubt that such things, well organised, make a big impression on the general public, and favour her progress. In the last few years the Roman Catholic Church has reached the point of being sufficiently powerful in this country to encourage mass public activities.

The May 30th 1958 Catholic Herald had on its front page heading: “12,000 attend an open air Mass in Glasgow.” The report opened:

“Representatives of fourteen nations sang the Lourdes hymn in their own language at the close of a solemn Pontifical Mass at Celtic Park, Glasgow, on Sunday—the climax of the Whitsuntide Conference of the C.Y.M.S. of Great Britain (Catholic Young Men’s Society). The Wembley Stadium has been used for a similar mass rally.”

A popular theme being worked on is to magnify the “persecution” of Catholics in the past. The Catholic Times (2-5-50) shows a procession of ordinary people passing through the City of London on the Tyburn Walk, which “retraces as far as modern traffic conditions allow, the route taken by so many of our English martyrs from Newgate prison to Tyburn.” The report runs: “There were more bystanders in evidence as the long procession made its way in a cold blustery wind to St. Patrick’s, Soho Square. A longer stop there, while the pilgrims were blessed with a relic of Blessed Oliver Plunket, the last martyr to die at Tyburn.”

In the Catholic Herald (21-11-52) there was a front page photograph of children and a nun playing in Lincolns Inn Field. It bore the legend: “Hunted Priests Hid Here,” and the theme was filled out to a paragraph. This attention to the so-called times of persecution stirs the imagination and fires the Catholic with a crusading spirit. Rome’s methods are infinitely diverse, but all contribute to the desired end.

Quite a different activity was the hiring of the Great Hall at Olympia a few years ago to display to Britain the hundreds of Religious
Orders and Missions which Rome has created throughout the world. There were representatives of each Order in their native dress and setting. It was certainly a strange “Exhibition.” And a tremendous Altar had been built in the hall, dominating all, at which Cardinal Griffin celebrated “Pontifical High Mass.” What effort, organisation and money is put into these propaganda activities. No wonder Rome is progressing, and all other sects appear feeble and death-stricken by comparison.

So much for the public organised Roman Catholic efforts in this country to advance its influence under modern democratic conditions. When one sees the increasing boldness, confidence, and open challenge now displayed, it is surely not a far cry to see Catholic Civic Committees being set up in this country similar to those in Italy. A paragraph from The Times (29-8-58) describes these Committees:

“Distinctly political though theoretically unpartisan is the network of Civic Committees. Though theoretically separate from Catholic Action it so happens that the committees were founded by Professor Luigi Gedda, who continues to be closely involved in their work. They were set up in 1948 to help defeat the Communists in the general election. They have survived the panic that brought them into existence. The mark of origin is upon them; organised directly to meet the Communist challenge with a branch or cell in every parish through out the country and with specially trained activists on which to draw, they possess a similarity of method with that of their enemies.”

There remains to mention the most well-known Roman Catholic peoples’ organisation in this country—The Sword of the Spirit, the counterpart of Catholic Action in Italy. Officially its object is defined as “to create an informed and active Catholic public opinion on international questions affecting the Church.” Whether or not it organises the Catholic press campaigns, I do not know. This activity is claimed to be very successful. There are advertisements in the daily press and elsewhere inviting the reader to enquire into the meaning of Catholic teaching. One line of advertising has offered a free Study course by correspondence. According to an article in the national press in May of this year:

“The Catholic Inquiry Centre last week dealt with its 100,000th request for information about the free correspondence courses on the Roman faith that it advertises and distributes. Father Michael O’Connor, director of the Catholic centre, said yesterday, ‘Now we plan to expand. We shall step up our advertising. Within three or four years we shall be taking half page spaces in newspapers.’”

The director said that over 50,000 people had taken, or are taking, the course, and over 6,000 have approached parish priests for instruction. This is but one source of their converts. No wonder they claim an increase in Britain of over 100,000 people per annum for the past twelve years.

Above: Traitors Gate at the Tower of London. Visitors today are informed of the Catholic “martyrs” that passed this way to their death. The martyrdom of many Protestants that took place at the tower is given no emphasis. Thus the public mind is prepared to be sympathetic to Roman Catholicism, seeing them as having been harshly persecuted in British history. This is however the “traitors” gate!

The Conquest of Protestant England Completed!

It has taken many years, but inch-by-inch Rome has edged her way into Britain and has neutralized the Protestantism that once existed there. The above article by Graham Pearce traces some of the steps that have been taken. The final step will be to fully integrate Britain into a United Europe where she will be tied down by countless “strings” of legislation, and the English Church brought into an ecumenical association that will bind it to the dictates of Rome.

Since the last war particularly, Roman Catholics have penetrated the media as is shown in the article on page 16. Many other aspects of society and politics have been similarly penetrated, so that in the United Kingdom as elsewhere “she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.” (Revelation 18:7).

The masses are blind to all this, for “the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” (Revelation 17:2). And again, putting it another way: “by thy sorceries were all nations deceived” (chapter 18:23). What has been happening in Britain has its counterpart elsewhere. Countries that were traditionally Protestant, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand have been subjected to a transformation of society (a phrase used by Roman Catholic writers themselves). Judgement will come however, as Revelation says.
Pope John-Paul II not only achieved the title of “Superstar” (awarded to him by TIME magazine), he raised the whole profile of the Roman Catholic Church, giving it an influence and a voice unequalled by any other religious organisation in the world. His legacy is that of a papal influence that is formidable. A few sentences uttered by his successor Benedict XVI, can put the whole Islamic world into a frenzy while at the same time rallying both political and religious support for Catholicism in Europe and the western world.

By any measure, the Pope today has a “great voice”—and it is a voice that is both echoed and amplified by the media, though few perceive the extent of this.

Promoting Papal Policy

Not only is the image of the Pope and his church given prominent and favourable publicity by the print and electronic media, but Vatican policy on world issues is usually found to be given full voice by newspapers, news magazines, radio and television. Whether the war in Iraq, the stand-off with Iran, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the European Constitution—it is the voice of Rome that is heard through the popular media.

This was seen during the recent war in Lebanon. On July 14, 2006, Benedict condemned Israel’s “attack” on a sovereign nation (Lebanon)—and that is exactly how the media presented it. In fact they did so with great enthusiasm—even to the point of misrepresentation. ‘HATE THY NEIGHBOUR’ ran a headline in TIME magazine—implying that Israelis hate their neighbour on the same level that Israel is hated. That is not a true presentation of the situation—and anyone who has taken the trouble to speak with Israelis must know that all they want is to be left in peace. The U.K.’s Guardian newspaper ran a cartoon depicting Israel’s act of self-defence from Hezbollah terrorist activity as a mailed fist used against Lebanese children (see opposite far right). The Times of London, in a not-too subtle cartoon (below, third right) suggests that Israel’s move against Hezbollah was disproportionate. While many have noted this bias in the media, few seem to recognize that the Pope placed himself clearly on the side of Lebanon by his statements, and by having his Secretary of State, Angelo Sodano meet with the Lebanese Prime Minister, Fuad Saniora (below) on July 26, while military action was in progress.

We have to recognize that the media is subject to many different influences from various interest groups. Humanists, socialists, environmentalists, professional groups, both right and left wing lobbies and so forth. But prominent among them is the Roman Church which is well organized in order to influence both the media and other centres of power. In a book entitled The R.C.’s by George Scott (pub. 1967) the author gives an example of how Catholics have exerted and do exert pressure, and how they mount campaigns of protest. He writes:

“I recall, incidentally, the story of the Jesuit..."
A Mouth Speaking Great Things

There is a symbol that is relevant to this in Daniel chapter 7. If we can allow ourselves to think about this, it becomes quite revealing. We refer of course to the “little horn” with “eyes like the eyes of the Man, and a mouth speaking great things” (verse 8).

This little horn power is a development that was to arise out of the fourth beast system of verse 7; that is, out of “the fourth kingdom upon earth” (see verse 23). So the little horn power was to grow out of the Roman Empire—that being the fourth empire (1. Babylon 2. Medo-Persia 3. Greece and 4. Rome). It would arise after the original ten (Barbarian) horn powers that formed the nations of Europe.

The eyes in this Roman horn tell us of its religious association, for the eyes are those of a “seer” or prophet (compare 1 Samuel 9:9). This is a Roman prophet or “overseer”—a bishop. Hence the term “Holy See.”

Not only that, but he has “a mouth speaking great things.” And Daniel 7:11 informs us that this mouth will be very active as the time of judgement draws near—for “because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake...” the Roman beast is destroyed. His great words are “against the most High” says verse 25, but the judgement shall sit, and this Roman prophet with a mouth will be found to be an enemy of the saints of the most High.

This Roman false prophet is seen again in Revelation 16:13,14. Here we see unclean spirits coming out of his mouth. These “spirits” are his teaching (see 1 John 4:1); they are “the great things” spoken by the little horn seer. 

Left: The Times (UK newspaper) publishes a not too subtle cartoon which suggests to readers that Israel is using ‘disproportionate’ force against Hezbollah.

Right: The Guardian newspaper depicts Israel as as a brutal mailed fist hitting Lebanese children. Who would guess that this was self defence?

THE BIBLE MAGAZINE VOL. 19. ISSUE No.4.

Voice
“the voice of the great words which the horn spake.”

From Zechariah 13:2 we can also see that prophets who were associated with the names of idols, were also those who were linked with an unclean spirit—a false or lying spirit. A spirit of deception. It is the great voice of Babylon (Jeremiah 51:55) which has echoed down the centuries and which will be active through the mouth of the false prophet to gather the nations to the battle of that great day of God Almighty—Revelation 16:14.

The Catholic Almanac says: “The declared purpose of Vatican Radio station is “that the voice of the Supreme Pastor may be heard throughout the world by means of the ether waves...” It is now heard through many other channels as well.

**War against the Saints**

The Roman Seer, in addition to speaking great things, was to make “war with the saints” and “wear out the saints of the most High” (Daniel 7:21 and 25). This enmity against the saints, or “holy people” (compare chapter 12:7) would resonate through the voice, for as Jesus said: “those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart” (Matthew 15:18).

The holy people, or saints, are those who are in covenant relationship with the God of Israel (see Psalm 50:5). The Jewish people being the subjects of the national covenant made at Sinai (Exodus 19:5; 24:7, 8 etc.) are thus, the holy people. So also are all those who “take hold of my covenant” in after ages (Isaiah 56:6). This includes the new covenant spoken of by Jeremiah (31:31-34); a new covenant that promised forgiveness of iniquity and that sins would be erased from memory. Jesus Christ said that this new testament, or covenant, was in his blood, and that it was shed (poured out) for “you”—that is, for Israel (see Acts 13:23); and for those who become “fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God” who had been taken out of the Gentiles for the Name (Eph. 2:19; Acts 15:14).

**An Anti-Semitic Voice**

It was an apostate Christendom that thus made war upon God’s saints and this is seen in the well-known anti-Semitism of Christendom, as well as in those accounts left on record by George Fox, Samuel Moreland—and even Gibbon. The Jews were depicted as “Christ-killers” and over the centuries this image created (through art and the media of that time), a deep impression upon the European mind which resulted in the anti-Semitism of more recent years. It was manifested in the German “Holy Roman Empire,” both in the Catholic and Lutheran sectors of that system. Behind it all was the voice of Rome—the little horn speaking great things.

It was this anti-Semitism that rose to prominence during the Nazi era, and if the propaganda of that time is examined, it will be found that anti-Jewish sentiments were frequently associated with anti-British and anti-American publicity. This was seen in written material, cartoons and posters, songs and radio; in all the media of the time. Protestant England and America were seen as enemies of the Roman system, so that it was not difficult to depict them as allies and supporters of the hated Jew.

There is little doubt that the anti-Israel propaganda emanating from the Arab world today is derived from the anti-Semitism of Europe. It is well-known for example that the famous Protocols circulate in Arab countries today just as they did originally in Europe. During the Second World War the leader of the Palestinian Arabs, the Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini, ran the Arab office from Berlin. He called Hitler the “protector of Islam.” It should not surprise us to find echoes of Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda in the Arab world today.

Behind German anti-Semitism was the voice of Roman Catholic anti-Semitism. The
evidence of this has been presented in books by Avro Manhattan, by Edmund Paris, and in more recent publications such as Hitler’s Pope and Hitler’s Willing Executioners. Furthermore, this Vatican support for Nazi criminals continued after the war—the incredible story of this has been told by Mark Aarons and John Loftus in the book Unholy Trinity. As many highly-placed Nazis escaped to the West via the Vatican’s ‘Ratlines’ (a code-name for the operation), it is understandable that their deeply-held convictions would surface again in those countries where they found refuge, so that once again the anti-Semitic voice of the little horn would be heard.

Penetrating the Media

The Roman Church has appreciated the power of the media for many years, and especially the electronic media. The Vatican set up its own radio station so that the papal voice could be heard in all parts of the world—and its first broadcast was made in February of 1931. But it was not satisfied with that!

The potential was quickly and decisively seized upon, and several encyclical letters were published on the subject so that Catholics everywhere might be alerted to it. Pius XII (Hitler’s Pope) published Miranda Prorsus in 1957 addressing “The Cinema, Sound Broadcasting and Television.” (see inside font cover, contents page). This document outlined:

1. The Church’s interest in the inventions of modern science
2. The right of the Church to have access to these means of communication
3. The rights and duties of the State
4. The duties of those professionally engaged in the industry

The encyclical went on to encourage the establishment of National Offices of supervision and gave a detailed consideration of each section of the electronic media.

Paul VI (above left) issued the encyclical Inter Mirifica on December 4, 1963. This was “The Decree on the Means of Mass Communication.” The objective, says this document, is to “develop a right public opinion.”

“All the sons of the Church should endeavour with one mind and one intent to see that the means of mass communication are used effectively in all the varied works of the apostolate in accordance with the requirements of the time and the situation. There must be no delay; the greatest zeal is called for.”

From “A Handbook for School Leavers” entitled The Lay Apostolate, we learn of a special Guild set up in the United Kingdom:

“The Guild of St Francis de Sales is a professional guild for Catholic writers, including journalists, authors, writers for radio, advertising and public relations.”

In 1971 the “Pastoral Instruction for the application of the (1963) Decree...” was published, giving a detailed explanation and pointing out that:

“Vatican Council invited the people of God
‘to use effectively and at once the means of social communication, zealously availing themselves of them for apostolic purposes.’"

In a detailed and thorough treatment, this ‘Instruction’ clearly sets out how the media could play its part in forming public opinion.

In harmony with these objectives the Roman Church has managed to capture many key positions in the media. The United Kingdom is a useful illustration of this, with Charles Moore as a Catholic editor of The Daily Telegraph, with Catholics in charge of the BBC and ITN, The Times newspaper has a Catholic editor, as do many other papers.

**The Anti-Israel Bias**

It is the task of the mouth of the false prophet to speak forth “unclean spirits,” or “doctrines of devils (demons)” (see Revelation 16:13, 14 and 1 Timothy 4:1). These doctrines are the “great things” spoken by the mouth of the little horn of Daniel 7. The effect of them is to gather the kings of the earth (Europe) “and of the whole world...to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” In the words of Isaiah’s prophecy this “is the day of the LORD’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion” (Isaiah 34:8).

The controversy of Zion is what this battle is to be about, so the mouth of the false prophet and of the little horn (one and the same mouth) will speak forth great things and doctrines which are essentially anti-Zionist, anti-Israel and anti-Semitic. This is what we can expect to see coming forth from those media where the Roman Church has a controlling influence. They will seek to form a public opinion which is hostile to Israel.

The evidence is that most major news agencies have been engaged in this propaganda war against Israel during recent years. Reuters, Associated Press, the BBC, CNN, the Guardian newspaper, Newsweek magazine and Time are just some examples.

There is so much evidence of what one writer called “BBC malice” against Israel, that the material could form the basis of a thick book! Any reader can avail themselves of the facts through a little research via the Internet.

As Caroline Glick, managing editor of The Jerusalem Post asked (August 29, 06): “What are we seeing when we watch events from the Middle East on our television screens? Is it news or is it terrorist theatre?”

In one BBC report Orla Guerin commented on the damage caused by Israeli military action against the Lebanese village of Bint Jbel. She said: “I haven’t seen a single building that isn’t damaged...This town has really been wiped out.” Yet on the same day Alex Thomson on Channel 4 News reported: “...it has to be said that on the outskirts, the suburbs—pretty much untouched by the Israeli attack...” We may ask which report is accurate and which exaggerated?

According to the Jerusalem Post, the BBC’s one-sided coverage of the Lebanese conflict prompted some pressure on the Israeli Foreign Ministry to resume a boycott of the corporation and to withdraw credentials from its correspondents. The report stated that:

“diplomatic officials said the network had not been reporting the war fairly. Senior diplomatic officials in Jerusalem went as far as saying that the reports we see give the impression that the BBC is working on behalf of Hizbullah instead of doing fair journalism.”

The boycott did not take place, and so the misrepresentation continued unabated.ed.

Readers may wish to consider the material available on the website www.BBCWATCH.com

Another report focuses upon CNN. This is from Media Critiques.

“Typical of Hezbollah’s manipulation of the media was the live story Nic Robertson submitted from Lebanon (for CNN). Robertson was given a tour by “Hezbollah Press Officer” Hussein Nabulsi. Throughout the interview, Robertson simply accepts Nabulsi’s claims that Israel was only attacking civilian areas. “No evidence of military equipment here,” Robertson tells CNN’s global audience. At several points, Nabulsi actually tells..."
Robertson’s cameraman exactly what to film. A week after the report aired, Robertson appeared on CNN’s “Reliable Sources” where he admitted that he had no way of confirming what he had just told the world. In Robertson’s own words: ‘(Hezbollah) had control of the situation. They designated the places that we went to, and we certainly didn’t have time to go into the houses or lift up the rubble to see what was underneath. (Hezbollah) has very, very good control over its areas in the south of Beirut. They deny journalists access into those areas. You don’t get in there without their permission. We didn’t have enough time to see if perhaps there was somebody there who was, you know, a taxi driver by day, and a Hezbollah fighter by night.’

Add to all this the evidence that several pictures of Lebanese casualties were staged (including one corpse that “sat up” at the wrong moment!—see left). There is far too much evidence of this anti-Israel bias in the media for us to provide examples here. Readers must learn to see it for themselves.

Visit the website given in the box below (left).

All this is forming a public opinion that is hostile towards Israel—and behind it there is that great voice being amplified by the world’s media.

“Behold I Come…”

What some are accomplishing through the media, others are accomplishing through political mouths (the dragon mouth and the beast mouth). That is another story. But it is while these things are going on that the words of the Spirit declare: “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame” (Revelation 16:15). To watch, is to be alert, awake. There should be an awareness of what is going on—of what we are being told about in the context. We should not be deceived by those things which come out of the mouth of the false prophet. Those who trust what they read in newspapers or hear on the radio—or watch on television are being very foolish. The LORD has spoken; He has told us the truth about the world in which we live, and He has warned us against the deception that is out there (see Revelation 18:3 and 23). The world is drunk, it is intoxicated; all nations are deceived.

God is working out His purpose through Israel, and He has said that He will gather all nations into the valley of Jehoshaphat. He will gather them against Jerusalem; He will gather them to Armageddon and plead with them “for my people and for my heritage Israel” (Joel 3:2; Zech. 14:2; Rev. 16:16).

All nations must learn the Truth, that God has chosen Israel, and that He will yet set His King upon His holy hill of Zion. In that day the great voice will be destroyed from the midst of Babylon the Great!
The principles of democracy did not originate from the Bible, they seem to have been derived from various forces at work in ancient Greece. In fact, whenever the will of the people asserted itself in Bible times it usually led to the corruption and eventual destruction of the true religion of God. Several examples could be cited to demonstrate this of course, but the incident recorded in 1 Samuel chapter 8 makes the point adequately enough. The elders of Israel came to Samuel desiring that he make “a king to judge us like all the nations.” So God says to Samuel:

“...Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them” (1 Sam. 8:7).

“The voice of the people” gave utterance to a vote against God; “they have rejected me” said the Lord.

We see that the same principle was to be at work when the one who would be “rejected of men” should come (Isaiah 53:3). The popular vote went to Barabbas, not to Jesus Christ (Matt. 27:20, 21). When it comes to matters of religion, the principles of democracy have never been favourable to the Truth.

The Reason for Failure

Democracy is but the expression of the human mind and of the will of man. In Bible terms, it is “the will of the flesh,” and it is naturally at “enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:7). That is why “the voice of the people” in 1 Samuel 8 rejected God as their king.

Putting it another way, God says through Isaiah the prophet: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa. 55:8, 9).

An entirely different set of values is involved as Jesus said (Luke 16:15): “... for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.” Hence it was that men usually spoke well of the false prophets and persecuted the faithful ones (c/p Luke 6:26). A majority view therefore is no insurance against falsehood or error when it comes to religious matters. The millions of Moslems or Catholics are no guarantee of either truth or salvation. The principle stated by Jesus was: “...wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. 7:13-14).

If we are willing to heed these Bible principles then we must conclude that, more often than not, the majority will be on the wrong side of a matter—and that the reason for this failure of democracy, especially in religious matters, is human nature itself.

Elected officials

There is a related problem attached to this—and this concerns the choice of those individuals who will represent the multitude, and in some capacity “serve” in a leadership role. Can human nature be relied upon to choose leaders and ministers for the right reasons?

In most cases it will be popular individuals who are voted into office—to put it bluntly, those who please others. This is why the politician always smiles at everyone so much and hugs babies! The principle is the same more or less in religious congregations, though it may be somewhat disguised or more subtle. Democracy inevitably produces politicians! This was a danger that the apostle Paul was aware of, and which he forcefully distanced himself from:

“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10).

And again in 1 Thessalonians 2:4-6:

But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness: Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.”

Good men do not seek positions of influence or leadership in a religious community or congregation (c/p 3 John 9), but sometimes it is imposed upon them. Some years ago a historian wrote of the situation in the first century and its development. “The first disciples and their immediate followers had no need of an organization, an elaborate ritual or a philosophical formulation of their faith: they expected the Messiah hourly. But when the second coming was found to be delayed, adjustments became inevitable. Leaders were forthcoming to organize the brethren’s meetings, to conduct their devotions, and to proselytize the heathen. The very growth of the Church and above all the pressure of persecution made organization imperative. The Church evolved a hierarchy, modelled on the imperial administrative system” (Gordon Childe, What Happened in History).

In our day the tendency would be to build an organization upon democratic principles, and there are several instances of this in the religious world. It has very real dangers however—dangers that are common to that nature which is enmity against God.

New Testament Times

There is no exact counterpart today, to the situation that existed in the first century. In those days the holy spirit (that is, the spirit of truth)—John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13) was given to the apostles of Jesus Christ so that they could teach the truth that inspired them, and direct the affairs of the young ecclesias. The apostles...
were appointed from above—they were not elected representatives of the ecclesia (see 1 Timothy 1:1); there was no democratic process involved.

Thus, the brethren met together on the basis of “the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship” (Acts 2:42). Even when choice had to be made so that some might serve the ecclesia in “daily ministrations,” such as was the case recorded in Acts chapter 6, those who were chosen according to strict qualifications (verse 3) were then approved by the apostles—verse 6. In all this organization, the authority was from the holy spirit working through the apostles—it did not derive from the ecclesia.

It was God who “set some in the ecclesia, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that…” various other forms of help (see 1 Corinthians 12:28).

As members recognized the true origin of the apostle’s authority, and of those “who have the rule over you,” they would voluntarily submit themselves—Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24.

The human mind being what it is however, there were those even in New Testament times who would manifest a spirit of disobedience. Not everyone would remain faithful to the high calling in Christ—hence the predictions of a falling away, such as can be seen in Acts 20:28-30. Here, and even to those which the holy spirit had made overseers, it was said “of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”

The holy spirit (the spirit of truth) did not compel obedience, any more than the knowledge of the truth enforces obedience today.

As the apostolic age drew to its close, the holy spirit “gifts” were withdrawn, and a permanent record of apostolic teaching was compiled as the completed New Testament writings. The instruction and guidance of the New Testament, together with the Old Testament, are a permanent record of apostolic teaching for believers until Christ returns. The New Testament, together with the Old Testament, are the holy spirit “gifts” were withdrawn, and a permanent record of apostolic teaching. In the New Testament, together with the Old Testament, the holy spirit made overseers, it was said “of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”

The holy spirit (the spirit of truth) did not compel obedience, any more than the knowledge of the truth enforces obedience today.

As the apostolic age drew to its close, the holy spirit “gifts” were withdrawn, and a permanent record of apostolic teaching was compiled as the completed New Testament writings. The instruction and guidance of the New Testament, together with the Old Testament, would provide all the necessary teaching for believers until Christ returns. The test for all is outlined by the apostle John in 1 John 4:6, “We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

**Individual Salvation**

Salvation does not depend upon membership of this or that “religion.” It depends upon a belief of the Truth—as the apostle has left on record (2 Thess. 2:13). “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.” Belief and obedience is what is required.

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).

“...do for us—we have to take it in hand for ourselves. The Scripture tells us to be “renewed in the spirit of your mind” (Ephesians 4:23), to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Eph. 12:2). How is this to be done? Peter says (1 Peter 2:2), “desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your life” says James 1:21. In order to engraft or implant the word of the truth into our minds we must read it and study it for ourselves. We cannot leave it to others—we cannot simply follow the multitude.

**Spurious Authorities**

While it is very clear from Scripture that the word of God itself is the only authority in matters of religion, there are innumerable religious bodies that consider themselves to be the last word and the infallible authority. The position claimed by the Roman Catholic Church is as well known as it is absurd. In a pamphlet by Joseph Cardinal Ritter of St. Louis (USA) entitled Good News to Man...

The Mormons began as a self-appointed Committee...
The events that have been looked for since the 19th Century are coming to pass in our time!

By Don Pearce  RUGBY  UK

As we look back over the events of the past few months, once again we can only marvel at the work of the angels under the Lord’s direction. More and more our eyes are able to bring into focus the long-ordained situation at the time of the end. The hopes and the understanding of Bible students are becoming increasingly justified. Many details were recorded in the middle of the 19th century at a time when there was no nation of Israel in the land, the Roman Catholic Church was a broken system, and Moslem power represented by Turkey was a fading power. Yet from a diligent piecing together of God’s prophetic word they were able to see very much what we see today! Yet at times it seemed almost impossible! The twists and turns of history gave rise to new interpretations, which—at the time—seemed “to fit”, but now are seen as dampsquibs in the political heavens. God decrees and it happens! Sometimes it requires much patience, but eventually the picture in the political heavens will match that foretold in the scriptures of truth!

“...Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry” (Hab 2:2,3).

So what do we see as the important happening of the past few months? The most obvious is the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah operating in Lebanon. There is unfinished business here. We shall explore some of the consequences that are becoming apparent following this conflict. One of which is the startling assembly of a European naval force in the eastern Mediterranean and troops into southern Lebanon. Is this a dummy run of that greater invasion to come?

Equally important for an understanding of the prophetic word is the side-by-side advancement of Germany and the papacy. At the same time links between Russia and Europe are growing, not only in the political world but also in the spiritual world of the Churches.

Israel’s Response to Hezbollah Kidnapping

Israel is always very defensive of her troops. On numerous occasions she has agreed to swap quite large numbers of prisoners in order to get back a few of her own people. It is part of Israel’s heritage—her own people are precious.

The Hezbollah terrorist group was set up in Lebanon by Iran in 1985 following Israel’s invasion of southern Lebanon. They have been trained, equipped and paid for by Iran, and as the events of the past few months have shown they have become a disciplined army, a forward arm of Iran. Iran has long had grand plans of becoming the major player in the Middle East, the representative of Moslem power in the region. She seeks two goals. The first is the elimination of Israel and the removal of western influences in the Middle East and the second is to bring under her control the Arab nations of the region. Hezbollah is her planned means of eliminating Israel. Their charter is quite open—except they will not use the word Israel—so it is “the elimination of the Zionist entity”!

The Moslem world is divided into Shiite and Sunni, there is much rivalry, hatred and distrust between the two, but the destruction of Israel unites them. This map (left) from Debka shows the distribution of the two groups. One readily sees that the majority of countries are not Shiite but Sunni. Iran and Iraq account for the majority of Shiites. Incidentally the population of Iran is greater than that of all the Arab states of the Gulf combined! So Lebanon is Sunni, yet Hezbollah is Shiite. In other words they are a minority group that takes their orders not from the Lebanese government but from Iran. When Israel withdrew from Lebanon in 1982, Hezbollah moved swiftly to repair the damage. The sting was not in the tail, but in the foundations! Heavily reinforced concrete bunkers were installed to accommodate Hezbollah’s weaponry. So under civilian buildings they built up an incredible network of defences. It had an added advantage—Israel’s reluctance to cause civilian casualties, in spite of what the press might say—meant that they could operate from civilian centres without great risk.

The details of the 34-day war are well known, having occupied much of the media’s attention during July and August. The heavy bias of the press against Israel was very apparent. The BBC reporter Orla Guerin reflected her Irish convent education in her scorn for Israel’s defence of itself against a group sworn to her elimination. One of the key advantages that Hezbollah had over Israel was her control of the media. One can watch a short movie on this and several other incidents at http://www.aish.com/movies/PhotoFraud.asp

The Aftermath of the Lebanon War in Israel

There has been much soul searching. It has revealed the deep divisions between the civilian government and the military. There have already been resignations from the military and many in Israel would like to see Olmert resign too.

Olmert’s popularity has slumped, as has support for his new party Kadima; new parties in Israel do not have a very good track record of long survival!

The Israeli military quickly learn from their battle experiences and it is expected that with American help she will work out ways to overcome the sophisticated weaponry that was used against her. Israel found that Hezbollah was armed with very advanced equipment from Iran, Syria and Russia.

Lebanon

There seems to be a growing disquiet at the fact that Hezbollah were allowed to operate independently within Lebanon. The Lebanese are under pressure to say we don’t want a repetition of this. Hezbollah were quick off the mark in organising generous cash grants to those who had suffered damage to property. They were being bankrolled by Iran—incidentally the world centre for counterfeit notes!
Hezbollah, Lebanon at Odds

"A month after fighting in Lebanon ended, hostilities with Israel have given way to a political struggle between the Western-backed government and Hezbollah as Lebanese troops try to take control of the Islamic militant group’s longtime southern stronghold.

“The outcome could prove crucial to the stability of the cease-fire with Israel and to the future of Lebanon’s fragile central government—at a time when Syria, a key patron of Hezbollah, is trying to claw back the influence it lost last year.

“Neither the 15,000 Lebanese troops nor an equal number of U.N. peacekeepers who are to patrol a buffer zone in the south have the mandate or will power to forcibly disarm Hezbollah...” (The Associated Press 16-9-06).

The extent to which Europe has been sucked into this area is remarkable in the light of the nations of Ezekiel 38. Suddenly the expectation of the forces of Europe combining to come into Israel no longer seems unreal! They are rapidly assembling on Israel’s northern border. We are not saying this is the start of the invasion of Israel, but it is certainly several steps toward that happening. Israel has to be dwelling securely. If Lebanon does succeed in quelling Hezbollah, then similar arrangements could be put into place in Gaza.

In spite of the rhetoric, many Arabs want peace not war. Increasingly there is a wary acceptance of the reality of the existence of Israel, and a seeking to find a way of bringing stability to the area. After all it is the ordinary people who are suffering and have suffered because of their leaders bellicose schemes. They see the living standards in Israel and in the West and not unnaturally wish for a better life for themselves.

Iran

The Jerusalem Post (14-9-06) carried an interesting interview with the broadcaster Menashe Amir, an Iranian who made aliyah in 1959 and who runs the Voice of Israel Persian service. He stated that the Iranian middle classes, who live in the cities and who make up more than 60% of the population, oppose their leaders belligerence. They are pro-western, and hope that America will help them overthrow the current regime. Of the 3 million who have fled Iran at least half went to the US.

She appears to have regarded the events of this war with mixed feelings. There were considerable casualties amongst Hezbollah, and a great expenditure of their rocket stock either through being fired at Israel or struck by Israel. On the other hand many of the Hezbollah fighters stood up to the Israeli advances, preventing deep incursions. It seems to have emboldened Iran to defy America and the UN over their opposition to Iran’s nuclear weapons developments. They have defied the UN deadline to halt such weapons preparation, and the 2-week extension that the EU offered has now past. Iran recently held military exercises in a defiant challenge to America and Israel.

If the West does nothing then there will be no stopping Iran. She knows that Europe is reluctant to take any military measures, let alone economic sanctions. President Chirac has openly broken ranks with America in leading the opposition to economic sanctions. It looks as if Israel and America will be left to deal a knockout blow to Iran’s nuclear plans.

The vast assembly of ships in the eastern Mediterranean allegedly to provide back up to the UNIFIL troops in Lebanon, seems to indicate that Europe is expecting further trouble in the region and wants to be there to watch the action! (see map below).

“Lebanese Security” Is the Pretext for the Naval Babel around Lebanon’s Shores

“The extraordinary build-up of European naval and military strength in and around Lebanon’s shores is way out of proportion for the task the European contingents of expanded UNIFIL have undertaken: to create a buffer between Israel and Hezbollah.

“Close investigation by DEBKAfile’s military and intelligence sources discloses that “Lebanese security” and peacemaking is not the object of the exercise. It is linked to the general anticipation of a military clash between the United States and Israel, on one side, and Iran and possibly Syria on the other, some time from now until November. “This expectation has brought together the greatest sea and air armada Europe has ever assembled at any point on earth since World War II: two carriers with 75 fighter-bombers, spy planes and helicopters on their decks; 15 warships of various types—7 French, 5 Italian, 2-3 Green, 3-5 German, and five American; thousands of Marines—French, Italian and German, as well as 1,800 US Marines” (Debka 4-9-06).

“Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States

One of the consequences of this war has been to drive these moderate Arab states back into the arms of the West—America and Britain in particular. The kings and emirs on the thrones of Arabia know that should Iran succeed in driving the Jews into the sea, that they would be next on the list. Their more liberal Sunni way of life would be superseded by the more extreme Shiite rule. It is in their interest that Israel remains strong and a bulwark against that advancement. So although there may have been celebrations on the streets over the “wonderful achievements” of Nasrallah the Hezbollah leader, this wasn’t the situation in the corridors of power!

“Between the Jewish state’s nuclear technology, and reports of its owning hundreds of atomic warheads, and Persian Iran’s own nuclear technological progress that might build atomic weapons, Arab countries find themselves threatened from two sides.

“Although they will not say it publicly, it’s not Israel’s reported nuclear and conventional arsenal that scares these Arab governments, most of which have shown desire for peace with Israel, but Iran’s military and political capabilities.

“Independent Arab analysts say Arab governments, none of which have been freely elected, fear Tehran because it threatens their own regimes’ stability more than Israel does, although they have maintained cordial relations with Iran.

“The leaders of Jordan and Egypt, the only two Arab countries that signed peace treaties with Israel, and Saudi Arabia have publicly warned against a rising Shiite power with a ‘Shiite crescent’ extending from Iran and Iraq through Syria and Lebanon on the Mediterranean”(Middle East News 27-8-06).

Saudi and Gulf Emirates Turn back to the American Military Umbrella

“While ostensibly keeping their distance from America in deference to popular sentiment, these Arab rulers may unbearishly and for lack of choice accede to an American military action to abort Iran’s drive for a nuclear weapon.

“None of them sees any real alternative to the United States as a patron. The prospect of Iran becoming master of the region is viewed as
had two aims:-  

paid a visit to his home country of Bavaria, a spearhead of this campaign. In September he restore “christianity to the heart of Europe.”

The German Pope has targeted Germany as the tanks and $400m for helicopters.

with the US that could be worth $2.9bn for contracts” (Nabou.com 18-8-06).

Also in August deals were being discussed with the US that could be worth $2.9bn for tanks and $400m for helicopters.

The Pope Targets Germany

Let’s now look at the situation in Europe. We saw last time the drive by the Pope to restore “christianity to the heart of Europe.” The German Pope has targeted Germany as the spearhead of this campaign. In September he paid a visit to his home country of Bavaria, a strongly Catholic part of Germany. His visit had two aims:-

“Pope Benedict xvi returned to his Bavarian homeland this past weekend for a six-day pilgrimage. He took the opportunity to address two key issues that are increasingly binding the religion of Rome with the politics of Berlin.

“First, Benedict focused his visit on reviving Christianity in his native country, which is split equally between Catholics and Protestants. Second, he addressed the status of Muslim residents in Europe.

“The pope’s endeavours reflect a notable commingling of church and state, one that is specifically represented in the ongoing German-Vatican discussion, also resurrected on this visit, regarding Catholicism’s representation in the European Constitution. Bavaria—Germany’s most religious and most populous state, accounting for a quarter of the nation’s Catholics—gave the pope an enthusiastic welcome September 9. The pope, though concerned with Germany’s secularization and declining church attendance, commented, “German Catholicism is not as tired as some people

think.”

“For beyond the pope’s visit, it was a more widespread desire to unite Germany under a single common cause that dominated the Catholic Church. In this, he sought to unite Catholics at their historic cultural base, the European continent! He knows that the greatest threat to Catholicism in Europe. He sees this as his greatest cause—that he has been chosen for this moment.

“What better way to unite Europe and return it to its former imperial days of glory than to provide people with a single common cause that overrides all else and counteracts all tendencies for division? So, in his own very ‘Germanic way, Benedict, this Bavarian pope, has simply lit the touch tape to an already smoldering issue of concern to all Europeans, the threat of Islamic jihad.”

We await further developments!

Germans Reconsider Religion

There has been a steady stream of articles about Germany’s resurgence not only on the economic and political fronts but also in the religious. The above was the headline to one article.

“This is the continent where some leading thinkers are talking about a “post-Christian Europe.” And this is the country of philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who infamously quipped, “God is dead.”

“Some may be surprised at the receptivity in Germany this week to visiting Pope Benedict XVI’s message Germans themselves are modeling a growing acceptance of religion’s role in shaping society”—Christian Monitor 15-9-06.

EU Needs Constitution with Christian Reference, Merkel says

The German Chancellor, Angela Merkel visited the Pope shortly before his Bavarian visit and promised support for his campaign to “put God back into the constitution.” Germany takes over the presidency of the EU for the first half of 2007. This coincides with the 50th anniversary celebrations of the signing of the Treaty of Rome.

“German chancellor Angela Merkel has suggested Europe needs a constitution that
makes reference to Christianity and God following her audience with Pope Benedict XVI on Monday (29 August). She added “I underlined my opinion that we need a European identity in the form of a constitutional treaty and I think it should be connected to Christianity and God, as Christianity has forged Europe in a decisive way,” according to press reports.

“Germany has been assigned by EU member states to come up with some kind of solution to the constitutional crisis during its presidency of the union in the first six months of 2007’” (EUPolitix.com 29-806).

To help forward the persuasion of the EU countries to change the character of the Union from a political to a political and religious entity, the Pope has set up a Commission of Bishops. There aim is to produce a document by next March.

“As the Vatican and Germany (along with Italy, Poland, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Ireland) continue to agitate for God and/or Christianity to feature in the Constitution for Europe, the Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Community (COMECE) has appointed a high-profile group to define the EU’s ‘common values’, and to raise awareness of such values throughout the Union.

“The interesting thing is that this expert group consists only of Roman Catholics. There are no Protestants, no Orthodox, and no representatives of Enlightenment secularism.

“Significantly, a COMECE spokesman has admitted an agenda, albeit ‘indirect’, ‘aimed at influencing a political declaration on the EU’s values and ambitions’. The resulting document is planned for adoption on 25th March 2007—the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome. The Pope has already agreed to be present to bestow his blessings on the project” (archbishop-cranmer.blogspot.com/ 18-9-06).

German Minister

We are beginning to see quite rapid progress of the last phase of the Beast power of Revelation. The final stage is of the woman riding the beast. As in the past when papacy and emperor work together there is a powerful combination; religious tolerance goes out the door! The above headline and the cartoon were from an intriguing article.

“In 962, Otto the Great revived Charlemagne’s empire as the first German Reich and was crowned Holy Roman Emperor by Pope John XII. This Reich became known as the Sacrum Romanum Imperium Nationis Germanicae (Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation) and Otto’s octagonal crown became the symbol of the concept of European unity. Now Germany’s Culture Minister, Bernd Neumann, has voiced what some have suspected for decades: that Germany is creating the European Union in her image. He said the German Reich ‘from today’s viewpoint (serves) as a valid model of the functioning order of a superstate.’ The context of his statement is highly significant, being the opening of an exhibition which is dedicated to ‘The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, 962-1806’. He said that this touches on ‘every great trend...which makes very clear to us the inner historical legitimacy and consistency of European unification’. It is therefore the Reich that laid the foundation for the ‘structures and developmental processes (which are) of great significance for the federal construction of Europe.’

“Such statements have been in circulation for decades, most notably articulated by the CSU (Christian Social Union) politician and grandson of the Austrian Kaiser Otto von Habsburg, who said: ‘the European integration of our times...follows the grand outline and principles of the Reich, which survived 1806, because they are of lasting validity.’ Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, echoed this very theme when he insisted that the origins of today’s EU should acknowledge ‘a common imperial ideal (Reichsidee).’ He will attend celebrations in Berlin next year to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. The German press already reports that the religious consecration will validate the EU, and will highlight ‘the spiritual foundations of Europe’s political unification’ (Lammert lädt Papst in den Bundestag ein; Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 28-8-06).

Germany Shores Up Its Eastern Front

Germany has secured her place in the heart of the EU; she continues to work on her eastern front.

“A complete European peace regime and the resolution of important security and political problems from the Balkans to the Middle East can only be attained with Russia and not without it,” the paper states (The Trumpet 12-9-06).

At the same time the Pope and the Russian Patriarch are working to bring some reconciliation to the millennia long schism. Catholic-Orthodox theological talks resume after 6-year break (Catholic World News 18-9-06). They are just about to hold their meeting, it will be interesting to see what progress they make.

There are many items we have not been able to touch upon. It is the sheer pace of events that is so exciting and should provide the necessary wake-up call that the Master is at hand. His words of exhortation to 21st century believers are brief yet exceedingly powerful:-

“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame” (Rev 16:15).

Let us ensure that, in the words of the apostle Paul, we are in the light.

“But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others: but let us watch and be sober... But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation” (1 Thes 5:4-6,8).
By Ken Langston Houston TX.

Prophecy is a roadmap provided by God for the benefit of His children. It is a Divine path that reveals not only what constitutes righteousness and holiness, but it illuminates our mind to His purpose which will ultimately be consummated in this Earth. To this map we turn and find that God created all things for His pleasure (Rev. 4:11) and not in vain (Isa. 45:18). We see that man has not been left nor abandoned to his own devices but will ultimately glorify and exalt the Creator (Numbers 14:21). Until then, we find God ruling in the Kingdoms of men. We see that He “hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation” (Acts 17:26). As a wise Master Builder, we see Him gathering the “the kings of the earth and of the whole world... to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” Then what wonders will be wrought in the earth when the times of refreshing are ushered in and the earth transformed into a habitation of righteousness with Jerusalem as the crown of His glory (Isa. 62:5).

Like a map, the Scriptures help us examine and assess where we are in relation to this programme by using symbols such as rivers, mountains, hills, valleys, forests, trees, grass, seas and so on. Even a scale is given (see 2 Pet. 3:8). Given the key of wisdom and understanding, a colourful picture emerges that paints the landscape with joy and gladness as we see our redemption drawing nigh (Luke 21:28). Solomon rightly declares that God’s Word is “…plain to him that understandeth, and hidden to him that is of a sordid spirit” (Proverbs 9:5, 4:18). There is no confusion in God’s roadmap, for in these last days prophecy has been unsealed (Daniel 12:4, 9) and made plain. History has become our infallible guide to understanding the fulfillment of prophecy.

A distorted map, however, serves no useful purpose and misleads. What if we are journeying to a far country and discovered our map was amiss—a map that we drew based upon our perceptions and beliefs? What would we do? After all, we may have spent much effort and time planning the routes and destinations, learning about the culture, preparing a trip itinerary, and packing our things. With keenness, our ears would have also been tuned to any news that came from that country with all the anticipation and excitement of an upcoming adventure. Despite such preparations, the map is unfit if it is unable to guide or allow us to assess our progress to the destination. How can we adequately prepare for any journey if we are not aware of the hazards along the way? If we cannot perceive the relevance of milestones and landmarks that pass in front of us, how do we know how far we are away from that country? How can we be sure we are on the right road? Also, if we are unsure of the directions or feel that the directions are just a matter of speculation how can we be “a guide to the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes” (Rom. 2:19-20)?

Prophecy is a basic and integral part of life in the Truth. Peter tells us that “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (2 Peter 1:19). It is sure because it is unchanging and provides something that is basic and indispensable. Further, he exhorts us to take heed to prophecy, which means “to hold the mind towards, i.e. pay attention to, be cautious about, apply oneself to, adhere to.” “Heed” is an action verb by which we gauge who are our friends and foes. As we journey, prophecy should become an indispensable force in our life.

It (prophecy) provides us with standards by which we gauge who are our friends and foes. As we journey, prophecy should become an indispensable force in our life.

Prophecy is not something to be approached in a casual or careless way. To do so is at our own peril. Peter tells us “that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation” (2 Peter 1:20). We are therefore not at liberty to construe and interpret prophecy as we wish. It is not our prerogative nor is it wholesome and life giving. In 2 Peter 3:16, Peter tells us that Scripture can be wrested or perverted so that instead of leading to life and blessing, it leads to wrath and destruction. How fitting then that such a warning was added immediately after a prophecy containing “some things hard to be understood.” Things difficult to perceive include highly symbolic language and metaphors. For those who were “unlearned and unstable,” they perverted the meaning of Scriptures causing them to fall (2 Peter 3:17). Also, Jesus emphasized the importance of correctly understanding prophecy in Rev. 1:3 when he said: “Blessed is he that readeth, and them that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.” To read is to know accurately. To hear is more than just recognizing sounds, but to understand the meaning of what was said. To keep is to watch over and preserve, to keep strictly. In doing these things, Jesus says that a person is blessed. How can we blessed if we cannot accurately interpret prophecy and apply it to our life?

The days in which we live are perilous to the Bible Student and can adversely impact his studies. The world is infatuated with its self and craves the new, the novel, the easy, and the smooth. Its delicacies are so tempting and within our grasp. If we become drawn into the vortex of pleasure, business, cares and other deceitful lusts (Mark 4:19), our time diminishes that could have otherwise been devoted to studying, meditating, and praising our Lord. We can also become products of our environment and develop sympathies more in-tune with the world than with our God. The consequence is the student’s ability to discern prophecy and to rightly divide the Words of Truth weakens. We have been left an overwhelming volume of literature that meticulously proves and confirms the viability of our historic interpretation of prophecy. Despite such a rich legacy, the new and novel inevitably arises mirroring the philosophies and speculations of the world, but how flimsy and unscholarly such works are in comparison! Let us therefore read ourselves rich in the things of God and turn to the “sure word of prophecy” for our directions. In so doing, we are preparing to rendezvous with eternity as we journey on that plainly marked road leading to Jerusalem.
By Ken Loveridge  PRINCE GEORGE B.C.

It was August 22nd of 1799 when General Napoleon Bonaparte turned his back on both Egypt and his army and set off across the Mediterranean and through the British blockade to return to Paris—the seat of power. His dreams of marching through Damascus to conquer Constantinople and the Turkish Empire came to an abrupt halt beneath the walls of Acre at the hands of Sidney Smith, Turkish Pasha.

In the previous two articles, we’ve considered Napoleon’s career from his days as a foreign (Corsican) Military School student, to his expedition across the Mediterranean to Egypt, and north into Syria against the Ottoman Empire. He does not appear to have had any contact with Jews in his youth, but on making contact with the Jews of Italy, he immediately took their side against the prevailing prejudice of the times. Napoleon’s brief visit to Malta perhaps tells us something of his attitude when encountering problems. Although he was only in Malta for a few days, he dealt with ancient institutions such as the Knights of Malta, proclaimed laws to remove inequities, opened schools and freed the Jews. The body of laws he proclaimed throughout Europe which came to be known as the Napoleonic Code, continues as the basis of laws throughout what is now the European Union.

October 9th saw Napoleon back in France, just as the Directory was about to expire under the attacks from all who opposed them. Everyone was looking for an opportunity to profit from the unrest and seize the opportunity. The unexpected and unauthorized return of the only “undefeated” French general went almost unquestioned. Everyone needed Napoleon too much to want him eliminated. Back on the stage of Europe, he once again was able to turn the spotlight on himself and use the support of the people to establish his place.

Napoleon had been absent from Paris and as a result was untouched by the actions of the Directory while he was away. The people of France remembered him as the conqueror of Italy. Fame, youth and a reputation as an adventurer all worked in his favour as the existing rulership collapsed. Perhaps the French knew too little about the actions and defeat in Egypt and Syria to attach any blame to their favourite son. It was only after his defeat at Waterloo that the circumstances of the expedition to Egypt and Syria came out.

Only a month after his return, Napoleon was given the legal responsibility for the safety of the nation’s representatives and the command of the troops in the Paris military division. This developed into a change of regime, with Napoleon as the head of a new three consul government. As First Consul of the three, he now became the head of state. In 1802 he became Consul for life, and on December 2nd, 1804, he took the crown from the hands of the Pope and crowned himself Emperor.

There were changes that Napoleon wanted to make within his domain, and several of those changes involved the Jews. The Jews themselves were not campaigning for citizenship, but were forced to accept all of the changes—both good and bad—that came with equality under the law.

It was in Italy in 1797 and in Egypt in 1798 that Napoleon first came into contact with organized Jewish communities. But these encounters gave no real indication of the situation that confronted Napoleon, now Emperor, when he set out to reorganize Jewish life in France. The problems that had arisen with emancipation found their solution with the Jews of France being made to divide their public role as citizens from their private role as Jews. Whether the full implications of this enforced choice were evident at the time isn’t clear. But the decisions of the Sanhedrin set the pattern for later developments in Jewish life in Western Europe. It proved possible to reconcile, even in the conditions of the modern centralized state, the continued existence of Judaism with the demands of that state.

In July of 1806 Napoleon as Emperor summoned to Paris an Assembly of Jewish Notables from France and Italy whom he constituted into a modern version of the ancient Jewish court—the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem. The 111 rabbis and Jewish laymen assembled in the Hotel de Ville to answer questions for the emperor. He intended to effect the changes he thought necessary to the religious life and institutions of French Jewry in the new conditions of emancipation. These questions were: 1. Are Jews polygamous? 2. Do they allow the marriage of Jews to Christians? 3. Do the rabbis claim the right to grant divorces independent of the civil authorities? 4. Do the Jews consider usury lawful?

The Jews answered that Judaism prohibits polygamy; that marriage to Christians is permitted; that divorce must be approved by civil authorities and that usury is not allowed in Jewish law. These were the answers that Napoleon wanted to hear.

Thereupon Napoleon told the assembly that he wanted the ancient Israeli Great Sanhedrin, Israel’s ancient supreme court, to meet again, although it had not met since the first century. The Sanhedrin, consisting of 45 rabbis and 26 laymen, met on February 9, 1807. They ratified the answers given by the earlier assembly and urged Jews to end all animosity to Christians. The Sanhedrin, feeling coerced and pressured, told the Jews of France to enter military service, end all usury, become farmers and participate in the arts and handicrafts.

Ignoring the Emperor’s anti-Semitism, the Jewish leaders used his plans in order to give a new yet nevertheless traditional definition of Judaism as a religion and at the same time rebuild a community organization which had been destroyed at the very time that French Jews received their rights as citizens. The population of the ghettos was released into the world, but the sense of community that existed within them also disappeared.
Then, in March 1808, Napoleon returned from numerous victories in Germany and announced the religious freedom of the Jews, granted them political rights in all of France except Alsace and Lorraine and demanded that all Jews take a family name. Many Jews took names derived from towns where they traded, such as Hamburger or Berliner or Frankfurter, while others used occupations, characteristics, or a patronymic name.

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic period brought to the Jews of France, the Netherlands, Western Germany and Italy the first intimations of modernity. It brought equality before the law, an end to oppressive taxation and enforced residential restrictions, and the opportunity to participate as free men in public and political life. True to the ideals of the Enlightenment, the Revolution granted to the Jew his rights as a citizen. Article X of the Rights of Man and the Citizen declared: ‘No person shall be molested for his opinions, even such as are religious provided that the manifestation of their opinions does not disturb the public order as established by the law.’ It is true of course that in the reaction that followed the downfall of Napoleon, in certain areas, notably in Italy, the Jew lost his new status. Even in France itself, the early achievements of the Revolution were in part nullified by Napoleon’s policy. Yet for all that, nothing can deprive the French Revolution of its rightful claim to have inaugurated a new and more hopeful era in the life of European Jewry.

The Sanhedrin was an ancient Jewish legal and religious institution in Jerusalem that appears to have acted as a court between about 63 B.C. and A.D. 70 when Judea was a Roman province. The accounts of it in the Mishna do not correspond to those in Josephus or in the New Testament. Rabbinic sources generally portray it as a body of Torah scholars presided over by the leader of the Pharisees. Greek sources view it as an aristocratic council led by the high priest. “Sanhedrin” may come from the Greek—‘Synedrion’ which means sitting together. Claiming that the Sanhedrin was started by Moses, the Jews claim that the word has Hebrew roots.

The Bible tells us that God commanded Moses “Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee” (Numbers 11:16).

Moses shortly after laid hands on Joshua son of Nun, and it is from this point, tradition holds, that the Sanhedrin began: with seventy elders, headed by Moses, for a total of seventy-one. One explanation for the name teaches that the first part of the word, sin, referring to the Torah that was received at Mount Sinai, was combined with the second part of the word, hadrin, meaning, “glorification,” to express the Great Court’s role, the glorification of God’s Torah through its application. Another rabbi suggests an alternative meaning taking the term as a combination of two words which mean, “foes (opposing litigants) give respect and honor to its judgment.”

Some Jewish sources describe the Great Sanhedrin as a religious assembly of 71 sages who met in the Chamber of Hewn Stones in the Temple in Jerusalem. The Great Sanhedrin met daily during the daytime, and did not meet on the Sabbath, festivals or festival eves. It was the final authority on Jewish law and any scholar generally depict the Sanhedrin as a political and judicial council headed by the country’s ruler. In about 30 C.E., the Great Sanhedrin lost its authority to inflict capital punishment. After the Temple was destroyed, so was the Great Sanhedrin. A Sanhedrin in Yavneh took over many of its functions, under the authority of Rabban Gamliel. The rabbis in the Sanhedrin served as judges and attracted students who came to learn their oral traditions and scriptural interpretations. From Yavneh, the Sanhedrin moved to different cities in the Galilee, eventually ending up in Tiberias. A newspaper article in October of 2004 told of the establishment of a Sanhedrin in Tiberias. In the words of one of the rabbis—“Whether this will be the actual Sanhedrin that we await, is a question of time—just like the establishment of the State; we rejoiced in it, but we are still awaiting something much more ideal. It’s a process. Today’s ceremony is really the continuation of the renewal of the Ordination process in Israel, which we marked several months ago. Our Talmudic Sages describe the ten stages of exile of the Sanhedrin from Jerusalem to other locations, until it ended in Tiberias—and this is the place where it was foretold that it would be renewed, and from here it will be relocated to Jerusalem.”

When Napoleon conquered parts of Germany, he imposed his regulations on the Germans as well, so that after the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo the German Jews were legally equal to other Germans. That, however, did not last long. The Germans could not tolerate Jewish equality but did keep the French imposed laws “on the books.” The Germans found the emancipation of the Jews distasteful, so that almost immediately after the Jews came out of the German ghettos during Napoleon’s rule, German writers and politicians agitated against the Jews. It was then that religious anti-Judaism was turned into racial anti-Semitism.

Because the German states before 1870 and all of Germany after 1870 maintained the Napoleonic Code regarding the Jews, the German Jews became “marginal” men during the nineteenth century. A “marginal” man is someone who lives at once in two cultures.

On the 22nd of June 1815, Napoleon’s victorious rule came to an end as he abdicated after his defeat on the fields of Waterloo. As he headed into exile on the island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic, his power over the nations came to an end. There were many victories, and some major defeats, especially the Retreat from Moscow. The reaction against Napoleon’s regulation...
The Grand Sanhedrin convened by decree on August 23, 1806, met from February 9 to March 9, 1807.

German Jews of the nineteenth century hoped year in and year out to yet be accepted as Germans, but none of this helped them. During the entire 19th century Jews were hounded in Germany and many lived in Paris to escape the hate permeated in their native land. The hate reached its culmination in the European gas ovens, 1941-1945. In the 1890’s, events such as the Dreyfus case exposed the real status of the Jews in Europe. An assimilated Austrian newspaperman —Theodore Herzl—showed that Dreyfus was the victim of anti-Semitism. More importantly, the case convinced Herzl that the Jews of Europe would never be properly integrated into European society. He became a Zionist and campaigned for a Jewish homeland.

After World War II the camps for Displaced Persons continued to be maintained by the Allies because the European nations were unwilling to resettle those Jews who had been moved or forced to flee from their homes. Their UN delegations in most cases voted against the establishment of a Jewish homeland, but at the same time refused to accommodate their restoration to their pre-war homes.

The Great Sanhedrin in the days of the Emperor Napoleon became a milestone for the Jews of Europe. They were able to free themselves from the medieval oppression of the times. In the book of Revelation we read about the association of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (the drying up of the Euphrates) which Napoleon helped to accelerate, with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, when the way of the kings of the east (the saints) is prepared. Part of this process involves “three unclean spirits like frogs” which go out into the world. Historically, we cannot help but associate these spirits which go out to the “kings of the earth” with the French Revolutionary principles of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity which spread throughout Europe and the rest of the world sparking unrest and uprisings everywhere.

“...the Sixth Angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” (Rev 16:12-14).

In human terms, the days of Napoleon may seem like ancient history, but it is evident that events initiated by Napoleon are still affecting us today. Over the following century, the oppression of the Jews became worse in spite of emancipation until the deportation of not only the French, but all European Jews to the Nazi death camps between 1936 and 1945. Ironically, the destruction of so much of the population of European Jews led directly to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Whatever his personal reasons were—Napoleon was the instrument of many of the changes in Europe that led to the establishment of the Jewish homeland.
It may be the Fall season, but as we leaf through the evidence for the theory of evolution we can only marvel as to why so many “fall for it!” Just look at the natural beauty in the scene depicted here—no artist could get anywhere close! How can dying and dead leaves make such a glorious picture? Can you fall for the idea that such artistry and beauty developed by chance from a filthy bog?

Another thing. How many butterflies can you spot in this picture (we have tried to make it easy)? You should be able to find at least three.

The Dead Leaf butterflies seen here are masters at camouflage. Their disguise comes complete with a midrib, veins, and spots on the rough brown wing surfaces that provide the illusion of holes or area of decay. The insects not only recognize their host plants and look-alike in three dimensions, they also “know” to place their bodies at the right angle so as to look like real leaves. Is all this evolution? Don’t fall for it!