BRITAIN, CATHOLIC EUROPE & THE ECONOMIC CRISIS
“...upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day... In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats.”

Isaiah 2:16-20.

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In the days of Jesus, some in Jerusalem said: “Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?” (John 7:26), from the evidence we should know also!

In his Milestones Update, Don Pearce brings to our notice the impact that the euro currency crisis could have on Britain and Europe.

From volcano eruptions to earthquakes Ron Kidd looks at an earth in upheaval which is what Scripture foretold

“...upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring” Luke 21:25.
By John Thomas

The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols He shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth (Isaiah 2:14-19).

2. There is a Vail spread over all nations:—

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the High Ones on High, and the Kings of the Earth upon the earth. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously. And in this mountain (of Zion) shall the Lord of hosts make a feast of fat things unto all people. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the Vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory” (Isaiah 24:21, 23; 25:6, 8).

“I, Jehovah, have called thee (Messiah) in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep Thee, and give thee for a Covenant (berith a purification sacrifice) of the People, for a Light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes” etc. (Isaiah 42:6, 7).

“They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save (Romanists and Pagans). Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return. That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear” (Isaiah 45:21, 23).

“Arise (O Jerusalem) and shine; for thy Light, Messiah, is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His Glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles (till then in “gross darkness,”) shall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightness of thy rising” (Isa. 60:1-3).

“The Lord will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations” (Isaiah 61:11). Until he do so the reverse is their condition. And because of their excessive vileness, he says:

“I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled on my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come” (Isaiah 63:3, 6).

“Thou, O Lord, never barest rule over them (the nations); they were not called by thy name. Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the Mountains (Kingdoms, States and Empires) might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy Name known to thine adversaries, that the Nations may tremble at thy presence!” (Isaiah 63:19, 64:1-2).

“At that time they shall call Jerusalem the Throne of the Lord; and All the nations shall be gathered unto it, (as the seat of government) to the Name of the Lord (Jesus), to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk ANY MORE after the Imagination of their Evil Heart” (Jer. 3:17).

“According to the days of thy coming out of the Land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things. The Nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord our (not their) God, and shall fear because of Thee” (Micah 7:15-17).

“My determination is,” saith the Lord, “to gather the Nations, that I may assemble the Kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger, for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent” (Zeph. 3:8). Anterior to this event, their spiritual language is mere confusion and impurity; and instead of calling on the Lord’s Anointed with unanimity, they are as divided as there are forms of superstition in the world.

“Walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the Life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness” (Ephesians 4:17-19).

“Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; for this cause God shall send them STRONG DELUSION, THAT THEY SHOULD BELIEVE A LIE: That they all might be condemned who believed not THE TRUTH, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

In the seventeenth chapter of Revelation is a prophecy concerning “the Great City which sits on Seven Hills,” and which in the days of the Apostle John, “reigned over the Kings of the Earth.” Is any body so ignorant as not to know, that this city is ROME? If there be then “let him not continue to be ignorant” still; for not to know this is next to being a dunce without remedy. In John’s day Rome was pagan; but his prophecy has reference to her, when she should be PAPAAL. Papal Rome, then, is very appropriately styled THE GREAT
No other religious leader has such a high profile with secular world leaders as does the pope of Rome: above at the U.N., below with President Obama

Harlot; and because of the corruption and confusion she has originated, she is termed “Babylon the Great;” and moreover, seeing that she has given birth to so many forms of superstition, papal and protestant, she is called the “Mother of Harlots and abominations of the Earth.” Her motto is “Mystery,” for she delights in deeds of darkness; and once miscribed the word upon the tiara of her Imperial image; therefore also her name is Mystery. The spirit of God represents her as a Drunken Harlot—drunk with the blood she has caused to be shed of the saints and witnesses of Jesus. This beastly murderer is not content with getting drunk herself set to work to intoxicate all that had any thing to do with her. Hence it is written, “The inhabitants of the Earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication (verse 2). And again, All Nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (spiritual abomination and idolatries;) and the Kings of the Earth also (18:3), and by her sorceries were all nations deceived (verse 23).

This Mother of Harlots is to continue till she is 1260; and then like a great millstone from aloft plunging into the sea, she is to sink down with violence into the molten flood beneath her, and thenceforth “to be found NO MORE at all (verse 21).

It is worthy of remark here, that a short time anterior to this “consummation so devoutly to be wished” by the “Heirs of the Kingdom;” the affairs of the Drunken Harlot become remarkably prosperous, and her prospects exceedingly flattering. Hence she is represented as “saying in her heart I SIT A QUEEN AND AM NO WIDOW, AND SHALL SEE NO SORROW.” She draws the eyes of all the nations to her, as a City, whose sovereignty is again shining forth with its ancient lustre, and, under the auspices of the Eighth Head, Imperial life her old Caesarian sovereignties is entering upon a new and brilliant era of light and progress in harmony with the spirit of the age! Vain, illusory expectations of a deceived and drunken world! With what unerring truth the apostle said, “they that dwell on the earth shall admire (thauamazontai) whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the World.” They will admire and praise the Imperial Head of the Harlot City. They vote addresses his Image from the Western Hemisphere; pay flattering compliments to his officials in the Land of the Pilgrims; give ear to his syren sorceries in Legislative Halls; and shout vivas to “His Holiness” in the doomed cities of his domain! How little do they know, that the desolation of the Harlot is nigh even at the doors! The sign of her eternal overthrow is the fitful flashing of her expiring wick—a little brightening of her affairs, precursory to the “plagues which shall come in one day, death, and mourning and famine;” when “she shall be utterly burned with fire.” Reader, be upon your guard, for the end is near.

In conclusion. When we contemplate the Nations, all of them, by the “sure word of prophecy,” we behold them, haughty, proud and idolatrous; their minds veiled with a covering of gross darkness; without divine knowledge; unrighteous; walking after the imagination of an evil heart; deaf, of vain minds; darkened understandings; alienated through ignorance from the life of God; past feeling; strongly deluded, believing a lie; and drunk with the intoxicating sorceries of the scarlet-robed, adulterous, and lascivious “Queen.” Such is the scripture delineation of those who manufacture “PUBLIC OPINION!” In view of this, is the doctrine of Jesus, strange, that “that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God;” or that of Paul, that if he “pleased men, he should not be the servant of Christ.” Can man advocate the truth of God, and continue in harmony with Public Opinion? Impossible! With such opinion there must be war even unto death.

The spirit deals in the choicest kinds of merchandise, which he offers to the public upon the most advantageous terms. His business advertisement is conceived in the most liberal spirit, and runs thus: “Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” He then proceeds to expostulate with people for wasting their means in buying mere sawdust of dishonest bakers, who sell it to them for bread. “Wherefore,” saith he, “do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye good (bread), and let your soul delight itself in fatness. incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will cut off to you the covenant of the hidden period (or future age), the sure mercies of David”—Isaiah 55:1-3. In this advertisement, the article offered for sale is the truth—the good things covenanted to David; concerning which he saith to men, “Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding”—Proverbs 23:23: that is, buy these four things; but when you have acquired them, see that you do not part with them for any consideration...

I say, it has been liberally offered for sale and extensively purchased; but it is not so now. A rival establishment has been opened... professedly to sell the same goods; but instead they introduced a poisonous and intoxicating substitute, which stole away the brains of all who purchased it. The noxious compound, which causes ramollissement du cerveau, or softening of the brain, and rottenness of the bones, is apocalyptically styled, Babylonian wine of fornication—Revelation17:2-5.
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Nicholas White (Pershore, UK)
David Billington (Brantford, ON)

For programme & information contact
Gary Smith
519-758-0362
hgarysmith@sympatico.ca

Northern Prophecy Day 2010
3:00pm, Saturday, 30th October 2010, God Willing
“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed”

CASTLEFORD CHRISTADELPHIAN HALL
Hartley Street, Castleford (off High Oxford St),
Castleford, West Yorkshire, WF10 5DQ

Speakers:
Simon Collard (Cambridge)
Andrew White (Rugby)
John Evans (Swansea)

Contact: Philip Jones, 01226-286026
Pipsafedriving@aol.com

Saturday 21 August 2010
Northlakes Community Hall Northlakes
Commencing 2:00pm & concluding at 7:45 pm

EUROPE IN BIBLE PROPHECY
Bro Andrew Dangerfield 2:00 pm-3:15
Afternoon Tea 3:15-3:45 pm

ISRAEL AT THE TIME OF THE END
Bro Jim Cowie 3:45 pm-5:00
Basket Tea 5:00-6:30 pm

THE REVELATION & LATTER DAY PROPHECY
Bro Steven Hornhardt 6:30 pm-7:45

Please ring Bro Neville Bullock for registration on 3886 0775 or email at nbullock@webshield.net.au
when Jesus came to the well in Samaria and asked the Samaritan woman for water, she immediately recognized him as a Jew, saying, “How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?”

The Jesus of the New Testament scriptures was Jewish through and through—a stranger could immediately recognize him as such, far from the modern world’s portrayal of Jesus as a person they would consider handsome, a tall white male, with the look of a movie star. Similarly the Christian churches have so distorted the work of the Messiah that it is barely recognizable. Among other false doctrines, they teach that he existed before birth, was then born of Mary the mother of God and is part of a triune Godhead. It is explained that he paid the price for our sins, dying instead of us. Then we are told that all we need to do is accept him into our hearts and we will be eternally saved, regardless of the life we subsequently choose to follow.

The real Messiah and his work is so different than all of this. For this reason, it is a worthwhile exercise to consider the Messiah from the roots of the Hebrew scriptures. Through them we will come to appreciate the work of the true Messiah much more fully.

Moses the Lawgiver

Moses, the servant of God, is one of the great personages of the Hebrew nation. Moses, whom God used to effect the deliverance of his people from the iron furnace of Egypt, was the caring shepherd of the nation. In a way he was the midwife that brought God’s firstborn national son into the world—even Israel, his firstborn nation (Exodus 4:22). Moses was a prophet (Deuteronomy 34:10), whom from within that office performed many other roles, including: a mediator (Exodus 24:2; Deuteronomy 5:5); a law-giver, a king (Deuteronomy 33:4,5); a man of war (Exodus 14:25; 26, 31; 15:3); and a granter of inheritance in the land of Israel (Joshua 12:6; 13:8, 22:4). At the end of the book of Deuteronomy and the end of Moses’ inspired writings we find the divine epitaph concerning Moses the servant of Yahweh:

“And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, In all the signs and the wonders, which the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.”

We all sympathize with Moses’ moment of stumbling, for we have all had our own—would any of us be as bold to imagine that we would somehow have succeeded where Moses failed! That, not once in the heat of the moment, we would not have slipped and been rash with our mouth? Yet when we rightly reply that we would not have done this, it is quite incredible that Moses, the great law-giver and redeemer of the tribes of Jacob, was unable to enter in at that time. His tragic failure had occurred at a moment of weakness, while provoked to anger by the murmuring masses. A relaxing of self control in the heat of the moment caused him to utter words which were rash (Psalm 106:32–33 RSV); glory that should have been ascribed to the name of the Almighty was claimed for self. The echo of the commandment delivered by the lawgiver to Israel rings out: “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain...” The divine verdict: “And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.”

Considering all this, it is quite incredible that Moses, the great law-giver and redeemer of the tribes of Jacob, was unable to enter the land of promise under the umbrella of the law he delivered to his nation (Deut. 4:21,22; 3:23–27). The lawgiver stood condemned and was unable to enter in at that time. His tragic failure had occurred at a moment of weakness, while provoked to anger by the murmuring masses. A relaxing of self control in the heat of the moment...
righteous, as we would have happily created our own standard by which to measure ourselves. Yet when we look at Yahweh’s law we humbly recognize our position and are able to accept the Almighty’s words: “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).

In Deuteronomy 18 Moses speaks of a future prophet who would come to the nation of Israel, that would be like himself. Being after the manner of Moses, he must then be a prophet who was also a redeemer, mediator, law-giver, king, man of war, and a granter of inheritance in the land of Israel. God would put his words in the mouth of this prophet and he would speak unto them “... all that I shall command him.” This, unlike Moses, who on that tragic occasion at Meribah had spoken rashly and had not spoken those words which were commanded by God. The prophet like Moses would succeed where Moses failed.

Yet not all the nation of Israel would hearken to the words of this great prophet, who would arise in a manner like unto Moses. In Deuteronomy 18:19, we see that there are those who would reject the words of this prophet. This too would be like Moses, for when Moses first came to his nation with the intent of delivering them and killed an Egyptian task master, the response of his Hebrew brethren the following day was: “Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?” (Exodus 2:14). So then, to begin with, until we see the clear connection with future age when Moses and his brother Aaron will be priests together in Zion; joining them from a later period of Israel’s history is Samuel. For this to be fulfilled all these faithful men of God must have been raised from the dead. All that Moses longed for when the angel showed him the land of promise, from the other side of Jordan will be realized. The angel did not show him the land in vain, it was because Moses was going there at the day of resurrection. Moses will enter the land and receive inheritance—but under what basis?

Forgiveness from Outside the Law.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived” (Numbers 21:8,9).

This seems to be a rather strange ritual to begin with, until we see the clear connection with Genesis 3:15—the promise made by God at Eden, when Adam and Eve had fallen into sin, much as their descendants now had in the incident of the brazen serpent. In Genesis God says to the serpent, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” The serpent was a liar that caused death by his faulty animal reasoning communicated to Eve. He was an amoral creature—that this does not change the fact he was a liar and murderer; the bitter fruits of his words were the introduction of sin and death into the world. In a figure, those who follow in his path, who reject God’s word are his children. Cain, who murdered his brother Abel, was the first child of the serpent. In the figure of the serpent on the pole, we see all that the serpent brought into the world destroyed and immobilized. It took faith for a person inflicted with a deadly serpent bite, to make the effort to arrive in close proximity to the brazen serpent Moses had placed on the pole. In this action the victim recognized that the serpent-like deceit which as Jeremiah wrote comes from the heart of man, must be destroyed and immobilized. As it has been shown, we are incapable of doing this ourselves; we cannot measure up to God’s standard. The serpent was a representative of the deceitful heart put to death,
David recognized that the offerings of the law—eternal inheritance in the land of Israel—of Moses, only death and exclusion from an eternal inheritance. There was no salvation for David under the law. Was it terminated when the law was introduced, concurrent with the law of Moses, or was it replaced when the law was introduced, concurrent with the covenants of promise? Abraham was counted a righteous man who would inherit the land. In Genesis 15:6 we read that on account of Abraham’s belief in the Almighty’s promise, he was counted righteous many years before Moses was born. In other words, salvation did not come from the law of Moses—but from the covenants of promise. Salvation did not come from the law of Moses—not merely because the law was terminated when the law was introduced, concurrent with the covenants of promise, or was it terminated when the law was introduced, or was it replaced by the law? When considering salvation outside the law of Moses, it is worth remembering that there was salvation before the law of Moses. Abraham was counted righteous many years before Moses was born. In Genesis 15:6 we read that on account of Abraham’s belief in the Almighty’s promise, he was counted as a righteous man who would inherit the land. The question then is, was this salvation granted by faith in the covenants of promise, concurrent with the law of Moses, or was it terminated when the law was introduced, or was it replaced by the law? Salvation did not come from the law of Moses—but from the covenants of promise!

David is promised that his throne, his house and his kingdom would be established for ever before him.

King David’s need for Forgiveness.

David, the great king of Israel, was a man who also experienced great failure in his life. While at the pinnacle of his achievements, David committed adultery and perpetrated the murder of Uriah—one of the faithful mighty warriors of Israel. There was no salvation for David under the law of Moses, only death and exclusion from an eternal inheritance in the land of Israel.

“And the man that committeth adultery with another man’s wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death” (Leviticus 20:10).

From where would David gain salvation and forgiveness? Psalm 51 was written by King David at this time of crisis, brought on by his sin. David recognized that the offerings of the law that in his situation God did not desire sacrifice—and indeed, there was no sacrifice that could bring forgiveness for the sins of adultery and murder. He then considers that the real purpose of sacrifice was for the offerer’s heart to be affected. God would not despise the broken, humble heart. Yet there is more before God will once again be pleased with sacrifices—“Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion...” David’s prayer now turns to Ziolon and to the covenant the Almighty had made with him. This covenant is recorded in 2 Samuel 7. David is promised that his throne, his house and his kingdom would be established for ever before him. One of David’s descendants would occupy his throne:

“And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever” (2 Samuel 7:12,13).

David was promised everlasting life—the throne was to be established for ever before him; a special descendant of David’s would occupy this throne; this descendant would build a house for the name of Yahweh. It is upon the basis of these covenants of promise, that David asks for forgiveness. The reader may question if David really was asking for forgiveness based on the covenants of promise and not merely upon his broken and contrite heart. However, the last words of David confirm that this was the case.

All my Salvation!

After all the success and failure, in the last words of King David recorded in 2 Samuel 23, David reveals the means of his salvation:

“The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God... Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow” (2 Samuel 23:3,5).

From David’s last words it is evident that:

• The one who rules over men and God’s kingdom must be just, he must rule in the fear of God;
• David’s house did not measure up to God’s standard;
• Despite this God had made an everlasting covenant with him, this covenant was the basis for all things regarding the kingdom of Israel—it formed a sure basis;
• The everlasting covenant was all David’s salvation, and;
• Yet God did not make it grow, this was all a matter of hope in the days of David.

The fulfillment was not in existence in his days. In other words David recognized his salvation and by extension his forgiveness, would be by means of something that would come later. For David, like Moses and Abraham, salvation did not come from the law of Moses—but from the covenants of promise. It came from faith in the covenants of promise. “...the just shall live by faith” (Habakkuk 2:4).

The Hebrew verb in 2 Samuel 23:5, translated “to grow” is from the root “Tzamach” XXXX meaning “to sprout forth.” From this verb comes the noun Tzamach, a sprout. This makes an incredible word link with the prophecy of Jeremiah 23:5:

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.” Jeremiah is prophesying many centuries after king David, yet his prophecy takes up the spirit of the last inspiring words of the old king. David had said: “He that ruleth over men must be just.” In Jeremiah’s prophecy we see a righteous branch (Tzamach), ruling and prospering. He is an offspring of David. In the
A
ter describing the prophet who would arise, “like unto Moses;” Deuteronomy 18 continues on to issue a test, by the which Israel could distinguish false prophets from genuine ones:

“....if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.” Deuteronomy 18:21, 22

The Lord Jesus Christ gave prophecies before his death, such as the desolation of Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin (Luke 10:13-16). Today even though many ancient cities have been restored in the land of Israel these three cities remain ruins. Also the destruction of the temple (Mark 13:2), the dispersion of his people the Jews and the down treading of Jerusalem, “And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24). All these things came to pass and would have served to verify that Jesus was an authentic prophet to his contemporaries and the following generation.

Yet this great prophet has given his servants a complete book, with continuing series of events which have unfolded over centuries; so that every generation has been able to be certain that Jesus was a prophet sent by God. More than this, the Revelation of Jesus Christ was delivered to his apostle John after his death and resurrection; therefore proving that he was resurrected.

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent his angel to John” (Revelation 1:1)

Separated Christians who had an understanding of the Revelation were correctly able to predict many events. Down through the centuries they have been able to understand at what point they fit into the prophetic timetable of the book and what remained to be accomplished before the return of Christ. Revelation prophesies of the persecution the followers of Jesus would experience for centuries—they were to witness clothed in sackcloth (Rev. 11), be slain for the witness of Jesus (Rev. 20:4). All these horrible things came to pass at the hands of the pagan Roman Empire, and then the Catholic Christian Roman Empire which persecuted and tortured Christians such as the Waldenses and Huguenots for centuries. An example of an historic event predicted on the basis of the book of Revelation, is the demise of the Ottoman Empire to make way for the return of the Jews. Samuel Cradock wrote about this in his book entitled “A Brief and Plain Exposition and Paraphrase of the Whole Book of the Revelation” in 1696, over 200 years before the final end of the Ottoman Empire and the return of the Jews. Concerning the sixth vial he wrote:

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates.” We may compare this with Chap. 9:13, which is a more clear and full explication of it. “Upon the great river Euphrates,” that is, the people inhabiting thereabout, (as Isaiah 8:7, the king of Assyria and his army is called the waters of the river). These are the Turks that possess that part of the world upon the river Euphrates, so that this vial relates plainly to the sixth trumpet. The subjects of the other Vials are not literal but mystical and metaphorical; and therefore Euphrates, in probability, is not to be understood literally here for that very river, but of the people about it. “And the water thereof was dried up”, that is, the Turkish Empire was diminished and lessened, in order to the restoring the Jews; and if their restoring to their own land be intimated thereby, the overthrow of the Turks seems needful to remove impediments out of their way” (Page 171).

Closer to the time, in 1885, Robert Roberts penned the following: “A new turning point has, in fact, been reached, at which there is scarcely anything we may not shortly see in the way of the completion of the political programme on which our eyes have been fixed with earnest solicitude for over thirty years past. If the Turkish empire disappear, which is now almost the daily expectation of politicians, the Holy Land will be liberated from the only obstacle that restrains the full development of impending Jewish restoration under English protection.”

Utilizing the book of Revelation, separated Christians understood the events surrounding the return of the Jews much better than the Jews themselves, who relied solely on the Old Testament scriptures. One of the great tragedies of Jewish history was the almost unanimous rejection by Orthodox Jewry of the return of Jews to the land, after the end of the Ottoman Empire in 1917.

Rabbi Teichtal was an Orthodox Rabbi that sadly died in the Holocaust. Before he died he recognized this great mistake of the vast majority of all Torah scholars of his generation, in his book entitled “The mother of the children is happy.” He wished the Orthodox Jews had joined with their secular brethren who were building the land:

“Had the Orthodox Jews joined those who were engaged in this sacred endeavor sixty, fifty, or forty years ago, and had they inspired all of Israel to do the same, we would have found abundant relief in the Land. Thousands upon thousands of Jews would have settled there and would have been rescued from death...

“However, they opposed this undertaking. Not only did they oppose it, but they caused the simple Orthodox Jews to despise the rebuilding of the Land so much that if one of them begins to speak or get enthused about it, they consider him repulsive and abominable. They all rebuke him, saying, “You are a Zionist, an abhorrence, and an abomination.” Thus, they have truly caused the desirable Land to be despised and detested...”

In the book of Revelation we have a prophecy proving Jesus Christ’s resurrection from the dead. The Revelation of Jesus Christ is an authentic and sure word of prophecy, to which we should take earnest heed. If we fail to hearken to the words of the prophet like unto Moses, it will be required of us.

David Billington
days of Jeremiah this matter was still prophetic, the Almighty had still "made him not to grow." Yet from Jeremiah’s prophecy we learn that the branch was a person. This person then, was all David’s salvation. It was through faith in the hope of the descendant of David, embodied in the covenants of promise, that David obtained salvation.

In Zechariah 3:8 he is named “The Branch.” We come across him again in Zechariah 6:

“And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” (Verses 12-13)

Here there is a clear reference to the covenant that God made with David. “He shall grow out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord...” Compare with God’s words delivered to David by Nathan the prophet in 2 Samuel 7: “I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name...” Zechariah 6 is speaking of the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant recorded in 2 Samuel 7.

There was then a hope existing before the law of Moses. We can see some of its colors at the very beginning in the words of Genesis 3:15, describing how the seed of the woman would overcome and fatally bruise the descendants of the serpent. The covenant is visible after the flood, symbolized by a rainbow. It is embodied in the promises God made to Abraham, the promise of eternal inheritance in the land through the heir of Abraham. King David reached for this rainbow of hope, which arched over the law of Moses in all its brilliant colors. Those abiding under the law of Moses could always lift up their eyes and see the eternal covenant rainbow stretching above. Then all the colors converge in the righteous branch, the descendant of David who would be a king priest upon the throne of Yahweh in the future age or righteousness. This was all David’s salvation. So Malachi says of the Messiah, “But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall” (Malachi 4:2).

A King Priest—The law of Moses Changed

The man called “The Branch” in Zechariah 6 is a king and a priest. This was impossible under the law of Moses—the constitution of the kingdom of Israel. David was of the tribe of Judah and therefore it is plain to see that all his descendants would be also, throughout all generations. The man whose name is “The Branch,” the Messiah, was to be of the royal family of David and so of the tribe of Judah. This is prophesied as far back as the end of the life of Jacob, when he told his sons what would befall them in the last days. Of Judah he said, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Genesis 49:10). Again, this time in the Psalms. “Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver” (Psalms 60:7). Without a doubt the Messiah was to be of Judah.

Under the law of Moses a priest had to be of the tribe of Levi and the Family of Aaron.

“And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest’s office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death” (Numbers 3:10).

How then would the Messiah, of the tribe of Judah, ever be a priest under the law and constitution of the nation of Israel? The answer is that the law and constitution would have to change. When the Messiah came then, the law would have to change to accommodate all things concerning him, as the law of Moses was in all things based on the priesthood of the family of Aaron. This is confirmed by the prophet Jeremiah:

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt;...” (Jeremiah 23:5).
spoken of by Jeremiah? The law was inadequate (as has previously been shown), not of itself, but in human nature’s inability to live up to the standard of the Almighty. Moses the lawgiver failed to receive inheritance in the land of Israel under the auspices of the law. King David failed under the law of Moses and was condemned to death by it. The nation of Israel was exiled from the land twice due to its inability to keep the law—as Joshua said: “Ye cannot serve the LORD...” The new covenant will be different, Jeremiah continues:

“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jeremiah 31:33).

The national covenant delivered by Moses at Sinai, causes us to humbly realize our position before God, preparing us for the new covenant. The new covenant, which will be delivered to Israel by the prophet like unto Moses, will have an exceptional ability to open the heart to receive and love the words of God.

The Lord said unto my Lord

“The Lord said unto my Lord” is the well known opening to Psalm 110. Literally this text is, “Yahweh said unto my adon”—lord or master. The question is, who is the master spoken of in Psalm 110:1? It has been suggested that the “adon” here is David himself and that the temple choir would sing this Psalm in reference to king David—singing “Yahweh said to my master David.” Let us look at the Psalm and consider some additional information given us regarding this Adon or master.

• The master will sit at the right hand of Yahweh for a period of time;
• He will rule with strength out of Zion;
• His people or nation will be willing in the day of his power;
• Not only will he rule in Zion, but he will also be a priest—for ever; and,
• He will be victorious over many nations in a future day of wrath.

Do these points fit king David? Has David sat at the right hand of Yahweh? At the peak of Yahweh. “Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?” (2 Samuel 7:18). David does not sit at God’s right hand in any sense. Was David a priest? As has been shown, this was impossible under the constitution of the nation at the time of David. Later there was another king of Judah, named Uzziah, who tried to play the role of a priest.

“But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men: And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the Lord God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him” (2 Chronicles 26:16).

David cannot be the master or lord of this Psalm, he has not sat at the right hand of Yahweh—only before him—and David, like Uzziah, being of the tribe of Judah could not play the role of a priest. Psalm 110 speaks of this lord being a priest after the likeness of Melchizedek, who was a king and a priest in Jerusalem at the time of Abraham. For this to take place, the law of Moses would have to be changed. This had not taken place by the time of Uzziah, who was smitten for disobeying this law. The Lord of Psalm 110 cannot be speaking of David himself. “Yahweh said to my master” are the words of David, spoken by David. Psalm 110 then is speaking of a master or lord of David himself, that would rule in Zion after him. This Psalm cannot be regarding anyone other than the Messiah. David’s son, who would be a king-priest on his throne, who would rule in righteousness in Zion. In fulfillment of the promise to David this would be for ever.

This raises an interesting question: Why does David call the Messiah, who would be his son, lord or master? If he is David’s son—which he would be—why does David call him Adoni, my master? David never said this to Solomon his son nor—if he were alive—would he have said it to any of the kings who proceeded after him. If then, we take the statement that when God said, “I will be his Father and he shall be my son” in 2 Samuel 7, as having simply the same meaning as it could be applied spiritually to David; how is Messiah greater than David and why does David call him Adoni—my master? The answer is that he was to be the literal ‘son of

If Yahweh is to make a new covenant with Israel, the first covenant—the one delivered by Moses—must have been inadequate in some way.

David’s success, when in 2 Samuel 7, “the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies,” king David goes in and sits before...
God,’ in a similar way to Adam who was created by the power of God. In this way he would be God’s son, David’s son and a greater one than David.

The priesthood spoken of in Psalm 110 is greater than that of Aaron and his sons under the law of Moses. “The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” This is an everlasting priesthood, based upon an oath from Yahweh himself. The priesthood of Aaron and his sons was not based upon an oath like this, they were consecrated by Moses and their office was terminated by death.

Would Messiah son of David have to Suffer?

Abraham was promised an eternal inheritance in the land, from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates — an inheritance Abraham never received. This requires his resurrection from the dead and for him to become an immortal being. The same applies to the covenant God made with David. Now it obviously follows that the son of David also will have to be an immortal being, in order to sit upon the throne of the kingdom for ever, as spelt out in 2 Samuel 7. This chapter also specifies that the Messiah would proceed from David’s bowels — it does say that Yahweh would also be his Father — but coming from David’s flesh means he would have the same flesh as David. The same flesh that was weak in its ability to keep God’s law. The nature that failed in David. The heart called by Jeremiah, “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one” (Job 14:4). Now, it is written in Psalm 119:67, “Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.” Affliction kept the Psalmist in the right way. Again in Job 23:10, “But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.” From these two passages it is clear that trial and affliction are needful to keep a person from going astray and to bring them forth as gold; to develop their character to be acceptable to God. “And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him” (Malachi 3:17). The purpose of the tribes of Israel wandering for 40 years in the wilderness, was to humble them and for them to learn that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that comes from God (Deuteronomy 8:2,3). It therefore must follow that the Messiah, the preeminent jewel in the crown, has been through a life of suffering and trial so that he above all would not go astray, keeping God’s law and ultimately coming forth as gold. He would go on the same wilderness journey. It is then required that the Messiah would have a life of suffering before inheriting the eternal throne of Israel. “The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God” (2 Samuel 23:3). Of his power. There are then two comings of the Messiah presented in the Hebrew scriptures. The first a life of affliction when he would be rejected, the second when the nation would be willing and the Messiah would rule over many kings.

Salvation by a Brazen Serpent was something outside of the Law

Two Comings of the Messiah.

The law of Moses had to change in order to accommodate the Messiah or anointed king-priest of the future age. This is the new covenant spoken of by Jeremiah the prophet. A careful examination of the future temple in Ezekiel’s prophecy, will show some more of the amendments that will occur to the law. This is an important point. As has been shown, Moses made two appearances to the nation of Israel, on the first occasion he was rejected and on the second he delivered the people and established them as a nation at Sinai. The Messiah was to be a prophet like unto Moses. Secondly, being from David’s descent—who as everyone else failed to keep God’s law and live up to his standard, the one who would be the Messiah would have to go through the same process, living a life of trial and affliction before ruling in majesty. A life of preparation and a coming in majesty. Moses came, was rejected by his nation, lived a life of trial as a shepherd with a little flock in the wilderness and subsequently returned and led his nation to their inheritance. After the first appearance of the Messiah, we should then expect a change in the law and constitution as delivered by Moses. In Deuteronomy 18 we saw how there would be some who would reject the words of the prophet like unto Moses, yet it would be required of them. In Psalm 110 we learned that the nation would be willing in the day
Summary

We have considered how the most preeminent leaders of the Jewish nation failed to live up to God’s standard enshrined in the law of Moses, including the law giver himself. The nation itself failed to receive a lasting inheritance in the land by means of the law; a new covenant will be needed to provide this, delivered by the prophet “like unto Moses.” This new covenant has always been there as a matter of hope, which men under the law could reach for, as David did in his hour of crisis. These men of faith looked for the day when the branch would grow out of his place. Proceeding from David’s bowels, this man would have to go through the same wilderness journey as Israel, Moses and David; but he would emerge victorious, having spoken all the words that were commanded him. The brazen human nature immobilized in him and God’s righteous standard portrayed in the law upheld. The Messiah must then make his wilderness journey under the law. Today, without the temple in Jerusalem, the law cannot be kept in its original fullness. For these things to be accomplished Messiah had to come before the destruction of the Hebrew nation in AD 70. On his first coming to the nation of Israel there would be those who would reject his words and it would be required of them. Then he would sit at Yahweh’s right hand until his enemies would be made his footstool. For this man whose name is the Branch, to be a king priest, the law of Moses would have to pass away. So from the time of his first appearance, when he would be rejected as a prince and a judge, we can expect the law to change, ready for the new covenant to be established with his nation.

There are many other prophecies of the Messiah in the Hebrew scriptures, we have only considered some of them here. Yet we can clearly see that the distorted picture of Jesus Christ presented by the popular Christian churches of today, does not fulfill these basic requirements of the Old Testament. We eagerly await the day when the real Jesus Christ will appear in Israel and the new covenant will be made with the nation. When Abraham, Moses, Aaron, Samuel and David will enter the land, their belief counted for righteousness and will receive an everlasting inheritance.

There are then two comings of the Messiah presented in the Hebrew scriptures. The first a life of affliction when he would be rejected, the second when the nation would be willing and the Messiah would rule over many kings.

Food For Thought

“Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?” Proverbs 20:6

“Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.” Psalm 49:12

“A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.” Jeremiah 25:31,32

“He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.” Psalm 46:9

“...and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Revelation 20:4

“And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.” Revelation 11:7
Events quite suddenly fall into the pattern outlined by Bible prophecy, and expected for many years!

By Don Pearce  RUGBY, U.K.

Our last review was just under 2 months ago, but what a lot has happened in that short time!

The British elections have taken place with an unusual outcome! The financial crisis in Greece has had the eurozone running in ever decreasing circles to prop up both Greece and the value of the euro. At the same time Germany is leading an assault on existing financial regulations in an effort to prevent a repetition of this gluttonous appetite for euros by Greece spreading to Spain, Portugal and Italy. The euro project is in grave danger of implosion. With all eyes on Europe’s troubles, Russia has been steadily pushing her old role as the champion of the Middle East. Deals with Turkey and Syria, together with her support of Iran look set to alter the power-balance in the Middle East. These are steps that Bible students have long anticipated and which quicken the expectation of the near return of the Lord Jesus. We have seen how quickly modern society could be brought to its knees with the airlines of Europe grounded because of ash from an Icelandic volcano!

Impeccable Timing!

As always the angelic timing is impeccable. For the first time in 65 years there was no clear winner in the UK elections on May 6th. When they had finished counting the votes on the 7th, Britain emerged with what is termed a “hung parliament,” although the Conservatives were the biggest parliamentary party, they did not win enough seats to take overall control of parliament. In the days until May 11th when they were able to announce a coalition with the Liberal Democrats, the euro tsunami was gathering speed. Just at the time when Britain had no clear government the Euro-zone leaders were locked not only in an immense rescue package but proposing far reaching actions that would, in their words, put Britain and the eurozone on such separate courses that it will amount to separation in all but name.” So let’s see how the leaders of the 3 main parties against each other. The Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg gained the most, pushing his party from an “also ran” to the position of “king maker.” Within a few days Britain had a coalition government; something common in many countries, but not seen here for many years.

“The deal gives Britain its youngest prime minister in almost two centuries. It returns the Conservatives to power for the first time in 13 years. Britain has its first coalition government since 1945, the year that Winston Churchill’s wartime alliance against Hitler ended. The Lib Dems, Britain’s third and often forgotten party, have entered government for the first time since the death of David Lloyd George, their formidable leader, 65 years ago” (Financial Times 14-5-10).

After the scandal and the sleaze associated with the previous parliament, in quite a remarkable show of putting country ahead of party, David Cameron assembled a government with Nick Clegg and five other Lib Dems in his cabinet. How long the bonhomie between the two leaders will last is the unknown factor, but at least they have a similar public school background. Is it the start of a higher standard in public life? Both men are determined to reduce the crippling deficit which has brought Britain to the brink of ruin. One of the largest drains in the demands of the EU. Britain’s contribution to the EU coffers is rising steeply—this year’s contribution is £9.3bn and the EU is demanding increased contributions to fund a 6% increase in the EU budget. Britain’s new chancellor, George Osborne has told the EU that there should be no increase in the EU budget, they should face reality and trim costs as all its members are having to do. This forthright statement was not exactly welcomed! David Cameron on his first trip to Europe as Prime Minister, speaking at a press conference alongside Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin, insisted Britain would not be “drawn further” into supporting the euro-zone currency area.

A new “Special Relationship” with India

So where does David Cameron’s heart lie—with Europe or outside? Whilst he is determined to play a role in Europe, he has made it clear that his policy will be to expand ties outside Europe. One of the promises in the just-published manifesto of the coalition government is to establish a new special relationship with India. Europe is seen to be an area of stagnation in the short-term and Asia where the growth is being looked for. It has been interesting to see the growth in ties between Israel and India—the Eastern Tarshish—so it would be encouraging to see Anglo-Indian ties also flourishing.

David Cameron: my belief in Israel is ‘very deep and inside of me’ and ‘indestructible’

Where does Cameron stand on Israel? At the Conservative Friends of Israel Annual Lunch in June 2009, he addressed his audience about “what they needed to know about him.” This is a brief summary.

“First, I passionately believe in the right of Israel to exist, to defend itself and to live in peace and security. Not just because of the tragedies of history. Not only because of the realities of today. Not simply because of my Party’s unstinting support for Israel through the decades. But also because it’s something I feel very deep inside of me. The belief I have in Israel is indestructible—and you need to know that if I become Prime Minister, Israel has a friend who will never turn his back on Israel” (Conservative Friends of Israel 6-7-09).

It has been interesting to look at his Jewish ancestry. David Cameron’s father’s mother was Enid Levita, whose paternal grandfather Emilé Levita was a prominent Polish Jewish banker. Emilé’s wife was from an “illustrious Danish Jewish family.” So perhaps this explains what he meant by his interest in Israel coming from “very deep inside me.” He is actually a direct
According to the Office responsible for the Middle East and North of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, these appointments bode 2008, he led an all-Party group meeting with Red and opponent of the boycott, disinvestment and the Conservative Friends of Israel lobby group 

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office

This government department looks after Britain’s interests abroad. Its appointees indicate the direction that the new government is seeking to go.

“The head of the FCO is the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, commonly abbreviated to “Foreign Secretary” (currently William Hague). This position is regarded as one of the three most prestigious appointments in the Cabinet, alongside those of Chancellor of the Exchequer and Home Secretary. Together with the Prime Minister, these comprise the Great Offices of State” (Wikipedia).

William Hague’s appointment was the first that David Cameron made. When interviewed in the run up to the elections, Hague describes himself as “a long-standing friend of Israel and someone who joined Conservative Friends of Israel at the age of 15.”

“I understand the country’s strategic fragility. Thanks to Conservative Friends of Israel I’ve travelled across the country. I’ve stood on the Golan Heights and swam in the Sea of Galilee. I’ve stood on the part of the West Bank where you can see the Mediterranean, where you really understand Israel’s strategic fragility. But we are candid friends, which means we don’t always agree” (TotallyJewish.com 25-3-10).

The appointed Parliamentary Undersecretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office responsible for the Middle East and North Africa is Conservative MP Alistair Burt. According to Wikipedia he is “a leading officer of the Conservative Friends of Israel lobby group and opponent of the boycott, disinvestment and sanctions campaign against Israel. In December 2008, he led an all-Party group meeting with Red Cross to campaign for visiting rights for Israeli hostage Gilad Shalit.” These appointments bode better for a fairer voice for Israel than was the traditional pro-Arab stance of the previous government.

EU agrees Massive Support Mechanism

The eurozone is looking far from healthy at the moment. Hedge fund managers are looking to make millions on the steep fall in the value of the euro. The EU and the eurozone members in particular have been holding ever more desperate meetings to try to prop up Greece from going bankrupt. We have moved on from firms and then banks going to the wall, now it is a matter of whole countries in deep danger. The problem is that any spare cash was used up bailing out the banks, so where’s the money to be found for the huge funds needed to bail out a country?

Angela Merkel was desperate hoping that matters could be strung out until after the German regional elections in North Rhine-Westphalia in early May; knowing that unpopular measures needed to be taken. The euro has continued to tumble. The eurozone ministers met again and announced on the 3rd May a €110 bn rescue package to prop up Greece and hence the euro. This was rubber stamped at a special EU meeting on the 7th May. President Sarkozy warned that the euro zone was experiencing the worst crisis since its establishment. He is alleged to have banged his fist on the table and threatened to leave the euro! So grave was the situation that Angela Merkel had earlier warned the German parliament (my emphasis):

Nothing less than the future of Europe is at stake...

Europe today is looking to Germany. As the strongest economy in Europe, Germany has a special responsibility and it takes this responsibility to heart.

“Immediate help is needed to ensure the financial stability of the eurozone. This must be done to avoid a chain-reaction to the European and international financial system, and contagion to other eurozone states. There is no alternative” (Yahoo News 5-5-10).

Britain’s new leader meets with Angela Merkel of Germany

The following day she told a Polish audience that the crisis was the “greatest test Europe has faced since 1990, if not in the 53 years since the passage of the Treaty of Rome.”

The plans were challenged in the German courts as unconstitutional, but with great speed the case was thrown out. Strafor (8-5-10) commented:

“What we can say is that the Europeans do seem to be moving toward a plan with considerable speed, and we are not referring just to this emergency summit. European summits that run into the early morning hours are commonplace, but something else happened Saturday May 8 that is unprecedented.

“Germany’s constitutional court rejected a case asserting that the Greek bailout announced just a few days ago was unconstitutional. It is not so much that the court rejected the case, but that it rejected it so quickly. The case was only filed last week, and the court rejected a temporary injunction that would have blocked the bailout May 8 so that Berlin would have needed legal cover to move immediately on this new crisis fund.

Normally EU policy is hashed out over years. Now it is being done in hours, and Berlin is taking charge.

“Something big is coming, and something big needs to come considering the scope of problems that the Greek crisis has imposed.”

Just how big was soon revealed. By the 10th May, with the euro tumbling, even bigger measures were being called for and the rescue package had risen to a staggering €750 bn to deal with Greece and the other countries in a similar position. €500 would come from the EU and the rest from the IMF. The deal had to be approved by the German government—last year Germany passed into law that the German parliament was above EU law and had to approve any legislation that affected Germany. Normally these matters take months, but this, like the earlier court challenge, was passed in days. So between the 7th and 10th May the rescue package was hammered out—just at the exactly same time as Britain was seeking a new leader.

Taxpayers face £13 billion Bailout after Alistair Darling caves in

Until a new government was appointed, Gordon Brown continued as Prime Minister. On May 10th, the day before Cameron became Prime Minister it was announced that the Labour Chancellor, Alistair Darling, had agreed to contribute €13bn towards the stabilisation fund set up as a means of propping up the euro, even though Britain is not in the eurozone. In fairness it was foisted upon Britain because the matter was dealt with under majority voting, so Britain had no veto—a foretaste of things to come under the new rules of the Lisbon Treaty.

France attacks UK over Attitude to bail-out Fund

“Furious at the UK’s refusal to participate in the eurozone bail-out, France has brusquely warned that Europe will not come to Britain’s aid when—not if—the markets round on sterling.

“The French market regulator, Jean-Pierre Jouyet, on Tuesday (11 May) told Europe 1 radio that it is inevitable that the pound will be targeted and that when that happens, Britain will be on its own.

“The English are very certainly going to be targeted given the political difficulties they have. If you don’t want to show solidarity with the eurozone, wait and see what happens outside it.”

Having put this multibillion rescue package together to be drawn upon as needed, France and Germany demanded their rewards for their inputs —greater regulation of the EU to prevent such a situation arising again. In truth it was not the lack of regulations that caused the problem—it was attempting to form a single currency without firmly applying the rules that were in place and without having fiscal unity. The euro project appeared doomed from the start, but it was able to hold together through the good times but began to fall apart in the bad as each nation sought to defend itself from the effects of earlier failure to adhere to the rules. As we saw last time,
Germany accepted the possibility of the euro failing, because she was sure that she would be the one to emerge with greater power—a situation we see unfolding before our eyes. One of the aims of France and Germany is put a stranglehold on Britain’s role as leader of financial services.

_Europe warns Britain: Join our Club or you will be Sidelined_

“Merkel is fighting back. She wants a treaty change to legalise the new rules regulating deficits and other economic matters under which eurozone countries can have their EU subsidies or voting rights suspended if they break the rules.

“If she is successful the Lisbon treaty, which took more than a decade to adopt and was supposed to remain unchanged for at least another decade, would end up being amended just months after it was introduced last year. This is where the tensions arise with Cameron. Not only would the government be required to hold a referendum on any treaty change, but the prime minister would resist greater EU surveillance over the economic policies of member governments. Sarkozy’s proposal for what he has called a eurozone council — regular summit meetings between leaders of the 16 euro members — threatens to push Britain to the sidelines of all European decision making, not just that relating to finance. This would be a smaller but more powerful version of the current European council, which gathers the leaders of all 27 EU members.

“Jean-Pierre Jouyet, chairman of France’s financial services authority, highlighted the extent to which the French see Britain as sidelined. ‘There is not a two-speed Europe, but a three-speed Europe. You have the Euro of the euro, the Europe of the countries that understand the euro... and you have the English,’ Jouyet said.(Sunday Times 23-5-10).”

“As reported by the think tank Open Europe, Mrs Merkel was calling last week for a “global” tax on financial transactions to raise 321 billion euros a year Europe-wide – 204 billion euros of which would come from Britain, still the world’s leading financial centre, with 43 billion euros from Germany and just 17 billion euros from France” (Sunday Telegraph 23-5-10).

**Our Eurocrats have Carried out a Velvet coup d’état during the Last Days.**

_Open Europe (25-5-10) carried a translation of a piece in a French newspaper which summed up the machinations of the EU leaders whilst Britain was preoccupied with other matters.

“Writing in _Le Figaro_, columnist Yves de Kerdrel questions the EU’s entire approach to the debt crisis, arguing that the turmoil ‘has not prevented our beloved Eurocrats from carrying out a velvet coup d’état during the last days. They have decided on the sly that we need ‘better governance’ of the euro... Have we realised that we are going to leave the keys of our budgetary policy to some Brussels-based Eurocrats who are not accountable to anyone, and who could just keep on making mistakes, as they have been doing with the regularity of a metronome during the last decade?”

“He concludes: ‘This European coup d’état has been masterly finalised using as its only argument: ‘if we don’t strengthen the rules now, the euro will fall into pieces.’ Fear can silence people.‘”

“One can see Britain’s growing resistance to the EU’s direction will result in a parting of the ways as this _Daily Telegraph_ (14-5-10) article by Ambroze Evans-Pritchard indicates (My emphasis).

**Europe’s fiscal Fascism brings British Withdrawal ever Closer**

“Just when you thought the EU could not go any further down the road towards authoritarian excess, it gets worse.

“The European Commission is calling for EU powers to vet budgets of the 27 member states before the draft laws have been presented to the House of Commons, the Tweede Kamer, the Folketing, the Bundestag, the Assemblee Nationale, or other national parliaments. It applies to Britain even though we are not in EMU.

“Fonctionnaires and EU finance ministers will pass judgement on the British (or Dutch, or Danish, or French) budgets before the elected bodies of these ancient and sovereign nations have seen the proposals. Did we not not fight the English Civil War and kill a king over such a prerogative?

“The truth is that no British government can ever put Europe on the back-burner and hope it goes away. It hits you in the face, again, and again, and again. This is why so many British ministers end up feeling a visceral hatred for the project.

“In my view, the EU elites overstepped the line by ignoring the rejection of the European Constitution by French and Dutch voters, then pushing it through under the guise of the Lisbon Treaty without a popular vote, except in Ireland, and when Ireland voted ‘No’, to ignore that too. The enterprise has become illegitimate—it is starting to exhibit the reflexes of tyranny.”

“The moment of definition is fast arriving from Britain. The measures now being demanded to save monetary union cannot and will not be accepted by this Government, Nick Clegg notwithstanding. The most eurosceptic people I have ever met are those who have actually worked for the European Commission, though it takes a while – and liberation from Brussels — for these views to ferment. The outcome — un véritable gouvernement économique — will put Britain and the eurozone on such separate courses that it will amount to separation in all but name. The sooner we get the nastiness of divorce behind us, the better.”

**A New Direction for Britain?**

Led by this new government of Britain, one can see the distinct possibility of Britain leaving or even being thrown out of the EU as we know it. Events might well transpire to bring this about in quite a short period of time. In the rather bluntly put _Daily Telegraph_ phrase above, “The sooner we get the nastiness of divorce behind us, the better.” The promised closer links with India and the Commonwealth will provide the strong markets that Britain needs, rather than Europe which looks set for many years of cuts and austerity. Israel too would make an ideal trading partner in these difficult days. And so the role long anticipated by Bible students from their understanding of God’s Word of Britain playing a dominant role outside continental Europe and working in the Middle East, India, and the Commonwealth could be a situation that we are seeing the beginnings of! The Merchants of Tarshish will be found working with her young lions in fulfilment of Ezekiel 38:13.

**A British Commonwealth supportive of Israel is a development to look for: The Tarshish Alliance!**

We repeat an item from our last Update, which now has much more relevance than even a few months ago! (My emphasis)

“William Hague addressed the Royal Commonwealth Society and promised: “We should be excited and determined about what the nations of the Commonwealth can do together... It should draw upon this experience and continue to evolve in the full assurance that it has an important role to play in the twenty-first century. It should also have complete confidence that it will have the unwavering support of a future Conservative government for it will be an important instrument in our foreign policy tool box. We will adopt a more assertive, energetic and enthusiastic attitude towards the Commonwealth since there is vast potential to be unlocked and Britain must, along with our friends and allies, be at the forefront of these efforts” (“Conservativehome.blog Feb 2009).”

The sobering thought is that our Lord Jesus can return at any moment to prepare his household for their future work of establishing the Kingdom of God. The final stages of the angelic work to bring the nations down against
Israel will take place after the Master’s return to raise his sleeping saints and to gather his elect.

The Euro’s uncertain Future

There have been many articles speculating on the euro uncertain future. France has threatened to pull out of it and so has Germany, as a way of escaping the downward fall in the strength of the euro. What seems clear is that the economies of the euro-zone are set to face a very difficult future as swinging cuts forced upon the various governments are implemented. We have witnessed rioting in Greece and it is not hard to foresee similar situations arising across Europe. Having mapped out a possible path for Britain, it was interesting read of Forecasts’ assessment (25-5-10) of a possible pathway for Germany, who, like Britain, desperately needs export markets to thrive. It could have come out of many a Christadelphian writing! They foresee Germany strengthening her ties with Russia! Here are a few extracts (My emphasis).

The German Question Revisited

“We return to the question that has defined Europe since 1871, namely, the status of Germany in Europe... If Germany is the key decision maker in Europe, then Germany defines whatever policies Europe as a whole undertakes. If Europe fragments, then Germany is the only country in Europe with the ability to create alternative coalitions that are both powerful and cohesive. That means that if the European Union weakens, Germany will have the greatest say in what Europe will become. Right now, the Germans are working assiduously to reformulate the European Union and the eurozone in a manner more to their liking. But as this requires many partners to offer sovereignty to German control—sovereignty they have jealously guarded throughout the European project—it is worth exploring alternatives to Germany in the European Union.

“Germany is indispensable for any decision within the European Union at present, and it will be the single center of power in Europe in the future—but Germany can’t go it alone. Germany needs a coalition, meaning the long-term question is this: If the EU were to weaken or even fail, what alternative coalition would Germany seek?... The historic alternative for Germany has been Russia.

The Russian Option

“A great deal of potential synergy exists between the German and Russian economies. Germany imports large amounts of energy and other resources from Russia. As mentioned, Russia needs sources of technology and capital to move it beyond its current position of mere resource exporter. Germany has a shrinking population and needs a source of labor—preferably a source that doesn’t actually want to move to Germany. Russia’s Soviet-era economy continues to de-industrialize, and while that has a plethora of negative impacts, there is one often-overlooked positive: Russia now has more labor than it can effectively metabolize in its economy given its capital structure. Germany doesn’t want more immigrants but needs access to labor. Russia wants factories in Russia to employ its surplus work force, and it wants technology. The logic of the German-Russian economic relationship is more obvious than the German-Greek or German-Spanish relationship.

“Therefore, if we simply focus on economics, and we assume that the European Union cannot survive as an integrated system (a logical but not yet proven outcome), and we further assume that Germany is both the leading power of Europe and incapable of operating outside of a coalition, then we would argue that a German coalition with Russia is the most logical outcome of an EU decline. The current economic problems may lead to a fundamental weakening of the European Union. Germany is economically powerful but needs economic coalition partners that contribute to German well-being rather than merely draw on it. A Russian-German relationship could logically emerge from this.”

Russia in the Middle East

I have to confess that so fast moving have been the events of the past few weeks that some of the matters I had drafted to deal with have been squeezed out. Whilst things have been unravelling in Europe, Russia has been busy exerting her influence in Syria, Turkey and Iran. There have been some remarkable meetings but we will have to defer looking at these for another issue, God willing. There are so many aspects of Ezekiel 38 that are slotting into place that it is truly thrilling. So let’s close with an aspect which has not had much publicity and as it involves Germany, fits very much into the theme of this review.

It is Ezekiel chapter 38 that points to Germany as the Magog of old, being part of the confedaracy that comes against Israel, so perhaps it is not surprising to read the following.

Germany, Palestinians begin landmark Political Partnership

“German and Palestinian cabinet ministers met for talks in Berlin on Tuesday, commencing the landmark ‘German-Palestinian Steering Committee.’ The high-level political partnership is aimed at facilitating peace in the Middle East.

“We believe that the development and reconstruction of state structures in the Palestinian areas are indispensable for a just two-state solution in the Middle East,” German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle said in a joint press conference with the prime minister of the Palestinian Authority, Salam Fayyad.

“Westerwelle’s talks with Fayyad ran parallel to meetings between the German and Palestinian interior, economy, development and education ministers focused on the development of state institutions in the Palestinian territories.

“The steering committee is due to meet once a year, either in Berlin or Ramallah, and involves 10 ministers from each side.

“Westerwelle announced that a total of 50 million euros ($62 million) had been allocated for development and humanitarian aid for the Palestinian Authority for 2010, which since 2007 has had control over the West Bank following a split with the militant Hamas movement.

‘Historic agreement’

“Fayyad called it ‘historic’ that the Palestinian administration had the opportunity to meet with the German government for high-level talks.

“He said that the Palestinian Authority had no other such agreement with other states and that he hoped the steering committee would set an example ‘at the EU level, in the framework of efforts to create the structures for an independent Palestinian state.’” (DW-world.de 18-5-10).

The Day Approaching

It has been thrilling to see the hand of the angels busily working in the affairs of men. The same angelic hands can work in our lives if we embrace God’s great and precious promises (2 Pet 1:4). Let us exhort each other with these words of the writer to the Hebrews.

“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorted one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb 10:23-25).

Footnotes

1 Germany’s most populous state and is in the country’s industrial heartland and regarded as a weathervane for national politics.

2 Her CDU party lost seats and no longer has a majority in the Bundesrat (the representative body of the regional states).

3 A genuine economic government.
“...that no man might buy or sell, save that one should count the number of the beast, and that number was six hundred threescore and six.”

By Paul Billing

Within less than a week of taking office, Cameron, was facing a European impact that would trigger activity and consequently—what in the financial markets?

As German Chancellor Angela Merkel warned, “If we do not avert this danger, the consequences would be incalculable, and then the consequences beyond incalculable, and then the consequences beyond...

Cameron, who had kept the issue of the campaign, was plunged into the issue just as his coalition partnership with the Liberal-D Lans could spell trouble for the new team.

The German Chancellor wanted to introduce measures for debt-laden countries, plus massiv use the Euro currency and get into trouble. Britain did not agree, and that Britain would veto a designed to protect the Euro currency.

So we are forcibly reminded of that passage article. We understand that in its historical context manifesting the same characteristics, and have more rising in Middle Europe.

Although it may not be emphasised too often, or given the United States, the Catholic social teaching was given considerable exposure in Britain since the Catholic Bishop’s Conference of England & Wales entitled the British General Election of 1996 when Tony Blair (at another term as Prime Minister. A front page headline in THE CHURCH ‘BACKS BLAIR.’ At that same time an editorial in The Euro C

We must understand that Britain, as a capitalist econ...
or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the same. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred and sixty-six” (Revelation 13:17 & 18).

2009 PAPAL ENCYCICAL CALLED FOR AN ECONOMIC “AUTHORITY”

Extract from Reuters report, July 5, 2009.

Pope Benedict called on Tuesday for a “world political authority” to manage the global economy and for more government regulation of national economies to pull the world out of the current crisis and avoid a repeat.

The pope made his call for a re-think of the way the world economy is run in a new encyclical which touched on a number of social issues but whose main connecting thread was how the current crisis has affected both rich and poor nations.

Parts of the encyclical, titled “Charity in truth,” seemed bound to upset free marketeers because of its underlying rejection of unbridled capitalism and unregulated market forces, which he said had led to “thoroughly destructive” abuse of the system.

Benedict said “there is an urgent need of a true world political authority” whose task would be “to manage the global economy; to revive economies hit by the crisis; to avoid any deterioration of the present crisis and the greater imbalances that would result.”

Several sections of the encyclical, Benedict made it clear he had great reservations about a totally free market.
So although we do not know what the outcome of all this may be at the present moment, the one result may well be a collision between Britain and Europe.

The *Daily Telegraph* (May 21) reported:

“Chancellor Merkel has insisted that all European countries must give up sovereignty to give the EU new economic powers to prevent another Greek and euro zone crisis.”

In other words, they must “give their power and strength unto the beast”— just as Revelation 17:13 says they will.

400 Years of History

This issue—relinquishing British sovereignty to Europe—is one that evokes deep concerns in the British conscience; this arises from a long history of the Island people fighting to defend their independence from Catholic Europe and its pope. That Britain is being told by Germany that it must give up (surrender?) and pay to support Europe’s Catholic-socialist dream, is not going to be well received.

The history of England was heavily influenced by the Bible, following Tyndale’s translations in 1525 and 1535. It was this (and not the matrimonial concerns of Henry VIII) that separated England from Rome. In view of what we now see, it will be useful to quote from a letter written by Tyndale to King Henry VIII in 1536, the first part of which reads as follows:

“I beseech the king’s most noble grace well to consider all the ways by which the cardinal, (Wolskey) and our holy bishops, have led him since he was first king; and to see whereunto all the pride, pomp, and vain boast of the cardinal is come, and how God hath resisted him and our prelates in all their wiles. We, having nothing to do at all, have meddled yet with all matters, and have spent for our prelates’ causes more than all Christendom, even unto the utter beggaring of ourselves; and have gotten nothing but rebuke and hate among all nations, and a mock and a scorn of them whom we have most holpen. For the Frenchmen (as the saying is) of late days made a play, or a disguising, at Paris, in which the emperor danced with the pope and the French king, and wearied them; the king of England sitting on a high bench, and looking on. And when it was asked why he danced not, it was answered, that he sat there but to pay the minstrels their wages; as one who should say, we paid for all men’s dancing. We monied the emperor openly, and gave the French king double and treble secretly; and to the pope also. Yea, and though Ferdinand had money sent openly to blind the world wthal, yet the saying is, through all Dutch-land, that we sent money to the king of Poland, &c....”

As England spent money for the “prelates causes” in the 16th century, so today they have been pursuaded to adopt many expensive Catholic principles, such as were outlined in *The Common Good* (1985). This quickly frittered away the strong financial position that had been achieved by previous Governments. After some thirteen years of socialism and following the European (the Catholic) model of social doctrine, it now becomes necessary to join the rest of Europe by imposing austerity measures and finding ways to increase revenues through taxation.

Social Unrest?

Imposing “austerity measures” upon populations that have enjoyed affluent times, thanks to their credit cards, will bring protests of course—such as has been seen in Greece. It was Margaret Thatcher who once said something like: Socialism works very well until you run out of everyone else’s money! When people are forced to tighten their belts, then things can start to get a little rough.

So what are the prospects for the future? The reasonable expectation must be that countries that are deeply in debt (Portugal, Spain and Italy who are heading in the direction of the Greek tragedy) will have to impose serious austerity measures—and that is bound to result in protests, as well as physical attacks upon banks and other financial institutions which are assumed to be responsible, and the idea that they are responsible is one that has been promoted by Rome for some time. Now if this is to be the outcome—and we are saying “if” at this point—then we should be prepared for a not very rosy future! Some of us will remember the scenes in Russia and Eastern Europe when Communism collapsed—the Capitalist West may well be about to witness similar (or worse) events.

Social unrest of this kind and the resultant crack-down by authorities, an outbreak of violent crime, riots and even terror, may be anticipated for another reason. It would be a form of judgement brought upon populations which have become totally godless and immoral. It is the Bible which leads us to expect such situations. In the words of
Revelation 16:11,
“(they) blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.”
That is the principle.

As far as Europe is concerned (but this is by no means limited to Europe) there is the question of idolatry—how a swooning flock can remain transfixed by their papal idol who seems to be able as well as willing to overlook, excuse and turn a blind eye to those paedophile priests who he has forbidden to marry — see 1 Timothy 4:1-3; Romans 1:24-28.

Britain & the Pope

The one country that bears a special responsibility for such gross behaviour in this matter of idolatry of the pope is (the once Great) Britain. Her history is one that has provided her with a wealth of experience and knowledge regarding the consequences of dealing with the Roman Catholic system—Yet once again she has invited “that man of sin” to visit the country. The very wording contained in “The Bill of Rights and Act of Settlement” (1689) is warning enough:

“Whereas it hath been found by experience that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant Kingdom to be governed by a Popish Prince or by any King or Queen marrying a papist...etc.”

It is well known that a Roman Catholic cannot occupy the throne of England. For that to happen there would have to be a constitutional shake-up as well as electoral reform. For the British government to spend an estimated £42 million on a papal visit, at a time when they are increasing their expected spending on other projects, is warning enough: 3; Romans 1:24-28.

According to a report from the BBC the British government has “delivered a 28,000-name petition to Downing Street objecting to any state funding” of the visit. The president of the society has stated that any benefits of such a state visit do not justify its cost. The opposition Labour Party has 40 Catholic MP’s.

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Britain’s Prime Minister Gladstone

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It is well known that a Roman Catholic cannot occupy the throne of England. For that to happen there would have to be a constitutional shake-up as well as electoral reform. For the British government to spend an estimated £42 million on a papal visit, at a time when they are talking about spending cuts and increased taxation, can hardly be expected to win much popular support! Even if the Catholic claim that ten percent of Britons are now Catholic is true (which is doubtful), it leaves ninety percent of the people with good reason for being upset. The position is a difficult one to defend even if the BBC and the media support it (which they probably will). According to figures published in the UK’s Catholic Herald (May 20) the results of the May 6 election saw only 19 catholic Conservative MP’s elected, 5 Lib-Dems, 3 SDLP and one Scottish Nationalist. The opposition Labour Party has 40 Catholic MP’s.

According to a report from the BBC the National Secular Society has “delivered a 28,000-name petition to Downing Street objecting to any state funding” of the visit. The president of the society has stated that any benefits of such a state visit do not justify its cost.

A Prime Minister’s Warning

From time to time it has been found necessary to introduce legislation designed to curtail the growing power of the Catholic Church in Britain. For example, the “Popery Act” of 1698 (passed through Parliament in 1700) had the long title: “An Act for the further preventing the Growth of Popery.” That Act was repealed in 1846.

Following the Proclamation of Papal Infallibility in 1870, one British Prime Minister published his warnings to the nation in a paper entitled ‘Vaticanism,’ and also in another work which had the title “The Vatican Decrees in their bearing on civil allegiance.” The Right Hon. W.E. Gladstone (four times Prime Minister of Britain) wrote about Vaticanism as follows in 1875:

“Of that system as a system, especially after the further review of it which it has been my duty to make, I must say that its influence is adverse to freedom in the State, the family, and the individual; that when weak it is too often crafty, and when strong tyrannical.”

He wrote further in explanation of his objective:

“My object has been to produce, if possible, a temper of greater watchfulness; to promote the early and provident fear which, says Mr.
Once a "Protestant Britain." To bring Roman Catholics to power in what was determined efforts that have been made in order Gladstone quoted above, it is worth briefly Britain's constitutional Acts, or those of Mr. Gentiles (2 Thessalonians 2:3,4)? was he not endorsed by the apostle to the warned of this very thing (Daniel 11:36,37), and which he made. But had not Daniel the prophet great deal of evidence supporting the statements textual criticism, the theory of evolution and the —i.e. upon the Bible itself through the avenues then being pursued such as textual criticism, the theory of evolution and the whole question of authority. By weakening confidence in the Divine Revelation (Scripture), the authority of the Catholic Church (and papal infallibility) became an obvious alternative for confidence in the Divine Revelation (Scripture), which is dangerous to the foundations of the Christian belief, which it loads with false excrescences, and strains even to the bursting."

"On one point I must strongly insist. In my Expostulation, I laid stress upon the charge of an intention, on the part of Vaticanism, to promote the restoration of the temporal sovereignty of the Pope, on the first favourable opportunity, by foreign arms, and without reference to the wishes of those who were once his people. From Archbishop Manning downward, not so much as one of those who have answered me from the standing-ground of Vaticanism has disavowed this project: Many of them have openly professed that they adopt it, and glory in it. Thus my main practical accusation is admitted; and the main motive which prompted me is justified."

"At last came the crowning stroke of 1870 (i.e. the Decree of Papal Infallibility—Ed.): The legal extinction of Right, and the enthronement of Will in its place, throughout the churches of one half of Christendom. While freedom and its guarantees are thus attacked on one side, a multitude of busy but undisciplined and incoherent assaultants, on the other, are making war, some upon Revelation, some upon dogma, some upon Theism itself."

It is here that Gladstone referred to a war upon Revelation—i.e. upon the Bible itself through the avenues then being pursued such as textual criticism, the theory of evolution and the whole question of authority. By weakening confidence in the Divine Revelation (Scripture), the authority of the Catholic Church (and papal infallibility) became an obvious alternative for religious people. It did not matter that many were embracing humanism and even atheism—for even that was preferable to the authority of the Bible in Vatican eyes. Gladstone was a very perceptive man!

For a Prime Minister to write these things he must have been exposed to—and witnessed—a great deal of evidence supporting the statements which he made. But had not Daniel the prophet warned of this very thing (Daniel 11:36,37), and was he not endorsed by the apostle to the Gentiles (2 Thessalonians 2:3,4)?

**The Battle against Britain**

Before we dismiss the warnings enshrined in Britain's constitutional Acts, or those of Mr. Gladstone quoted above, it is worth briefly reviewing the pattern of history that reveals the determined efforts that have been made in order to bring Roman Catholics to power in what was once a "Protestant Britain."

**Britain gives up on the Reformation**

Michael Gove on the strange death of a Protestant nation

Just opposite El Vino’s, in the heart of Fleet Street, there lies an old curiosity shop. It sells books and magazines, but its antique frontage seldom betrays the passing waves or the front pages, it is the flesh not the word which shopper, The memories of, the pamphlets, the poignant, the occasion, Women Protest, and like in, there are the doors, shops, a birth of, the B.C., the Holy

Ever since the Bible was translated into English exposing the fraudulent church of Rome, and thus launching the Reformation in England, there has been a consistent and unremitting attempt to turn back the clock and to return the country to papal domination. Some of the main landmarks of history are listed below, and gathered from Steinberg’s Dictionary of British History (1970 edition).

Among the several plots, conspiracies and even acts of war, we may list the following:

- The Throckmorton Plot (1583)
- The Babington Plot (1586)
- The Spanish Armada (1588)
- The Bye Plot (1603)
- The Gunpowder Plot (1605)
- The Popish Plot (1678)
- A conspiracy to turn England back to Catholicism under James II resulted in the Revolution of 1688.
- The Jacobite Rebellion (1745)
- The ‘Aggression of the Pope’ (1850) in unilaterally setting up a Catholic hierarchy in Britain resulted in the Ecclesiastical Titles Act (1851).
- Sinn Fein attempts to overthrow British rule in Ireland began in 1916.

As most of these avenues failed to produce the desired results, British Parliamentarians relaxed their vigilance, and charitable men thought it unfair to their Catholic fellow-countrymen that they should continue to be restricted. So there were those who promoted a Roman Catholic Disabilities (Removal) Bill... Thus, the law forbidding Roman Catholics to vote was removed from the Statute-Book in 1792. The law which prevented Catholics from sitting in Parliament was removed in 1829. A law forbidding papal bulls from entering the kingdom was taken away in 1846—and as each of these objectives were achieved, it was claimed that it would be a "final settlement" and that thereafter the Roman Catholic Church would not seek to be involved in political matters. And each time the pledge was made it was soon broken.

In more recent years—and following the guidelines given in papal encyclicals—the Catholic push for power has taken a different approach. Since World War Two Catholics have captured many of Britain’s centres of influence—not totally, but far in excess of their percentage of population.

The British media is littered with Catholics; the Director General of the BBC Mark Thompson for example is Catholic, as have been many editors of prominent UK newspapers. A telling paragraph in a book published some years ago reveals some rather obvious methods used by Catholics to influence opinion. For example, the writer (George Scott, “The R.C.s,” 1967) says: ‘...Catholics have exerted and do exert pressure... they mount campaigns of protest. I recall, incidentally, the story of the Jesuit priest on the teaching staff at Stonyhurst who told an ex-pupil, ‘I have only to lift that telephone to get 500 people sending letters of protest to the B.B.C.’’

Such are the modern methods. Every year there are complaints about Britain’s traditional ‘Bonfire Night’ held on November the 5th, recalling the Gunpowder Plot whereby Catholics planned to blow up King James I who had arranged for a new translation of the Bible (the “Authorised” version of 1611). James was to be blown sky-high together with Parliament! This attempt to blot out the memory of that event is like asking citizens of the United States to abandon the celebrations (and fireworks) on the fourth of July!
15. There was a time when Britain and other Protestant nations understood these things, when enlightened statesmen did not shrink from pointing them out. Today that knowledge has been smothered, it has been lost, concealed, stifled and suppressed. But it is a knowledge that Jesus Christ has communicated to his servants when through the instrumentality of his servant John, he made known those things which were going to come to pass.

For over twenty years we have taught that “Britain’s Exit from Europe is inevitable!” (see panel opposite). This statement was made on the basis of our understanding of prophecy. Others had warned Britain from a different perspective. For example in 1990 a former cabinet minister Nicholas Ridley, who had occupied the position of Trade and Industry Secretary, told The Sunday Express newspaper (August 5, 1990) that:

“He believes Britain is threatened by economic domination by the Germans and warns that unless we act now we will end up as the poor man of Europe, driven into a Thirties-style recession.”

The signs are that we could be approaching that day; the day when these things become a reality. It may take some time yet—we do not know—but what we can see is that the things we have learned, and been assured of, are faithful and true. These things are coming to pass in our day!

In 1993 an article appeared in The Daily Telegraph by the well-known journalist Clifford Longley in which he lamented that “anti-Catholic prejudice still exists in royal circles.” He used this as a means of launching his own agenda to “remove royal marriages from the legal restrictions” which forbade the heir to the throne marrying a Catholic. This present writer decided to telephone Clifford Longley in order to ascertain his religious persuasion. It was no surprise to learn that he was a Catholic, so the question was put to him—Why not declare your own interest here? Oh, said he—“I did wonder about that.”

But the gradual erosion of Protestantism in Britain has allowed Catholics to increase their influence and power. That, together with the planned secularization of the population, has resulted in an amazing indifference to the whole matter. So much so that The Times newspaper of August 4th, 1998 could carry an article headed: BRITAIN GIVES UP ON THE REFORMATION: “The strange death of a Protestant nation.” The fact is, however, that Britain still retains a protestant spirit, even if not from religious convictions.

But then, it was a nation that had forgotten, and that had no desire to teach its children the lessons of its own history.

We might suppose that with that the battle was over—but oh no. The whole thing had to be taken further and Britain made subject to Catholic Europe and its social teaching. What the Spanish Armada failed to accomplish, perhaps European Treaties could!

The Christian-Socialist State

Ever since the pope lost his temporal power in 1870 (that is, his position as a king and monarch, as well as being a religious leader—or “false prophet”), it has been the intention of the Vatican to recover that power, as was noted by Gladstone in 1875, quoted earlier. The ambitions of the Vatican to restore the temporal power was not to be however—at least, not in the form which it took previously. Times had changed—and had in fact run out, for the 1260 years of prophecy had expired.

A study of the prophecy of the Apocalypse together with history reveals to us a clear attempt to re-create what was known in history as The Holy Roman Empire. The first attempt was seen in the First World War when an Austro-German alliance tried to unite Europe under its domination. The second attempt was made to bring into being a new Europe (Das Nue Europa) under the “Third Reich.” When that failed, a plan to unite Europe under the “Treaty of Rome” was commenced (1957) and has gradually evolved to become the European Union that we see today. That this ‘United States of Europe’ is governed by Catholic social doctrine is sufficient to demonstrate that it is, in fact, the hand of Rome that pulls the strings and produces the menu. What we see emerging is a (Catholic) Christian-socialist state which in symbolic terms is a woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns (Revelation chapter 17).

What we need to understand is that the goal of the Vatican has always been—and still is—POWER. Power and control. If not as a king, monarch or Caesar—then as that “great whore that sitteth upon many waters” which “are peoples and multitudes, and nations and tongues” (verse 15).

There was a time when Britain and other Protestant nations understood these things, when enlightened statesmen did not shrink from pointing them out. Today that knowledge has been smothered, it has been lost, concealed, stifled and suppressed. But it is a knowledge that Jesus Christ has communicated to his servants when through the instrumentality of his servant John, he made known those things which were going to come to pass.

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From the heavens the earth appears like a colourful jewel against the blackness of space; it hangs upon nothing, sparkling with awesome beauty and splendor. Unfortunately a closer look reveals a planet ravaged by war and human mismanagement.

It has long been advocated that the earth is heading for an environmental disaster. As far back as 1988 the Time Magazine departed from its tradition of naming a “Man of the Year” and instead designated planet earth as “Planet of the Year.” The cover story described human incompetence in the harvesting of natural resources as well as human carelessness in dealing with natural disasters such as earthquakes. In contemplating the possible life span of planet earth the article commented,

“How long it endures and the quality of life it can support do not depend alone on the immutable laws of physics. For man has reached a point in his evolution where he has the power to affect, for better or worse, the present and future state of the planet.”

Human pride and arrogance appears to know no bounds; why should we believe that with all the available modern technology man can change life for the better? The Bible contradicts this quotation noting that mankind is incapable of solving his own problems. We read, “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). Six thousand years of human history testify to the truth of these words. History is built upon conflict and aggression; as technology has been developed for good, invariably it has been directed towards more destructive purposes. Greed and power have been at the centre of so called human progress and until the heart of man is changed nothing else will.

The Bible makes it quite clear that the earth will abide for ever (Ecclesiastes 1:4; Psalm 148:1-6). Despite all the “end of the world” statements the Bible declares God’s intentions with the earth. We read that
God created the earth to be inhabited (Isaiah 45:18) and eventually it will be “filled with the glory of the LORD” (Numbers 14:21); for the Bible student everything that we see happening around us confirms the purpose of God is right on track.

**A Natural Aggressor**

There are other forms of aggression which challenge the human race and which renders all of our technology powerless to prevent. One is an aggression from the air in the form of Hurricanes, Tornadoes and Lightening Storms; the other stems from the earth itself in the form of Volcanoes, Earthquakes and Tsunamis. The devastation caused by natural disasters is well documented: the 2004 Tsunami in the Indian Ocean killed 200,000 people; Hurricane Katrina killed 1,836 people in 2005, displacing 80% of New Orleans’ population and the 2010 Haitian earthquake killed over 200,000 people, leaving Haiti in ruins. The recent volcanic eruption in Iceland shut down much of European airspace and according to the news reports disrupted air travel for an estimated 10 million travelers worldwide.

Each form of natural disaster is a deadly power to be reckoned with but the earthquake is perhaps the most terrifying that can be unleashed. According to a United States Geological survey over 275,000 earthquakes have occurred since the beginning of the 21st Century; the majority of these are under 5.9 in magnitude. Many of the earthquakes are not even felt, these are described as micro earthquakes, less than 2.0 in magnitude, and they average approximately 8,000 per day. Notwithstanding nearly 1700 earthquakes have registered over 6.0 on the Richter scale in the same time period and they are described as between Strong (6.0-6.9) and Great (9.0-9.9) earthquakes. While it is true that advanced technology allows experts to monitor and predict earthquakes more accurately, unfortunately there is no scientific solution for preventing them from happening.

Earthquakes generally occur when rock underground suddenly breaks along a fault. You see the earth’s outer shell is made up of a series of irregular rigid segments called plates and each segment has been given a name corresponding to the oceans or continents embedded in them (see diagram right). Earthquakes usually occur when these plates grind and crush together, like an irresistible force encountering an immovable object. As pressure builds up the rocks break up and an earthquake occurs. Depending on the size of the fault area an earthquake can last from a few seconds to several minutes, but in that short space of time it strikes terror into people’s hearts,
producing panic and uncertainty and as we have seen from media pictures a great deal of damage can be caused in a few seconds.

Of God or Natural Phenomena

Inevitably when disasters occur questions arise about God; if there is a God, why does He allow such things? Today people describe natural disasters as the work of Mother Nature, but in reality this is only an excuse to remove God from the picture. The Bible clearly identifies God as the creator of all things and that He has set in motion natural laws by which this world is governed (Jeremiah 31:35). Because of this the natural elements are at God’s disposal. Consider what the Psalmist wrote, “For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof… He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still” (Psalm 107:25-29); again, “The LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers.” (Nahum 1:1-4). We also read, “Shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not rivers,” (Nahum 1:1-4). We also read, “Shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not rivers,” (Nahum 1:1-4). We also read, “Shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not rivers,” (Nahum 1:1-4).

There have been occasions throughout history when God has used the forces of nature to accomplish His purpose; the Bible speaks of “Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word” (Psalm 148:8); in reference to the rain, snow and winds we read, “He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy” (Job 37:13). There are numerous examples where God has responded to mankind’s continuous rebellion against His word by using the natural elements for divine punishment. In the days of Noah it is recorded that the earth was filled with violence and that “every imagination of the thoughts of (man’s) heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5-12). Because people refused the preaching of Noah God brought a flood upon the earth that destroyed all flesh (Genesis 6-7).

The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were guilty of sexual depravity; they were “wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly” (Genesis 13:13). Righteous men such as Lot were “vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked” (2 Peter 2:7), which resulted in God “raining down fire and brimstone out of heaven” and overthrowing those cities, (Genesis 19:24-25). Other incidents have occurred involving the natural elements, for example during a rebellion against God’s appointees, Moses and his brother Aaron, the earth opened and swallowed up Korah, Dathan and Abiram because they challenged God’s authority (Numbers 16). The prophet Jonah refused to complete God’s mission to Nineveh therefore God sent a great wind into the sea which created a mighty tempest to steer Jonah back on course (Jonah 1).

This does not mean that all disasters are divinely orchestrated or that all natural disasters are God’s instrument of punishment. The Lord Jesus Christ was quick to dispel such a conclusion when speaking to his disciples. A tragic event had overtaken a number of Galileans in Jesus’ day. Jesus commented saying, “Suppose ye that the Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered such things?” (Luke 13:1-2) In other words was God punishing these men for some gross sin on their part? Jesus answered, “I tell you, Nay” (verse 3-5). Some nations appear to suffer more than others but this does not suggest that one nation is more sinful than another. God is simply using these natural phenomena to warn humanity that God is in control and will punish those who oppose Him. The Lord Jesus Christ warned his own generation, “As it was in the days Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man” and again, “Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot…even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed” (Luke 17:26-30).

Weather in History

Bible prophecy provides clear evidence of God’s omnipotence. The prophet Isaiah declared, “I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, I will do all my pleasure” (Isaiah 46:9-10). This means that the events of history are not random, rather God is steering the course of history in order to fulfill His purpose in filling the earth with His glory. Whilst we may not understand the mechanics of how God accomplishes this, we are told that God is in complete control of the nations. The prophet Daniel declared that, “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” (Daniel 4:17). In other words the transition of power from one nation to another is divinely controlled.

One clear evidence that this has occurred is the manner in which the natural elements have contributed to moulding the world we live in to fulfill Bible prophecy. When the Lord Jesus Christ discussed the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, one of the signs that would point to its nearness was that there would be “famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places” (Matthew 24:7). The Acts of the Apostles records “the great dearth” which took place “in the days of Claudius Caesar” (Acts 11:28-30). When the

Volcanic ash: bringing the world to a stand-still!

The horror of a Tsunami
Apostle Paul was in Philippi there was an earthquake which brought about the release of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:26). The historian Josephus, who lived during the Roman invasion in AD 70 documented the weather conditions prior to the fall of Jerusalem. He wrote:

“There broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, and continual lightnings, terrible thunderings and amazing concussions and bellowsings of the earth, that was in an earthquake. These things were a manifest indication that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder; and anyone would guess that these wonders foreshowed some great calamities that were coming” (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 4, ch.4:6, Whiston’s translation).

Other Bible commentaries record that the period leading up to Jerusalem’s downfall was unusually marked by earthquakes throughout the Roman world.

When Philip of Spain challenged Queen Elizabeth I in the 16th Century the objective was not merely to expand his empire, rather it was to re-establish England as a Catholic country under Rome. But as has been commented on in the pages of this magazine before, England’s role in Bible prophecy is well established and its position as a Protestant nation clearly stated. Philip built a mighty armada determined to overthrow the British navy. His initial successes were overturned when the Spanish Armada was forced to regroup and sail northward; the fleet encountered severe storms which disrupted the ship’s course and many of the ships were wrecked on the north and western coasts of Ireland and rocky shores of Scotland. A medal was produced to commemorate the victory over Spain bearing the inscription, “God blew and they were scattered.”

Russia figures prominently in Bible prophecy as an independent power that will invade the Middle East in the near future. However in 1812 Napoleon had other ideas. Napoleon invaded Russia with about 600,000 men and over 50,000 horses with the intention of concluding the war in twenty days, but it didn’t work out that way. A series of miscalculations resulting in low food supplies and low morale broke down his army. But it was the weather that brought an end to the invasion. Extreme temperature conditions contributed to reducing Napoleon’s army to 100,000 men forcing a retreat. Thousands died in their sleep overcome by exhaustion and exposure to the subzero temperatures. Napoleon experienced the reality of the Psalmist’s words, “He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold” (Psalm 147:17).

**Waiting for the Big One**

When we talk about earthquakes in North America we immediately think about California and the San Andreas Fault. Following the earthquake which struck San Francisco Bay in 1989 TIME Magazine published an article entitled “Still waiting for the Big One.” Whilst considerable damage was caused by the 6.9 magnitude quake it was still not as serious as the 1906 quake which was 8.3 on the Richter scale.

But is California the place we should be watching? The Bible says we should be watching the Middle East and specifically Israel. The land of Israel is an earthquake-prone region and has a history of a destructive earthquake occurring once every 80 to 100 years. The last major earthquake was in 1927 (83 years ago). Running down through the Jordan valley is what is called the Jordan Rift Valley, otherwise known as The Dead Sea Rift. The rift travels as far south as Mozambique in Africa. As we write this article news has just been published (Sunday May 23, 2010) of a 5.3 magnitude earthquake sending tremors throughout Israel, Lebanon and Syria. The earthquake shook open a large hole on the Temple Mount plaza, near the Dome of the Rock. Are the Israelis prepared for a large earthquake? According to the experts an estimated 20 to 50 percent of Israeli buildings are not built to withstand a large earthquake and yet they are convinced that a large-magnitude earthquake in Israel is likely to occur in the next few decades.

The Bible does not say an earthquake is likely to occur in Israel, rather it says it is inevitable. The prophet Zechariah details a major earthquake occurring at some point in the future. Before we examine when the earthquake will occur we will first consider the impact it will have on that region and beyond. The prophet records:

“And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley: and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee” (Zechariah 14:4-5).

“And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and a very great valley shall be opened from the plain unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king’s winepresses” (Zechariah 14:8-10).

From these verses we can make the following observations:

**A medal recalls the destruction of the Spanish Armada**

Dead Sea Rift. The rift travels as far south as Mozambique in Africa. As we write this article news has just been published (Sunday May 23, 2010) of a 5.3 magnitude earthquake sending tremors throughout Israel, Lebanon and Syria. The earthquake shook open a large hole on the Temple Mount plaza, near the Dome of the Rock. Are the Israelis prepared for a large earthquake? According to the experts an estimated 20 to 50 percent of Israeli buildings are not built to withstand a large earthquake and yet they are convinced that a large-magnitude earthquake in Israel is likely to occur in the next few decades.

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From these verses we can make the following observations:
The earthquake will occur east of the city of Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives. This mountain is only 15 miles west of the Dead Sea Rift.

The impact of the earthquake indicates that it will be of major proportions, splitting the mountain into two halves, pushing north and south to create a great valley.

Tremendous topographical changes will take place. The extent of the valley will stretch from Geba to Rimmom. Geba has been located as 6 miles North of Jerusalem and Rimmom as 33 miles south of Jerusalem. This indicates that a 40 mile section of land—the whole of the southern section of the mountain range in the West Bank—will be leveled to create a large plain.

Verse 10 identifies within this level plain a portion of the land being lifted up or elevated. The parameters given in this verse refer to the specific area around Jerusalem. Thus the portion of land upon which the city of Jerusalem will be rebuilt will be elevated so that it can be seen throughout the land.

The Dead Sea, which presently lies 1385 feet below sea level will obviously be affected and Zechariah informs us that it will be revitalized by living waters. The prophet Ezekiel speaks of this saying, “And it shall come to pass, that fishers shall stand upon it (the water) from Engedi even to Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets…” (Ezekiel 47:10). Engedi is located on the western shore of the Dead Sea.

The description provided by the prophet indicates an earthquake with enormous power, such as the world has never seen. The significance of the event lies in the fact that it will be precipitated by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ when he is manifested on the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4). It was from this mountain that Jesus ascended up into heaven with the promise that he would return (Acts 1:11-12). The prophet Ezekiel records “in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel” and the shaking is described as God’s presence (Ezekiel 38:19). Speaking of Jerusalem, Isaiah also records, Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and a great noise, with storm and tempest, and a flame of devouring fire” (Isaiah 29:6).

But when might we expect to witness this event? By comparing the context of the various prophecies we can develop a reasonable time frame for Zechariah’s earthquake. Ezekiel identifies the time period as “the latter years” (Ezekiel 38:8); he also records, along with Joel and Zechariah, that it occurs when the nation of Israel has been restored to its own land. It will take place at a time when the nations are angry at Israel and will align themselves against them; the bone of contention will be the “mountains of Israel” (the present day West Bank) and the city of Jerusalem. At that time Israel will exist in a secure atmosphere (Ezekiel 38:1-11; Joel 3:1,16; Zechariah 14:1-2). All these factors illustrate that the scene is being presently set for this great event.

The Judgments of God

It is inevitable that accompanying such a catastrophe there will be considerable destruction and death and the question will invariably be asked for what purpose? When God brought a flood on the earth and later destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, it was because of the wickedness of man’s heart. The Lord Jesus Christ said that it would be no different when he returns, “But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matthew 24:37). God does not delight in the death of the wicked, but desires men and women to repent (Ezekiel 33:11). Previous to the gospel beginning to spread in the first century God had winked at man’s ignorance, “but now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained,” even the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30-31). The heart of man has not changed during the past two thousand years; it is the same evil heart that existed in the days of Noah and God has decreed that He will “destroy them that destroy the earth” (Revelation 11:18).

It has been suggested that an earthquake of such magnitude will have worldwide ramifications, to the extent of toppling buildings over 7-10 stories high; to this agree the prophets.
DISARMING THE STATE OF ISRAEL

For some time news reports have been placing increasing attention on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to which 189 “parties” are said to be supporters. There has been much talk of twisting the arms of Iran to sign up, and Iran has responded by pointing the finger at Israel’s supposed nuclear capability. The United Nations has the great idea of making the Middle East a WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) free area.

It all sounds fair enough on the surface, until you factor in the reality of Middle East politics and the determination on the part of most Arab countries to wipe Israel off the map. Iran, of course, has threatened just that. So it is no surprise to learn that Israel will not go along with the plan—meanwhile neither confirming or denying that she has a nuclear arsenal.

But other nations refuse to sign the Treaty besides Israel—India and Pakistan for example, are not prepared to abandon the nuclear deterrent that they possess. If Israel does have the bomb, it is understandable from a human and pragmatic view that they would be reluctant to relinquish it.

We can expect the pressure to be maintained and probably increased on Israel in this area—her enemies would rejoice to see her defenceless.

And yet we cannot help pondering the words of Ezekiel 38 which speak of her enemy thinking “an evil thought” (verse 10), and the state of security described—“without walls, and having neither bars nor gates” (verse 11).

It is hard to see any group of nations invading a country that is ready to use the “Samson Option.” We must wait and see—but it certainly makes us think! It makes us think of other Scriptures too, such as Zechariah 14:12, which does sound like the horrible effects of nuclear war (though we are aware of other ways to look at that verse).

But of course, Israel does not really need any nuclear weapons, because her God is more powerful than any of them. He has promised to save Israel, and He will do so. The article by Ron Kidd that finishes on this page reveals the tremendous power—the forces—that are part of the arsenal at the command of the Almighty. The craftiness of men might disarm Israel by a ruse such as that now being proposed, but they cannot disarm Israel’s God. When earthquake, fire and brimstone is unleashed from heaven they will come to realize this!

When God begins to take up His controversy with the nations we are told “and the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth” (Jeremiah 25:31, 33). When God arises to shake terribly the earth we are told that “the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of man shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day” (Isaiah 2:17-19). But such a shaking is not simply to destroy; it will be the beginning of a cleansing process that will prepare the world for the greatest reformation of all time. The purpose of God is clear, one day He will fill this earth with His glory, as the waters cover the sea (Numbers 14:21; Habakkuk 2:14), and this will be accomplished by sending His Son back to the earth to establish the long-coveted temple that will form the nucleus for world government and the fulfillment of the prophecies.

Fortunately the picture presented by the prophets does not conclude with God’s destructive power. The final picture is one of glory and restoration. Zechariah records, “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one” (Zechariah 14:9). We are told of the city of Jerusalem, “men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited” (Zechariah 14:11), it shall be “beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king” (Psalm 48:2; Jeremiah 3:17).

The prophet Isaiah provides a beautiful picture of the kingdom of God once the cleansing process has been concluded, we read:

“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 any more” (Isaiah 2:2-4).

Upon the top of Mount Zion God will build a temple that will form the nucleus for world education. Guided by God’s immortalized saints, the nations will be brought to worship before God and learn of His ways. There will commence a worldwide reform where men and women will channel their energies into a God centred, peaceful and productive work.

Every indication suggests that the largest earthquake in history is imminent; all the signs clearly confirm that Jesus is at the door. Climatic conditions are creating unprecedented financial challenges to world governments and the alignment of the nations is on course with Bible prophecy. Our responsibility is clear; not only should we be watching these events enthusiastically, but we should be taking the necessary steps to prepare for the day of the Lord.

The immortality of the soul is not of the truth, and therefore a lie; and no man can be saved by the belief of a lying or false hope. We are saved by hope—’the one hope of the calling,’ which Plato knew nothing at all about.

JOHN THOMAS, His Life and Work

God asks men for their hearts; but they give him only their lips. They profess to love Him, but give their affections to the world.

JOHN THOMAS, Elpis Israel

Multitudes are called ‘Christian’ who do not believe the truth concerning Christ or obey his commandments. It has become, in fact, the name of a system of fable and error that has risen up in the world in the place of truth, in fulfillment of the predictions of the apostles. Therefore, to be known as a “Christian” is not to be known as a believer of the truth.

ROBERT ROBERTS, Robert Roberts: The Instructor

Wisdom lies deep. You have to dig for it: sweet when found, but hard to reach.

ROBERT ROBERTS, Seasons of Comfort

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 take-over of Western Europe.

GRAHAM PEARCE, Russia, the Vatican & the Invasion of Israel
“BEHOLD, I COME AS A THIEF”

“Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepest his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Revelation 16:15.

It would seem reasonable to conclude that the “watching” referred to in the passage above, is related to, and concerns, those things spoken of in the immediate context. This would include the events of the sixth vial—the drying up of the great river Euphrates and the preparation of a way for the kings of the east, or sun’s risings. This is the influence of “unclean spirits” like frogs, as they go forth from civil and religious centres with philosophical madness (such as the stupidity of post-modernism), embroiling and gathering nations in hostile intent against Almighty God and His Hebrew nation. These signs are to be watched—not merely observed; it is intended that we be alerted by them, which is the meaning of the word watcheth in this place.

Political Signs

In his book Elys Israel, the writer John Thomas points out that saints, though not participating in politics, are nonetheless extremely interested in them. He explained: “... Paul says every power is of God; and the powers that be are ordained of Him. This is a matter of great consolation and rejoicing to His saints; for, though the tyrants may propose, it is God only that disposes events. The saints who understand the word will keep aloof from politics. None are more interested than they; but they will mix themselves up neither with one party nor another; for God regulates them all: therefore to be found in any such strife would be to contend in some way or other against Him.”

So it is that our interest in events and the political activities of men is kindled by the knowledge that “the most high ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Daniel 4:25). Prophecy was given for a purpose, and one reason why the “things which must shortly come to pass” were revealed and communicated is that his servants might be alerted to the approach of God’s judgements, both upon the world and in regard to himself and his brethren. The awareness of God’s Hand at work as He implements His purposes serve to encourage the believing saint, for like Moses of old he is strengthened to endure “as seeing him who is invisible” (Hebrews 11:27). It provides vision. Faith in the word of God is vindicated.

Trying to explain these things to someone who has no experience of it, is like trying to describe the colours of a rainbow to a man born blind. He cannot understand. It is only by reading and understanding the prophetic words, written down centuries ago, and comparing them to the events of history—and current affairs—that we come to appreciate the miracle of it. One writer, Thomas Newton, whose work was published in 1754 wrote:

“Men are sometimes apt to think, that if they could but see a miracle wrought in favor of religion, they would readily resign all their scruples, believe without doubt, and obey without reserve. The very thing that you desire, you have. You have the greatest and most striking of miracles in the series of scripture-prophecies accomplished; accomplished, as we see, in the present state of almost all nations... and this is not a transient miracle, ceasing almost as soon as performed; but is permanent, and protracted through the course of many generations. It is not a miracle delivered only upon the report of others, but is subject to your own inspection and examination. It is not a miracle exhibited only before a certain number of witnesses, but is open to the observation and contemplation of all mankind; and, after so many ages, is still growing, still improving to future ages. What stronger miracle therefore can you require for your conviction? or what will avail, if this be found ineffectual? Alas, if you reject the evidence of prophecy, neither would you be persuaded though one should rise from the dead. What can be plainer?”

But being alerted by such things, we are then instructed to keep our garments.

The Need for Garments

Before a man or woman can “keep” their garments they must obtain them. The idea takes us back to Genesis 3, verses 7, 10 and 21. The man and his wife were naked, ashamed of themselves and afraid. They could not cover-up their shame despite their efforts to do so, therefore “Unto Adam also and unto his wife did the Lord God make coasts of skins, and clothed them.”

This merciful act which was in no sense deserved provided a symbolic token of God’s promise made in Genesis 3:15, which was to be fulfilled in after ages. No doubt, Adam and Eve believed that God would perform His word, and on the basis of that faith he clothed them through the shedding of blood of an innocent animal. Certainly, and as the record tells us, the coats of skins were provided in order to clothe the physical nature of the first human being. But if that were all there was to it, fig leaves or cotton might have done the job—but it required the shedding of blood to be clothed in the skin of an innocent living creature. The reason for this is that more than physical nature was involved. Adam and Eve had sinned; that is to say, they had been disobedient to the command of their Creator. This produced the feeling of guilt—what the apostle calls the “conscience of sins” (Hebrews 10:2).

We all know what this is through experience. We are aware of certain desires which, for one reason or another, have to be restrained and denied. When these desires (or lusts) involve things that our Creator has forbidden, it is latent disobedience, or sin—and what the apostle calls “the law of sin in my members” (Romans 7:23). This is an involuntary force that we all experience from an early age. It is, as the saying goes, “in our blood.” We all know this because we are constantly being tempted in one way or another. It is the apostle James who describes the process that takes us from lust, to actual sin, and then to the end result.

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

The apostle Paul says that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), and Solomon likewise says “there is no man that sinneth not” (1 Kings 8:46). As this is so, all men carry the “conscience of sins”—and are in need of conscience-clothing. They require a garment. So how can anyone cover a guilty conscience?

There is one simple answer—through forgiveness. If a man-offends someone so as to cause a breach in friendship (or fellowship), that break in the relationship requires an admission of wrongdoing on the part of the offender (that is, confession), and then a willingness to overlook the matter—forgiveness—on the part of the one offended. That is straight forward.

The problem is that sin against God is never a one-off incident. Because of his nature, man offends again and again in different ways. He cannot permanently stop himself. His nature is incurable!
and righteous—so He clothes those who trust in Him, that they may hope in His promise and covenants. Since the beginning men have hoped that a seed of the woman would bruise the enemy, nailing it once and for all! In order to accomplish this however, that seed of the woman would have to be bruised in his heel, inflicting a wound that had promise of recovery through the direct operation of God.

What did all this signify? Just this: that “God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law...” (Galatians 4:4-5). How did he do that? Well: being made of a woman, Jesus Christ came in the flesh and was therefore tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin (1 John 4:2; Hebrews 4:15). He had our nature; he was flesh and blood and was “the seed of Abraham” (Hebrews 2:14-18).

Jesus Christ was a mortal man and subject to all the usual desires of his flesh-nature—for “he himself hath suffered being tempted” (Hebrews 2:14-18). and all the usual desires of his flesh—nay, for “he was tempted in like manner as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). What did all this signify? Just this: that “God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law...” (Galatians 4:4-5). How did he do that? Well: being made of a woman, Jesus Christ came in the flesh and was therefore tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin (1 John 4:2; Hebrews 4:15). He had our nature; he was flesh and blood and was “the seed of Abraham” (Hebrews 2:14-18).

Jesus Christ was a mortal man and subject to all the usual desires of his flesh-nature—for “he himself hath suffered being tempted” (Hebrews 2:14-18). But he was a unique man—and unique in a way that is not easy to grasp. It is a great temptation to simply dismiss that which we do not fully comprehend—to sneer and mock at concepts that we find to be outside of our experience; so we try to explain it on our own terms, and in our own terminology. We cannot always do that with Divine things, for as God says through the prophet Isaiah (55:9), “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” So it is with this unique man, Jesus Christ. As Luke records it, Mary was told:

“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

This “Holy Spirit” is not a person—as so many Christian churches claim; it is not part of some Trinity—but rather as the words mean (Holy)—set apart, special; consecrated; and Spirit—power, energy, force, mental or physical), a separated or dedicated power. In this case of Luke 1:35 it clearly denotes creative power.

The apostle John describes this creative act in different words. He tells us:

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

The “word” (Greek: logos, reason, expressed thought or purpose) was made—constituted—flesh. In other words, there was a divine impress of the mind of God—of His character—built into the mind of man. As it is expressed in 1 Timothy 3:16, “God was manifest in the flesh.” This is a matter to be approached in humility—it is treading upon holy ground as it were—yet it has ever been a subject which has driven men to controversy and strife as they try to come to terms with it. That be as it may, we have here a unique man who could bring under his control the desires of the flesh and of the mind. And being found in fashion as a man, he fully understood the nature of man, that it was absolutely incurable. He understood that God was righteous in condemning man to mortality, and so it was that he submitted to death upon the tree, crucifying that flesh-nature which is the source of all temptation and rebellion. As Hebrews 9:26 teaches us:

“...now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

Now those who come to recognize those things, who experience the weakness of their own nature in trying to resist unlawful desires, see that what Jesus did was to condemn sin in the flesh (Romans 8:3). So they find themselves identifying with his mind on the matter. They cannot attain to his standard of obedience, but see in him an example of what they should be.

God recognizes this. He sees that there is belief in what His son did, and so sets him forth as a “propitiation”—that is, a covering. The word is associated with the “mercy seat,” lid or covering for the ark of the covenant (see Exodus 25:17 LX; also Hebrews 9:5 where the word “mercy seat” is from the same Greek word). Thus the apostle writes in Romans 3:24 and 25:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” (John 3:16, “God was manifest in the flesh.”)

The idea is that of putting on Christ’s character. The same word, enduo, is used in Colossians 3:10-14:

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him... Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering: Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”

So by entering into covenant with him through baptism the believer puts on these characteristics; Christ is his garment. So the apostle Peter says:

“...Ye, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5).

An on-going conscious effort is necessary in order to stifle that ‘law of sin’ in our members, putting those impulses to death as it were, whilst building those attributes of the divine Name into our own lives (see Exodus 34:6-7) that we may be like him.

Truly blessed are those who keep their garments then, that they might be suitably clothed on the day of inspection, and walk in white at the great feast that the king of Israel will provide when he returns.

“This cup is the new testament (the word is covenant) in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins”—Matt. 26:28.
The Scriptures show us that the only “devil” that we have to fear is man himself, not some fallen angel. In many cases it refers to rulers of this world.

By Arthur Bull  VANCOUVER.

Who were the “Sons of God”?  
“And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants (Hebrew, Nephilim) in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown” (Genesis 6:1-4).

To find the meaning of a term used in the Bible, we must see how God uses it in other parts of the Bible:
Job 38:4-7 “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?...When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

Luke 20:34-36 “The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.”

I John 3:1-2 “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.”

From these Scriptures we learn:
• The angels are called “sons of God”
• Faithful believers are now called “sons of God”
• If believers remain faithful they will be raised from death.

• They will be made like the angels to die no more.
• When Jesus returns the faithful will be made like him.
• The angels of God do not marry.

From these three Scriptures it can be seen that the “sons of God” in Genesis 6:1 were mortal men—the true worshippers of God. After Cain had murdered Abel, Eve gave birth to Seth. Afterwards, Seth had a son “and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord” (Genesis 4:26). In other words, the believers organized themselves to worship God together. The other people, who did not worship God, were Cain and his descendants.

By the time of Noah, the whole world rejected God’s way, except Noah and his family—eight people. Why were the worshippers of God so few at that time? It was because the sons of God had started to intermarry with the ungodly women (daughters of men)—see Genesis 6:1. The apostle Paul warned believers not to marry the ungodly:

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? for what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

The children of such mixed marriage generally follow the ways of the ungodly parent. This is what happened before the flood, until only Noah and his family were left of “the sons of God.” Genesis 6:4 says that “there were giants in the earth in those days.” These were big men (Hebrew, nephilim). The big men who the Israelite spies saw in Canaan were also called nephilim—they were the “sons of Anak” or “the Anakim” (Numbers 13:22). David and his men killed Goliath and other members of his family of giants who lived in Gath (1 Chronicles 20:4-8).

All nephilim in Scripture are children of mortal mothers and fathers.

The nephilim (A.V., “giants”) of Genesis 6:4 became “heroes” or “mighty (gibbor) men” and “men of renown.” The same Hebrew word gibbor is used of Nimrod (great-grandson of Noah), who became famous as the mighty hunter—(1 Chronicles 1:10). Gibbor is also used of the valiant fighting men whose names were remembered because of their feats in battle (1 Chronicles 11:11). “This is the number of the mighty men whom David had: Jashobeam, an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred slain by him at one time.”

• The giants or nephilim were mortal men like Goliath, whom David slew.
• The mighty men or heroes were men of renown
The king of Babylon is given the nick-name “Lucifer.” Modern Bible translations show that the name refers to the “day star” which is the planet Venus. Other empires have ruled for hundreds of years, but Babylon ruled for only 70 years after capturing Jerusalem. Most of the stars we can see shine all night, but Venus can be seen only for a short time before sunrise, or after sunset.

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! —Isaiah 14:12.

V.4. That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon. This is the song that the Jews would sing, after the Persians had conquered Babylon.

V.5. The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. The government of Babylon taken away.

V.6. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger. The king of Babylon was always beating up his neighbours.

V.7&8 Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon Literal trees don’t talk—the people in the countries around Babylon were happy.

V.9. Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming The literal grave does not tell the dead kings to welcome a new comer!

V.10. Art thou (the king of Babylon) also become weak as we? Dead men can’t talk—the literal teaching of Scripture is “in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom” (Ecclesiastes 9:10). This is what happens to people who are buried in the grave.

V.11. The worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. This passage has nothing to do, as some claim, that an angel or the devil fell from the sky. It is talking, in figurative speech, about the king of Babylon. He fell from the political heaven, or government over the nations which he conquered. See Jeremiah 51:53.

V.12. “which didst weaken the nations!” The king of Babylon did this by taking whole nations captive and removing them to another place.

V.13. “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven” The figurative “heaven” in Isaiah refers to the government of Israel. Compare Isaiah 1:1 with 1:10.

V.14. “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north” This is Jerusalem — see Isaiah 2:2-3 and Psalm 48:1-2.

V.15. “Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.” (N.I.V. “the grave”) This is a figure for the great ambition of the king of Babylon. His plan was to conquer and rule over all nations. See Habakkuk 2:6-7. —as all mortal men are.

V.16. “Is this the man that made the earth to tremble?” The nations around were afraid of Babylon’s army.

V.17. “That made the world as a wilderness” Judea was emptied of people by the king of Babylon (Isaiah 24:4-6).

V.17. “opened not the house of his prisoners?” The Jews could not go back to their homeland until the Persians had conquered Babylon.

V.18-20. “All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house:” Kings build their own expensive mausoleums, but the king of Babylon had no memorial tomb. No remants of the Babylonians or Chaldeans can be found now.

V.21-22. “For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the LORD.” Babylon has been emptied of all people, and now only a few wild animals live among its ruins.

In summary, Isaiah 14 has nothing to do with an imaginary “fallen angel.” It is about a “man,” the “king of Babylon” who appeared in public with “pomp” and “the sound of stringed instruments” (verse 11).
ur last article dealt with the coming of Pompey and the Romans, and their influence on the Jews in the land. Fighting among themselves, the Hasmoneans, after an inspiring start as revolutionaries, were seen to be following in the footsteps of those they had replaced.

The independent Hasmonean kingdom came to an end with the civil war between Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus, sons of Alexander Yannai and Salome Alexandra. Alexander Yannai (the first of the Hasmoneans to call himself king) died at the age of 49, leaving Alexandra his wife as the only queen to ever rule the kingdom, which she did with the help of the Pharisees. Each of her sons had sought the support of the Roman general Pompey, but when he did intercede, and chose Hyrcanus to rule as High Priest, Judea was effectively drawn into the Roman Empire in 63 BC. How was it that, 23 years later, an Idumean—Herod—came to rule over the land?

The civil war which followed the death of Alexandra in 67 BC, was a struggle for power over the kingdom of Judea. Hyrcanus the elder, inherited the titles of king and high priest, while his younger brother Aristobulus, the more spirited of the two, was left with nothing. Hyrcanus was supported by Antipater II, and the Nabateans, under Aretas their king. Aristobulus was defeated and besieged in Jerusalem, until Pompey relieved him and forced the Nabateans to withdraw from the city. Aristobulus surrendered to him, but his supporters were encamped on the Temple Mount. It took three months to dislodge them, and Pompey then demolished the walls of the city. Hyrcanus ruled as high priest and ethnarch from 63 to 40 BC, but was given no royal title. He was dependent on the Roman governor of the province of Syria, with Antipater in fact ruling over what was left under Hyrcanus’ control for the next 20 years. During the war, Herod as a young boy lived with his mother’s family in Nabatea, which was ruled from Petra.

Herod the Idumean, son of Antipater II, is mentioned only ten times in the Gospel records, but the period of his reign (40-4 BC) tells us a great deal about the political situation in the Land during the life of the Lord. Herod was the second son of Antipater, an Idumean, and his wife Cypros, a Nabatean princess from Petra. When John Hyrcanus the Maccabean conquered Idumea-Edom between 140 and 130 BC, the inhabitants were given a choice: either become obedient to the Law, or leave. Most Idumeans underwent circumcision and were converted, including the family of Antipater I, Herod’s grandfather, more than half a century before the birth of Herod. Antipater II (Herod’s father) had attached himself to Hyrcanus II, the ethnarch, during the civil war, and became a high-ranking official. He was able to appoint his two sons to official positions within the kingdom—the elder Phasael as governor of Jerusalem, and Herod as governor of Galilee. Herod was only 26 at the time, having been born about 74 BC. Antipater earned the gratitude of Julius Caesar for his support during the wars in Egypt. Caesar was well-disposed toward the Jews from this time, and regarded them as allies. He granted them privileges, and saw to it that the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt. The High Priesthood was made hereditary in Hyrcanus’ line. Forgetting his former support for Pompey, Caesar made Antipater a Roman citizen—a rare honour for an alien—and also exempted him from taxation. Caesar told Antipater that he could rule Judea in any manner he wished. Leaving the decision with Caesar, he was named procurator of Judea. Much of the goodwill which both Octavian and Antony later had for Herod sprang from the loyal service of his father, Antipater.

In 43 BC, Antipater chose to offer financial support to Crassus, one of Caesar’s murderers, and as a result, died after being poisoned. Crassus pillaged the Temple to support his ambitions. Later he was defeated and died at the hand of the Parthians, who defeated the Roman legions under his command. Herod, with the backing of the Roman army, later executed his father’s murderer.

A year later, after the battle of Philippi, Herod was able to convince both Mark Antony and Octavian that his father Antipater had been forced to help Cassius, and reaffirmed his loyalty. Herod and the older Mark Antony had met fifteen years before, and become friends, while Mark Antony was earning his spurs in the battles that went on with the supporters of Aristobulus throughout Judea. When Antony
marched into Asia, Herod was named tetrarch of Galilee by the Romans. The Hasmoneans were a Pharisaical family, but over the generations, as the effect of Hellenism was felt in Judea, they lived an ever more decadent lifestyle and were scorned by observant Jews. The family of Herod had even fewer constraints on their behaviour, as converted Edomites, and were hated for their way of life.

Two years after his appointment as tetrarch, the Parthians invaded the land, and Hyrcanus the High Priest was deposed by Antigonus the son of his younger brother, and rival, Aristobulus, with their help. Phasael, Herod’s brother, and Hyrcanus tried to negotiate. Captured by Antigonus, Hyrcanus had his ears cropped to disqualify him as High Priest, and was sent off to Babylon in chains. Rather than live as a captive, Phasael chose to end his own life. Supported by the Parthians, Antigonus was on the throne of Judea.

Herod was forced to flee. His trip to Rome reads like an adventure novel. First he sent his treasure on to Idumea, then, taking his family and as many as 9000 supporters, along with 500 women who had been promised to the Parthians, he fled south, and was overtaken by his enemies. Near Bethlehem, and the future site of Herodium, he won the battle, and continued on to Masada, where he had prepared a sanctuary for his family. But staying out of the way was not Herod’s style, and he knew he needed the Romans behind him. The city was gradually surrounded and cut off. After a five month siege, the city was taken, Antigonus was executed and Herod had a kingdom to go with his title. The Romans wanted to sack the city, but Herod was able through bribery and force, to save it from devastation. Before he departed, Sosius, the Roman general, offered a crown of gold to the God of Israel. At last, he had become the sole ruler of Judea. The Herodian dynasty was established, and Hasmonean rule came to an end. Josephus says that this was 27 years after Jerusalem fell to Pompey.

According to Josephus, he ruled for 37 years, 34 years of them after capturing Jerusalem. Thirty-six years of age, and nearly bankrupt, Herod was now hated by the majority of his subjects, who blamed him for their many sufferings at the hands of the Romans. With his beloved Mariamme at his side, Herod began to rule his kingdom. Next, we will look at both his accomplishments and the terror of his reign.
Spiders are not the only fellows that can spin a yarn so as to entrap their unsuspecting victims. The prophet Isaiah speaks of those who never plead for the truth, “they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.” He says they “weave the spider's web,” but their webs will not cover up their works (Isaiah 59:4-6). So let us beware! The smooth and silky talk of those who do not have the Truth at heart and who do not plead for it, but weave their own theories, must be judged by their works (see Matthew 7:15-20). So it is with the evolutionist; his godless theories have resulted in a godless society that is estranged from God and trapped by a false philosophy. The miracle of creation and of prophecy cannot be appreciated by such victims.

The spider (above) is preparing itself for “ballooning.” His silken thread can catch the wind so that he may travel just yards, or for many miles. Ballooning (or kite flying) spiders are known to have been found 200 miles out to sea! They can even reach the upper atmosphere and jet streams. They can travel to distant islands in this way. What incredible creatures God has designed and made!

The silk thread of a spider has the tensile strength superior to that of high-grade steel. Don’t get caught up in it!