“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.”

Revelation 16:13
“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

Revelation 16:16

WRITTEN OVER 100 YEARS AGO

John Thomas: An Outline of the Kingdom of God  PAGE 3

DOCTRINE

Ron Kidd describes How Christ’s coming will change the world.  PAGE 4

Art Bull brings us another installment on The Personal Devil & his Companions.  PAGE 29

EXHORTATION

Glenn Blair-Ford considers the challenge of maintaining integrity and faithfulness in the face of subtle influences and difficult trials  PAGE 8

PROPHECY FULFILLING

MILESTONES UPDATE by Don Pearce explains the ramifications of the new European Lisbon Treaty. Chilling developments come into view as the Beast rises.  PAGE 14

Europe’s Christian-Socialist Chains: Paul Billington looks at developments in Europe from a broad-based perspective of the historical and Biblical background.  PAGE 18

Jonathan Bowen comments on the symbolic “One Hour” of Revelation 17:12.  PAGE 25

EXPOSITION

Daniel Billington leads us in an instructive study of the Feast of the Firstfruits (Weeks)  PAGE 26

EDITORIAL

Judgement Upon The Nations — and why!  PAGE 32

BACKGROUND HISTORY

Ken Loveridge gives some background to The Septuagint Version  PAGE 34

REGULAR FEATURES

Food For Thought  PAGE 7

Quotables: from various writers  PAGE 31

Prophecy Days & Events  PAGE 24

BACK PAGE FEATURE Universe Created by spirit-power

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

Pope Benedict signs his encyclical letter Caritas in Veritate, the latest of many papal encyclicals which establish the social doctrine of the Catholic Church as the road map for Europe and other Catholic countries. Our article Europe’s Christian-Socialist Chains examines the development which is gathering the nations.

In the modern age Socialism was derived from French philosophy and found political expression in the French Revolution of 1789. Today it has become the reigning doctrine in politics and religion.

Ron Kidd describes How Christ’s Coming will change the world. He guides us through the Scriptures and to the promises of a better world.

Glenn Blair Ford writes a thought-provoking article about Maintaining Integrity in the Face of Trial & Adverse Influence

Don Pearce provides a revealing report of events in Europe and their consequences in this Milestones Update.

“For she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.”—Rev. 18:7.
Moses said to Israel, “When ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye shall dwell in safety; then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause his Name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you” (Deut. 12:5, 16). The time for making choice of this city arrived, when the Lord had given the kingdom to David, and rest from all his wars. David sought out the place, and Jehovah approved it. He “found it in the fields of the wood.” He found it in a manner he did not expect. The Ark of The Covenant had been removed from Obed-Edom to the City of David on Mount Zion; while the altar of burnt sacrifice continued at Gibeon. Now David having been moved by Jehovah to number the people who had sinned, seventy thousand of them fell by pestilence in the country parts in three days. At length an angel of the Lord arrived at Jerusalem to destroy it, and as he was destroying, Jehovah said to him, “It is enough, stay now thy hand.” At this crisis David discovered the angel standing near the threshing-floor of Ornan, or Araunah, the Jebusite, between the earth and heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand extended over Jerusalem. David having confessed his sin in numbering the people and prayed that the plague might be stayed, the angel commanded Gad, David’s seer, to tell David to go up and set up an altar to Jehovah in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. When David saw the angel, he would have gone to Gibeon where the Mosaic tabernacle was to be confounded as one city. They are two distinct mountains, and the sites of two cities; though in after times they came to be surrounded by one and the same wall, and to be vernacularly from the testimony that “Solomon began to build the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the angel appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite” (2 Chron. 3:1). The Ark of the Covenant, which is a New Testament name for Jesus, the royal Son of David, was placed in the City of David on Mount Zion, where it remained forty years preceding the building of the temple by Solomon. This long residence of the Ark on Zion, distinguished Zion as the place of the throne of the kingdom; as the building of the altar on Moriah designated it as the place of the Temple. Moriah and Zion are not to be confounded as one city. They are two Zion, where it remained forty years preceding the building of the temple by Solomon. This long residence of the Ark on Zion, distinguished Zion as the place of the throne of the kingdom; as the building of the altar on Moriah designated it as the place of the Temple. Moriah and Zion are not to be confounded as one city. They are two distinct mountains, and the sites of two cities; though in after times they came to be surrounded by one and the same wall, and to be vernacularly for He dwelt between the outstretched wings of the Cherubim representatively by the glory which they sustained (Psa. 80:1); and in speaking to Moses and the High Priests, caused his voice to be heard as if proceeding from the lid of the ark called “the mercy Seat,” which was overshadowed by the glory (Num. 7:89). The Ark, the Mercy Seat, and the Cherubim of glory, were representative of the Christ; who is therefore termed “the ark of God’s strength,” “the ark of his testament,” “the mercy seat” (hilasterion,) and the bearer of the glory, in the scriptures old and new. When he comes in “the glory of the Father,” he will “build the temple of the Lord, and bear the glory, and sit and rule upon his throne, and be a priest upon his throne” (Zech. 6:13). When this comes to pass, Jehovah will dwell in Zion again, and “shine forth” through Jesus there, as the Lion of the Cherubim of his glory; and in speaking to men will cause his voice to proceed from him, as the blood-sprinkled seat of his mercy, divinely over-shadowed with the brightness of his majesty.

“When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.” “He hath chosen it; he hath desired it for his habitation. This, saith he, is my rest forever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation; and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn (keren, horn, strength, power,) of David to bud; I have ordained a Light for mine anointed. His enemies (the foes of this Light,) will I clothe with shame; but upon Himself shall his crown flourish” (Psa. 132). “The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and make thee glorious; the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister to thee; for the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. I will make thee, the place of my feet, glorious. The sons of thine oppressors shall bow down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee THE CITY OF JEHovah, ZION, THE HOLY OF ISRAEL—ir Jehovah, Tzvyon, kodesh Yisraail. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations” (Isa. 60). This testimony is sufficient to prove that the Royal City of the Kingdom under the Old and New Covenants, is Mount Zion, “the joy of the whole earth,” when “Jehovah shall reign over Israel there from henceforth even for ever” (Micah 4:7).
How Christ’s coming will change the World

“...he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

Isaiah 2:4

By Ron Kidd  LONDON ON.

Most of us will remember the name Mikhail Gorbachev, who in December of 1988 announced to the world his sweeping vision of a “new world order.” Gorbachev introduced many bold new initiatives under the policies of Perestroika (restructuring) and Glasnost (openness) and Time magazine described these as “The Gorbachev Challenge.” During the following twelve months many changes were to take place as the Soviet empire began to dissolve;

again Time magazine commented on the first Bush-Gorbachev summit, describing it under the heading as “Turning Visions into Reality.” The wild seas and high winds that accompanied this first summit in Marsaxlokk Bay, Malta appeared to herald the political climate that lay ahead. But the reality of the vision never materialized, and on December 25, 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed and Mikhail Gorbachev disappeared from the political heavens like a burnt out shooting star.

Of course Gorbachev wasn’t the first to use the phrase New World Order; in 1776 a man named Adam Weishaupt (otherwise known as Spartacus) established a secret society called the Order of the Illuminati, whose objective was to seek A New World Order. Two points stand out in his agenda, first, to abolish all ordered government; second, to create a new single world government. It is worth noting that within thirteen years of the establishment of this Order the French Revolution took place which some have asserted had links with the Illuminati.

Be that as it may, such information serves to emphasize that a number of attempts have been made, or suggested, that would radically change the present political arrangements of government; and more importantly, there has
repeatedly been some recognition that the present systems of government simply do not work for the wellbeing and benefit of the entire planet. Let us just consider what social changes the people of this planet would really benefit from. International peace would be a high priority. We are not just talking about peace brought about by the threat of catastrophe resulting from the arms race, rather peace achieved by the total elimination of the production of weapons, a world free from violence and its resources being channeled into more productive industries. Agricultural prosperity would also be high on the list. Imagine a world where, instead of there being rich and poor nations, its natural resources would be equally distributed amongst every nation. Another priority would be a universal health system that guarantees results and is available to all levels of society. Consider the possibility of disease being brought under control, of life expectancy increased, of diseases being brought under control, of life being extended.

Security and the Preservation of Peace

None of this is possible under the present world systems. This is evident when we consider the attempts of the past 100 years. The League of Nations was founded after the First World War and established upon principles of collective security and preservation of peace through arbitration of international disputes. Unfortunately the ineffectiveness of The League became evident when faced with the territorial aggression of Italy, Germany and Japan. The international panel was liquidated in 1946 and replaced by the United Nations.

The United Nations has offered the world no more confidence than its predecessor. Its stated aims are facilitating cooperation in international law, security, economical development, social progress, human rights and the achieving of world peace. In 1959 a bronze sculpture was presented by the Soviet Union to the United Nations; it depicts a man holding a hammer in one hand and transforming a sword into an instrument for agriculture. The name given to the sculpture was “Let Us Beat Our Swords into Ploughshares.” Sadly, over the past fifty years there has been no sign of this taking place. Well spoke the prophet Jeremiah when he wrote, “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jeremiah 10:23).

You will notice that the League of Nations was and the United Nations charter is committed to the achieving and preservation of world peace, and it is this that is the most significant part about the UN sculpture. Its name is actually taken straight out of the Bible, from the prophet Isaiah: “They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:4).

Now it doesn’t matter what our social standing may be, these words have an obvious appeal to all levels of society; we all want to live in a world that is free from the prospects of war and its affects.

Examine the Scriptures

In a previous article we examined the Old Testament prophecies concerning the birth, life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ and demonstrated that there is an overwhelming collection of scriptures that provide formidable evidence that the Bible is reliable. The same scriptures speak freely and extensively of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to establish the kingdom of God on earth and because the Bible accurately predicted the first advent of Jesus, we can be equally certain that the second advent will occur.

With this in mind we need to examine Isaiah’s words more closely, and the first thing we must do is consider Isaiah’s words in their full context:

“The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD” (Isaiah 2:1-5).

Jerusalem—Focal Point of World Influence

Notice that Isaiah is describing conditions which will involve Jerusalem. This ancient city, which has been the centre of controversy since before the birth of Jesus, is described as the focal point of world influence.

Isaiah is describing conditions which will involve Jerusalem. This ancient city, which has been the centre of controversy since before the birth of Jesus, is described as the focal point of world influence. Isaiah speaks of all nations being drawn to Jerusalem, or there being formal education in the ways of God emanating from the city, resulting in the nations living together in harmony. This is nothing short of a description of a world government which will implement a new world order.

But what of this new world government, where will it come from, who will be its representatives? To answer this we need, first of all, to examine what the scriptures say about Jerusalem. Jesus said, quoting from the Psalm 48, that Jerusalem is “the city of the great king” (Matthew 5:35), and at the birth of Jesus, the angel Gabriel prophesied that God would give to Jesus “The throne of his father David” (Luke 1:32). Again, the prophet Isaiah said, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:6-7).

Consider these words carefully; a child would be born that would establish a kingdom and government that shall never end. In these verses Jesus Christ is described as the Prince of peace, who will sit upon David’s throne and exercise judgment and justice for ever.

David’s throne was, of course, in Jerusalem and the prophet Jeremiah speaking of the time when Israel will be restored to its ancient land said, “At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all nations shall be gathered unto it” (Jeremiah 3:17).

The similarity between Isaiah’s words and Jeremiah is striking: both recognize Jerusalem as the centre of international activity and also the migration of the nations to seek God.

From these sample verses it is evident that God will at some point in time move to establish Jerusalem as the centre of international affairs and that His son, the Lord Jesus Christ, will reign as king in Jerusalem and execute God’s law throughout the world. The work of this new government will be to implement peace in the earth.

The prophet Isaiah isn’t the only one to speak of such a time. Psalm 72 describes the work of the king who will exercise God’s judgments and righteousness (verse 1). It clearly states that the king will exercise dominion (verse 8), and “all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him” (verse 11). The psalm describes the effect of the king’s authority: “In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth” (verse 8); and again, “all men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed” (verse 17). The prophet Micah paints a similar picture in chapter four of his prophecy.

Nothing like this has ever occurred; whilst the angels rejoiced at the birth of Jesus with words, “peace on earth, good will toward men” (Luke 2:14), by the end of his life Jesus made it
very clear that his kingdom was “not of this world” (John 18:36). Under no circumstances does this comment suggest that God’s kingdom is in heaven, Jesus was describing the conditions of the world he was about to leave. At that time it was a world of darkness, which refused to acknowledge the light (John 3:19). God’s kingdom can have no part of such a world. So when will Isaiah’s vision be realized? There is no mistaking his answer; “it shall come to pass in the last days” (Isaiah 2:2).

The Last Days
Reference to the last days can be found in a number of scriptures and does not necessarily always mean the same time period. For example in the letter to the Hebrews the apostle wrote, “God…hath in these last days spoken to us by his son” (Hebrews 1:2). The context determines what period is being described and in this instance the last days refers to the first century when the epistle was written—“these last days.” The apostle is speaking about the closing days of the political life of the nation of Israel, which was brought to an end in the wars of AD 70. Isaiah is entirely different; the context of his prophecy requires the end of war and the establishment of Jerusalem as a centre of international worship. This has never taken place. The last days of Isaiah’s prophesy are referred to by the apostle Paul when he wrote, “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come (2 Timothy 3:1); Paul follows this by describing the general moral breakdown of our present society (verse 2-5). Furthermore we can be certain that it is our present day that is being spoken of because in the same context Paul refers to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the setting up of his kingdom, “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:1).

Isaiah’s reference to the last days describes the days in which we now live, “perilous times,” described by the prophet Daniel as “the time of the end” (Daniel 11:40), in which there will be “a time of trouble such as there never was since there was a nation even to that same time” (Daniel 12:1-2).

The Greatest Event in History
The return of Jesus will be the greatest event in history. Whilst it will be preceded by a period of unprecedented trouble, Jesus will intervene in the affairs of men with the result that, upon the ruins of the existing governments of the world, he will establish God’s Kingdom on the earth. Jesus will bring great blessings to all mankind. Some of these blessings will be:

Peace on Earth: “But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace” (Psalm 37:11); “In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth” (Psalm 72:8).

One World-wide Religion: “the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit” (Jeremiah 16:19); “At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all shall call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent” (Zephaniah 3:9).

Agricultural Prosperity: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt” (Amos 9:13)

Housing Problem Solved: “And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat: for as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands” (Isaiah 65:21-22)

Disease Controlled: “And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity” (Isaiah 33:24); “There shall be no more an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old; and the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed” (Isaiah 65:20).

The above list is but a sample of the many benefits available when Jesus returns, however they are only a byproduct of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The real purpose of Jesus’ return is to remove the influence and power of sin. This is man’s greatest enemy and Paul reminds us that under its curse “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Romans 8:22). But he continues by telling his readers that those who faithfully follow God’s ways will at Jesus’ return receive the “the redemption of our body.” Jesus has promised all that will follow him faithfully an opportunity to share in the rulership of this world. The promise is, “To him that overcometh, and the reward, “will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne” (Revelation 3:21). Jesus promised his disciples that they would sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28) and the apostle Paul wrote, “If we suffer (with him), we shall also reign with him” (2 Timothy 2:12). The faithful are described in the book of Revelation as singing a new song, “For thou hast redeemed us to God...and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:10).

A number of points emerge from reading the above verses.
First, when Jesus sits upon the throne of David in Jerusalem, he will be accompanied by those who have faithfully responded to the call of the gospel. These faithful followers of Jesus
“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

Proverbs 28:13

“Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.”

Daniel 7:23

“Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.”

Psalm 49:20

“Crusader

“He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”

Revelation 13:10

“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert” (Isaiah 35:5-6).

It is very strange; God offers a world that every living person desires. So, what prevents a person from choosing God’s way? The answer is simple, man’s pride. Men and women are not prepared to submit themselves to God’s authority; even the majority of religious people are willing only to worship God on their own terms. But soon all this will change and God will say to the people of this world:

“Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low” (Isaiah 2:10-12).

Change is coming, therefore Jesus says to everyone, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Proverbs 20:32

A Dublin Minister of Justice speaks out against crimes committed by the Roman Catholic Church

Secondly, those that attain to this privilege will be changed from sinful, erring members of the human race to immortalized individuals who will share God’s “divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). We read that the faithful believer will be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, and “this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:52-53). Jesus said “Behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be” (Revelation 22:12). And so the return of Jesus Christ will commence with the resurrection and the rewarding of individuals “according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Thirdly, the blessings of God are to be experienced on the earth. It is God’s expressed purpose to fill the earth with His glory, as the waters cover the sea (Numbers 14:21). This is the significance of the Lord’s prayer when Jesus said, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). But in order to accomplish this it will be necessary, as Jesus commences his glorious reign, to “rule in the midst of his enemies” (Psalm 110:2). Again the apostle Paul wrote that Jesus “must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet” (1 Corinthians 15:25). This process of subduing his enemies and solving the problems of the world will take 1000 years (Revelation 20:4).

Divine Education

Six thousand years of man’s mismanagement will not be changed overnight; divine education has never been readily accepted by men and women, the mind of God is in constant conflict with the mind of the flesh. But changes will take place:

“If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.”

Proverbs 20:32

Six thousand years of man’s mismanagement will not be changed overnight; divine education has never been readily accepted by men and women, the mind of God is in constant conflict with the mind of the flesh. But changes will take place:

“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert” (Isaiah 35:5-6).

It is very strange; God offers a world that every living person desires. So, what prevents a person from choosing God’s way? The answer is simple, man’s pride. Men and women are not prepared to submit themselves to God’s authority; even the majority of religious people are willing only to worship God on their own terms. But soon all this will change and God will say to the people of this world:

“Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low” (Isaiah 2:10-12).

Change is coming, therefore Jesus says to everyone, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Proverbs 20:32

A Dublin Minister of Justice speaks out against crimes committed by the Roman Catholic Church

THE BIBLE MAGAZINE Vol. 23 ISSUE No.1

Page 7
Maintaining Integrity in the Face of Trial & Adverse Influence

By Glenn Blair-Ford  LONDON, U.K.

“It is hardly possible for a human being to live without having any influence on his contemporaries. He either helps or hinders them. He either serves, or he is a drag on the wheel. Sometimes the best service a man can possibly render is in the influence of a good example”—Islip Collyer.

This study is concerned with the concepts of influence and integrity. We start by reminding ourselves and making clear what is meant by the two words influence and integrity in the context of life in the truth.

When we use the term Integrity we refer to the quality of holding a firm adherence to a code of godly values. When we read the word integrity in Job for example, the Hebrew word expresses the ability to remain blameless and in a state or condition of moral goodness in life, with a focus on not having guilt or sin. Not wavering, but having stability in God’s ways without being doubleminded.

The term Influence expresses the power or capacity of causing an effect in indirect or intangible ways. In this respect it corresponds to being a form of spirit, i.e. something you can’t see, or touch, but which has power and effect. Spirit is expressed by the Hebrew word ruwach and the Greek pneuma both of which literally mean breath or wind, which typifies the unseen and indirect nature of the concept. Influence is power exerted from one party over the minds or behaviour of others. It may be exerted and received consciously or unconsciously, it may be resisted or embraced. In practice influence comes about through the relationship that one person has with another combined with the words they say and what they do.

Influence can be a force to enhance or erode spiritual integrity. It is the influence of the word of God that guides us in His ways, and it is the influence of the mind of the flesh that can draw us away. Thus we are counselled in 1 John 4:1 to “believe not every spirit (or influence), but try (meaning test) the spirits whether they are of God.”

So it is that when we speak of influence we are speaking of a power or force. And when we speak of integrity we speak of a kind of spiritual inertia that can withstand that power or force when necessary or be reinforced by it if appropriate. This study attempts to examine the dynamics of, and draw lessons from, examples where influence can work against spiritual integrity.

Influence verses Integrity

There will inevitably be times when we have to make spiritually significant decisions. It may concern our day to day conduct, it may be a lifestyle decision, some specific issue or it may be a time of unusual stress and pressure. At such points, the temptation to sin is ever present. When we are tempted we are tempted from within “drawn away of our own lust, and enticed” as it says in James 1:14, and it is this lust which leads us to sin. During these times, there are often people or other persuasive elements around which are willing to offer advice and thereby influence how we think and what we do.

The influence may be helpful or not so helpful. Sources of influence include respected experts: the media, advice from well-meaning colleagues or friends who are not guided by the word of God. But whatever the influence, or persuasive element, wherever they may come from, we know that we cannot be tempted to do something that is not part of our nature, we are “drawn away of our own lust.” The fundamental temptation that we must overcome is therefore not external but comes from within. It is against this temptation that we must strive to maintain our integrity.

It is perhaps easier for us to be on guard against detrimental influences of the persuasive elements of the world in its many forms. But how vulnerable are we when such an influence is emanating from a loved one or from a fellow believer, or someone we feel we should be able
to rely upon? We are after all warned in Psalm 146:3,5.

“Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God.”

The Hebrew word for ‘princes’ expresses ‘one who is inclined to give, of a willing heart, generous.’ These are admirable qualities indeed, yet the clear warning is that these qualities do not in themselves form a basis for our trust or faith. Verse five makes it clear that in the final analysis we have to rely upon the God of Jacob. As we shall see, advice from those close to us, even those who share our beliefs can add to our trials. Advisors or counsellors whom we believe should be encouraging us in the truth can prove to be the very people that tempt us away from God’s way in our time of distress. Keeping our integrity may mean rejecting the counsel of those close to us. Notwithstanding, we are told in Proverbs 8:33 to “Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.”

And again in Proverbs 1:5 “A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.” Clearly we must be receptive to wise counsel, with a discerning ear, knowing that God’s way often will not suit our natural inclination. However there must at the same time be a limit to the influence that we allow others to have over us in the judgements we make. Advice and support may be comforting, but the word of God must be our final authority in the decisions we make.

In the final analysis we will stand alone before God. We will receive his righteous judgement for what we have done. There is no respect for persons in this. We will not be able to lay the blame with others for the actions which we have chosen to take because of their influence over us. We are each accountable for the choices we make and the things we do.

We shall consider scriptural examples of friends, peers and advisers in the truth, all of whom through their advice demonstrate how human influence can work against spiritual integrity.

Adam’s Trial

Our first example is that of Adam in the Garden of Eden. It is well known that sin and death were introduced into the earth when the serpent beguiled Eve. And she, being persuaded, took of the forbidden fruit, thereby disobeying God’s single command. And Adam ate of the fruit also.

In Genesis 3:1-6 we have the scriptural detail of the incident.

“This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:22-24).

This was the archetypal marriage. From the very start the bond between a man and his wife was such that they would cleave together. To ‘cleave’, in the original Hebrew, expresses the idea of being united and being figuratively stuck together as if by glue, inseparable. It has the idea of being associated one with another. As Adam went on to say, through this process the man and the woman are so close it is as if they become one flesh or one body. The compatibility of the two souls was a match literally made in heaven. The two of them were emotionally, mentally and spiritually joined together as one. This is the essence of the marital love bond.

The love bond between them must have been phenomenal; the impulse for unity powerful; nonetheless, their two perspectives on this marital bond would have differed in one crucial aspect. Adam knew the loneliness of existing outside of this bond and it was ‘not good,’ whereas Eve had never experienced loneliness. On Adam’s part the desire for them to walk together would have had that extra edge brought about through knowing the bleak alternative.

1 Corinthians 15:47 tells us that Adam was a man made from the dust of the earth. And on this occasion he was concerned with the earthly matter of bonding with his wife. As we read in 1 Corinthians 7:33.

“…he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.”

Adam could have refused to eat of the fruit, but he chose to go along with his soul mate. Adam chose to follow when he should have shown spiritual leadership.

On this one notable occasion in the Garden of Eden, Eve was far from a help to her husband’s integrity. Eve was in fact instrumental in tempting Adam to sin.

Did Eve make her husband sin? No she did not, the responsibility for his decision was his.

Did she influence him in making his decision to sin? Most certainly. Her influence put a strain on Adam to break his integrity, and he succumbed, but the choice and responsibility was always his.

Job

Besides the Lord Jesus Christ, Job is arguably Scripture’s most well-known example of a man of remarkable endurance and integrity. His story is very familiar to most people. For the purposes of this study, we shall briefly review Job’s story and what happened to him, rather than how God brought about these things.

Job was perfect and upright, he feared God, and eschewed evil. He had seven sons and three daughters and God blessed him with vast wealth such that he was the greatest of all the men of the east. Then suddenly God brought calamity and took it all from him. In one single day, Sabeans drove off Job’s 500 yoke of oxen; lightning destroyed his 7000 sheep; Chaldeans stole his 3000 camels; and finally a whirlwind killed all of his children. Despite all of this, Job’s faith was not shaken. Then he suffered further calamity. Job was struck with a sickness of a most unpleasant nature, involving continuous pain, burning fever, ulcerated flesh, nightmares
Job was truly brought low by the hand of God. Then he was visited by a group of close friends who came to mourn with him. Both his wife and his friends had words for him during his suffering. The words of his beloved wife and trusted friends served to further test his integrity.

**The Words of Job’s Wife**

As Eve was to Adam, so was Job’s wife to Job. She was his wife, his suitable help. On this basis alone, her words may well have carried great influence. Furthermore, she knew what he was going through. It was her children as well as his that were lost in a day. It was also her wealth and means of living that had been taken away. And now her husband was before her wracked with sickness and neither of them knew where it would end. It is from this fellowship of suffering that she said to her husband, as we read in Job 2:9.

“Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die.”

She was in effect saying to him that all that God has brought upon him clearly demonstrates that it is pointless to remain morally upright, and that he might as well yield to the ways of the flesh and accept the death that will follow as a consequence. Although this counselling came from one whom he loved, in contrast to Adam, Job had the integrity to resist her influence because it was ungodly. He said to her:

“Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?”

Thus Job subdued his human nature and chose not to sin, instead he showed the spiritual leadership that Adam did not.

The contrast between Job, who remained upright, and Adam, who transgressed, is highlighted in the words of Proverbs 11:3: “The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.”

Adam’s transgression led to his eventual destruction or death, whereas Job’s integrity was his guide through further challenges that were to follow with the counsel of his friends.

**The Words of Job’s Friends**

Much of what Job’s friends said can be found almost word for word in various parts of the scriptures. They appeared to be devout men. Men of principle, based upon their knowledge of God. However, their knowledge without a true understanding formed a sandy foundation for their piety. Yet the record of their conduct provides an opportunity for each of us to recognize elements of our own characters and inclinations for our doctrine, reproof and correction.

The logic of Job’s friends seemed to be based upon a view that there is a simple proportional relationship between one’s sin and one’s life’s suffering. Thus, when faced with Job’s predicament, they concluded that Job had “fulfilled the judgment of the wicked” (Job 36:17) therefore the sufferings and losses of Job were the consequence of, and retribution for, sins he had done of a similar and extraordinary nature to his suffering. Their thinking was in fact scripturally derived. It is a truism that the Lord can and does inflict suffering as a result of sin. We have already considered the first sin committed in the Garden of Eden which introduced suffering and death into the world. And we need only to follow the biblical history of the children of Israel to see many prominent examples of this.

However Job had not done wrong, and there was nothing about his way of life to suggest that he had. But, the heart of man being such as it is, this did not prevent his friends from casting untrue and unsubstantiated aspersions, as we see in the words of Eliphaz the Temanite in Job 22:6-10.

“... thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing. Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry. Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken. Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee.”

These slanderous words from close friends, at such a time, would have been as wounds that go down into the innermost parts of the belly. Naturally any attempt by Job to protest was seen as the treacherous words of the guilty in denial adding rebellion to sin.

“... he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands among us, and multiplieth his words against God” (Job 34:37). The words of Elihu.

Thus through thinking themselves wise, they could not hear truth nor see in order to understand. In this way they trapped themselves in their error concerning Job. They added insult to Job’s injury further testing Job’s integrity until God intervened justifying Job, and opening the way to reconciliation for his friends.

Job’s friends had no way of knowing precisely why the Lord was putting Job through those troubles. Any given incident of suffering or calamity can be allowed or brought about by God for any number of reasons—such as glorifying God, providing an example to others, or chastisement in order to improve the character of one that suffers.

We have the example in Luke 13 of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, and the eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them. Jesus used their calamity to teach that we cannot derive the magnitude of someone’s transgression from the level of their suffering, but that we must repent remembering that we deserve no better than they.

Also we are told in the Scriptures that we must not despise the chastening of the Lord, this chastening is not pleasant it is a grievous suffering. This chastisement is a sign of God’s love for us, just as a father chastises the son in whom he delights. The scriptural record gives us the understanding that Job’s situation was in this category.

The words of Job’s friends were scripturally derived and so appeared to be godly, but they had not at that time reached a true understanding of God’s ways. They understood some aspects of God’s way, (retribution repentance), yet they disregarded and even refused to agree with, other aspects of God’s way (God’s manifestation of love and mercy through chastisement). Their incomplete representation of the nature of God, when presented as the full picture of God,
formed a convincing, yet misleading impression of how God works. They presented Job with an erroneous mixture of their own arguments mingled with the word of God at a time when Job was vulnerable. As God said of them in Job 42:7 “ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.” Thus they darkened counsel by words without knowledge. Job had to reject the counselling of his respectable friends in order to keep his integrity before God.

**Job was Resolute**

Just as we learn from the error of Job’s friends, so too we can learn from the example of Job. As well as enduring the calamities brought upon him by God, Job had the added trial of being tested by the rebellious counselling of his wife and the more deceptive counsel of his friends.

Job was able to resist their influence because, in contrast to his friends, he had a highly developed understanding of the ways of God. Job heard and understood what they said, he then had to work out what was right, wrong or deficit about their counselling. He proved all things by the word of God and held fast to that which is good. In this way he was able, and we are able, to keep integrity despite persuasive arguments. Job was resolute throughout his ordeal that he would not abandon truth.

The words of Job. Chapter 27 Verse 3-5

“All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils; My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit... till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.”

Job’s devotion, discernment and resoluteness of heart, is a valuable example to us all.

**The Example of Rehoboam**

After the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam was made King of what was then a united kingdom. Rehoboam had just been promoted to power. As soon as he came to power, Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel requested of him:

“Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee” (1 Kings 12:4).

The heavy demands of Solomon’s high maintenance kingdom had understandably wearied the people over the years. So then the choice faced by Rehoboam was whether to ease their burden; or whether to disregard their wishes. Was he to be a strong King or a weak King? Was he a wise King like his father Solomon, or was he to be a foolish king? The situation was dangerous. Jeroboam the leader of the delegation, was a “mighty man of valour” (1 Kings 11:28)—a proven leader whom Solomon had given oversight over all the charge of the house of Joseph. The potential for rebellion was apparent.

He sought counsel of the old men who were his father’s advisers. These were men who assisted his Father Solomon in making his wise and godly decisions of great renown. They would have been wise men in their own right, with knowledge of the ways and principles of God. They had opportunity to learn every day from observing King Solomon’s God-given wisdom. These men advised Rehoboam to concede to the wishes of the people and thereby obtain their longterm loyalty.

But as we know, Rehoboam “forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him.” These men answered to the description of being sons of belial. Their hearts were wicked and their words worthless. And they advised him thus:

“Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us: thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father’s joins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke” (1 Kings 12:10-11).

Rehoboam chose to be influenced by those with whom he had more in common, in preference to the counsel of the wiser and more experienced advisers. He chose to make a decision that showed pride, power and arrogance; at the expense of wisdom.

“And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men’s counsel that they gave him; And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat” (1 Kings 12:10-11).

Evidently Rehoboam’s peers told him what he wanted to hear. The counsel of his friends was aggressive, provocative and reflected the heart of man unconstrained by the word of God. And likewise Rehoboam’s response to the people was harsh and antagonistic, adding insult to the hardship of their situation. The antagonistic nature of his response quite predictably, was the catalyst to bring about the division of the kingdom under Jeroboam’s rebellious leadership.

Proverbs 16:31 tells us that,

"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.”

And Leviticus 19:32 says

“Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God.”

Rehoboam would have done well to have been guided by these words of Scripture. If he was inclined to do so, then perhaps he would not have been the person to execute that particular part of God’s plan. Rehoboam did not show spiritual integrity in the decision that he made concerning the kingdom. He was not guided by the principles expressed in the word of God.

Rehoboam chose to make his decision based on friendship ties. Friendship ties cannot be a basis for discerning the correct course of action to take in a matter. Rehoboam made this mistake with the encouragement of his friends. The circumstances were orchestrated by God who knows the hearts of men, in order to execute his plan, but the lesson is still just as valuable to us.

**Jesus**

In common with Rehoboam, there was a point in Jesus’ life when he found that he too had been suddenly empowered. He had just been baptised and the spirit or power of God had descended upon him. The temptation to use this power to satisfy his own human desires would have been great. All things were now within his power. It was time for Messiah to make some resolute decisions in the face of severe temptations and pressures.

Matthew 4 tells us of how the Spirit of God led him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. The term devil simply depicts that which is antagonistic and malicious and accuses falsely. In relation to the ways of God, this is an accurate description of the unconstrained heart of man, or human nature.

Jesus was a man, and at that time a descendant of Adam. In his new and powerful situation he had to overcome a range of temptations from within if he was to serve his Father. He had to constrain the tendencies of his human nature.

Throughout Matthew 4, we are shown how Jesus is faced with a number of temptations from within.

After 40 days and nights fasting, Jesus was hungry. He was tempted to command that the stones be made into bread to fill his belly. His response to this temptation was to draw strength from the word of God. He recalled the words of Deuteronomy chapter 8. “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

The next temptation shows us how the mind of the flesh can even use the word of God to lure us out of God’s way, when artfully misapplied. The voice of the devil quoted Psalm 91 saying, “If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot...”
against a stone.”

For a second time Jesus drew strength from the word of God and said “It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”

And finally Jesus faced a third type of temptation, when in his mind’s eye he was taken to a place where he could see all of the kingdoms of the world and he was presented with the prospect of having all of these kingdoms worship him if he chose to submit himself to the influence of his fleshly mind rather than to the influence of God.

And for a third time Jesus’ strength was derived from the word of God. He quoted Deuteronomy 6:13 saying “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

Jesus kept his integrity when tempted in the wilderness. And this set his mind and his attitude in preparation for much greater temptations to come. Matthew 26 describes the internal conflict and anguish that Jesus experienced before his crucifixion. He maintained his integrity at this time by completely submitting to the will of God even to the cost of his own life. Referring to his impending death by crucifixion he said “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39).

We read in Luke chapter 23 how he was tested at his crucifixion.

The people and the rulers derided him saying, “he saved others let him free himself if he be of the Messiah that chosen of God” (verse 35).

The soldiers mocked him saying in verse 37, “if thou be the King of the Jews save thyself.”

And in verse 39 we can read how one of the malefactors who were hanged with him railed on him saying, “if thou be the Messiah save thyself and us.”

Jesus had been brutalised and beaten by the Romans, and then nailed to a piece of wood, suspended in the air and left to die. Death was imminent and he knew it, yet it was within his power to save himself. At the same time people around him were goading him. He faced pressures from without and temptations from within.

Once again Jesus was facing essentially the same temptations as those which he had overcome in the wilderness. Only this time the temptation must have been orders of magnitude greater as it was now a matter of his life or death.

There was the temptation to put the Holy Spirit power to the test.

There was the temptation to use his power to satisfy his own human needs as he was tempted with the stone.

There was the temptation to yield to the ways of the flesh and claim his place then as Messiah, the earth’s most powerful king, ruling over all the kingdoms of the world.

All of this was available to him even as he hung crucified. But he had already overcome these very temptations, and thus he kept his integrity. If he had lost his integrity at that point then he would not have conquered sin in the flesh. He would not be our high priest now mediating between God and man.

Jesus completely submitted to the will of God, even to the point of giving up his life. He was able to keep his integrity to the point of death because he had prepared himself. He had already learned how to overcome the temptations that he would face at that crucial time of his crucifixion, from the very start of his ministry when he retreated into the wilderness. In so doing he conquered sin in the flesh. He killed the devil that is human nature. Likewise we must prepare ourselves so that we are clear and resolute on how to face temptation, and what we would do in trying situations before they occur, if we are to keep our spiritual integrity.

Jesus drew his influence strictly from the word of God. This is not something he only evoked at crisis points, it is how he lived his entire life. This was his strength, and it is our lesson and our example.

Maintaining Spiritual Integrity

It is evident from the contrasts and examples of Adam, Job, Rehoboam and Jesus that maintaining spiritual integrity is dependent upon having the correct mentality.

In Proverbs 9 verse six we are told, “forsake the foolish and live and go in the way of understanding.”

The Hebrew word for “forsake,” in that sentence, means to leave behind or release. Also, “the foolish,” depicts the ways of those showing lack of wisdom and understanding, easily persuaded, yet able to change.

Thus it is our responsibility to let go of the mentality whereby we are easily influenced out of God’s way, like Adam and Rehoboam were. According to this verse, this is the way to life. And instead, we must go in the way of ‘understanding,’ a Hebrew word expressing insight, discernment, and the ability to skillfully react to life situations as did Job and Jesus. This is a practical living skill, not just a cerebral achievement.

And in verse 10, it tells us how to achieve this. It says, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.” The second half of that verse is key. It can be reworded as: Knowledge of things set apart for God’s purpose (the holy), is insight and discernment. These are exactly the same qualities by which we are told that we must live in verse six.

These qualities are obtained through knowledge of the word of God. Therefore when we receive advice or influence of any kind we have to discern right from wrong, regardless of whom the advice comes from.

It can be very tempting to allow ourselves to be influenced by counsellors based solely or largely upon whom they are or how much we trust them. But we are taught that we must not put our trust in Princes or in men and that we must not be respecters of persons.

This principle stands whether they are people that we have known all our lives, or whether they are respected in the truth. The same principle stands if they are people close to us such as a husband or wife, or someone whose role it is to provide us with sound counselling. We have to be especially mindful to recognize and control the influence of our own fleshly mind which is able to devise persuasive arguments to turn our hearts.

This is by no means a reason to close our minds to the wise counsel and advice of others, as did Rehoboam. But it does mean that we must compare and contrast their influence with the word of God. The Scripture records for us the example of the Bereans.

The Berean Jews are described in Acts chapter 17:11 as being noble. The Greek word translated as ‘noble’ depicts “a willingness to learn and evaluate something fairly—‘to be open-minded.’ It is in this sense that they were noble people.

So we see in Acts 17:11 that these people were more open-minded than “...those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word (of God) with all readiness of mind,” and crucially, “they searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

The act of assessing what they heard from the apostle Paul against the word of God was simply...
part of the process of evaluating what they heard fairly and being willing to learn, and this act is essential to maintaining or keeping spiritual integrity and hence making spiritually wise decisions.

Thus we must compare and assess every influence that we expose ourselves to against the word of God before we allow ourselves to follow that path. This is true whether the influence is internal from our own mind, or external from someone else or some other source. This is how we come to glorify God in our actions and this is the path which leads to life.

**Conclusion**

There is to come a time of judgement and accountability. This time of judgement upon individuals will be just that; a time of judgement when each individual stands alone and will receive perfectly just judgement and mercy according to their faith which will be evident in their conduct, by one who sees into the hearts of all men. 2 Corinthians 5:7-10 puts it this way: “(For we walk by faith, not by sight:). Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

Daniel 12:2 speaks of the same time saying: “… many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

The outcome of this judgement is by no means a done deal for any of us. This will be a time when we may be very mindful of just how well we have maintained our integrity before God.

The Scriptures do not imply that judgement will be a time when we can cite influence and advice of others as a reason not to receive for what we have done. The precedent was set in the Garden of Eden, when Adam, Eve and the serpent faced judgement for exercising its perverse influence over Eve. Then came judgement on Adam and Eve. “Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

Clearly the act of influencing or deceiving someone toward sinning is in itself a sin. Hence the serpent was punished and Eve’s punishment drank with him. Then came God’s judgement by the mouth of the same man that lied to him: “Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of which the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcasse shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers’ And when he left, a lion met him by the way, and slew him” (1 Kings 13:21).

The severity of God’s judgement on the prophet from Judah and on Adam and Eve was not reduced on account that they were influenced by others, in fact God stated explicitly that the judgement on Adam was because he hearkened to, (meaning to be influenced by, and yield to), the voice of his wife.

Adam, Eve and the prophet from Judah were each judged alone as individuals, according to what they had done. The prophet from Judah received his judgement almost immediately. None was judged in conjunction with their respective tempter. They were each alone at judgement. It would be logical to expect the same principle to apply to us at our time of judgement. God’s judgement upon us as individuals is not affected by the influences that we allow to affect us.

Ultimately the trials, influences and temptations that we experience are in the control of the creator, and He will not test us beyond what we can bare. Therefore responsibility for our actions is ours alone, regardless of the source of influence to which we are exposed.

Each of us who wish to follow God have a responsibility to reject evil and choose good according to the word of God. We have a responsibility to keep spiritual integrity throughout the many trials of our lives. Thus we must read, study, understand and believe the word of God. When we understand the word of God, only then can we have faith in the word of God. Only when we act in this faith can we truly keep our spiritual integrity. So it is important to make the word of God our own, and have it with us at all times in our hearts and minds to guide us in all circumstances. Our spiritual integrity is evidence of our faith in God and of our desire to manifest God.

“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14).
The implications arising from the European Lisbon Treaty are a major milestone for Bible students.

By Don Pearce RUGBY, U.K.

We closed our previous Milestones Update shortly before the German elections and the Irish Referendum on the Lisbon Treaty had been held. Since then there has been much to encourage watchers on Zion’s walls. As step-by-step so many pieces of the prophetic jigsaw now seem to be dropping into place. It is quite thrilling to consider the angelic activity in the political heavens in these last days. God’s blueprint is being worked and all the many prophecies will reach their fulfilment, exactly as God intended—even though in ways which amaze us.

So we continue with an update on what we considered last time—the coming together of Europe as a political power, the rise of the Papacy, and the binding of Europe, East and West, both politically and religiously.

We start with the historic coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty on December 1st 2009.

Lisbon—A Constitutional Revolution by Stealth?

Most Europeans are unaware of what their leaders have signed up to and this headline in the EUObserver (1-12-09) neatly summed it up. This Treaty carries many important implications of great interest to Bible students because we see this as the big step in shaping the Europe of the latter-days. It is clear that there is a Beast system at the time of Christ’s return (Rev 16:13,14; 17:10-14; 19:19). In the past centuries Europe was ruled by Emperors and Popes cooperating together to control the lives of their citizens. The French Revolution and the work of Napoleon brought this to an end with much bloodshed. The people tasted freedom and the monarchies of Europe and Russia disappeared, together with the power of the churches. Church and state were kept at arm’s length; however this was to be but a temporary phase in the history of Eastern and Western Europe. The final Bible picture is of a revival of the Kingdom of Men, with church and state working together as in the pre-revolution days. In Russia we have seen the fall of communism and the rising interest in the restoration of the monarchy. We also see that church and state work hand in hand—church leaders and political leaders stand side by side.

In Western Europe the progress towards putting religion (i.e. the Vatican) back into the heart of European matters lags behind the situation in Russia, but it is making rapid steps under the German Pope Benedict XVI, who finds a ready ear for his dreams in his native nation. The Holy Roman Empire of the past was essentially Germanic, and the Germans have never lost their dream of being at the centre of Europe once more. Hitler’s dreams for this are well documented as was the support the Roman Church gave Hitler. According to the report of a visitor to Munich (posted 6-12-09), the Vatican embassy was located in the same street near to Hitler’s main Nazi buildings! However the time was not right. Hitler’s dreams of an empire that embraced Europe and the Soviet were poured into dust by the allies. But it was not forgotten. The founding fathers were “good” Roman Catholics—many of them are on the Vatican’s pathway to “sainthood.” What Hitler failed to achieve by force is rapidly being achieved through peace. Various circumstances have led to Germany emerging as the strong leader of Europe. By using the EU rather than bombs and bullets, Germany is emerging as the power that will heavily influence the shape of Europe to come. The 4th revival of the Germanic Empire is preparing to be the latter-day Beast power.

European Union Celebrates First Day of Lisbon Treaty

It has taken 9 years of battling to get to this stage. The Irish were pushed into voting Yes, the second time round but it still left the Czech government to approve. Václav Klaus, the Czech president was known to be against the political union that signing up to the Treaty would inevitably lead to. As leader of an ex-communist country he had endured many years of central government imposed by the Soviet, and didn’t relish losing their freedom to Brussels. So it was a relief to the other EU leaders when suddenly the deed was signed and the long battle to impose this Treaty on its members finally ended. Celebrations were muted after the exhausting battle.

What is involved in this Lisbon Treaty? It replaces the earlier attempt to bring about political union through the European Constitution. This was killed off by France and the Netherlands rejecting it in 2005. Disheartened but not ready to lose their cherished dreams of a united Europe, a new attempt was made. It involved a subtle, but rather messy, amendment of the Maastricht and the Nice Treaties. Virtually all the things that the rejected European Constitution contained were inserted as modifications to the earlier Treaties.

“The resulting Lisbon Treaty contains most of the constitution’s innovations but no longer the symbolically important and state-like elements such as an article covering an EU flag and anthem. It was also presented differently as simply an amending treaty, rather than a constitution in its own right” (EUObserver 1-12-09).

The flag and the EU anthem were in fact inserted as a recommendation in a last minute footnote put in by Germany and France and some others.

“It’s most prominent innovations include the creation of a permanent president of the European Council and a beefed up foreign policy chief, who will head a new large diplomatic corps.

“The arguably more profound change is internally, with member states’ ability to veto being markedly reduced and a corresponding significant boost to the European Parliament’s powers. MEPs now have a say over a wide range of new areas including farm and fisheries policy, transport, structural funds and justice and home affairs” (ibid).

It was a triumph for the Euro-federalist’s dream of a united Europe—the dream of the founding fathers of the EU. Jerzy Buzek, the president of the European parliament (not to be confused with the newly appointed post of President of the European Council—more of which later), “marked the day by sending flowers to be placed on the graves of Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman, the ‘founding
fathers of the EU” (Daily Telegraph 1-12-09).

Here are some of the triumphal statements. “This marks the beginning of a new era of European integration” (Jerzy Buzek).

“It is a great day for Europe because this treaty, after a battle lasting nearly a decade, enters into force. This treaty is even more important than Maastricht or even the Treaty of Rome” (Guy Verhofstadt, a former Belgian prime minister).

“The Lisbon Treaty is better than reported, with it Europe is going forward towards political union.” “We never gave up on it, even after the negative referendums in France, the Netherlands and Ireland. Some people were ready to give up but never us in this parliament” (Jo Leinen, a senior German Social Democrat MEP).

Lisbon—A Constitutional Revolution by Stealth? (Part II)

So what has changed for the 500 million citizens of the EU? The EU population ranks No. 3 after China and India, covering less than half the area of the US. To quote from the EUObserver article (1-12-09): (my emphasis DFP)

“Lisbon, like the EU Constitution before it, establishes for the first time a European Union which is constitutionally separate from and superior to its Member States, just as the USA is separate from and superior to its 50 constituent states or as Federal Germany is in relation to its Länder. The 27 EU members thereby lose their character as true sovereign States. Constitutionally they become more like regional states in a multinational Federation, although they still retain some of the trappings of their former sovereignty. Simultaneously 500 million Europeans become real rather than notional or symbolical citizens of the constitutionally new post-Lisbon European Union.”

This means that members of the European Parliament, who up to now have been “representatives of the peoples of the States brought together in the Community,” become “representatives of the Union’s citizens” (Art.14 TEU; cf Art.189 TEC). Without being asked—apart from the Irish—we find that we are no longer just citizens of say the United Kingdom, but also citizens of the EU! This is the 3rd leg in a 3-part step to turn the EU into a State.

Three steps to a Federal-Style Constitution

“Lisbon’s constitutional revolution takes place in three interconnected steps. Firstly, the Treaty establishes a European Union with legal personality and a fully independent corporate existence in all Union areas for the first time (Arts.1 and 47 TEU).”

“This enables the post-Lisbon Union to function as a State vis-à-vis other States externally, and in relation to its own citizens internally.

“Secondly, Lisbon abolishes the European Community which goes back to the Treaty of Rome and which makes European laws at present, and transfers the Community’s powers and institutions to the new Union, so that it is the post-Lisbon Union, not the Community, which will make supranational European laws henceforth (Art.1 TEU).”

“Thirdly, Lisbon then makes 500 million Europeans into real citizens of the new Federal-style Union which the Treaty establishes (Arts.9 TEU and 20 TFEU). Instead of EU citizenship “complementing” national citizenship, as under the present Maastricht Treaty-based EU (Art.17 TEC), which makes such citizenship essentially symbolic, Lisbon provides that EU citizenship shall be “additional to” national citizenship.

“This is a real dual citizenship—not of two different States, but of two different levels of one State. One can only be a citizen of a State and all States must have citizens. Examples of this are the USA, 19th Century Germany, Switzerland, Canada, Australia. “Being a citizen means that one must obey the law and give loyalty to the authority of the State one is a citizen of the two state levels, the federal and the regional or provincial. “In the post-Lisbon EU, the rights and duties attaching to citizenship of the Union will be superior to those attaching to one’s national citizenship in any case of conflict between the two, because of the superiority of EU law over national law and Constitutions (Declaration No 17 concerning Primacy).”

So the EU under Lisbon becomes a State, no longer a loose collection of 27 countries. Quoting again, “Lisbon changes this situation fundamentally by giving the post-Lisbon Union the constitutional form of a true supranational Federation, in other words a State.”

EU Leaders Name New President and Foreign Minister

The person finally chosen to be the new EU President had not been among the front runners. A quiet, little known man, Belgian Prime Minister Herman Van Rompuy was a surprise choice, pushed for by France and Germany. The Foreign Minister too was a surprise. European Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton of Britain now heads the long-winded office of “high representative for foreign affairs and security policy,” a title to detract from the real office, to appease those who opposed the original title in the failed European Constitution. Again France and Germany pushed for her. The choices were made by the 27 leaders behind closed doors—there is little transparency in the EU and the people get no say.

His Roman Catholic credentials are high, so much so that the National Secular Society (20-11-09) ran the headline:

“Does the Pope have another Little Toiler at the top of Euro Politics?”

This was followed by a later article (27-11-09)

“It is in fact true that van Rompuy is a serious Catholic, the author of a book entitled Christendom, who has opposed Turkish entry into the EU on the grounds that “The universal values which are in force in Europe and which are fundamental values of Christianity, will lose vigour with the entry of a large Islamic country such as Turkey.”

• He makes monthly retreats to a Benedictine monastery;

• He gained a degree in economics at the Catholic University of Leuven—but also one in philosophy;

• He is a leader of the Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams, Belgium’s Flemish Christian-democratic party

• On October 19, he delivered a paper to a conference on the last encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI about the Church’s social doctrine. He supported the Pope’s idea that social doctrine needed a “world leader” to ensure that it was based on morality.

The potential cost of these new offices plus a diplomatic corps will have to be funded from somewhere. They have chosen the right man—he is an advocate of raising taxes. The Times (17-11-09) commented:—(My emphasis DFP)

“The man tipped to be Europe’s first president is already considering new EU taxes to fund the rising cost of Brussels and the welfare state ... Van Rompuy’s contentious remarks were aired privately amid the grand surroundings of the Castle of the Valley of the Duchess near Brussels. The château hosted the talks on the Treaty of Rome in 1957 that launched the European Union.”

According to Ferris News-Wheel (20-11-09) the Pope was the first to phone to congratulate these two appointees.
Constitution—has spoken before of the sense in the chairman of the drafting committee of the French ex-President Giscard d’Estaing who was once an EU member always an EU member. There is an opt-out clause. Under earlier Treaties, to torpedo any matters in the future especially have 43.6 percent. It will be difficult for Britain share of the vote total, whereas under Lisbon they population. Under the Nice Treaty, Germany, Germany alone represent 30% of the EU’s say, but a country’s leader’s vote carries the countries in favour of the Nice Treaty many matters were under be decided by QMV—Qualified Majority Voting. be virtually abolished and nearly all matters will under these regulations the power of the veto will force, although it is not due to start until 2014. proce sses which the Lisbon treaty brings into weapons ready. The first is a change in voting "It has happened again: British politicians for Britain as she is being outmanoeuvred for 50 years that France has had this role. Mr. Sarkozy said: ‘It’s the first time in every step. With British elections having to be called sometime next year, the Conservative Party is confident of going in their place. The The English are the big losers in this idea. "We would like everything in place before David Cameron becomes Prime Minister... it is a form of pressure that David Cameron is putting on us—but it is very good pressure because it means that we have to press on."

Since Lisbon Treaty came into Force, Relations between EU countries are Domestic Policy not Foreign Policy Again Open Europe (11-12-09) reveals that the changed situation brought in by Lisbon is alarming and shocking many government ministers. Overnight they have lost power! On his Coulisses de Bruxelles blog, Jean Quatremére notes that European Foreign Ministers have discovered “with horror” that under the Lisbon Treaty they no longer get to take part in EU summits of heads of state and government, and that the EU Foreign Minister, Cathy Ashton, goes in their place. The Times quotes Bildt saying that since the Lisbon Treaty came into force, relations between member states are no longer considered “foreign policy” but are now “domestic policy.” Therefore EU leaders no longer need their top diplomats beside them at EU summits.

Britain has been Sideline by the EU once Again This headline in the Sunday Telegraph (6-12-09) continued—On agriculture and the City. Nicolas Sarkozy has outstanding Gordon Brown. This time it was to do with CAP reform. “It has happened again: British politicians have been thoroughly outmanoeuvred by their French counterparts in the formulation of EU policy. As we report today, the French have organised a meeting of agricultural ministers from all of the states of the European Union to ‘reflect on the future’ of the Common Agricultural Policy. Funnily enough, no invitations have been sent to the governments of Britain, Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Malta—the five states which are known to favour reform of the cripplingly expensive CAP. This is because the true purpose of the meeting is to make sure that the European Commission takes the ‘right’ attitude to the CAP: that is, it sniffs out all attempts to reform it.” Catholic Church reminds EU that Lisbon Treaty gives it Arm-Twisting Status We saw in the last issue the importance of the Lisbon Treaty to the aims of the Vatican. They had worked hard to get built into it legislation matters which would strengthen their position. The National Secular Society (4-12-09) under the above headline had this rather caustic comment to make. Obviously they are deeply unhappy at church-state cooperation. Their cries of alarm indicate the very real threat that they perceive to their humanist teachings. A director of the society claimed that “This is probably the most sinister document I have read for some time. It gives clear warning that the Catholic Church intends to insinuate the Vatican’s hard-line Catholic doctrine right to the heart of Europe.” “The Lisbon Treaty came into effect this week, and first to celebrate was the Catholic Bishops Conference (COMECE) which issued a press release reminding EU members that religious groups—particularly the Vatican—are coming to claim the privileges that the Treaty promises them. “The Press Release says: “The Treaty introduces into EU primary law an Article of notable importance for the Churches. By means of Article 17 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, the EU recognises the identity and specific contribution of Churches and engages on this basis an ‘open, transparent and regular’ dialogue with them. Thanks to this Article, Churches and religious communities will be able to strengthen their Dialogue with the European Commission, Council and Parliament and so contribute more efficiently to reflecting on European policy. Inspired by Catholic social teaching and strengthened by their background experience, Churches will be enabled to pursue a critical and constructive Dialogue with EU decision makers on the policies put forward by the EU...” COMECE calls on Churches and Christians all over Europe to seize this dialogue opportunity, based on their expertise and their humanity, to make a contribution to the European project. COMECE, together with its ecumenical partners from CEC (Conference of European Churches), will make soon specific proposals to the European Commission, Parliament and Council on how to develop this dialogue into regular
institutional practice” (National Secular Society 4-12-09).

**Pope to speak at Oxford, Westminster Hall during September visit to England**

According to Catholic World News (10-12-09) Pope Benedict XVI will make a 4-day visit to England beginning on September 16. It is a State visit, and he is expected to stay at Windsor with the Queen. It is shorter than the 6-day pastoral visit of John-Paul II in 1982 which was the first papal visit to these shores since Henry VIII declared himself head of the church more than 500 years ago. As well as speaking at Oxford and the Westminster Hall in London, the visit will almost certainly be linked to the canonization of Cardinal Newman who converted to Catholicism in 1845.

**Pope Benedict XVI paves way for Thousands of disaffected Anglicans to cross over to Rome**

“This is astonishing news, Pope Benedict XVI has created an entirely new Church structure for disaffected Anglicans that will allow them to worship together—using elements of Anglican liturgy—under the pastoral supervision of their own specially appointed bishop or senior priest...

“In theory, they can have their own married priests, parishes and bishops—and they will be free of liturgical interference by liberal Catholic bishops who are unsympathetic to their conservative stance. There is even the possibility that married Anglican laymen could be accepted for ordination on a case-by-case basis—a remarkable concession.

“Both Archbishop Nichols and Archbishop Williams ‘are surprised by this dramatic move.”’

How many take up this offer remains to be seen. The interesting thing is that this hurried-through step is part of a larger plan to reach out to the Orthodox churches where there are sections with married priests. It appears to be the test of a blueprint that can be used to bring the eastern churches back to Rome. As Moynihan put in a later article (10-11-09) they are to “be united but not absorbed, by giving the eastern churches back to Rome. As Archbishop Nichols put it, ‘it is not just a test of a blueprint that can be used to bring the eastern churches back to Rome, it is a hurried-through step is part of a larger plan to reach out to the Orthodox churches where there are sections with married priests.”

“Both Archbishop Nichols and Archbishop Williams ‘are surprised by this dramatic move.”’

### New hints of Movement toward Vatican-Moscow ‘Summit’

We saw in the last Update that there is a strong movement towards some form of unity between the Churches. The visit of the Russian President, Dmitry Medvedev, to the Pope has accelerated this process. The above headline appeared on the CatholicCulture website (2-12-09).

“On the eve of a meeting between Pope Benedict XVI and Russia’s President Dmitri Medvedev, there are new signs of substantial progress in relations between the Holy See and the Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow, and hint that a “summit” meeting between the Pope and Russian Patriarch Kirill might be under discussion. “The visit to Rome by President Medvedev is significant in itself, since the Russian leader has advanced the possibility that Russia might open a full embassy to the Holy See. (The Russian Federation currently has a special diplomatic representative at the Vatican.) Medvedev—who was baptized into the Orthodox Church as an adult, and whose wife Svetlana Medvedeva is a known for her devotion to the Orthodox Church—could also serve as an intermediary in furthering talks between the Holy See and the Moscow patriarchate.”

This indeed was the result of the meeting as our next headline shows.

**Russia and the Vatican establish full Diplomatic Ties**

“Russia and the Vatican have agreed to establish full diplomatic relations, the Kremlin has announced.

“Until now, Moscow only had an office of representation at the Vatican. The new status means full-fledged embassies will be established in Moscow and Rome” (BBC 3-12-09).

The Vatican now enjoys diplomatic relations with 177 sovereign states, plus the EU and a special relation with the PLO. What is so interesting to Bible students is the rapid growth in her world-wide reach. The picture in Revelation chapter 17 is of the Harlot Woman riding the Beast. The Beast is a symbol for Western Europe; however the Harlot’s activities are clearly spoken of as covering a far wider area than just Europe. She sits on many waters is a phrase that aptly describes her outreach today.

**Israel-Vatican talks over Church Properties Collapse**

This report in the Int Christian Embassies Jerusalem (11-12-09) indicated that the Vatican had withdrawn from talks with Israel over the status of Church property, due to Israel refusing to hand over total control of several of the religious sites in Jerusalem that the Vatican had requested. Another indication of the coming struggle between Rome and Israel.

**Barclays: “Israel’s Economy ready to Roar”**

Israel economically has been prospering in spite of the recession. Whilst Russia’s economy, for example, is expected to shrink by over 8.5% in 2009, Israel is recording modest growth. Barclays Capital has recommended that firms invest in the Israeli Stock market following the disastrous crash of the Dubai market in December according to Globes (10-12-09). Israeli firms were barred from this market and so have not made the substantial losses due to exposure as have many British and American banks.

**India deepens Defense Ties with Israel**

It is interesting to see the close ties between Israel and the Eastern Tarshish power of India. A Jerusalem Post (8-11-09) report says that Israel has signed an agreement to supply India with an upgraded tactical air defence system worth $1.1bn, for delivery by 2017.

“Israel and India enjoy close defense ties and Israel last year overtook Russia as the number-one supplier of military platforms to India after breaking the $1 billion mark in new contracts signed annually.

“According to press reports, India is interested in working with Israel on submarine-launched cruise missiles, ballistic missile defense systems, laser-guided systems, satellites as well as unmanned aerial vehicles.”

This is a partnership that Bible students have long anticipated, as India is part of the young lions that cooperate in the Middle East and are friendly to Israel. India shares Israel’s fear of trouble from Iran.

Talks on controlling Iran’s desire for nuclear weapons seem to have reached the end of the road. Obama began his presidency confident that he would be able to engage the Iranians in dialogue. He has learned the hard way that they are not interested in making any deals with America. They are excellent prevaricators—spinning out talks endlessly, whilst pursuing the acquisition of nuclear weapons without any let-up. There is much talk of Israeli preparations for a strike to take out the major sites. The threat of a nuclear Iran is very real for Israel. She knows that Iran is developing these weapons to use against her. For Israel it looks like a case of who strikes first.

We close with those words of encouragement from God through the pen of Habakkuk, words which are of especial relevance to the watchers on Zion’s walls in these last days.

“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. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith” (Hab 2:2-4).
s the nations of Europe have united themselves ever more closely, and into something resembling a federal state, many readers of this magazine will have made the connection with Revelation chapter 17 where we read of the ten horn-kings who “receive power as kings one hour with the beast.” The recent “Lisbon Treaty” appears to fit this prophecy. We are told: “These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful” (Revelation 17:13-14).

This unification of the things of the mind centres upon political and religious philosophies which produce antagonism towards the things of God and “the Lamb,” who, as the king of Israel will gather these European horn-powers for judgement. The result will be a futile “war with the Lamb.”

Gathering to Battle

If we consider Revelation 16:13,14 alongside the passage from chapter 17, it will lead us to understand the root and basis of this unitary mind that binds the ten horn-kingdoms to the beast. John writes: “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.”

Here are “spirits” that gather the kings of the earth—and of the whole world—to “the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” So this also is a war with the Lamb whom God has sent.

This is not difficult to understand: Here are those spirits of liberalism, socialism and democracy, that govern most modern nations today, and which most people would applaud. These principles which are traceable to various periods of history, became the guiding light for the modern world at the time of the 1789 French Revolution with its well-known slogan of “Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite.”

However agreeable these principles may be to the majority of people today, they constitute a challenge to the word of God. As He has said: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8, 9).

God has said that He requires voluntary obedience—men are not given liberty to go their own way with no consequences. Further, the Bible does not teach that all men are equal; God says “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion” (Romans 9:15; Exodus 33:19). Of Israel He says: “You only have I known of all the families of the earth” (Amos 3:2), and again: “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special
people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth” (Deut. 7:6).

This is hardly equality—it is election. And as for “Fraternité,” the brotherhood of man, the word of God teaches separation in both Old and New Testaments. In Leviticus 20:24 and 26 we read this:

“But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.”

A similar principle is seen in 2 Corinthians 6:17. There can be no fellowship or brotherhood between the people of God and the nations.

It is this difference between the principles of God and the philosophy of the world that will inevitably lead to an irreconcilable enmity, and one that must result in the world’s invasion of Israel, as foretold by Ezekiel, Joel, Zechariah and others. There will be “war with the Lamb.”

“Spirits Like Frogs”

The apostle John says that there is a “spirit of truth” and “spirit of error” (1 John 4:6). He also says that we should try, or test the spirits whether they are of God because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (chapter 4:1). From this we can see that a spirit of error is the teaching of a false prophet.

Such a teaching is an “unclean spirit” as can be seen from Zechariah 13:2,

“And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.”

Now in Revelation 16:13 the unclean spirit is said to be “like frogs.” Again, this must be a spirit of error that comes “out of the mouth.” It is a doctrine or teaching of some kind taught by dragon, beast and false prophet.

In the history of Europe the emblem of the
frog has been associated with the ancient Franks, and even in recent years has been used in celebrating the conversion of the Frankish king Clovis. In 1996 a tapestry was commissioned for that event and depicted Clovis with three frogs on his tunic (see top right). This was featured in *The Bible Magazine* Vol. 11 issue No. 2. In that article the connection with Freedom and democracy was pointed out, so that we can understand the frog-like spirits as relating to these principles:

“It is quite remarkable that the barbarian tribes that invaded the Roman Empire and brought about its destruction were also champions of so-called liberty. Gerald Simons in the book *Barbarian Europe* (Time-Life Books) says: ‘...they stubbornly clung to their tribal attitudes toward law and the rights of the individual—and thereby preserved a priceless tradition until the time for democracy was ripe ... (they) led all others in personal freedom...’ The very concept of progress—the belief in the inevitable and continuous betterment of man—can be traced to ideas born in the barbarian epoch’ (page 13).

“Edward Gibbon in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* tells us that ‘the love of liberty was the ruling passion’ of the Frankish barbarians who originated in Westphalia, Germany. ‘They deserved, they assumed, they maintained the honourable epithet of Franks or Freeman’ (Chapter 10). The name of the Franks is from the Latin *francus*, meaning free. Gibbon describes the way in which these Franks framed their laws, appointing four venerable chieftains to compose them and then submitting these draft laws for approval by ‘three successive assemblies of the people’ (Chapter 38).

“It was those ‘free and warlike barbarians’ as Gibbon describes them, who overran Gaul and established the nation that we now know as France. They overcame the mighty Roman Empire, but not the sagacious and wily priests of Catholic Rome. As the conversion of Clovis to Catholicism illustrates, those who sought liberty and freedom actually became the servants of corruption—that is, they became servants of a spiritually corrupt Roman Church.”

**Battle for the Mind**

It is these frog-like principles that go forth from the mouth of Dragon, Beast and False Prophet that influence the mind so as to create a uniform character in the peoples of Europe, and in “the whole world.” In the symbolic language of the Apocalypse this is likened to a stamp that creates an impression on the minds of men. *This is the Mark of the Beast* which occurs six times in the book of Revelation.

The word “mark” is the Greek *charagma* meaning “a scratch, etching, stamp” (*Strong*). Hence the idea is to engrave, to impress. The word is akin to the Greek *charakter*, meaning the figure stamped. It is used in Hebrews 1:3 where it is rendered “express image.” So the mark (*charagma, stamp*) creates a *charakter*, impress or image. If on the forehead—the seat of the mind—then the *thinking* is involved. If on the right hand, then it gives authority—a qualification to practice (to buy, to sell in a metaphoric sense, as in Proverbs 23:23 or Matthew 25:9).

It is this mark of the beast that creates “one mind” and causes nations to surrender their power and strength unto the beast (Revelation 17:13). All are persuaded that this is for the “common good,” and are thus ensnared into the “politically correct” shackles imposed upon them.

**A Malignant Disease**

What began with the French philosophies and the principles of the revolutionary “Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite,” was a secular and godless concept that was called by various names—humanism, socialism, communism, democracy etc. It was first injected into the European body-politic by Napoleon Bonaparte, and then later by various leaders during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Humanism was adopted as a foundation ideal by the United Nations—and especially by UNESCO (United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization). As pointed out by the American Humanist Association:

“The United Nations is a specific example of Humanism at work. The first Director General of UNESCO, the UN organization promoting education, science, and culture, was the 1962 Humanist of the Year Julian Huxley, who practically drafted UNESCO’s charter by himself.”

The charter read, in part, as follows:

“The unifying of tradition into a single common pool of experience, awareness, and purpose is the necessary prerequisite for further major progress in human evolution. Accordingly, although political unification in some sort of world government will be required for the definitive attainment of this goal...”
stage, unification in the things of the mind is not only necessary also but it can pave the way for other types of unification.”

That phrase, unification in the things of the mind reveals the objective of those who control education, science and culture. It tells us that education involves what has been called “social engineering” or conditioning. It was the journalist and author Peter Hitchens who pointed out that television has become an “insidious form of mind control.” “Behaviour which was once deviant is made to seem mainstream, or at least acceptable, and those who are unhappy about it are portrayed as narrow-minded, old-fashioned, prejudiced and wrong. The effect of this implicit propaganda upon public opinion has been enormous…”

A Triple Alliance

The Revelation tells us that the frog-like influences are to come out of the mouth of Dragon, Beast and False Prophet. These are the major political powers working with the Vatican during the latter phase of the sixth vial period (Revelation 16:13 and 14).

The dragon was an emblem used by Roman legions and is thought to have been adopted by them from Egypt and Babylon. Pharaoh is called “that great dragon” in Ezekiel 29:3, and Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is said to be “like a dragon” in Jeremiah 51:34. It is thus associated with the east. In Revelation we read of “the great dragon... that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world...” (chapter 12:9). So the connection is made with paganism—and with Rome in its pagan phase. As a result of the battle of Milvian Bridge in 312 A.D., Constantine was victorious and the dragon was “cast out,” thereafter being associated with the eastern empire. When the eastern “Byzantine” empire collapsed in 1453, it was Russia that took up the mantle.

In the book “The Russian Chronicles” (edition published in 1998 by Quadrillion) we learn of the connection between Russia and Byzantium: “The fall of Constantinople in 1453 had radically altered not only the political map but also the ideological frame of reference of Orthodox Christendom, and notions of Russia as Byzantium’s spiritual heir became increasingly prevalent in Moscow. Inseparable from this was the concept of the imperial dignity. In 1472 Ivan III married Sophia Paleologina, niece of the last emperor of Byzantium, and adopted the Byzantine double-headed eagle as his own emblem. Spiritual and political ideas fused in the concept of “Moscow the Third Rome,” which was first expressed in the monk Filofey’s epistle to Vasily III.”

In the light of history it is now clear that Russia has inherited the role of the Constantinopolitan dragon (see panel below), and that the frog-like spirit of communism brought about the Russian revolution of 1917. What had happened in France in 1789 was repeated in Russia towards the end of the First World War. With the events of 1991 communism was modified to become the frog-like spirit of socialism, which is now the policy that comes out of the mouth of the dragon.

The Beast has several different variations which reflect the phases and development of its history (see chart page 22). In Revelation chapter 13 the Roman sea beast is succeeded by the beast of the earth, and in that form it represents the Germanic Holy Roman Empire. That empire was brought to an end in 1806 when—as a consequence of Napoleon’s conquest of Europe—it was terminated by Emperor Francis. But this Germanic beast ascended out of the Magogian wilderness (the abyss or “bottomless pit”) and attempted to restore the empire of middle Europe (Austria, Hungary and Germany). The defeat of the Kaiser (read Caesar) brought that dream to an end. But not for long! The Germanic beast ascended yet again from the abyss as the Third Reich under Adolf Hitler, seeking to re-establish the totalitarian empire. Again the attempted come-back failed and the beast went into perdition (ruin). After the war, Germany was divided between east and west. The eastern part was incorporated into Russia’s Communist empire, whereas western Germany was part of the democratic world. History records: “The memories of National Socialist crimes prompted many thoughtful Germans to reintroduce morality and religious principles into politics and to construct a new political order around basic human rights and democracy.”

Human rights and democracy are principles which are linked to the 1789 revolution in France. So this was now a frog-like spirit coming out of the mouth of the beast! When the reunification of Germany came in 1990, the Communist east quickly adopted the socialism and democracy of the west—and the frog-like spirit went forth to the kings of the earth (i.e. Europe) to “gather” (collect and convene, assemble) them... into a European Union! This has been greatly assisted and promoted by: The False Prophet

Following the Second World War, when it became clear that all attempts to drive back the spirit of 1789 could not succeed, the Roman Catholic Church realized that urgent and drastic action was called for. In his book The Changing Vatican Alberto Cavalleri wrote about the Second Vatican Council which had been called by pope John XXIII in 1963:

“There are some (declarations) which definitely mean, as one theologian has written, a Catholic reconciliation with the ideas of the French Revolution which only yesterday were unconditionally condemned. Liberty, fraternity, and equality are in fact the keystones of the council doctrine...”

This fact is well illustrated by the papal encyclicals that followed. For example Pacem in Terrae emphasized on its title page “justice, charity and liberty” (read ‘equality, brotherhood and liberty’). Also, and highlighting the need for change was Mater et Magistra with its subtitle “New Light on Social Problems.” It was a revolution within the Church itself in order to harness the very principles of 1789 so as to use them in the battle for the mind. Thus a frog-like
spirit came out of the mouth of the false prophet. It would be vigorously promoted, wrote John XXIII in his encyclical:

“It is to be inserted into the religious instruction programmes of parishes and of Associations of the Lay Apostolate. It must be spread by every modern means at our disposal: daily newspapers, periodicals, popular and scientific publications, radio and television.”

What began as a secular and godless concept was now to become the social doctrine of the Roman Church. By 1979 John-Paul 2 was using the phrase “authentic humanism” in his encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*.

“Out of the Mouth…”

It is with considerable skill that the Vatican has harnessed the world’s media in its efforts to create a unitary mind. Several encyclicals were issued which drew the attention of Catholics to the importance of the subject—for example *Miranda Prorsus* (1957) and the *Decree on the Media of Social Communications* (1963). In 1971 came Mass Media The Pastoral Instruction as well as a World Communication Day held annually. Catholics were told:

“Parents, educators, priests and Christian organizations should encourage young people with the right qualities to take up a career in social communication... Broadcasters have access to the minds and hearts of everyone... Television especially…”

So today Roman Catholics are to be found in key positions in the media and at the head of organisations such as the BBC; editors of leading newspapers and magazines, publishers and distribution networks. Almost all have been brought under the control of Catholics, giving them an influence that is far out of proportion to their numbers.

In addition to the mass media, there is an oppressive influence in education—all aimed at promoting the social teaching of the Church and...
contributing to the formation of public opinion and hence to that “one mind” which is the mark of the beast.

A Common Ideology

The socialist character being formed over the years is serving to unite Europe, and at the same time bring ever warmer relations between the E.U. and Russia. While Russia has slightly modified its totalitarian inclinations so as to appear more liberal, the European Union has become much less democratic—so a combination of iron and clay is seen to be the emerging political nature of things.

This has been the expected drift of things for over 150 years, as believers have examined the prophetic word in order to determine events leading to the coming of the Messiah and the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. In 1854 a book was published by John Thomas with the following predictions embodied in the title-page—all conclusions drawn from the prophecies:

ANATOLIA:

or, RUSSIA TRIUMPHANT AND EUROPE CHAINED:
being an EXPOSITION OF PROPHECY,
showing the inevitable FALL OF THE FRENCH AND OTTOMAN EMPIRES;
the occupation of EGYPT AND THE HOLY LAND BY THE BRITISH;
the formation of a RUSSIAN LATINO-GREEK CONFEDERACY;
its invasion and conquest of EGYPT, PALESTINE, AND JERUSALEM;
its destruction on the MOUNTAINS OF ISRAEL;
The long-expected deliverance of the Jews by the Messiah; His subjugation of the world through their agency, and consequent establishment of the KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.
By John Thomas, M.D., Author of “Elpis Israel”
None of the unjustified shall understand, but the wise shall understand—Daniel.

Much of that is now fulfilled—and the content of that book also pointed to developments that we today are witnessing. For example:

“The Czar” or leader of Russia—“will not be hostile to the pope. On the contrary, he will honour and acknowledge him, and be the enemy of the Holy Land.”

And again in reference to the “... Autocrat of all the Russias. As the head of a confederacy of the adherents of the Greek and Latin churches, it will be his policy to cause their priesthoods to be respected as useful co-operators in the subjection of Europe to his will.”

More recently, in 1970—and following the same lines of interpretation—a book entitled “Russia, the Vatican and the Invasion of Israel” arrived at the following conclusions as expressed in the following three selected paragraphs:

“We have described the coming Roman world as a christian-socialist state, corresponding with the iron and clay feet of the Image, and with the current socialist development of Europe...

“... in the light of the prophetic word, we may expect there to be a deal between the Vatican and Russia, the Vatican preparing the way for the Russian takeover of Western Europe...

“Such an arrangement may be a triangular one, between the Soviet, the Vatican, and Germany; Germany being given some collateral political control over Western Europe for her cooperation in this empire building.”

And again in a 1977 book (“Babylon and Jerusalem”)

Hearty Greetings! Pope Benedict greets Russian President Medvedev

A 19th Century cartoon: Russian octopus with designs upon Europe!
Security. The chains that are being forged today will take over as the “guardian” of Europe’s possible future. We already see Russia taking over and considering a socialist banner will lead to the nations of the world. The signs are that the unification of Europe under the Iron-Crimean kingdom (of Israel) for ever, even for ever and ever. The “princes” are “the saints of the most High.” The Lamb is the “Prince of princes” who will break the enemies of Israel without hand (Daniel 8:25). These lords and kings are those who “are with him (and) are called, and chosen, and faithful.” In Daniel’s prophecy this Lamb is the “Prince of princes” who will break the enemies of Israel without hand (Daniel 8:25). The “princes” are “the saints of the most High” who will “take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal” (Ezekiel 38 Revised Version).

Writing of Europe in 1854, John Thomas said:

“... their leaders are all wrong in supposing that ‘the age of conquest is past for ever,’ and that they will succeed in establishing the freedom and independence of Europe. There never has been such an age of conquest as that which will soon open upon the world; and as to the establishment of European freedom and independence, the war to be initiated is the setting in of an overwhelming inundation that will submerge them under one of the most terrible and scorching despotisms that ever wrung the heart of nations.”

The last phase of Daniel’s fourth beast will thus be formed as a Russo Latino-Greek Confederacy, which Daniel describes as being “dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly” (chapter 7:7), and again verse 19 “exceeding dreadful.”

We live in an age when science and technology have put into the hands of men the ability to create the nightmare that has been prophesied. The lives of every man, woman and child can be monitored and controlled as never before—and would be if it were not for the fact that the Almighty God will set up His invincible opposition in the nation of Israel. The despised nation is to become the means through which God will save the world from itself. That is why the nations are to be gathered “together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” (Revelation 16:16).

“War with the Lamb”

These ten horn kingdoms of Europe that have one mind, and give their power and strength unto the beast “make war with the Lamb,” who will overcome them. But it will be noted from Revelation 17:14 that the Lamb is not alone. He is Lord of lords, and King of kings. These lords and kings are those who are to reign with the Lamb upon the earth, and who say with a loud voice “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power...” (Revelation 5:10-12). They are those who “are with him (and) are called, and chosen, and faithful.” In Daniel’s prophecy this Lamb is the “Prince of princes” who will break the enemies of Israel without hand (Daniel 8:25). The “princes” are “the saints of the most High” who will “take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal” (Ezekiel 38:23). These are matters which, like Daniel, true believers will keep in their hearts—in their deepest feelings, looking for that glorious day of Israel’s redemption.
As we watch the unification of Europe taking place before our eyes, we sometimes miss the significance of the time period in which we live. These are momentous events accelerating the return of our Lord. The Scriptures tell us to “Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh” (Matt 25:13). The specific day and hour is unknown to us, but our earnestness should be heightened knowing that we are in the “time and season” which we do have power to know, because we have the inspired record that was given to the Apostles after they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:7-8).

**Understanding Times and Seasons**

Understanding times and seasons is not an easy task. The thoughts of God are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways (Isaiah 55:8). The language of the Apocalypse is language of divine symbol given by the Lord Jesus Christ by his angel to his servant John (Rev 1:1).

**The Miniature Representative Time Period**

The time periods given in the prophetic word are miniatures. They are symbolic numbers, representative of much greater epochs of time. We see this in other ways too. For example, the 144,000 of Revelation 14:1 is a number representative of, what is called in Revelation 7:9, “a great multitude which no man can number.”

Throughout the prophetic word the use of miniature representative time periods is frequent. In prophetic language, a day represents a year as is revealed in Ezekiel 8:4 and Numbers 14:33-34. In Daniel 9:24-27 the 70 weeks prophecy speaks of 70 cycles of weeks. Using the prophetic ‘day for a year’ principle Daniel is speaking of 70 cycles of 7 years. This prophecy starts in BC 455 with the decree to build the wall and brings the reader to around AD 30 the time of the Messiah. Here the miniature representative period given in weeks points forward to a much greater period.

**The Meaning of the Symbolic Hour**

We are told in Revelation 17:12, “the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.” The kings voluntarily give their power and strength unto the beast for a finite period of time with a precise significance.

The Greek word for hour is houra. Liddle & Scott’s Greek Lexicon defines it as: “any period, fixed by natural laws and revolutions, whether of the year, month, or day.” The idea expressed is that of a cycle of time and it is translated hour, day, time, season, short, and instant. The Jewish day was divided into 12 cycles or fixed periods called ‘hours’ (John 11:9). The Jewish year was also divided into twelve cycles or fixed periods, and therefore a month is an ‘hour’, or twelfth of a cycle, of the year. John Thomas relates in Eureka Volume 2 page 348, “The small cycle of light, called a day, which is the root of all the greater cycles, was divided by the Jews into twelve equal parts; and the night into other twelve… their division, which is the scriptural one, makes a month and an hour representative of twelfths of a whole, to be determined by the subject treated of. In Apoc. 9:15 there is a notable proportional use of a symbolic hour, day, month, and year. Here hour is proportional of day; and month similarly proportional of year… symbolic time, which is time in miniature, always represents time longer than itself. Here, “day” stands for year; and “year” for a term of years; so that the “hour” is the twelfth of the “day” or 30 days; and the “month,” the twelfth of the “year,” or time of years, and therefore equal to 30 years. This is the only place in the apocalypse where hour stands for thirty days. It occurs in seven other places after this; but in all these it stands alone, and represents a judicial period of thirty years, or the twelfth of a time.”

The miniature month and miniature day are both twelfths of a cycle and therefore taken as equivalents both representing 30 symbolic day-years. The use of this is borne out in Revelation 8:1 where the symbol is first used. We read, “And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.” The historical unfolding of this bears out the principles outlined above, because during the period of the Roman Empire being considered, “... the beasts of the Apocalypse were at work” (Rev 14:1). This is the hour of the true and righteous judgments of Almighty God.

When we see a momentous event such as the signing of the Lisbon Treaty we are witnessing the kings of the earth giving their power and strength both politically and monetarily to the beast. The image is shaking itself from the dust and standing up ready for the stone to destroy it. Before the 30 years fully commence, the resurrected and judgment must occur.

Being able to see that we are in the very last days, let us look up and lift up our heads, for truly, our redemption draweth nigh.

This brings us to conclude the one hour during which the Kings of the Earth are to receive power as kings is a finite cycle representing 30 years.

**Events during the Lifespan of the Last European Beast**

During this thirty year period, the proclamation will go out from the Lord Jesus Christ: “Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Rev 14:6). The hour of God’s judgment is the finite period during which the final judgments of God will be poured out.

The nations of the European beast will not repent, nor respond favorably to the mid-heaven proclamation. Psalm 2:1-3 describes how they will rage and imagine a vain thing: “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.” This will be at a time when God states, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion” (v. 6). The kings of the earth “shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings…” (Rev 17:14).

The speed and severity of this judgment is bemoaned by the kings of the earth who lament, “Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come” (Rev 18:10). She is also mourned by the merchants who cry, “Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city!” (Rev 18:17). This is the hour of the true and righteous judgments of Almighty God.

When we see a momentous event such as the signing of the Lisbon Treaty we are witnessing the kings of the earth giving their power and strength both politically and monetarily to the beast. The image is shaking itself from the dust and standing up ready for the stone to destroy it. Before the 30 years fully commence, the resurrection and judgment must occur.
The Feast of Firstfruits or Weeks was the second of the three great feasts, a celebration of seven weeks which was to commence in the spring of the year “from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain” (Deut. 16:9 NKJV). Firstfruits, also called the “feast of harvest,” was kept at the beginning of the harvest, in contrast to the Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles) kept at the end of harvest:

“And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field” (Exodus 23:16).

The Feast of Passover and Unleavened bread were the first of the three great festivals, in the month Abib, and marked the start of the Weeks which began with the waving of grain (the firstfruits) on “the morrow after the sabbath,” or “the morrow after the passover” (Joshua 5:11), and climaxied after seven sabbaths on the fiftieth day with the Feast and waving of two loaves (Leviticus 23:9-21). As we considered in our last article (Vol. 22, Issue No. 2), the primary issue of the Passover was the redemption of Yahweh’s firstborn son: first the nation of Israel (Exodus 4:22-23; 11:1-47); later the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 2:13-15); and finally through Christ all His sons (1 Cor. 5:7-8; Gal. 4:3-7). Judgment was brought upon Egypt’s firstborn while God’s son was and is still being taken “out of them a people for his name” (Acts 15:14). As we will see this first feast forms an important foundation upon which the second (Firstfruits) is based.

Unlike the feasts of Passover and Tabernacles (e.g. Ezekiel 45:18-25 & Zechariah 14:16-19) the Feast of Firstfruits is not specifically mentioned as continuing in the Kingdom Age; however we will see that the resurrection is a key principle taught in the rituals of this very significant festival. It is therefore provided as a pattern of God’s work as the husbandman who “waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain” (James 5:7 NKJV).

There are two words used in the Hebrew text in relation to the Firstfruits. One is the word *bikkuwr* meaning, according to Strong, “the first-fruits of the crop.” This word is used in Exodus 23:16 to describe the feast as “the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field.” The other word is *re’ shiyth*, which Strong says is “from the same as 7218,” i.e. *rosh*, and means “the first, in place, time, order or rank (specifically, a firstfruit).” We see both words used together a little later in Exodus 23 where we read: “the first (re’ shiyth) of the firstfruits (bikkuwr) of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God” (v. 19). The Firstfruits were particular to the time when Israel began to receive the produce of the “land that floweth with milk and honey.” Therefore, the Feast of Firstfruits was not kept until Israel entered into the promised land, i.e. the Kingdom of God (Lev. 23:10).

**Wave Sheaf—Leviticus 23:9-14**

The waving of the sheaf commenced the count of seven sabbaths “on the morrow after the sabbath,” coinciding with the beginning of the grain harvest (Lev. 23:11,15-16; Deut. 16:8-9). Assuming this sabbath is the weekly sabbath, not the “holy assembly” of the Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits and the commencement of the “weeks” would begin on the day after the regular sabbath following Passover. Since we are not told the day in Abib when this feast commenced (unlike the other feasts), it would indicate that the date varied since the count of seven Sabbaths was based on the regular weekly Sabbath. It is significant that Jesus Christ, who was put to death at the time of Passover, rose from the dead on the first day of the week or “the morrow after the sabbath,” and is referred to by the apostle Paul as “the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Cor. 15:20).

Barley was the first grain to be harvested and therefore that brought to the priest to be waved by him before Yahweh “to be accepted for you” (Lev. 23:10-11) on the first day of the week (on or about Abib 15th). This is apparent from Exodus 9:31-32 where we see the affect of the seventh plague of hail and thunder upon the mature fields of barley:

“The flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was boilled. But the wheat and the rie were not smitten: for they were not grown up.”

**A Time of Gleaning**

It was “in the beginning of barley harvest” (Ruth 1:22) when the Gentile Ruth and the Jewess Naomi came to Bethlehem (i.e. “the House of Bread”) and obtained grace of the Redeemer Boaz. Ruth continued labouring “unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest” (Ruth 2:23). It is fitting that the record in Leviticus 23 repeats the instruction to Israel regarding providing for the poor and stranger in this context of the firstfruits (verse 22; c/p ch. 19:9-10). Clearly the lesson, which is most relevant in today’s world, is to give to God first and those in need before ourselves.

In the Ruth narrative we can see the parable of which Paul speaks when he says that during...
Israel’s “blindness in part... the fulness of the Gentiles” will be come in (Rom. 11:25). The words spoken by the Gentile Syrophenician woman to Jesus also relate to this: “yet the dogs under the table eat of the children’s crumbs” (Mark 7:28). So Ruth received of that which fell “handfuls of purpose” i.e. a spoil or plunder (Ruth 2:16), called by Paul “the riches of the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:16). Therefore, as did Naomi, the Jewish nation will receive of this fulness: “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins” (Rom. 11:26, 27).

On this day, “the morrow after the sabbath” when the firstfruits sheaf of barley was waved, a burnt offering was to be offered (Lev. 23:12-13). It was specifically forbidden for the Israelites to eat of the new grain before bringing the required offering to God (v.14). A burnt offering of a first year male lamb without blemish was offered with a meal offering (2/10 of fine flour mixed with oil) and a drink offering (1/4 of a hin of wine). In this single male lamb our minds are being taken back to the promise of the firstfruits of the land promised to Abraham (Genesis 15:13). The priest offered the two loaves and two male lambs of the peace offering by waving them before Yahweh (v.20). They were “holy to Yahweh for the priest.” therefore providing a secondary purpose as food for the priests (see Num. 18:11-13). Like the tithe, this permitted their dedication to the service of the truth—“for your service in the tabernacle” (Num. 18:2, 31). The priestly families had no inheritance in the land to provide for themselves, and therefore like the poor and stranger were wholly dependent on their fellow Israelites. Following the keeping of the Passover (2 Chron. 30:1) at the time of Hezekiah’s reformation we have a great example of this, where the people “bring in abundance the first fruits” with tithes to support the priesthood (1 Chronicles 29). This was intended to be a time of encouragement in the law of the LORD. “That they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord and in the law of Moses, which the Lord had taught Israel” (Deut. 31:10). We should therefore ask ourselves if we are able to see clearly the future pattern of this feast. The apostle Paul points out that there is a pattern: “as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming” (1 Corinthians 15:20-23).

The Firstfruits: 

![Chart of Feasts](chart_url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feast</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passover</td>
<td>1st day of the month</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firstfruits</td>
<td>1st fruits of the harvest</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>50th day of the harvest</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Week 1:**
- **Passover** (God's provision for man's spiritual needs)
- **Unleavened Bread** (The spiritual food of the Christian)
- **Wave Loaves** (The first fruits of the new harvest)

**Week 2:**
- **Firstfruits** (The first fruits of the new harvest)
- **Wave Loaves** (The first fruits of the new harvest, waved before Yahweh)

**Week 3:**
- **Pentecost** (The outpouring of the Holy Spirit)
- **Three Loaves** (The dedication of the priestly families)

The feast day was to be a time of celebration involving all of Israel (Deut. 16:11), and like the other feasts required gathering together “in the place which the LORD shall choose” (Deut. 16:13); i.e. to the tabernacle or later the temple in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 8:13). In addition to being a time for recognition of God’s material goodness, it was also a time to remember deliverance from Egyptian slavery into the good land “that flowed with milk and honey,” the land from which fruit was now enjoyed (Deut. 16:12, 26-5:10).

What Israel was to recount from the history of their deliverance is precisely recorded in Deut. 26:5-10.

“And thou shalt speak and say before the LORD thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous: And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: And when we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression: And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders: And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey. And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God.”

It was not the pleasant things of Egypt they were to remember which is our natural inclination, but rather their deliverance from Egyptian slavery, from hard bondage and affliction. The divine perspective highlights the struggle required to obtain freedom from slavery to sin, that we might be brought into the fruitful land of promise.

**Christ the Firstfruits**

It is only from the New Testament that we are able to see clearly the future pattern of this feast. The apostle Paul points out that there is a pattern in the Firstfruits of the resurrection from the dead, particularly regarding Christ having been raised first:

“Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming” (1 Corinthians 15:20-23).
“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles” (Acts 26:22-23).

After the pattern of the firstfruits then, we see that Christ is first, the wave sheaf, and “they that are Christ’s at his coming” the two loaves of the firstfruits. Under the New Covenant we have the principle of this symbol in the memorial bread:

“The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread” (1 Cor. 10:16-17).

In light of what we have seen the two loaves would seem to be a fitting representation of Christ’s brethren, both adopted and natural.

Manna Replaced in Principle by the Firstfruits

In this context it is most interesting to note the circumstances of the first celebration of Firstfruits. We have already noted that it was when Israel began to receive the fruit of “the land flowing with milk and honey,” but Joshua makes the connection to the provision of manna which ceased at this time for “they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the Passover... and the manna ceased on the morrow” (Josh. 4:19; 5:10-12). We are told in Exodus 16:16 that “an omer” of manna was gathered “for every man.” In Leviticus 23:10 we learned that the Israelite was to “bring a sheaf of the firstfruits (rosh) of your harvest unto the priest.” The Hebrew word for sheaf (Strong # 6016) here is omer and has two possible meanings: as translated; and as “a measure of dry things, containing the tenth part of an Ephah” (Gesenius). It is estimated that an omer, or 1/10 of an ephah, is about 2 litres. Therefore, we see that both the portion of manna and the wave sheaf are seen to be similar, both related to an omer.

In addition let us remember what our Lord said of himself regarding the manna, and note that he says these things when “the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh” (John 6:4, c/p v.9) and therefore also the offering of the barley sheaf a feast of the Jews, was nigh” (John 6:4, c/p v.9).

As we have already seen the sheaf and single lamb required seven weeks after the Passover, and therefore the new creation will be the firstfruits of the wave loaves on the resurrection morning of the fiftieth day:

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection” (Romans 6:4-5).

We find this redeemed multitude related to the firstfruits in Revelation 14:

“And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God” (Verses 3-5).

Here are the redeemed of the Lamb, the firstfruits unto God. What a wonderful hope we see here offered to those who are Christ’s at his coming, to those who have been called out of Egypt as it were. Pentecost began this work, fifty days after the Passover and resurrection of Christ the wave sheaf. Two loaves are being formed representing two classes leavened with the truth: one Jewish (Jer. 2:3); and the other Gentile (Rom. 1:16). They are referred to by Jesus as the leaven of the Kingdom of God:

“Whenceunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened” (Luke 13:20-21).

It is interesting that on the 6th day twice as much manna was to be gathered, i.e. two omers (Exodus 16:22-23), to provide for the 7th day. Also on the day of the Feast of Firstfruits we see a similar doubling of the measure for instead of the sheaf and single lamb required seven weeks earlier, two loaves of two omers and two lambs were required (Lev. 23:17, 20). If we consider the total number of animals offered we also see the same pattern: 2 x 7 lambs in the burnt offerings; and a total of 2 x 12 or 24 animals combined (see the chart on the prior page). When considered in full this pattern seems too consistent to be a coincidence!

As we have already seen the principles of the firstfruits are pulled together by the apostle Paul when he speaks of the resurrection of Christ. The apostle continues to use the planting of the seed or old body in the ground, which springs forth from this death with a new life to demonstrate the principle (1 Cor. 15:36-38; John 12:23-24). Therefore, the apostle says: “so also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption” (v. 42). It will be at the resurrection from the earth of “they that are Christ’s at his coming,” the redeemed, that the future pattern of the firstfruits will have its ultimate fulfillment. It was partially fulfilled at Pentecost and the resurrection was preached, but the time is yet to come when “in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance” (Joel 2:31-32; 3:15-17; c/p Acts 2:16, 20). Then “the patriarch David” will be neither dead nor buried!

The climax of the feast on the fiftieth day, following seven weeks of seven days, reminds us of the fiftieth year of Jubilee, following “seven sabbaths of years... seven times seven years,” when liberty was proclaimed, and each man was able to return to his possession (Lev. 25:8,10). Here as well we can see a future pattern of the work of God through the Lord Jesus Christ. The harvest of the precious fruit of the earth will soon begin, the promised land will be returned liberated, Jews and Gentiles will be fed bountifully with the bread of life, and therefore all the earth will be renewed in righteousness and peace. We pray that day will come speedily!
By Art Bull  VANCOUVER, B.C.

But where did Beelzebub Come From?

"Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils" (Matthew 12:24).

Did Jesus teach that Beelzebub is "prince of the demons"? No, he did not. What does the Bible say about Beelzebub? It says that Beelzebub was god of the Philistines who lived in Ekron (2 Kings 1:1-6). But Jesus taught that there is only one God, the Father (Mark 12:28-33). He did not believe in Beelzebub, and he did not believe in any other sort of "evil spirit" or pagan god.

Jesus believed the words of the Psalm concerning Beelzebub:

Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat" (Psalm 115:4-7).

Jesus showed that the Pharisees were wrong in what they said about his miracles of healing: "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house" (Matthew 12:26-29).

We need to understand that the Satan Jesus knew was different from what the Pharisees believed.

Jesus possessed an excellent knowledge of the Scriptures, which are our Old Testament. He would well know the 25 occurrences of the Hebrew word satan. This is an ordinary word which means an adversary or enemy. The first occurrence is used this way in Numbers 22:22.

"God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary (Hebrew, satan) against him.

Other occurrences of the word are also used in the ordinary way:

- 1 Samuel 29:4—David
- 2 Samuel 19:22—Abishai, David's nephew
- 1 Kings 5:4—an enemy
- 1 Kings 11:14—Hadad
- 1 Kings 11:23, 25—Rezon
- 1 Chronicles 21:1—The Lord (see 2 Samuel 24:1)
- Psalm 109:6—an enemy.

The word satan occurs 14 times in the book of Job, where it is always used as a figure of sinful human nature, as it is in the New Testament by Jesus and the apostles—"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east" (Job 1:1-3).

The man Job was very wealthy, but he was also a good and godly man. He belonged to a group of people who gathered at certain times to worship God: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them" (verse 6).

Those who worship God are here called the sons of God, as they are elsewhere in Scripture:

Continued from Vol.22, Issue No. 3 page 32
The Bible Magazine Vol. 23 Issue No.1

Page 30

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:1-2).

John says believers are now the sons of God, but when Jesus returns, we will be like him. As Jesus says, we will be “made like the angels to die no more” (Luke 20:6). Then we will be in every way “the sons of God,” like those angels who shouted for joy when God laid the foundations of the earth (Job 38:7).

These mortal worshippers, children of God, came to present themselves before the Lord (Job 1:6). Cain, after murdering his brother Abel, “went out from the presence of the Lord” (Genesis 4:16). In other words, he stopped associating with those who worshipped God at that time—Cain was not in heaven with God! Neither were those in the book of Job—“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan (Hebrew ha-satan which means “the enemy”) came also among them” (Job 1:6).

God does not permit any enemy or rebel into his presence in heaven—see Psalms 5:4-5; Habakkuk 1:13; Matthew 6:10. This was happening on the earth. When people gather for worship they have all come for the same purpose. They do not welcome any unbelievers. The enemy was one of the worshippers of God. Why does he call him “the enemy”? God knew that Job was “blameless and upright” (Job 1:8; Ezekiel 14:14-20), but “the enemy” showed by his words in verses 9-11 that he was jealous of Job.

Jealousy is one of the “works of the flesh,” a sin which can keep a man out of the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5:20-21). “The enemy” who was jealous of Job was not an angel, because “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23), and angels cannot die (Luke 20:35-36). “The enemy” (Job 1:6) was therefore a mortal man, one of the people who worshipped God with Job. But why would God speak of this jealous man as “the enemy”? By using this figure, God is directing our attention to the real enemy of mankind—that which brings disease, pain, and death. That enemy is the sin that comes out of the hearts of men (Matthew 15:18-19). Every time we see “Satan” in the book of Job, it is used in this figurative way. It is not referring to an ordinary enemy, but to the great enemy of mankind, which Jesus came to destroy (Hebrews 2:14). The New Testament exhibits the great contest between Jesus and human sin, which is “the Enemy” of mankind. That is why in this part of the Bible Jesus and the apostles always use “Satan” in the same figurative way as in the book of Job.

The Hebrew word satan occurs three times in the book of Zechariah:

“And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan (Hebrew ha-satan which means “the enemy”) standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan (ha-satan), The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan (ha-satan); even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?” (Zechariah 3:1-2).

This is not the ordinary word, “an enemy” (satan). It is “the enemy” (ha-satan), which shows that it is used as a figure, as it is in the book of Job. Part of this passage is used by Jude in verse 9 of his letter. He calls Zechariah’s satan “the devil”—“Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil (Greek to diabolos which means “the false accuser”) he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.” Who is this “satan” in Zechariah? Zechariah prophesied after some Jews had returned from Babylon to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Ezra wrote about this in his book. The Jews began working very hard to rebuild the temple.

But there were other people, Gentiles, living around Jerusalem, when the Jews came back from Babylon. These people had moved there while the Jews were held captive in Babylon. They did not want the Jews to come back, and they tried to stop the work of rebuilding. They became “the adversary” (ha-satan) of the Jews.

They falsely accused the Jews of plotting to rebel against the emperor of Persia—see Ezra 4:7-24. The emperor believed them, and commanded the Jews to stop rebuilding the temple. God then sent two prophets to encourage the Jews to get back to work—“The elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah” (Ezra 6:14).

The Jews heard Zechariah say, “Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan (Hebrew ha-satan which means “the enemy”) standing at his right side to accuse him. The Lord said to Satan (ha-satan), ‘The Lord rebuke you, Satan (ha-satan)! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?’ (Zechariah 3:1-2). This was a message from God, telling the Jews that he was helping them, so they could finish the work of rebuilding.

In God’s message here, we can see Joshua the high priest standing for all the Jews. The Gentiles who lived around Jerusalem were ha-satan, “the enemy.” This was not simply “an enemy” of the Jews. This was “the enemy” of God, opposing what God had commanded his people to do. This was sinful human nature, joined together in men who were defending their own selfish interests against the people of God—“in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem... Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort... Be it known now unto the king, that, if this city be builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings” (Ezra 4:6-13).

This was a “false accusation,” so when the Old Testament was translated into Greek, the Hebrew ha-satan in Zechariah 3:1-2 was called diabolos (false accuser) in the Greek translation. Diabolos was the best word that could be used, because this is exactly what the enemies of the Jews were doing—falsely accusing them.

But then God “rebuked” ha-satan. God, who works through his messengers, the angels (see Daniel chapter 10) caused the emperor of Persia to find a commandment given by Cyrus. Cyrus was the first Persian emperor. He had commanded the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. It was the law of Persia that no commandment of the emperor could be reversed. Now, the emperor, moved by the unseen hand of God, rebuked the Jews’ enemies: “Let the work of

Remains of Nehemiah’s wall dating from the restoration
this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place... Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this“ (Ezra 6:7-13) — such a rebuke!

*Ha-satan* (“the enemy”) in the book of Zechariah is God’s figure for the people who were opposing him. The Greek translation is *to-diabolo* (“the false accuser”), also used in Jude 9. *The figure of selfish and sinful human nature,* in opposition to God, is taken up in the New Testament in the words *Satan,* and *The Devil.*

“Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of *the devil.* And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungry. And when *the tempter* came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4).

Jesus “was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts (therion—dangerous animals), and the angels ministered unto him” (Mark 1:13). This means that Jesus was in the desert for all of the forty days—he did not go anywhere else. Yet in one of the temptations the Lord Jesus is taken to the highest point of the temple, in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was not in the wilderness. Again, we are told that the devil took Jesus up into a high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. In fact, there is no mountain from which all kingdoms could be seen at once.

Jesus was alone except for the wild animals, and the angels who protected him from them. This incidentally shows that the angels of God cannot sin or rebel. If the angels were not perfectly trustworthy, then God would be placing his Son in danger. The Devil and Satan cannot possibly be a fallen angel. When a man is alone he can think—and Jesus had plenty to think about! How was he going to use all the great power that God had given him?

Fasting in verse 2 above means Jesus did not eat anything in those forty days. Jesus needed nobody to tell him he was hungry. If Jesus did not eat soon, he would die. It would be natural to ask himself if he should use the power of God to turn stones into bread. If he did, he would keep himself alive so that he could serve God. But Jesus did not ask only himself. He asked what God wanted him to do. He looked into his memory of the Scriptures, and found, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Deuteronomy 8:3). In other words, it is more important to obey God than to eat food. The power, as Jesus later told the disciples, was to “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils” (Matthew 10:8). Jesus rejected his own natural human desire (“the Devil” and “Satan”), and chose what God wanted instead.

Jesus did not go to the temple—he was in the desert all that time. But it is easy to imagine his thoughts going there. Jesus was the Son of God—he knew it and John the baptist had said so, and the voice of God had declared it. But all the other people did not know it. It would take a long time for them to learn who Jesus was. But he could prove it to everyone on the first day—he could jump from the highest part of the temple. The crowds of people there would see him land safely because the angels would protect him. Then all the people would know he was the Son of God! Again, Jesus asked what God wanted him to do. He looked into his memory of the Scriptures and found, “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Deuteronomy 6:16). Once again, Jesus rejected his own natural human desire (“the Devil” and “Satan”), and chose what God wanted instead.

Jesus “has been tempted in every way, just as we are” (Hebrews 4:15).

*To be Continued*
As everyone knows, the Bible tells us that there is to be a great conflict in “a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” The context in which this prophecy is given describes “the kings of the earth and of the whole world” being gathered “to the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (Revelation 16). The whole tenor of this prophecy leads to the inevitable conclusion that world rulers are to adopt policies which are in direct opposition to the will and purpose of God, and that they are determined to carry out their schemes by the use of military force—and that their plans will in some way involve the place of the Hebrew language—Israel.

**Coming Judgement**

The Apocalypse is not the only place that informs us of an international hostility towards the Jewish nation, and of a military attack which is intended to eliminate Israel. As readers will also know, several passages in the Old Testament Scriptures tell us of the same thing. For example, the frequently quoted passage from Joel Three:

“For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land” (verses 1-2).

The ideas conveyed in the names ‘Armageddon’ and ‘the valley of Jehoshaphat’ are very similar, describing a valley of judgement (i.e. upon the nations). The prophecy of Zechariah 14 leads to the same idea— all nations gathered against Jerusalem to battle: “then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle” (verse 3). Is not this “the battle of that great day of God Almighty” referred to in the Apocalypse?

Among other prophecies that speak of this final conflict, the most notable is that of Ezekiel chapter 38. In this prophecy specific nations are pointed out by their ancient names—names that can be found in Genesis chapter 10. They are largely Japhetic nations (verses 2-5), added to which are “Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya” (Ezekiel 38:2-6). As has been shown on previous occasions, these Japhetic nations are to be found in Europe, and in what is now Russia. They are presented to us as being in alliance with Persia (Iran) and other Islamic states. Addressing this confederacy or coalition the prophet Ezekiel says:

“After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a cloud, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee” (Ezek. 38:8-9).

As in the case of the other prophecies that we have referred to, the outcome is not in accordance with the “evil thought” that has been imagined!

“And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face... And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone” (Ezek. 38:18, 22).

**E.U. Hostility to Israel**

In view of the prophecies referred to above, the Bible reader can hardly be surprised at Vice Premier and Strategic Affairs Minister Moshe Ya’alon, who cancelled a trip to the UK on advice from Israel’s Foreign Ministry legal team. There was an attempt by lawyers of Gazan families to get Israel’s Defence Minister Ehud Barak arrested in Britain when he went there to address a Labour Party Conference. In December 09 another attempt was made to have an arrest warrant issued in Britain for Tzipi Livni, leader of Israel’s Kadima Party.

These, and many other incidents that could be mentioned, demonstrate the fanatical hatred of Israel in some quarters of Britain and the European Union. Much of the hostility is generated by Islamic elements, but it is quietly permitted to continue by governments and churches whose ideology is fundamentally opposed to the existence of the Jewish State. This is made much worse by the left-wing media which continually fans the flames of anti-Zionism—the BBC, the Guardian and Daily Mirror newspapers, and others. It is a well-trodden path and we can identify the footprints of Nazi Germany along the way.

Our interest in these matters is not due to any political prejudice, it is because these things are predicted in the Scriptures of truth. The prophetic word is unambiguous; the nations of the world are to become filled with hatred for Israel and the things of God—and this will lead to the confrontation mentioned at the beginning of this editorial.

**Why Europe?**

The phrase in Revelation 16:14 “the kings of the earth” refers in this context to the reigning rulers of Europe—that is, of the Latin earth. Europe bears a particular responsibility before the God of heaven because this is the territory where the apostles preached the gospel of salvation, and because it is these “kings of the earth” who have “committed fornication” with the great apostate system seated upon the seven hills of Rome (Revelation 17:2 and 18). Not only so, but for 1,260 years witnesses gave their testimony before the Roman “god of the earth”—from the rise of Constantine in 312 AD to the holocaust of 1572 when they finished their testimony and “the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit made war against them, and overcame them, and killed them” (Revelation 11:3-7). This death of the witnesses is known in history as the “massacre of St Batholomew” when over 70,000 Protestants were murdered in France. Pope Gregory XIII made known his delight to the world by having a medal struck in order to celebrate the victory of the Roman Church. On the obverse of this medal the murderers are depicted as an angel of light (compare 2 Corinthians 11:14) killing men, women and children. In the background a woman is seen with uplifted arms rejoicing at the massacre—and as she represents the Roman woman, one can only imagine what the reaction of God was when he saw the image of his servant being attacked in this way.
Church there can be little doubt as to her identity (see Revelation 17:6). The Latin words read “UGONOTTORUM STRAGES 1572,” The Slaughter of the Huguenots 1572. That event led to a war against Protestants which depopulated France by one fourth.

Add to this the centuries long persecution and slaughter of the Jews of Europe, culminating in that dreadful Holocaust during the Second World War—Yes, the rulers of Europe, “the kings of the earth” bear a tremendous responsibility for these crimes. We could make many, many references to the history of their cruelty and blasphemy—but the point is surely made. When we see Europe becoming more and more hostile to Israel now, it must surely mean that the time of judgement upon her rulers (civil and ecclesiastical) is close at hand.

The Whole World

Next year marks the 400th anniversary of the King James version, and in spite of all its faults it must be recognized that its influence has been tremendous—especially in the English-speaking world. This Book, produced as it was in a Protestant England, brought a knowledge of God’s ways to many nations far across the seas. And it has taken this long—some 400 years—for Rome to turn back the influence of the Protestant Bible (as it has been called). But the English Bible made its impact, and wherever that knowledge was introduced it brought responsibility. The principle is a Scriptural one, for as Jesus said:

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19).

Now it is true that this light shone out into the world in various degrees of intensity—the pure truth of the word was rare; it would usually be delivered together with the many corruptions that papal and protestant churches had added. Nonetheless it was a testimony—a witness—to quite a large degree, bringing to peoples the ten commandments, the so-called sermon on the mount, the Psalms and other portions of Scripture. Along with this would often be some knowledge about the great apostasy, the Antichrist and that “Man of Sin.” Even the preface to the King James Bible made reference to it in the following words:

“...the zeal of Your Majesty toward the house of God doth not slack or go backward, but is more and more kindled, manifesting itself abroad in the farthest parts of Christendom, by writing in defence of the Truth, (which hath given such a blow unto that man of sin, as will not be healed).”

This reference to “that man of sin” is taken from 2 Thessalonians 2:3 of course, and together with the mention of “Popish Persons” traducing the efforts of the translators, it would convey a clear message to all who read it. So widespread was the knowledge of the identity of the great harlot of Rome, that it has taken four centuries to erase the stigma!

So it is that Bible knowledge became dispersed throughout “the whole world,” bringing responsibility with it. Few world leaders would be able to plead complete ignorance of these things. In one way or another they have been responsible for their courtship of the Roman lady, and for seeking her favours.

Britain & the U.S.

The protestantism of England was exported to North America, so that Britain and the United States are especially accountable for their policies, as they may be judged in the light of the Bible. The leaders of these two nations know; they are educated people and know sufficient history and have enough acquaintance with the Bible to make them answerable. Not to resurrectional judgement—but to the judgements spoken of in the Bible (i.e. trumpets, vials etc.).

Their dealings with Rome and their involvement in Europe’s system is one thing that they ought to know will bring them into conflict with the God of the Bible. But another issue is even more inexcusable: their policies towards Israel and the Jews.

In libraries and archives in both countries there exists the testimony of a previous generation which foresaw from Scripture the restoration of the Jews to their ancient homeland, as well as the opposition to it from the European Beast system. For example, Joseph Mede whose work was printed in English in 1649 wrote:

“The Sixth vial shall be poured out upon that great river Euphrates; that being dried up, a passage may be prepared for new enemies of the Beast to come from the East; that is for the Israelites to be wonderfully converted to the pure faith and worship of Christ, and now to have conferred upon them the kingdom promised so many ages since. Whom the worshippers of the Beast, haply, shall esteem for the army of their imaginary Antichrist to arise from among the Jews, God so revenging the obstinacy of their error...”

Among the many writers who have left similar testimony, we may mention H. Grattan Guinness whose work The Approaching End of the Age was published in 1880. He wrote:

“However improbable it may appear that Palestine should ever again be the home of a mighty Jewish nation, Scripture leaves no room to doubt that such will be the case,—that the same Almighty arm which to place Israel there of old, plaged Egypt, destroyed the host of Pharaoh, and extirpated almost entirely the seven nations of Canaan; which subsequently overthrew the mighty Babylonian monarchy, in order to restore Israel to it for a comparatively brief period, by means of Cyrus and Artaxerxes, will in due time overthrow the Turkish power which has so long trodden down Jerusalem, defiled the sanctuary, and desolated the land of Israel, and will, the second time, restore his ancient people, to their inalienable inheritance. Every barrier must fall, every obstacle be overthrown, that the purpose of God may be accomplished, and the promises to Abraham and to his seed be fulfilled.”

To this may be added many Christadelphian writings, quotations from which appear regularly in this magazine.

The Bible teaching concerning the restoration of Israel and the opposition to it by the papal power and the European beast-system is no secret. Leaders in Britain, the United States and other English-speaking countries have chosen to ignore the facts while they trumpet their own unbelief and self-importance. They, together with the academic establishment and the media have led the people into the thick darkness of spiritual ignorance, so that judgement is now at the door.

Those who have known these things—including many Bible believers—have failed to meet the challenge. Rather than risk the wrath of men, and not wanting to follow their Lord who was despised and rejected of men—these so-called disciples have kept silent. But there is a heavy price to pay for that “comfortable pew.” The price is the loss of all things!

The United States, Britain and other countries who have been enlightened by Scripture in the past, have now allowed themselves to be brought under that influence which is gathering the nations in preparation for the battle of that great day of God Almighty. They are joining common cause with the kings of the earth and of the whole world, and must expect to reap the consequences of it.

Too Late?

Those who do perceive the truth of these things should do all that they can to enlighten others. To make any impression upon a world that is deaf to the word of God requires a tremendous stirring among believers. It requires enormous personal effort and initiative on the part of individuals. It requires sacrifice. Who knows what can be accomplished with God’s help and blessing? There is no point in looking to established churches and religious organizations for this work—rigor mortis has long overtaken all of them. It is up to individuals to arise and do what needs to be done. It is a personal responsibility for all of us.

“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!” H. Grattan Guinness
331 BC: Following the sieges of both Tyre and Gaza, and a visit to Jerusalem, Alexander the Great turned south to take Persian-occupied Egypt. Judea had now become part of the Greek empire, and the process of Hellenization began, with Greek settlers and military colonists given land and governmental duties. Hellenization was Alexander's attempt to consolidate his empire by making Greek the universal language, with the people having a common way of life. He was welcomed in Egypt, as he had been in Judea, and when the new city of Alexandria was founded, he moved many Jews from Judea to populate a section of the city.

We are told that it was on the 7th of April, 331 years before the birth of our Lord, when Alexander the Great stood on the southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and founded yet another city named in his honour. It was probably the first, but not the last of the cities, he was to found and name in this way. This Greco-Egyptian city was, however, the greatest, and was to survive for many years.

Two of those who apparently accompanied him to the shore that day were Ptolemy and Seleucus, boyhood friends from the Macedonian royal circle. Touring the country before heading north again to Tyre, and more encounters with the Persians, Ptolemy at some point made the decision to return to Egypt.

On the 10th of June, 323 BC, Alexander died in Babylon, and the struggle to succeed him began. Diodorus Siculus records—When he (Alexander), at length, despaired of life, he took off his ring and handed it to Perdiccas. His Friends asked: “To whom do you leave the kingdom? And he replied: “To the strongest.”

Eighteen years later, the middle-eastern empire had been divided primarily between Seleucus, who ruled over Babylonia, and Ptolemy, who ruled over Egypt and Judea. In 305 BC, with the death of the last of Alexander’s family, and following the example of Seleucus, Ptolemy proclaimed himself both king and pharaoh of Egypt, but expressed no desire in ruling in the place of Alexander over the whole empire. He took the title of Ptolemy Soter (Saviour), and ruled for another 22 years, dying at age 84 in 282 BC. He built on the ideas of Alexander in creating the city of Alexandria, with his Greek architects, and the work was continued by his son, Philadelphus.

After the destruction of Tyre, Alexander had set out to establish a commercial center to serve his new empire, a model Greek city. Egypt was a source of grain and food, for all of the Mediterranean. Ptolemy also wanted Alexandria to be a cultural center, of which the Jews were a significant part. Great wealth had come with Ptolemies created was the Royal Library of Alexandria, and the Museum, or temple of the muses, was another of the famous buildings nearby.

As part of their cultural program, the Ptolemy kings imported scholars, scientists and intellectuals to populate their Museum. They were appointed for life, with good salaries and tax exemptions, with food and lodging provided. To accommodate this group, the Royal Library was established. Acquisitions of the necessary Greek works, was the first problem to be dealt with. Agents were sent throughout the Greek world with orders to buy whatever books they could find—the older the copy, the better. Whatever they could not buy, they commandeered. Any books found on ships coming into the harbours were copied. The copies were given to the owners, and the originals were shelved in the Library. Being the source of papyrus production was a great help. Ptolemy III borrowed the official versions of the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides from Athens after posting a huge bond, made copies, sent the copies to Athens and forfeited the bond. The policy of the Library was to acquire a copy of everything, to make it a comprehensive repository of Greek writings.

As well as Greek works, they sought to acquire translations of important foreign books. One of these was what came to be known as the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Septuagint means “seventy,” as tradition tells us that the translation was made by seventy-two Jewish elders, six from each tribe. The prime purpose was apparently to serve the Jewish population of Alexandria in particular. Many of these people had been in Egypt long enough to lose their understanding of Hebrew, and spoke only Greek. Josephus, once again, is the source of much of our information, which is to be found in his Antiquities of the Jews. He tells us that large numbers of Jewish slaves were freed, great gifts were given to the Temple in Jerusalem, and...
copies of the Greek translations were made available to the Jews throughout the kingdom.

The Septuagint, or Alexandrian, translation was apparently begun in the early years of the third century BC, and completed during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Early references imply that the books of the Law were first translated, rather than the whole of what Christians call the Old Testament. Many legends are attached to the story, concerning the way the translators worked, and what they produced, with miraculous overtones. In any case, it appears that the Greek version produced had words and expressions related to the dialect of Alexandria. There are no records of the Scriptures being translated into other languages at this time, so it seems reasonable to accept that a wealthy sponsor, such as the king of Egypt, was involved. The Hellenistic Jews began to use the new version as their Hebrew became less familiar.

The other Old Testament books were eventually translated as well, probably by 150 BC, but there are great differences in the quality of the translations. Having no other works to compare in making their translations, we have to consider some of the problems presented in translating Hebrew words, terms and ideas into a Gentile language for the first time. Many contemporary writers found fault with these Greek Scriptures, but the Jews of Alexandria attached great authority to their version, and it gradually spread throughout the Dispersion. To those who lived throughout the Roman Empire in the first century AD, it was the common version.

We probably should not be surprised that the Apostles often quoted from the Septuagint version, rather than the Hebrew. They did not usually translate from the Hebrew on the spot, but rather used what was familiar to those to whom they were preaching. Philo and Josephus used the Septuagint in much the same way. The Greek translation is just that, a translation, and not an inspired work. Its use in our Bibles is just that, a translation, and not an inspired work. Its use in our Bibles is just that, a translation, and not an inspired work. Its use in our Bibles is just that, a translation, and not an inspired work. Its use in our Bibles is just that, a translation, and not an inspired work. Its use in our Bibles is just that, a translation, and not an inspired work. It is not an inspired writing, as is the Hebrew original, but can often be used to help us understand the thoughts of the Old Testament writers.

Part of the Jewish response consisted of more Greek translations. In the second century AD, three more complete versions were put together, by Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion. As some parts of the new works were preferred to the original translation, a merging process began, and a number of revised ‘Septuagint’ versions appeared over the next two centuries. It was not until the eleventh century that the text of the Greek New Testament became fixed as we know it today.

The Eastern churches using the Greek text today treat the Septuagint as inspired scripture, in place of the Hebrew original. Writings of the early Church Fathers were based on the Septuagint, and must be read with it. The spread of Hellenism in the Greek empire of Alexander was encouraged by him and his successors, and we can only admit that it was successful. The Royal Library, the Pharos, and the rest of the Seven Ancient Wonders, with the exception of the Great Pyramid of Giza, have disappeared, but the influence of the Greek language remains with us today.

There are differences of opinion as to its accuracy, but the Septuagint translation can be useful to us in studying our Old Testament record. It is not an inspired writing, as is the Hebrew original, but can often be used to help us understand the thoughts of the Old Testament writers.

Now Re-Mastered & on DVD
THE LIONS OF TARSHISH
From our series “For Zion’s Sake”
Frank Abel, John Ramsden and Paul Billington joined together to produce this video in 1997. It was filmed on location in Israel and the UK, bringing convincing evidence of Britain’s identity with the “Tarshish” of Scripture. At a time when Britain has become part of the European system, this video shows that as she has pursued an independent course in the past, so she must do again in the future, together with her “young lions.”

This DVD is now available through your Bible Magazine agents. Visit our website for further info. www.Biblemagazine.com
“By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens” JOB 26:13.

“Spirit” (Hebrew ruach) has the meaning Power, Energy (a driving force such as the wind, love, truth... etc)

He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.” Jeremiah 51:15

FROM THE GALAXIES ABOVE TO INVISIBLE ATOMS, THERE IS A CONSISTENT PATTERN

“The building block of matter and ultimately of the universe is the atom (left). No one has ever been able to define the energy that binds the atom, but it is this intangible something that holds the form of the universe. If, by some magic, the energy of the atom were to be switched off, the whole of material creation would vanish, for the atom has no material substance within itself. Only when it is built into molecular structures do we arrive at the stage of matter and solidity. This is the underlying reality of the universe we inhabit and of ourselves. Can we expect to probe deeper? We look for the edge of the universe; but the galaxies continue on as far as our finest instruments can penetrate. What is the energy that sustains the universe, and where does it originate?” How was it that the Bible gave us the answer thousands of years ago? The answer is surely obvious: It is the word of the Living God!