THE PROTESTANT THRONE OF BRITAIN & THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS
“Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee...”
Ezekiel 26:16

Right: Queen Elizabeth pictured with Canada’s Prime Minister Stephen Harper, one of Israel’s strongest allies and supporters. He has opposed Reform to the Act of Settlement and has blocked it.

Left: The pomp and ceremony of the Royal wedding was seen by millions, but what events await the future generation of the British monarchy? How long will the Protestant throne survive — and who will occupy it?

Legal safeguards which have been in place for some 300 years prevent any change to the Protestant constitution of the British Crown. This is understood throughout the Commonwealth.

A Royal Wedding: strengthening the monarchy

IN THIS ISSUE
Written With the Finger of God. by Ron Kidd PAGE 6
How was our Bible Compiled. by Peter Moore PAGE 10
“If ye Believe not his Writings” from John Carter PAGE 12
The Protestant Throne of Britain & the Restoration of the Jews. by Paul Billington PAGE 18
Tyre & Tarshish of the Latter Days. by Graham Pearce PAGE 22, 23
The Redeemer & The Jubilee. by Jonathan Bowen PAGE 24
Jacob: His wives & his wages by Nick Barnes PAGE 28
When will Asher dip his foot in oil? (Part Two) by Glenn Blair-Ford PAGE 31
The Valley of Elah by Ken Loveridge PAGE 34

OUR REGULAR FEATURES FOR THIS ISSUE
EDITORIAL
EDITORIAL: The Supreme Authority of the Bible PAGE 3
PROPHETCY FULFILLING
MILESTONES UPDATE by Don Pearce PAGE 13
WRITTEN OVER 100 YEARS AGO
John Thomas: The Coming Humiliation of Britain PAGE 4
OTHER FEATURES
Bible School Announcement PAGE 9
Quotables PAGE 33
Food For Thought PAGE 27
Prophecy Days in 2011 PAGE 5
BACK PAGE: “Thy Kingdom Come”

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” John 17:17
A nyone who genuinely believes that the Bible is the word of God, the “oracles of God,” and “the lively oracles,” cannot accept any human authority as being above what is written in the Scriptures. As the prophet Isaiah expressed it (chapter 8:20),

“To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Men have been given authority in times past, for God spoke through Moses and the prophets. He has spoken through His Son Jesus Christ and through the apostles (Hebrews 1:1-2; 1 John 4:6). In such cases believers were commanded to obey those who had been appointed to rule over them, and there would be no difficulty in doing so because they would speak in harmony with the Law and the Testimony. They would “speak as the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11).

In our day there are no officials appointed by the holy spirit as in Bible times and so the apostle John instructs us how to deal with this situation. He says:

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

And how are we to try these teachers? The apostle continues (verse 6):

“We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

So we must test what is being taught by the words of Scripture—by the Law and the Testimony and by the words of the apostles of Jesus Christ.

In his book Elpis Israel the author, John Thomas, gave sound advice when he wrote:

“Cast away to the owls and to the bats the traditions of men, and the prejudices indoctrinated into thy mind by their means; make a whole burnt offering of their creeds, confessions, catechisms, and articles of religion; and, after the example of the Ephesian disciples, hand over your books of curious theological arts, and burn them before all. These mountains of rubbish have served the purposes of a dark and barbarous age; the word, the word of the living God alone, can meet the necessities of the times.

“Let the example of the noble-minded Bereans be ours. They searched the scriptures daily to see if the things taught by the apostles were worthy of belief; “therefore they believed.” If, then, not even the preaching of an apostle was credited unaccompanied by scriptural investigation, is it not infinitely more incumbent on us that we should bring to a like test the opinions and precepts of the uninspired and fallible professional theologians of our day?”

He continues:

“Let us then “cease from men, whose breath is in their nostrils, for wherein are they to be accounted of.” “They be blind leaders of the blind,” in whom is no light, because they speak not according to the law and the testimony of God. Let us repudiate their dogmatisms; let us renounce their mysteries; and let us declare our independence of all human authority in matters of faith and practice outside the word of God.”

Look at the religious world around you, while they may claim to base their systems upon the Bible, there is always an additional “authority” of some kind that is involved. Some have their pope, their “authentic magisterium” or teaching authority. There is often a church hierarchy giving out its directives. Some will tell you that they have the holy spirit leading them to all truth (but coming up with different and even contradictory teachings). Then there are groups like the Mormons with their leading authorities—and the Jehovah’s Witnesses with their organisation and president of the society. Wherever we look there is human authority, human leadership—and of course, human failing. The people have not yet learned the truth which teaches us that we must be “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”

There seems to be something in man that always strives for mastery—seeking to control others; a love of power and position. A humble submission to the plain teaching of God’s revealed word is rarely to be found. So Jesus taught his followers:

“Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren” (Matthew 23:8-11).

No one who truly respects the authority of the Bible will elevate himself to being a spiritual authority of some kind. What he will do is to study the word of God with the purpose of developing an obedient spirit, such as is seen in Christ himself.

But history demonstrates that men—even religious men—do not want the Bible. They did not want it in the hands of the people so that they might be able to read it for themselves. Consequently the Bible was banned, it was confiscated and burnt. Religious leaders wanted to control what people believed, and did so for many centuries, using church authority, the rack and the fires to do so.

In his book Christendom Astray the writer Robert Roberts made this comment:

“Recent centuries have witnessed the "Reformation," which has given us liberty to exercise the God-given right of private judgment.”

But there are many religious organisations today that oppose the liberty of private judgment. They keep a strict party-line and will often shun or even excommunicate those who do not conform to the imposed traditions.

This is not to suggest that we are all free to believe and preach our own personal opinions. There is a standard of Truth, and there is a court of appeal—and that is the bar of Scripture. THE AUTHORITY is the word of God, and by this all theories must be tested. We each have a personal responsibility to search the Scriptures daily, whether those things are so or not (Acts 17:11).

The danger is the neglect of the word of God. As John Thomas expressed it in his book Eureka, when looking at the decline of the Truth during the First Century:

“The people, not holding on to their “first love,” that they might be saved, and neglecting the study of the word for themselves, were easily beguiled by “the working of Satan with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness,” brought to bear upon them. They surrendered themselves to their spiritual guidance, selling themselves to the clergy for their “philosophy and vain deceit”—Colossians 2:8. “For this cause, the Deity sent upon them a strong delusion to their believing in a lie, that all might be condemned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in the unrighteousness”—2 Thessalonians 2:9-12.

Our goal is to understand the Truth that God has graciously revealed. We must seek this with independence of mind as we respect the fact that God has provided us with only one authority—that of His word!
The British Lion is a proud and lofty beast; and its dominion, a high mountain, and lifted up. This is also the character of all the kingdoms and empires of the world. Now, the scripture saith, “Every one proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord.” Proud persons, proud nations, and proud governments, are equally objects of his detestation. He has therefore delivered himself concerning them in these words, in reference to the fate that awaits them in the day when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth, and he alone shall be exalted:

“The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of Jehovah of armies shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up and upon all the ships of Tarshish; 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” (Isaiah 2:10-22).

This prophecy is clearly unfulfilled as yet; for “the powers that be” are not humbled, the Lord is not alone exalted, and the idols are not abolished. The reader will perceive then, that contemporarily with the sole exaltation of the Lord, “the day of Jehovah is upon all the ships of Tarshish.” This is explained in the forty eighth Psalm, which is prophetic of the time when Zion, the City of the Great King, shall be the joy of the whole earth. But before this comes to pass, it foretells the assembling of the kings against her; that is, the kings of Gog’s confederacy; and their flight with precipitation and terror. It is then added as a contemporary event, “Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.” This implies that the ships broken and scattered are a fleet in the Mediterranean, which would be exposed to a hurricane from the east. This will doubtless be the British Mediterranean fleet cooperating with the land forces against the Russian armies in the Holy Land. The pride of Britain, and probably of America in maritime alliance with her against the common enemy of constitutional government and liberty, will be laid low by the wreck of the most powerful fleet that ever floated upon the sea of Tarshish. This will cause the maritime powers to abase themselves, and to yield obedience to the “Shepherd and Stone of Israel,” whom even the winds and sea obey.

“Michael, the great prince,” that is, “JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS,” descends from the right hand of power; wrests Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the contending armies; and stands up for the entire deliverance of the Twelve Tribes from the power of all their enemies. The ambition of the Gog-power is extinguished for a thousand years; and the maritime ascendancy of Britain is subjected to the king of Israel, who forthwith prepares to complete the conquests he has so felicitously begun.

It is not to be supposed that the King of Israel will permit the government of Britain to remain in the hands of the reigning family, and of those

Crest at Buckingham Palace
All things pertaining to the government of the British empire will hereafter be at the absolute disposal of Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, who will dethrone the reigning family and command allegiance to himself alone.

This is proved by the testimony of Daniel, who says,

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there were given him dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him” (Chapter 7:14).

It is admitted by all professing Gentiles of intelligence, that Jesus of Nazareth is “the Son of Man” so often alluded to in the Bible. This testimony of Daniel, then, is affirmed of Jesus; “All people, and nations, and languages shall serve him.” The populations of the British empire must, therefore, be his subjects, being constituents of the “all.”

“Granted,” says an objector, “but not their rulers.” Yes, their rulers, also, for David says, “All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him” (Psalm 72:11). When this is accomplished, how many British, Irish, Hindoos, Sikhs, etc. will remain to yield allegiance and tribute to the House of Brunswick? Not one! Its royalty will have vanished like fog before the sun.

Extracted from: Herald of the Kingdom & Age to Come Vol. 8. 1858

Editor’s Note: The “House of Brunswick” links British Royalty with their German origins. The family has been known as the “House of Windsor” only since 1917. Since 1960 the correct name has been Mountbatten-Windsor.
The English Bible has a fascinating history; its preservation during the most oppressive periods bears testimony to the fact that the hand of God has been at work. In recent months this magazine has presented ample evidence demonstrating that the Bible is no ordinary book.

Although the history of the English Bible makes for interesting reading, the origins of the Bible are even more remarkable; written by more than forty individuals, from varied levels of society over a period of fifteen hundred years. Some would suggest that this in itself demonstrates that the Bible cannot be reliable, and in the nineteenth century volumes of higher criticism were written in an effort to discredit the Bible. Common sense would suggest that had all the arguments against the Bible been supportable then the Bible would indeed have been relegated to the book stores as a fine piece of fiction. But such is not the case; those that sought to destroy the Bible are dead and the Bible is very much alive, simply because God has said, “all flesh is grass…the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever” (Isaiah 40:6-8).

In the Bible, the term “inspiration” is used to describe the process by which God communicated His word to His people. This concept is central to understanding the nature and authority of the Bible. When the Bible speaks of God “inspiring” the words of the prophets, it means that He breathed out His word directly, without the mediation of human intellect or imagination. This is in contrast to the process of human reasoning, which involves the use of my mind to draw conclusions from the facts at hand.

The Bible is unique in its claim to be the inspired word of God. It is not simply a compilation of ancient writings, but rather a living, dynamic message that is relevant to every age. The understanding of the Bible as inspired is crucial to understanding its teachings and message. When we speak of the Bible being inspired, we are speaking of the fact that it is the word of God, and that it is a trustworthy guide for us as we seek to understand God’s will for our lives.

The Bible is not only inspired, but also authoritative. It is the authoritative word of God, and it is to be obeyed. The Bible is not a book of suggestions, but a book of commands. When we speak of the Bible being authoritative, we are speaking of the fact that it is the final authority for all matters of faith and practice. It is the ultimate authority for us as we seek to understand and follow God’s will.

In conclusion, the Bible is a living, dynamic message that is relevant to every age. It is the inspired word of God, and it is the authoritative word of God. It is a book that we should strive to understand and follow, as we seek to grow in our faith and love for God.

By Ron Kidd LONDON, ON.

The Isaiah Scroll written some 2000 years ago

God breathed out His command, He spoke the word and His creative work was accomplished. The Hebrew word for breath is “ruach” and is translated spirit in the book of Job, “By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens” (Job 26:13). A number of conclusions can be drawn from these verses: first, that God’s breath in some circumstances refers to the word of God, and second, unlike man’s word, God’s word is active because of His spirit power. The opening words of the book of Genesis demonstrate this power; the Spirit of God was present at the beginning of creation and God said, “let there be light,” and there was light (Genesis 1:1-3). God’s word produces results, it never fails, and so we read, “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

This principle is evident in God’s inspired word. The messengers of God were vehicles through which God communicated His word, or as one New Testament writer records, “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21). In the Old Testament the prophets preceded their message with statements such as, “Thus saith the LORD,” or “the word of the LORD came unto me saying.” When men and women heard the gospel message, the apostle Paul could say, “when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

The implications behind this claim are quite simple; “the scriptures were given by God and are without error in all parts of them, except where errors of transcription or translation exist.”

The following selection of verses demonstrate how the writers of the Bible perceived their role in communicating the word...
of God.

"Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue" (2 Samuel 23:1-2).

"Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands" (Nehemiah 9:30).

"Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth" (Jeremiah 1:9).

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:49-50).

Each of these scriptures teaches that the individuals, including the Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledged that they were not responsible for the message being conveyed; it was God’s word and His message that was being transmitted through them.

The Method of Inspiration

Someone will ask, just how does inspiration work. Inspiration is divine revelation. The Tabernacle in the wilderness was not built to human specifications; God did not leave its construction to human devices, Moses was told, “look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount” (Exodus 25:40). God revealed to Moses the full specifications of the Tabernacle. This principle equally applied to communicating His word to men and women. The apostles were told, “But the comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to remembrance” (John 14:26); the apostle Paul in writing to the Ephesian brethren said, “by revelation he made known unto me the mystery...which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by his spirit” (Ephesians 3:3-5). When Moses protested that he was inadequate to speak before Pharaoh God said, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say" (Exodus 4:11-12). Wherever we turn we read that it was God’s word, revealed to men and women, who then communicated it to others.

Not only does inspiration apply to the spoken word it also describes the written word. The title of this article is taken from two scriptures referring to the Ten Commandments, we read “And he (God) gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of stone, written with the finger of God” (Exodus 31:18; Deuteronomy 9:10). The accuracy of God’s word was not left to chance, nor did God depend upon the integrity or intellectual ability of individuals to accurately record what they were told; the Ten Commandments are described as the “oracles of God” which were not only spoken to Moses but written down by God for future generations (Romans 3:2; Acts 7:38). This is equally true of all scripture, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning” (Romans 15:4), and to ensure the verbal accuracy of those things communicated it was given by inspiration of God, “with Holy Spirit sent down from heaven” (1 Peter 1:12).

This does not mean that every statement recorded in the Bible is true. When the serpent said to Eve, “ye shall not surely die,” that simply wasn’t true; the Gibeonites claimed to be from a far country, but they lied; when Job’s friend Eliphaz said, “whoever perished, being innocent?” he was incorrect; when the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out devils by Beelzebub, it wasn’t true; yet we have a record of these comments in the Bible. There is a difference between what was said or happened, and what was recorded. Events are related which did not always meet with Divine approval, yet we are provided with an accurate account of those events and comments, recorded by individuals who were inspired by God. And so the apostle could write, “all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition” (1 Corinthians 10:11).

The Foreknowledge of God

God says that His thoughts are not man’s thoughts, neither are His ways the same as ours (Isaiah 55:8). The reason for this is because “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world” (Acts 15:18). The Bible describes this as the foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 1:2). Speaking of the work of salvation, the epistle of Peter states, “the prophets have inquired and searched diligently...searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify...” (1 Peter 1:10-11). By combining these thoughts we learn that events concerning God’s purpose are known by Him before hand but those that communicated the message were not always cognizant of the meaning or time frame that they wrote about. God’s foreknowledge coupled with the God breathed word operating upon holy men of God made it possible for events to be described in detail centuries before they actually occurred.

An example of this is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, when the apostles were considering what to do after Judas had committed suicide. Peter said, “Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas” (Acts 1:16). The first point to note is that it was the Holy Spirit that spoke and not David; he was the vehicle by which the message was communicated. Repeatedly we are being informed that it was not the individual using Divine power to predict, rather Divine power was using the individual.

David lived approximately one thousand years before Christ, yet Peter says that David wrote down events about Judas, how could this be? When Peter spoke about the “mouth of David” he was referring to the book of Psalms in which is recorded “Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take” (Acts 1:20). In actual fact Peter is quoting from two psalms, Psalm 69:25 and 109:8, both of which are described as Psalms of David. Like the Lord Jesus Christ David had a close companion called Ahithophel and by examining both psalms we can conclude that the events described by David refer to the period of his life when his son Absalom rebelled against him. Ahithophel betrayed David and supported Absalom and this betrayal was captured in the words, “Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me” (Psalm 41:9). The psalms quoted by Peter also implicate Ahithophel, who like Judas hanged himself leaving his position before David vacant (2 Samuel 17:23).

David’s own experiences became the backcloth for future events and God’s
foreknowledge anticipated the role that Judas would play; thus “the Spirit of the LORD spake by me (David), and his word was in my mouth” (2 Samuel 23:2). David was the pen of a ready writer (Psalm 45:1); God used David’s own circumstances as a prophecy concerning Judas and moved David to document these events. None of this would have been possible left to human devices; God alone can “declare the end from the beginning”; God alone can say, “my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure” (Isaiah 46:10). We may not understand the mechanics of how inspiration works, but the evidence that it does is clearly visible if we have eyes to see.

Objections to Biblical Inspiration

There are all kinds of objections raised by the skeptic when considering this subject, all of which are calculated to undermine the power of the word of God. We will briefly examine four areas of concern.

The first objection concerns the language used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7; it is stated that Paul expresses his own opinion on certain marital relationships. In verse 10 of this chapter Paul writes, “Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord….” However in verse 12 he says, “But to the rest speak I, not the Lord…” A full examination of the context reveals that Paul is not expressing his personal opinion, rather in the first instance he is referring back to comments of the Lord Jesus Christ recorded in the gospels (Matt. 5:32; 19:6,9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18). In verse 12 there had been no express command from Jesus on mixed marriages and because of this Paul, under the influence of the spirit of God, establishes an additional divine principle. This conclusion is confirmed later in the chapter where Paul says, “and I think also that I have the Spirit of God” (verse 40). Earlier in the epistle Paul had already established that he spoke, “not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Corinthians 2:13).

The second objection is related to the literary style and vocabulary of the writers. It has been noted that verbal inspiration would eliminate the personality of the writer which from a careful reading of scripture is evidently present. We have already noted earlier that God used the personal circumstances of David as a vehicle to speak about future events, and it is not unreasonable to argue that God selected the right individual for the message He intended to convey. The presence of an individual’s character or the circumstances peculiar to a particular writer being present in the record does not suggest that the writer is making his own contribution to the material; rather it is far more satisfactory to conclude that God selected the appropriate individual to convey the message He wanted to deliver.

An example of this is the apostle Peter who was one of the three disciples who witnessed the Transfiguration. The second epistle of Peter was written to counter the growing influence of false prophets (2:1); there were scoffers in the ecclesias who questioned the authority of those who had spoken with Holy Spirit. Peter, as was Paul, was a chosen vessel for God’s purpose (Matthew 16:19; Acts 9:15) and as such both the message of God and the one used to convey the message were in perfect harmony. Those that place a great deal of emphasis upon the literary style and vocabulary of the writer do so because they overlook the fact that when God selected an individual to communicate His word, the writer’s personality became part of the message. Whilst we may not know how this is accomplished we are forced to conclude that the production of God’s word was altogether miraculous.

The third objection relates to the question, is it really necessary for the chronologies contained in the Bible to be inspired; they are simply a list of names taken from Jewish records? For example, in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, four of these are devoted to genealogies. Similarly the first thirteen chapters of the first book of Chronicles document the names of certain tribes of Israel. This is repeated in other parts of the scriptures.

The question may appear reasonable on face value but surely if God was to ensure that all that was written was accurate and infallible then this would include the genealogies. Some have attempted to force such a compromise in the reading of Paul’s words to Timothy; instead of “all scripture is given by inspiration of God…” some translations read, “Every scripture inspired of God…” (The ASV, RV, NEB). This has been interpreted to mean that some scripture is not inspired by God, and such translations have been used to emphasize that only those scriptures that pertained to salvation were required to be inspired. The first objection is to the translation itself; not all modern translations support the alternative rendering, in fact the preponderant majority of these, including the NIV and the new English Standard Version, support the King James translation.

Secondly, is the interpretation placed on the alternative translation reasonable? Not really because the context is completely ignored; Paul is not speaking of any scripture, rather those referred to in verse 15, the “sacred writings” of the Old Testament. Therefore when using the alternate translation—“every scripture inspired by God”—we must keep in mind which scriptures Paul is referring to and by so doing the interpretation is invalid. In his Expanded Paraphrases, FF Bruce clearly links the scriptures of verse 16 with those in verse 15, “You know that from your earliest days...
you have been familiar with the sacred writings—the writings which have the power to impart wisdom which brings you salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Every part of those writings is divinely inspired and useful…”

Thirdly, there is a serious implication behind the question. To suggest that some parts of scripture are inspired and other parts are not opens the Bible to human fallibility, in other words who decides what is or is not inspired scripture; the reader of scripture becomes the arbiter and whatever is not palatable to the human heart becomes the mere opinion of the writer, and of no eternal value to the reader. This contradicts the claim of the Bible.

The last objection we will consider is that of verbal inspiration and errors in subsequent translations. The question is often asked, if God wanted to ensure His word was an accurate record why did He allow translations to contain errors? Invariably those that refer to errors of translation exaggerate the problem. It is true that errors do exist in the available translations, but not as many as some would make out, and certainly none that cannot be satisfactorily explained.

Having said this, errors in translation by no means remove the fact that the original documents were verbally inspired; on the contrary as one writer says, “If we know that the source is pure, and free from human error, does it not make our acceptance of the translations easier? The scope of investigation is immediately narrowed down. We need not try to sort out which parts of the original Scriptures were from God; all we need is to get back as closely as possible to those originals, knowing that the nearer we go to the source of the stream the purer becomes the water.” Furthermore, many of the so-called contradictions and errors are invariably the product of our own incomplete knowledge or false conclusions. More than any other period in history we can turn to the archaeological findings of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and other sources, and be assured of confidence in the scriptures of truth.

More than any other period in history we can turn to the archaeological findings of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and other sources, and be assured of confidence in the scriptures of truth.

Does it really Matter?

For many people today discussing the inspiration of the Bible is an academic exercise; most people, even those high up in religious circles, are selective in their acceptance of the Bible. Notwithstanding, the claim that the Bible is the inspired word of God cannot easily be dismissed; the Bible is either the word of God or it isn’t; either what the Bible says is true or it is one gigantic fraud. There is no middle ground. Those who pick and choose what is acceptable and what is not simply demonstrate that they are unwilling to submit to a higher authority than themselves.

The evidence that the Bible is the word of God is overwhelming: the consistency of the message, written by over forty individuals over a period of fifteen hundred years can only be explained by the influence of a divine hand; the remarkable fulfillment of many Bible prophecies hundreds of years after they were spoken bears testimony to a divine mind at work; the collaborating evidence of archaeology reveals that God has not left himself without witness from the past.

The Bible holds the key for understanding life; it tells us where we came from and it most certainly informs us as to where we are going and why; no other book offers the answers to the questions man is searching to understand. Because of its divine authorship the Bible places the human race against the backdrop of creation; without an understanding of God’s ways man is no different than the beasts that perish, and his failings and sins bear testimony to this fact. Notwithstanding, the creator of all life, whose ways and thoughts are higher than ours has extended an invitation to the good and honest heart to “seek the L ORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near” (Isaiah 55:6). In contemplating a response we should consider carefully the alternatives available to us; we can perish with the skeptics through reaping the rewards of disbelief or we can live forever by accepting the God-breathed message that the Bible contains. Remember “all flesh is grass…the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever.”
he internal evidence of scripture is that it was progressively compiled over a period of at least 1,500 years. This inspired revelation began with the Pentateuch, the first five books of our Bible, called the books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy and concludes with the Book of Revelation written towards the end of the first century AD.

Biblical Model for Divine Revelation

There are three clear steps. First, God speaks, second, man writes it down and then it is read to others. In this process, there is no reliance on fallible human memory for best recollections of God’s plan and purpose with mankind.

“And the 
LORD said 
unto Moses, 
Write this 
for a memorial in a book, and 
rehearse it in the 
ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the 
remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Exodus 17:14).

The process of Divine revelation was the same for the New Testament. For example, Jesus’ angel speaks to the Apostle John who is instructed to write what he sees and hears.

“Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, 
What thou seest, write in a book, and 
send it unto the seven churches which are 
in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and 
unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto 
Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto 
Laodicea” (Revelation 1:11).

Each letter was then read in the Churches. For example, read Revelation 2:1.

Who wrote the Book of Genesis?

Did Moses write the Book of Genesis or, was he the Divinely appointed compiler of it? If Moses was the inspired writer of Genesis around 1,500 BC then God left mankind without any written record for about the first 2,500 years of man’s history. The evidence of scripture is that God instructed and guided faithful men right from the beginning. Cain and Abel understood that they had responsibilities to their creator. By the time of Adam and Eve’s third son Seth and their grandson Enos, men began to call themselves by the name of the Lord. How did they reliably know what the Lord required of them?

The Book of Genesis appears to have at least ten inspired human contributors, each recording “the generations” or, period of “history”. Chapter 1:3 begins with the words, “God said…” God continued to speak throughout the chapter until we reach Genesis 2:3. Who was listening and who recorded it? God’s angels carried out the wonderful work of creation, but before Adam and Eve there was no human beings to listen and record the sequence of events.

“God said, Let us make man in our image…” (Genesis 1:26). God (Elohim or mighty ones), were the angels who spoke and recorded the Genesis creation week for it to be handed on to the first human pair. The angels were later to perform a similar task when Moses was given the Law on Mount Sinai.

“And the Lord delivered unto me (Moses) two tablets of stone written with the finger of God…” (Deuteronomy 9:10).

God spoke and men wrote

The Apostle Paul in Romans 4:23-24 tells us that Abraham was in possession of a written record of the promises God made to him and that the record has been kept for us to read. If Abraham had a written record of the promises God made to him, then Genesis must have been written many years before the time of Moses.

“And now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead” (Romans 4:23-24).

Each record in Genesis overlaps with the previous one and adds progressively to that which has gone before, showing that God’s revelation was a continuous record. The Book of Genesis appears to have had at least ten inspired writers, each recording “the generations” or period of the “history.” The inspired contributors are not named, but they lived respectively in the time periods of Enos, Noah, Joktan, Terah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Esau and Joseph. Moses then guided by the spirit of God compiled these separate records in one book called the Book of Genesis.

Notice in the King James Version, which is a literal translation, that each of the Books of Moses that follow Genesis begins with a conjunction, that is a joining word.

The precise method of compilation may not be possible to verify in every case but the possibilities suggested here provide an interesting approach — Editor
The Lord expects us to read the Bible as one book. It is only by this means can we understand the plan of salvation he has revealed for our salvation.

2. The Lord expects us to read the Bible as one book. It is only by this means can we understand the plan of salvation he has revealed for our salvation.

2 Chronicles

2 Kings

1 Kings

1 Chronicles

2 Chronicles

Esther

Nehemiah

Joshua

Numbers

Deuteronomy

Leviticus

Exodus

The inspired New Testament manuscripts were written in the first century AD. Compared to the Old Testament they were written over a relatively short period, the typical span of adulthood of a man, about 50 years. Yet there are more arguments and challenges to the accuracy of manuscripts by scholars and theologians than for the Old Testament that was written over a period of at least 1,500 years! Why is this so?

The New Testament texts have been found over a wide geographical area and some appear to have been less carefully copied. This has led to questions about the authority of some manuscripts.

The New Testament Greek texts used by the translators of the King James Bible were few in number and were the texts that Erasmus and Tyndale also had access to. The preface to the New King James Bible states that, “it (the New Testament) was based on the traditional text of the Greek-speaking churches, first published in 1516 (i.e. by Erasmus) and later called the Textus Receptus or Received Text. Although (the KJV) was based on relatively few available manuscripts, these were representative of many more that existed at the time but only became known later.” These manuscripts are now known collectively as the Byzantine Text of which the Received Text may be said to be representative.

Well over ninety percent of the 5,000 surviving handwritten Greek manuscripts covering all or parts of the New Testament agree substantially with the Received Text. There are no credible variations in these texts that would require a change in faith or understanding of any account of any event in Scripture.

Critics of the KJV sometimes dismiss the Received Text in favour of other texts found later.

It is sometimes claimed that the Alexandrinus, the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus manuscripts came into the public domain after 1611. These manuscripts were older and therefore considered by some to be more reliable and therefore challenge the authority of the Received Text manuscripts as the basis for an accurate version of the Bible. However, it appears that some of the variant readings of these manuscripts were known to Erasmus (1533) and to the King James translators who rejected them because of the differences and omissions between them.

Choosing a Bible Version?

As laymen without a knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek language how can we decide which is a reliable version of the Bible?

Let the Bible give us some advice: “Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar” (Proverbs 30:5-6).

The whole Bible is a continuous quotation from the mind of God. Therefore there are no inconsistencies or mistakes in what was originally revealed.

We are also cautioned to remember not to add to His word or subtract from it.

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18-19).

In choosing a Bible, we should look for a version that seeks to translate the Hebrew and Greek texts as literally as possible. Bible versions that interpret and paraphrase provide translators with scope to add or subtract from what God has said. Translators are given a precise brief to work to, which they carefully follow. So the first step for us to take is to read the preface to the version. From this we can learn which manuscripts were used as source texts for the translation and what method of translation was used. Source text for the Old Testament is usually the Masoretic Text and for the New Testament, Received text; Byzantine text; Majority Text, with reference to Vulgate, Septuagint and other sources.

Modern Texts

Most modern English Bible versions are translated from an eclectic text. An eclectic text is one that is produced by editors who create their own New Testament Greek text. This is done by selecting what makes best sense of existing differing manuscripts. Eclectic texts are therefore reconstructions based on personal editorial judgements and are texts for which no New Testament manuscript ever existed. Texts produced in this way take a significant step away from the wise words of the Proverbs, “Every word of God is pure…”

Methods of Translation

The methods of translation adopted are stated in the preface of most Bibles. Translations should tell us as clearly as possible what the original text says. The King James Version is a literal translation which seeks to do this. It is limited only by the translators understanding of the Hebrew and Greek text and what the English language allows. Alternatively, other translators seek to try to tell us what they think the text means. They do this through methods of translation that are variously called, ‘formal equivalence’, ‘functional equivalence’ or, ‘dynamic equivalence.’

By checking prefaces of Bibles and notes from translators we can group Bibles into three...
groups as shown in the table below.

In order to choose a Bible that is declaring the Word of God we need to be aware of the origin of the source texts and be aware of the brief for translation that the translators are working to.

The translators of the King James Version in 1611 were given fifteen terms of reference by the project manager for King James I, Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury. Two rules are of particular interest because they show the translators were required to translate the text as literally as possible.

No. 1 “The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishop’s Bible, to be followed, and altered as little as the truth of the original will permit.”

No. 15 “These translations to be used when they agree better with the text than the Bishop’s Bible: Tyndale’s, Matthew's, Coverdale’s, Whitchurch’s, Geneva.”

Chapter headings were to be retained (no. 5) and marginal notes to be excluded. The only permitted marginal references were those which explained the meaning of a Hebrew or Greek word (no. 6) and cross references to other parts of Scripture were permitted (no. 7).

The remaining terms of reference set out rules for adjudicating and peer review of the work. The King James Bible has been subject to more rigorous checks that any other translation of the Bible.

For an example of a modern version, the Preface of the New International Version informs us that the Greek text used in translating the New Testament was an eclectic one. Much has been written by others regarding the authority of this text and methods of translation.

The challenge for all translators is set by the Apostle Paul.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The Chart below shows a comparison of the benefits of more literal Bible versions compared with less literal interpretive and paraphrase versions.

Different Bible versions have a useful place in Bible study. However, we must be aware of the approaches to translation by the translators. If we want to know what God has declared for our learning to prepare for the coming Kingdom of God, then we must recognise the importance and value of a literal word-for-word translation of the Word of God. The 1611 King James Bible is a literal translation which has been the vehicle for proclaiming the truth of God’s Word throughout the world for 400 years. Today it remains the key to understanding the truth that was preached by Jesus and the Apostles in the first century.

The testimony of Moses (so persistently denied today with grave consequences, as will be seen in the day of Christ’s return) consisted of several parts. His own life, in its typical foreshadowing of Christ, was a testimony. Then Moses built the tabernacle, the typical house of God, and this is called “the tent of the testimony” (Num. 9:15). Further, the law of Moses bore witness, by convincing of sin, to the need for a saviour, and in its ceremonies and institutions testified to one to come. Moses also, as God’s servant, laid the foundation of the literary structure which we call the Bible. This has been the most permanent testimony. When Christ opened the scripture teaching concerning himself, his death and resurrection, he began at Moses—at the beginning of the scriptures (Luke 24:27). Jesus before this time had affirmed that Moses wrote of him, and added that if Moses’ testimony was not believed his own resurrection would not convince.

MILESTONES

UPDATE

The earth in upheaval: Earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand, Tornado in Joplin, USA etc. etc. etc!

By Don Pearce  RUGBY, U.K.

L ast time we mainly concentrated on the devastation triggered by the Japanese earthquake and saw how the world of nature is increasingly out of kilter. This pattern has continued. Our brothers and sisters in Christchurch New Zealand continue to be shaken, with over 7,500 force 3 and over aftershocks experienced since the first major shake in September 2010. Large areas are facing demolition and the price-tag for repairs in this sparsely populated country has risen to US $20bn.

Meanwhile in Japan few people have been rehoused. The sheer volume of detritus to be cleared first is almost incomprehensible. “Japan’s central government estimates that nearly 25 million tons of smashed concrete, steel, wood and other detritus from devastated coastal areas must be cleared away and disposed of to make room for rebuilding. Completing this gargantuan task—projected to cost more than $8.4 billion and take at least three years—is critical to the recovery process, and it won’t be easy (Wall St Journal 23-Jun-11).

The cost of the earthquake has been put at $16-31 bn and the tsunami is now put at $200-300 bn. Just to put back in the sea five of the many ships washed by the tsunami onto land has cost $6 million—they only had to be moved some 400 yards/metres!

The US has been struck with abnormal weather patterns and with the tornado season running until October, has had its 4th worst year since 1875 for deaths and is within 10 deaths of being the 2nd worst year.

Volcanic activity is also at a high level, flights being disrupted over a wide area by the ash from the Puyehue volcano in Chile.

Until recently it was thought that there was no connection between earthquakes and volcanic activity, but opinion is now changing. “Earthquakes, it seems, can both be created by volcanoes, and can act as a catalyst for volcanic eruption. The dangers of either can be severe, but the dangers of both, put together, can be catastrophic” (Rex Trulove 02-Sep-07 Helium.com).

To the layman it seems an obvious connection! So, in the light of Bible prophecies, it was interesting to learn of Middle East devastation triggered by the volcano in Chile.

The African Rift Valley

The map indicates that this remarkable rift which runs up the eastern side of Africa, along the Red Sea and up the Jordan Valley, is an area of volcanic activity.

In 2009, Saudi Arabia was shaken by a swarm of earthquakes.

“Many Saudis worry about Harrat Lunayyir—an ancient lava field (The 3rd triangle down from the top of map). Two years ago the area was shaken by a so-called swarm of more than 30,000 mini-earthquakes, which geologists say was caused by magma flows deep underground. The swarm left a 5-mile-long fissure and forced some 40,000 people to evacuate their homes.

“When a similar event occurred in the year 1256, the magma forced its way out from under the ground near Medinah. “The brilliant light of the volcano made the face of the country as bright as day; and the interior of the harim (the sacred area of the city) was as if the sun shone upon it,” according to an account at the time (All Headline News 23-Jun-11).

Professor Ali Adnan Eshky of King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah warned of possible volcanic eruptions in the Kingdom during the next two years. According to Eshky, there are about 300 volcano craters between Makkah and Madinah that could erupt at any time. “The Red Sea rift has a chain of underwater volcanoes along its axis,” said USGS volcano seismologist Wendy McCausland. “Since it is deep underwater, we are rarely reminded of this on-going volcanism.” (Arab News 20-Jun-11).

In the Afar Triangle—the shaded area on the map—there has been increasing activity.

“In recent months, researchers have also recorded an up-tick in volcanic activity. Indeed, geologists have discovered volcanic eruptions near the earth’s surface at 22 places in the Afar Triangle in north-eastern Africa. Magma has caused fissures up to eight meters (26 feet) wide to open up in the ground, reports Derek Keir from the University of Leeds. While most of the magma remains beneath the surface, in places like Ertu Ale it has made its way above ground. The eruption of the Nabro volcano is one more indication this process is accelerating. In the last five years, the geologic transformation of north-eastern Africa has ‘accelerated dramatically,’ says Wright. Indeed, the process is going much faster than many had anticipated. In recent years, geologists had measured just a few millimeters of movement each year. ‘But now the earth is opening up by the meter’”(Spiegel.de 15-Jun-11).

The rift in the picture above is below sea level and it is expected that soon the Afar Triangle region will be flooded by the sea.
Gulf Members

The Coming Earthquake

Our interest lies in the fact that the Bible indicates that the northern end of this Rift Valley area is to be the subject of massive earthquake and volcanic activity. The huge earthquake that splits the Mount of Olives as foretold in Zechariah 14:4 appears to be accompanied by volcanic action that lifts the region around Jerusalem (verse 10). The noise that accompanies the eruption of a volcano can be tremendous and the ash cloud can turn day into night. There are several passages in scripture about such occurrences which while having a figurative fulfillment may well have a literal one too (Joel 3:15; 2:30, 31; Isa. 30:30—esp. RV; Isa. 24:4, 18. See also Tony Benson’s book Stormy Wind which has just been republished by the CSSS).

Ezekiel paints a Dramatic Picture.

“And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone” (Ezek. 38:22).

As well as the passage in Zechariah 14 that speaks of the great changes to the topography of the region, Ezekiel 47-7-12 speaks of the great changes when the Dead Sea will become a living sea full of fish! As a result of the great earthquake, the Dead Sea, now the deepest spot on earth is to be elevated above sea level resulting in the reversal of the flow of the River Jordan, requiring a new outlet into the Mediterranean, possibly at Carmel or Tyre.

There is an enigmatic passage in Isaiah 11 that indicates great changes to the topography of Egypt.

“And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt” (Isa. 11:15, 16).

This could possibly involve the diversion of the river Nile so it no longer exits into the Mediterranean but into the Red Sea.

Interestingly, the area of Sinai is an area of recent seismic activity as indicated on this seismic map, in an area which has a long history of earthquakes. It would not take much to open a new rift for the Nile to divert to the Red Sea, enabling people to travel from Africa along the highway to be built in Israel in the Kingdom Age without having to cross the Nile. What will happen to the man-made Suez Canal in that day is not known, it could well disappear!

Gulf Members

Gulf States weigh Plan to Expand Regional Peninsula Shield Force

The Gulf Cooperation Council was formed in 1981 and consists of members who border the Persian Gulf. The 6 founder members are all Sunni monarchies. In 1984 they set up the Peninsula Shield Force, drawing troops from each country. The 6 nations drew up ambitious plans to form a Common Market with a common currency; however little progress has been made.

The coming of the so-called Arab Spring (Arab Winter would be better, or Debka’s phrase Arab Revolt) has galvanised them into action. As monarchies, they feel a little vulnerable, and with Iran increasingly trying to exploit the situation to advance her own agenda—the overthrow of Sunni rulers and their replacement with Shiite religious leaders—they have decided to beef up their joint security.

“The Gulf Cooperation Council is examining a plan to significantly expand its regional force.

“Officials said the six Gulf Arab states were considering a plan to increase the Peninsula Shield Force to more than 22,000 soldiers. They said each GCC state would host a Peninsula Shield contingent to accelerate development of the force” (GeoStrategy Direct 01-Jun-11).

In addition to stepping up their military might they are expanding their membership to accelerate their clout.

Gulf Council invites Jordan’s Membership, anticipates Military Benefits

“The GCC has invited both Jordan and Morocco as members. Officials said the invitation would enhance the GCC’s military and economic reach, particularly amid rising tension with neighbouring Iran.

“Officials said Jordan has already been helping train and equip several GCC militaries and security forces. They said Jordan’s admission into the GCC would supply Western-standard military and security skills for the six Gulf Arab states.

“Jordan also participates in peace and security keeping efforts,” Khalid Abu Al Einan, former commander of the United Arab Emirates Air Force, said. “There has always been interaction with the Gulf countries” (GeoStrategy Direct 01-Jun-11).

Both countries are monarchies, but of course do not border the Gulf and Morocco is right the other side of Africa!

One of Jordan’s strong points is that she has maintained strong intelligence links to Israel and is the most fruitful of the Peace Accords that Israel has made.

We have often remarked that these moderate Arab states see Israel as a bulwark against Iranian aggression. Should Israel fall, their thrones would be next on Iran’s hit list. So although the ordinary people in these countries may be strongly against Israel, their leaders have a different perspective. This then ties with an interesting Debka article which came out at the same time as the above two articles (GeoStrategy Direct always appears several days earlier than their indicated date).

Netanyahu’s Secret Weapon. An Israeli-Saudi Strategic Understanding

This Debka article revealed a series of secret understandings that Mr Netanyahu has forged with the ‘young’ Saudi princes assigned by King Abdullah in recent months to manage the oil kingdom’s foreign and security affairs.

“Saudi Arabia and Israel have been cooperating quietly on issues of shared interest for three years starting in the days of Netanyahu’s predecessor, Ehud Olmert. But the basis of understanding has broadened and strengthened in the four months since the fall of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and the falling-out between Abdullah and President Barack Obama over the latter’s Middle East policy.

“According to Debka’s sources, the accords Israel has reached with the Saudis do not constitute a formal pact or treaty but rather a row of strategic understandings hammered out in fairly regular, unpublicized encounters between Israeli and Saudi intelligence chiefs at which Netanyahu too has put in an appearance.

“Mossad Director Tamir Pardo takes his seat opposite the Director of Saudi General Intelligence Prince Muqrin bin Abdulaziz or Chairman of the Saudi National Security Council Prince Bandar bin Sultan—or sometimes both. Their discussions are described by Israel and Saudi sources as down-to-earth with no time wasted on rhetoric or political palaver.”

The two parties raise issues of concern, swap intelligence and get down to the hard tasks of ways and means and solutions. When the issues are within the remit of the officials present, the agreed steps can be put into practice without delay or red tape. When higher authority is required for implementation, decisions are referred to King Abdullah in Riyadh and Netanyahu in Jerusalem.

Today, bilateral strategic cooperation between Israel and Saudi Arabia encompasses:

Iran: Insights on its domestic currents and the balance of power within the regime, the army and the Revolutionary Guards Corps;

Iraq: Having expanded its undercover operations there, the Saudis welcome any input —provided it does not come from American or domestic sources. They now rely heavily on their own sources, contributions from Jordan’s clandestine informants in the country and on
Israel’s undercover presence in Iraqi Kurdistan.

“Last week, we reported that Jordan’s King Abdullah II had accepted an invitation to join the Gulf Emirates association, the Gulf Council of Cooperation. Since then things have moved fast and, notably, Lt. Gen. Mohammad Al Qaada, Director of the Jordanian General Intelligence Dept.—GID, was told to pitch in with the Israeli-Saudi intelligence partnership. He came armed with the strong ties he already maintains with his Israel counterparts” (Debka 27-May-11).

So we see the Southern Arab states moulding themselves together, with Saudi Arabia as the driving force. Are we seeing the latter-day Sheba-Dedan alliance, friendly to Israel, coming together in opposition to the northern states (Ezek. 38:13)?

Why would Russia continue protecting Syria?

The situation in Syria is very fluid. President Bashar Assad’s firm action against the Arab Spring has left thousands dead and tens of thousands of refugees have crossed the borders into Turkey and Lebanon. Hezbollah is busy transferring rockets out of Syria into Lebanon in case Assad is deposed.

One interesting sidelight is Russia’s refusal to allow the West to intervene in Syria. The bases which Russia has in Syria are too valuable to permit any sign of rift between Russia and Syria. Hence we have the strange situation where the West is pitted against Libya’s Col Gaddafi, yet doing little against the mass murders in Syria.

“The answer may lie in a surreptitious accord between Russia and Syria. Russia offers a military and political umbrella to Syria, and in return, the Russian Navy can use the Syrian ports in the Mediterranean Sea. Intelligence reports indicate also that there are more than 2,000 Russian military advisors in Syria training the Syrian armed forces. The Mediterranean Sea access is extremely valuable for the Russians who helped build a huge modern port in Tartus, 150 miles south of Damascus.

“Then there are accounts that Iran and Hezbollah sent elite forces to Syria to help President Assad quell the riots. Both Iran and Hezbollah have significant stakes in Syria” (Huffington Post 14-Jun-11).

For the moment at least, it has brought to an end the cooperation between Turkey’s Prime Minister Erdogan and Syria’s President Assad. Turkey is threatening to send troops into Syria to defend those fleeing from the crackdown, which is being led by Assad’s feared brother, Maher Assad.

Lebanon has a radical new Government giving Assad his Second Front

The Lebanese held their elections in March, but could not come to an agreement over the composition of the new government. Suddenly, in June, a new government was formed—not to the liking of the West nor Israel, for Hezbollah had triumphed!

“Lebanon has a new government headed by Najib Mikati, ally of Syrian President Bashar Assad and Hizbollah. Formed suddenly on June 13, the 30-minister line-up has earmarked an unprecedented 18 portfolios—including defense and interior—for Hizbollah loyalists and pro-Syrian politicians. While fighting the uprising against his rule, Bashar Assad has recaptured Beirut. The appointment of friendly Fayez Ghosn defense minister places the army at the service of Damascus and portends trouble on the Lebanese-Israeli border.

Gone is the careful sectarian balancing act which maintained a measure of equilibrium and kept civil war in Lebanon at bay.

“The breakthrough was directly spawned by the Syrian uprising: The Shiite Hizbollah capitalized on neighboring unrest to grab its largest slice of government ever. Assad set up a second front against his foes in Beirut, added muscle to his military repression at home and signaled the US, Turkey and Europe that attempts to topple his regime risked sparking civil strife and chaos in neighboring Lebanon. The peril of inflaming the entire Levant was meant to deter foreign military intervention in Syria” (Debka 17-Jun-11).

This represents quite a triumph for Iran, the paymasters and weapons supplier to Hezbollah. There are now reckoned to be an arsenal of 50,000 rockets and missiles aimed at Israel in Lebanon, and over 1,000 launching stations are at the ready to fire these at virtually every part of Israel. In addition, chemical weapons are thought to have been smuggled out from Col Gaddafi’s stocks in Libya—some ending in Gaza, others in Lebanon. Mustard gas shells were amongst the thousands of weapons that fell into the hands of anti-Gaddafi troops. Iran was happy to buy them from the rebels. Not all reached their destinations. “Mysterious” explosions killed Hamas operatives smuggling some of these through Sudan, and destroyed their weaponry. It is probable that Israel had been tracking them and took action.

Gaza is thought to have built up a stockpile of 10,000 rockets and missiles, as well as these new chemical weapons. Egypt’s reopening of the rajah crossing has helped the bringing of weapons into Gaza, although Egypt did clamp down on the number of people crossing the rajah border point, after a few days of free-flow. As Debka (31-May-11) calculated, “Firing at the rate of 150 missiles a day, Hamas is capable of keeping southern Israel under constant attack for 66 days running.”

Hamas and Fatifa: A Temporary Marriage of Convenience

After years of bitter division, the Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Hamas leader Khalid Mesalla signed an agreement on May 4, 2011 at a ceremony in Cairo. How this little progress has been made in bringing the two opposing factions together; one fundamental disagreement covers who should become the Prime Minister of this unity government. This is not the first reconciliation agreement, and as The BESA Center 12-May-11 rather wearily put it:-

“The world has ceased to count the number of accords that the PLO and Hamas have signed. “The Hamas-fatifa agreement creates a Janus-faced government in the West Bank and Gaza, which is more smoke and mirrors than reality. There is a build-up of countries that are willing to support an attempt to create a Palestinian State in September, by agreement of the United Nations. This would have no legal power, but is a problem for Israel as she is pushed towards accepting a Palestinian State which refuses to acknowledge Israel’s right to exist. Fatifa has made it clear that she will never recognise the State of Israel and they would claim Jerusalem as their Centre of government.

The only UN organisation that has the power to recognise a new state is the UN Security Council. The US, Britain and France have the power of veto and so would squash any attempt to get recognition from this body. It is a short circuit to nowhere; a nation needs capable leaders to build a nation, and the Palestinians are too fractured to do this. Many Arabs living in Israel certainly don’t want to come under Palestinian control; they have too many benefits to lose. Even the majority of Arabs on the West Bank don’t want to exchange the benefits they have gained in the past few years, for a strict Muslim rule as is being increasingly enforced in Gaza.

Apart from increasing world pressure on Israel to make even more concessions, it is hard to see any real change. Israel is not willingly going to give up security for a Palestinian State whose aim is to see her elimination!

Russia to double Oil Exports to Japan

In many ways, things have turned out to Russia’s advantage. The Japanese tsunami which devastated Japan’s nuclear reactors at Fukushima has meant that Japan is desperately in need of alternative energy supplies.

“Japan relies heavily on nuclear power as one of its prime energy sources. Japan is the third worldwide in nuclear energy usage, and prior to the recent earthquake had 54 nuclear reactors that supplied 27% of Japan’s electric needs in 2009. The Japanese government planned to increase the nuclear power’s share
in Japan’s total electric power to 40% by 2017 and to 50% by 2030. This recent turmoil however might make the government reconsider its plans on this issue.

“In the earthquakes 11 of Japan’s nuclear reactors were damaged. Thus, it’s estimated that 10-20% of Japan’s energy sources from nuclear power were lost” (tradingnrg.com March 28, 2011).

Japan’s other sources of energy are oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG), both of which have to be imported; both are fuels that Russia can supply. Japan is in fact the world’s largest importer of LNG.

“A senior cabinet official says Russia will double its oil exports to Japan to 18m tonnes this year to help its neighbour through the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami” (Financial Times 23-Mar-11).

Over in Europe the disruption to the gas and oil from Libya has meant looking for alternative suppliers. Again Russia has stepped into the breach and is now the world leader in oil and gas supplies.

Nord Stream Pipeline Completed

The first of the 2 pipes was completed in May and construction of the second is well on target to be completed next year. The first pipeline should carry Russian gas straight into Germany by the year end, with the 2nd pipeline scheduled to be working 12 months later. The two pipes are scheduled to carry 55 bn M3 per annum. It effectively bypassed Eastern European countries, as it has been laid on the Baltic Sea floor. It also undercut the high prices that Germany is presently paying to Norway for its supplies of gas. It is intended that Germany will distribute gas to her neighbours, putting her in the same strong position that Russia currently enjoys.

“North Stream undoubtedly uplifts the overall Russian-German strategic ties to a qualitatively new level of partnership” (Asia Times 11-May-11).

Again it has come at an interesting time for Germany. Germany has many nuclear power stations and was contemplating building more. Fukushima has put paid to these plans and Angela Merkel is now working on phasing out nuclear power stations by 2020. As these produce some 25% of Germany’s power, alternative sources are being sought. There is a big push to “green” power sources such as wind turbines, but these are not going to make up the shortfall. More gas powered generating stations seem to be the easiest solution; Russia, is willing to help construct them, as well as supplying the gas, again increasing Germany’s dependence on Russia!

Another two major gas pipelines have been under discussion for some time; Nabucco Pipeline and South Stream. Nabucco is the one favoured by America and the EU as it lessens Europe’s dependence upon Russian supplies. This pipeline is scheduled to run from Turkey to Austria. It would be fed from supplies from the Caspian region, Iraq and possibly Egypt. The South Stream is backed by Russia; running from Russia, under the Black Sea, across the Balkans to Austria with a possible branch to Italy. At the moment it looks as if this is receiving major backing. Both are scheduled to be built by 2018 or so, but the Nabucco is short of backers. Interestingly Germany’s BASF, already a 15% shareholder in the Nord Stream, has agreed to take up a 15% stake in South Stream (Gazprom
German-Russian Security Cooperation

“Russia and Germany are currently negotiating a potentially new institution within the European Union. It is the European Union and Russia Security and Political Committee. The actual organization—its name and its purpose—is quite vague. But what is clear is it would introduce Russia to the political and security decision-making of the European Union.

“The idea is the brainchild of a meeting in June of 2010 between Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Merkel in Berlin. At this meeting it was proposed that Russia would come to the table and sit down with the European Union on security issues. And Germany specifically brought the issue of Transdniestria, a breakaway region in Moldova, as an issue upon which to build a tentative, collaborative environment between Russia and the EU.

“The talks on the Transdniestria issue are set to restart on June 21 and it is definitely something that we will be watching carefully. But the main emphasis is not necessarily on what happens on the ground in Moldova. That is a problem that is intractable and is very unlikely to be resolved by any further negotiations at this particular juncture.

“What’s interesting to watch is to what extent Germany is actually aligning itself with Russian interests on this specific issue. This is because Berlin doesn’t really care how the Transdniestria issue plays out in the region. What it does care about is to be able to prove to the rest of Europe that it can in fact control Russia, that it can in fact bring Russia to the table, and then once at the table Berlin can get Moscow to give some sort of conciliatory gestures towards the rest of Europe.

“This is very important because if Berlin can actually pull this off, it proves to the rest of Europe that it can negotiate with Russia and get Russia to be compliant, and therefore there is no need for the United States to be involved in European security issues” (Stratfor 13-Jun-11).

How interesting that Germany feels bold enough to negotiate with Russia without the need for her fellow EU members! Germany has a long-term goal—to be the dominant power in the European Union. It is the European Union and Russia Security and Political Committee. The actual organization—its name and purpose—is quite vague. But what is clear is it would introduce Russia to the political and security decision-making of the European Union.

The euro situation is one that we can be sure will lead to Germany getting what she wants.

have. The French energy giant Total — privately owned, but with close ties to the state — has an ambitious plan for cooperation with Russia. Total plans to take a 12 percent stake in Russian natural gas production company Novatek. Total will also take a 20 percent stake in the Yamal liquefied natural gas (LNG) project. For Russia, strengthening ties to France has both geopolitical and practical purposes. First, Russia needs technology and France can offer at the right price. Second, as Moscow deepens its relationship with Paris and Berlin, it effectively ties itself to the European Union’s two leaders. This will certainly upset Central European NATO and EU member states as they try to counter the Russian resurgence on their periphery. Moscow, meanwhile, will endeavor itself to Western Europe—Spain and Italy will also receive lucrative deals in Russia’s privatization and modernization drive—and trust that pressure from the EU leadership will keep the United States out of the European continent. (Stratfor 21-Jun-11).

Again we see the major powers cooperating together. Their aim is to keep America out of Europe. We are witnessing the countries listed in Ezekiel 38 strengthening their ties. France as Gomer, Germany as Magog working with Rosh, Meshech and Tubal—Russia, with Moscow as its political centre and Tobol as its energy centre.

The Greek Crisis brings us even Closer to the Long-planned European Empire

The eurozone is in deep trouble, with the very real prospect of Greece defaulting on her debts, which could lead to the collapse of the euro project. Its members are fighting to prevent such a collapse, but with several other eurozone members in an equally precarious position, the outlook is not rosy. Germany has been insisting that Greece privatizes her best assets to raise much needed money. Who has the cash to buy these—mainly Germany!

The euro situation is one that we can be sure will lead to Germany getting what she wants.

Lord Tebbit, a senior cabinet minister in John Major’s government, who resisted the then Chancellor Ken Clarke’s attempts to have Britain join the proposed euro, wrote on his blog, under the above headline.

“The grand strategy being pursued in Brussels is designed to achieve, without recourse to war, the realization of a dream unfulfilled since the fall of Rome, the first pan-European Empire. Spain, France and Austro-Hungary failed in their attempts to build such an Empire and after yet another destructive European war, the founding fathers of the EU swore to achieve through politics what warfare had failed to deliver.

“The creation of a common, or to be correct, sole currency, the euro, was not an end in itself, but a weapon to achieve by economic means, a European government. It was about politics, not economics.

“So it will not be long before the would-be collective Emperor in Brussels announces that Tebbit was of course right all those long years ago when he told Chancellor Clarke that no currency can have two, let alone a couple of dozen chancellors and there must be One Euro, One Chancellor, One Finance Ministry, One Tax Rate and One Europe or the whole European economy, including ours, will be brought down.

“Could that be a democratic state? Please do not ask awkward questions like that. Just do as you are told. If not, it will be all the worse for you. You must be ready to pay the price for peace (of a kind) and prosperity (of a sort)” (Daily Telegraph Blog 23-Jun-11).

Words from the horse’s mouth!

We have been privileged to witness so much in the political heavens that had been long anticipated by our earlier brethren. Ours surely is the generation that will see all these things come to pass. In an age when truth and godliness are under constant attack, we have the more sure Word of God to guide us.

“Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed” (Hebrews 12:13, 14).
The “Coronation Chair” that can be seen in Westminster Abbey today was first used for a coronation when James I was crowned king of a united Great Britain in 1603. The following year James commissioned a new translation of the Bible at Hampton Court in London and so it was that the King James Version of 1611 came into being. It has influenced British history more than any other single book.

The Bible replaced the authority of Protestant Britain remained separate as witnessed in the Gordon riots in 1828...

“If, as well as in our own land, there should be a Jewish State on the banks of the river Jordan... an event which would be the crowning point of the history of the world, and which would be beneficial...”

King James I (1603-1625) was the first to be crowned as monarch of Great Britain on the Coronation Chair in 1603.
So this Coronation Chair provides a historical link between the British monarchy and the Protestant character of the nation, in the background to which is the King James Authorized Version of the Bible. Although the chair was made in 1297 to house the “Stone of Scone” (sometimes called The Stone of Destiny) when it was captured from Scotland, it was not used for a coronation until the time of James I. It was on this chair too that the Puritan, Oliver Cromwell was installed as Lord Protector in 1657. It has since become symbolic of Britain’s Constitution, and by extension, that of many Commonwealth countries.

Attempts are made from time to time to change the Constitution, but the difficulties have proved insurmountable. This was the case recently when changes were blocked by the Church of England, and by the Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

At the root of these constitutional arrangements there was the question of papal authority versus the authority of Scripture. Article 37 of the Church of England (1563 and 1571) stated “The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England,” and the British monarch is duty bound by the Coronation oath to uphold the Protestant religion—so there is a constitutional obstruction to a Roman Catholic occupying the British throne.

The writer Michael Pragai comments as follows in his book “Faith and Fulfillment,”

“The growing importance of the English Bible was a concomitant of the spreading Reformation, and it is true to say that the Reformation would never have taken hold had the Bible not replaced the Pope as the ultimate spiritual authority.”

The influence of the Bible in Britain—especially after the publication of the King James Version in 1611—saw a tremendous growth in anti-Catholic sentiment.

The preface and “Translators remarks to the Reader” in the King James Authorized Version of 1611 gives a glimpse of this. The reference to “that man of sin” and “popish persons” still appears in many editions of that version. One paragraph in the translators’ remarks is devoted to explaining how the Church of Rome had opposed the translation of the Scriptures into English.

“A Sharp Sword”

Many centuries before there was an English Bible, the spirit of Christ speaking through the prophets declared:

“Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me” (Isaiah 49:1-2).

“His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object...”

The Balfour Declaration 1917
called from the womb to “bring Jacob again to him” (verse 5), “to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel” (verse 6). This is the work of Jesus Christ, the redeemer of Israel. He is also given for a light to the Gentiles that he may be for salvation unto the end of the earth.

Thus, when we meet “the Son of man” in Revelation 1:16 we see that “out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword” (see also Rev. 19:15). This identifies the Son of man of the Apocalypse with the redeemer of Israel in Isaiah 49, and it is clear that he has a message for the “isles” concerning the restoration of Israel.

But the word of the Lord is described as a sharp sword. This implies the stirring up of controversy and debate, and when the word of God became translated and known in the isles of the Gentiles, this is exactly what happened. The great false church predicted in the New Testament was readily recognized by translators such as William Tyndale and others—and especially by those who studied the Apocalypse.

Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) was strongly Protestant in her religious persuasion and was excommunicated by Pope Pius V in 1570. This strengthened the Church of England and Puritanism, moving the country further away from Rome. When Elizabeth died in 1603 she had chosen James of Scotland as the heir to the throne. He was thus crowned on the Coronation Chair with the Stone of Scone (upon which was placed the Coronation Chair with the Stone of Scone) in 1603. Today the “stone” is kept in Scotland, but would be back in place for a future Coronation.

Preparing the Way

This was a period of considerable Biblical scholarship. A contemporary of King James was Joseph Mede (1586-1638) whose studies emphasized prophecies of the Roman apostasy and the predictions of Israel’s restoration. Many writers followed the pattern set out by Mede, so that for the next 300 years or more many books appeared which expanded on the same themes. As the Scriptures were studied more detail became evident as to how the word of God would be fulfilled.

One major development which Joseph Mede had noted, and which later writers expanded upon, was the approaching end of the Turkish (Ottoman) Empire which had ruled over much of the Middle East since 1453. For example, George Stanley Faber published his “Dissertation on the Prophecies” in 1806 and commented on Revelation 16:12 as follows:

“...those mystic waters of the Euphrates which deluged the Eastern Empire, denotes the rise of the Turkish power, so the drying up of those waters must evidently denote its subversion. Now, since the drying up or evaporation of water is a slow process, we may naturally conclude, that the expression points out, not merely the subversion of the Turkish power in the general, but the particular mode of that subversion by the slow consumption of its political strength, and by the gradual wasting away of its people. When the sixth angel however poured out his vial upon the figurative Euphrates, we read that its waters were completely dried up, insomuch that a way was prepared for the kings of the East. Hence it is manifest, when we consider the slow process of evaporating natural water, that we may expect the waters of the Ottoman empire to begin to be dried up many years previous to their final exhaustation under the sixth vial.

“The prelude to the pouring out of this vial we may behold with our own eyes among the many other signs of the times by which the present age is so peculiarly marked. Let us only advert to the present state of the Turkish power, and we shall be convinced, that for some years the symbolical Euphratean waters have been gradually drying up. The approaching termination indeed of the Ottoman empire is so manifest, that even those, whose attention is solely directed to politics, are sufficiently aware that the time of its extinction cannot be very far distant.”

It was actually over 100 years later that the Turkish power was finally driven out of the Middle East.

Faber wrote his Dissertations in 1806, that is during the reign of King George III. In common with writers (including Mede) he saw the drying up of the Turkish power as being preparatory to the restoration of the Jews. In a remarkable passage he concluded that the Jews would begin to be restored by “the great maritime power of the age,” and that this maritime power would not be part of a European confederaity, and that it would be subject to “a protestant prince.”

A Protestant Maritime Power

This passage written by Faber is worth reproducing here. He wrote:

“As certain as it is that the confederacy of Armageddon will in part at least be directed against Judah and Jerusalem; so certain is it, that the Jews will begin to be restored by the great maritime power of the age. Hence it will necessarily follow, that as the one is hostile and the other friendly to Judah, the great maritime power cannot be leagued in friendly alliance with the (European—Ed) confederaity. The confederaity however will consist, as we are explicitly told, of the beast, the false prophet, and the kings of the Latin or Papal earth; therefore the great maritime power cannot be subject to any of the heads of this confederaity. But, if it be not subject either to the beast, the false prophet, or any of the papal kings; it must be subject either to a protestant prince, or to a prince of the Greek church. It cannot be subject to a prince of the Greek church; because the dominions of the only sovereign of that religion, extending as they do over vast tracts both of the European and Asiatic continent, do not by any means answer to the prophetic description of the territories of this maritime power. It must therefore be subject to some protestant prince, whose kingdom is either purely insular, or at least...
The isles of the sea, and the ships of Tarshish, must begin the great work of the restoration of the Jews.

Accordingly we are expressly informed by Zechariah, that they will be brought back in two great distinct bodies. “The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David, and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.” If Judah then is to be saved first, and if the isles and the ships of Tarshish are to bring his sons from far first, it is evident that the division, which Zechariah terms Judah, will be restored by the maritime power before the other division, which he terms the house of David and Jerusalem.”

History told in advance!

So scholars expected, on the basis of Bible prophecy, the formation of a European confederacy, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of the restoration of the Jews by a Protestant maritime kingdom. All this is now seen to be accomplished history. It has been seen in the European confederacies and alliances of World War One, World War Two, and in the European Union. It has been seen in the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War One, and in Britain’s involvement in the early development of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. It has also been a result of Britain’s Protestant Constitution which has maintained her separation from Rome. How long Britain’s present relationship with Europe will continue is one of those unknowns which makes the signs of the times so interesting and fascinating for us to watch. Unseen by the world, it has been the work of Jesus Christ working through the influence of his word and that of the angels upon the Gentile “Isles” to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel” (Isaiah 49:6).

Three Centuries of Preparation

The history of Britain demonstrates her Protestant position, and especially since the reigns of Elizabeth I and King James I. The King James Version—sometimes called The Protestant Bible—has provided a major influence in the development of the nation.

In this atmosphere the country moved further away from Catholicism. Events brought the monarchy into collision with Parliament when the former was perceived to be collaborating with, or in sympathy with papists. Civil war, the execution of Charles I, the growth of Puritanism and Scottish Presbyterianism brought Oliver Cromwell to power as “Lord Protector.” An attempt to restore the monarchy revived the former problems. Later, James II married a Catholic and began appointing Roman Catholics to positions of power. In consequence he was deserted by the ruling Whig party and in 1688 William of Orange (son-in-law to James II) was invited to occupy the throne as a Protestant monarch. The Bill of Rights and Act of Settlement (1689) ensured that, from then on, the British Crown would be reserved for Protestants only. The act reads as follows:

“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... Every person who is or shall be reconciled to, or shall have communion with, the See or Church of Rome, or shall marry a papist, shall be excluded and be for ever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy the Crown or Government of this Realm and Ireland, and in every such case the people of these Realms shall be and are hereby released of their allegiance.”

Insurmountable Difficulties

An article in The Daily Telegraph (London) had the headline: “Church Blocks Reforms over Royal Marriages.” It read:

“Nick Clegg, the Deputy Prime Minister, began work towards repealing the 1701 Act of Settlement, under which heirs to the throne must renounce their claim on marrying a Roman Catholic, in order to introduce full equality between the faiths... This would result in the constitutionally problematic situation whereby the Supreme Governor of the Church of England was a Roman Catholic, and so ultimately answerable to a separate sovereign leader, the Pope, and the Vatican...”

“Mr Clegg was initially attracted to the idea of repealing the Act but is said to have been persuaded that the difficulties raised by the Anglican Church were insurmountable. “A spokesman for the Anglican Church said that although the Act of Succession appeared ‘anomalous’ in the modern world, while the Church of England remained the established religion, the monarch and Supreme Governor could not owe a higher loyalty elsewhere.”

Another headline in the Church of England Newspaper (April 29, 2011) read: “Canada Blocks Cameron’s Call to Reform the Act of Settlement.” The following extract from that article pointed out:
“Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper has effectively blocked any reform of the Act of Settlement, which would permit a Roman Catholic to become the head of the Church of England. “In a campaign stop in Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories, Mr. Harper said Canadians were not prepared to debate on the Act of Settlement. “In response to constituent’s question about the royal marriage and the succession, Mr. Harper said on April 20 ‘the successor to the throne is a man. The next successor to the throne is a man.’ “I don’t think Canadians want to open a debate on the monarchy or constitutional matters at this time,’ he noted, adding, ‘that’s our position, and I just don’t see that as a priority for Canadians right now, at all.’ “Without Canada’s support, the Act of Settlement cannot be amended without restricting the monarchy.”

So, like it or nor, the British (and Canadian) throne remains Protestant—which means that Australia, New Zealand, and other Commonwealth countries are constitutionally attached to it as well.

A Yet Future purpose?

This background to the Royal succession which surfaced again recently because of the Royal Wedding is interesting and underlines Britain’s separation from Rome. One can only think that in spite of Britain’s unfaithfulness and apostasy, a future purpose may yet await the old country and its related nations across the seas. Britain has withstood Catholic Europe for over 450 years, including two major World Wars—what lies ahead?

The Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey is in many ways representative of the constitution. Old and creaky it may be, but it remains a bulwark against those who desire to overturn the Acts which bind together the State, the Church (apostate though it is) and the monarchy.

It is true that Britain’s Church and its Protestantism remains a mere shadow from the past, an artifact of past glory, and we may wonder whether there could ever be any revival. The prophet Isaiah wrote:

“Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength; let them come near; then let them speak:

Then as regards Tarshish similar language is used: “They shall be there with a gift (of tribute): the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts” (Psalm 72:9-10). Again here is a specific happening, and real people are involved. If the latter day Tyre and Tarshish do not relate to Britain and her associates, the critic must still find an answer to these scriptures. A mere agnostic attitude, we cannot tell, will not do.

It has been our understanding of prophecy that Britain will be used to bring back the Jews to their land when Jesus has returned, and the Temple is being built. Isaiah refers to this several times, as in chapter 60:

“Surely the isles shall wait for me, the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God.”

The phrase in Ezekiel, chapter 38: “The merchants of Tarshish and all the young lions thereof” has been taken as Britain and her dominions. There was great excitement amongst many in the 1914-18 war when Punch produced the cartoon of the mother lion with the young lions behind her, giving their support in the war. At the present time Britain has largely withdrawn from the Near East, and the old ideas are now being rejected. But the old is not being rejected in any proper way, by disposing of the evidence. Situations have a remarkable way of reasserting themselves, like the swing of the pendulum; and there is really no difficulty in believing that Britain will go back into the Near East again, as prophecy requires.

So let us look at the question of the latter day Tyre and Tarshish. The starting point is to appreciate that there is to be a specific Tyre and Tarshish in the latter-days, the counterpart of the historical names; just as there is to be a latter day Babylon, the counterpart of the Chaldean Babylon. This we may establish from two scriptures. First regarding Tyre. In Psalm 45 we have David by the Spirit speaking of the King in the day of his glory.

“And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things” (verse 4).

Then the picture is given of the queen at his side:

“Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.”

And her character is extolled:

“The king’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of gold” (verse 3).

Then in the midst of this scene we read:

“and the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift (of tribute); even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour” (verse 12). Now in the midst of this scene we read:

“So at an early stage of the setting up of the kingdom, there is a people described as “the daughter of Tyre” who submits to Christ.

Then as regards Tarshish similar language is used: “They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents (of tribute, as 2 Kings 17:4; 18:11): the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts” (Psalm 72:9-10). Again here is a specific happening, and real people are involved. If the latter day Tyre and Tarshish do not relate to Britain and her associates, the critic must still find an answer to these scriptures. A mere agnostic attitude, we cannot tell, will not do.
Commonwealth countries to draw together. We have faith in the word of God, and His foreknowledge, that this will happen.

As to the presence of these peoples in the land of Israel, circumstances will bring about cooperation between them and Israel. After Russia is bestride Europe one would expect a new East-West strategic line to be established, with the U.S., Britain and the Commonwealth as the South Power in relation to this line.

When the invasion takes place, the challenge is in the form of the words: “Art thou come to take a spoil?” This suggests that Britain is a partner with Israel in the trade and prosperity that is to develop—the “silver and gold, the cattle and goods” that make “the great spoil.” In other words Britain as “the daughter of Tyre,” the great trader, is to develop her merchant interests with Israel.

This suggests that the Tyrian pre-eminence will begin to move to Israel, as the centre of world trading. The last verse in the chapter on Tyre in Isaiah 23, does seem to indicate that in the Millennium, Israel will be the “Tyre” of that time.

Once again, in this chapter we observe various developments that have yet to take place before the final invasion of the land. This cooperation of Britain with Israel, and the prosperity, we can expect to develop after Christ has returned to the earth, but before he is manifest to the nations in the great overthrow in the land.

There are a number of scriptures that refer to remarkable happenings in Sinai, Edom, Arabia, and the region south of the land of Israel, just before and during the Gogian invasion.

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The British Lion & former Empire

The British Lion & Tarshish of the Latter Days

The Daughter of Tyre

Where today is the daughter of Tyre? we look for a community which is similarly placed to ancient Tyre, and which carries on the traditions for which Tyre was famous, so that she can be regarded as a descendant of the original Tyre. There is only one place in the world today where the original Tyre situation will be found, and that is in the city of London.

Commodity Markets & the City of London

The commodities of the world today are largely bought and sold without the goods being seen and before they leave their own land. The handling of the world’s goods is a complex operation, involving one of the many Commodity markets or Exchanges; Banking facilities; Exchange control; freight arrangements; either by sea or air; and Insurance. All of these requirements are brought to a focus in the City of London, together with the expertise that has grown up over many years.

Britain is Tyre

So, in the matters that here concern us, Britain is not declining or losing her world position. The fact that she is declining as a military power in the world is beside the point; and it would seem we have been wrongly influenced by this. Tyre of old was not a great world power, and was of small significance compared with Egypt or Assyria in a military sense. But in control of trade and commerce she was preeminent. And so it is with Britain today. She combines the Tyrian and Tarshish features of chapter 27 of Ezekiel. And like Tyre of old, she has had a unique association with Israel, which no other modern nation has had.

The Merchants of Tarshish and the Young Lions

The linking of these with lions sounds strange, but is very significant when it is appreciated that the lion is the universally accepted heraldry for Britain in these latter days. This is an effective way for Ezekiel by the Spirit to refer to something which had no development in his time. The phrase used “all the young lions” is appropriate for the various English-speaking peoples who are derived from this country, but are now independent. Ezekiel in chapter 17 shows how whelps become young lions when they become independent rulers. The Dominions of the British Empire became young lions by the Statute of Westminster in 1931. Other countries have arrived at independence since. America has been a young lion since her independence in 1783.

At present there are critical attitudes in various parts of the British Commonwealth, but this will not prevent all the young lions combining together against the united power of Europe. When Britain is irrevocably outside Europe, no doubt circumstances will cause the Commonwealth countries to draw together. We have faith in the word of God, and His foreknowledge, that this will happen.

As to the presence of these peoples in the land of Israel, circumstances will bring about cooperation between them and Israel. After Russia is bestride Europe one would expect a new East-West strategic line to be established, with the U.S., Britain and the Commonwealth as the South Power in relation to this line.

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There are a number of scriptures that refer to remarkable happenings in Sinai, Edom, Arabia, and the region south of the land of Israel, just before and during the Gogian invasion.
A cycle of sabbaths leading to the Redemption of Israel and the year of release when each man would return to his possession

By Jonathan Bowen  BRANTFORD, ON.

The Pattern of the Sabbath

The Jubilee law is built into the pattern of the Sabbaths. There are four Sabbath cycles in the divine record. The first cycle is the “Sabbath of days” recorded in the ten commandments:

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it” (Exodus 20:8–11).

This was the base unit of the Sabbath cycle and laid down the principle of a day of rest, taken from creation (Genesis 1:31–2:3). This was a day that was to be “hallowed” or sanctified, set apart and dedicated to God.

The second cycle was the “Sabbath of seven years.” It was built upon the same principle:

“When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD... And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat” (Leviticus 25:2–7).

This Sabbath cycle was designed to give rest to all who would be involved in the work of the land, right down to the cattle. It required faith on the part of the believer to keep:

“And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old store: and in the ninth year shall be a sabbath of the land unto you; and ye shall eat of the old store: But in the tenth year, in the year that the sabbath shall be, ye shall sow no seed, neither shall ye reap. For the sabbath, the rest of the land, shall be a sabbath unto the LORD: I the LORD have given it you” (Leviticus 25:9–11).

The third Sabbath cycle was the “Sabbath of years”, also called the Jubilee:

“And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee (Strong’s 8643 taruwah Joyful noise) to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land” (Leviticus 25:8–9).

This Sabbath cycle had particular significance. It began with the sounding of the trumpet on the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur. Gesenius defines kippur (Strong’s 3725), as “redemption.” It was on this day that all who had sold their lands were allowed to return to their possession. Those who had been sold into servitude were released:

“And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family” (Leviticus 25:10).

This was called the Jubilee, or Yowbale. Strong’s Concordance (3104) defines it as the blowing of the ram’s horn; Gesenius’ adds to the definition “a joyful sound.” It was the 50th year following seven Sabbath’s of Years. During this year no work was to be done (Leviticus 25:11–13).

The last of the cycles is the Millennial Kingdom age, identified by the Apostle Paul:

“Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God” (Hebrews 4:7–9).

It is a period of one thousand years, following six thousand years of man’s servitude upon the earth:

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:6).

The Jubilee Law

The Jubilee cycle was one of specific significance. It returned the Israelite to his possession:

“The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land” (Leviticus 25:23–24).

The idea of “the land of your possession” identified in verse 24 is also seen in verses 25, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 41, 45, and 46. It is obviously a key feature. This principle was rooted in the promises to Abraham. The first use of the word “possession” in the Bible was to Abraham when the promises were given:

“And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God” (Genesis 17:8).

Upon this principle the land could not be sold forever. When Joshua divided up the possessions we are told, “These are the countries which
Moses did distribute for inheritance” (Joshua 13:32). The inheritance was divided to the people by lot in Shiloh:

“And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions” (Joshua 18:10).

The Israelite was forbidden to give away his land forever, it had to be redeemed at the end of the 50 years of the Jubilee. An example of a faithful Israelite who would not break this law is Naboth:

“And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee” (1 Kings 2:2-3).

Naboth gave his life because he would not break the law of God and forsake the inheritance given to him by God. The land was stolen by Jezebel for Ahab who lay whining on his bed. Isaiah identifies those Israelites who were trying to join other men’s inheritances to their own:

“Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!” (Isaiah 5:8).

In the prophecy of Micah, the LORD condemns this behavior and promises retribution because of it:

“Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage. Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time is evil” (Micah 2:1-3).

The Redeemer

Under the law of the Redeemer and the Jubilee, if an Israelite fell on hard times, God encouraged his brother to assist:

“If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it; then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession” (Leviticus 25:25-27).

The redeemer would step in and “redeem” his brother if he was unable to redeem himself. If there was no redeemer then the poor Israelite would return to his possession in the year of Jubilee (verse 28).

The Hebrew word for redeemer is Ga’al. It is defined by Strong’s (1350) as “to redeem, act as kinsman, avenger, to ransom, to buy back, to do the part of a kinsman.

The Redeemer’s role was amplified if his brother had been sold to a stranger:

“And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger’s family: After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him: Either his uncle, or his uncle’s son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if be able, he may redeem himself” (Leviticus 25:47-49).

Israel’s Servitude

The pattern of the Redeemer and the Jubilee is used by God with the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel was waxen poor because of their sin and disobedience. They had sold themselves into servitude:

“Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away” (Isaiah 50:1).

They had sold themselves because of their iniquities. They were in the position of the Israelite who had no power to redeem himself. They could not take away their own sin, however, God could:

“Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver?” (Isaiah 50:2).

The Hebrew word for “redeem” is paduwth, (Strong’s #6304) and means “to ransom.” The Hebrew word for “deliver” is natsal (Strong’s #5337), and means “to snatch away or rescue, recover, to pluck out.”

God makes it clear that he will provide a Redeemer for Israel, and bring Israel from their servitude back to the land of their possession:

“Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away” (Isaiah 51:10-11).

This will be the time when the trumpet of Jubilee, the “joyful noise” will sound as it did on the Day of Atonement years ago. This will be a day of national atonement when Israel’s sin will be taken away, they will be ransomed and brought back to him, and recognize him as their deliverer:

“Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money. For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian
expressed them without cause. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to bow, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is blasphemed. Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I” (Isaiah 52:2-6).

God says in Isaiah 54:5-8 that He is their Redeemer who would gather them with everlasting kindness and mercy.

The redemption process began in the 19th Century as Jews from all over the world began returning to Zion. It reached a crescendo when the state of Israel was proclaimed in 1948 and Jews no longer lived under the servitude of the other nations amongst which they had been scattered. Many Jews in the land realize they are living in the time of the Redemption. They are religious Zionists who, unlike their political Zionist forefathers, see their return to the land as a fulfillment of Biblical prophecies.

The full redemption of Israel will require the removal of their sin. They had sold themselves for their iniquities (Isaiah 50:1), and require ransomings from this. This occurs with the coming of the Messiah: “And the Redeemer (Ga’al) shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever” (Isaiah 59:20-21).

This passage is picked up in the New Testament, but the Spirit changes the emphasis a little: “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the Gentiles, they shall gather themselves together, and see the jot and tittle of the law, that is, no prophet shall arise among them, nor shall a root of Jesse spring up among them: but he shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for he shall bring upon Jacob that which is written in the prophets, saying, ‘Many of them of Jacob have turned away, saying, There is no savior. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding” (Jeremiah 3:14–15).

The prophecy of redemption in Isaiah 52 speaks of teachers who will come to Zion and bring them the good news of the kingdom of God. It will mirror the joy of the Jubilee trumpet of years gone by: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that publisheth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God” (Isaiah 54:5-8).

**Redeemed without Money**

The pattern of the Redeemer will be played out in the national life of Israel. Under the law the man who had sold himself was to “give again the price of his redemption out of the money that he was bought for” (Lev 25:51). We are also told, “if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubilee: and in the jubilee it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession” (Leviticus 25:8).

Israel had not sold themselves for money. The scriptures inform us they had “sold themselves for their iniquities” (Isaiah 50:1). We are told in Isaiah 52:9 that they would be “redeemed without money.” They could not buy themselves back, they could not take away their own sin. None of their fellow slaves could buy themselves back either, their worldly wealth is worth nothing:

“They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption” (Psalm 49:6–8).

However, God’s hand is not short that He cannot redeem: “But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah. (Psalm 49:15).”

There is no doubt God would redeem Israel for he has clearly stated his intention: “Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities” (Psalm 130:7–8).

That is why Jeremiah calls God by his title, “The Hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble” (Jeremiah 14:8).

God would not forget the promises made to Abraham: “Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for he hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel” (Isaiah 44:21–23).

God tells Israel, in their low estate: “Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 41:14).

The way in which God would provide a ransomer, a near kinsmen, related to his brethren, who could redeem them from the power of the grave, was the great mystery of the gospel eventually revealed in Jesus Christ. He who would be saviour (Yahshua), the anointed one (Messiah).

Zechariah, the father of John, being filled with the Holy Spirit and proclaimed: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should..."
be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visitted us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace…” (Luke 1:68-79).

The Lord Jesus Christ would be the one who would ransom the people of God without money: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:18–19).

Zechariah went on to pray that the Messiah would also be a “light to the Gentiles.” They too were “alienated by wicked works” and are “reconciled in the body of his flesh through death” (Col. 1:20-23). The Gentiles would be included in the promises to the fathers by adoption into the hope of Israel:

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will... In whom we have REDEMPTION through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace...That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance...” (Ephesians 1:3-12).

Food For Thought

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Luke 1:32,33

The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. Psalm 72:10,11

And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour. Psalm 72:10,11

Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. Isaiah 60:9

The Jubilee was predicated upon the promises to Abraham. The land was promised as an everlasting possession, so those who were redeemed, or released had to return to “the land of their possession”.

We are living in the beginning of the time of redemption, when Israel is returning to their land. May God soon bring the Redeemer that will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and redeem us from the power of the grave that we “might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.”

Food For Thought

Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Matthew 5:35 Psalm 48:2
The story begins in Genesis 27 verse 41, where Jacob has just deceived his blind father, wearing goat kid skins on his hands and neck, and so received the blessing that was rightfully his—both because God had said it would be his, but also because Esau had sold it to him. Yet we read:

“And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.”

But, of course, this becomes known to Rebekah—both because God had said it would be his. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.”

And in verse 20, Jacob responds to God’s promises.

“And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all the seed of thy brother, shalt thou have dominion. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.”

The agreement between them is perfectly clear. Jacob will work seven years for Rachel, Laban’s younger daughter. And yet, on the wedding night, Laban substituted Leah for Rachel. And in verse 25 we read:

“And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah: and he (Jacob) said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?”

Now it is very easy to read lightly over these words. We are so familiar with the story that often we fail to enter into the horror that faced Jacob on that morning. Here is a man so in love, that the labour, of 7 years, is nothing to him. Here is a man who, like his father Isaac, and his grandfather Abraham fully intended to follow the principle of God—one man, one woman, united forever. And yet now he finds himself married to another. No wonder he cries out in anguish, to Laban, “what have you done to me?”

This is the first time that Laban has changed Jacob’s wages, but what a change it is. What evil he has done Jacob. He has deliberately put the man in this appalling position.

But Laban’s response is typical of the man.

“And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years” (verses 26-27).

Laban makes light of it. He now asserts the need to follow a custom, which he has failed to mention in all the years that Jacob has laboured for Rachel, and now says “but don’t worry you can marry the other one next week—for another seven years labour.”

And little does Laban care—

• That Jacob did not want two wives;

father’s house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.”

And we see how Jacob responds to God’s promises. He embraces them enthusiastically. These are the blessings that he has always wanted, and he commits himself to God’s service—and it was a covenant that he kept through all his life.

What a contrast with Esau who despised his birthright and sold it for one morsel of meat.

And what a contrast with Laban who made covenants and broke them—changing Jacob’s wages ten times.

“What a contrast with Esau who despised his birthright and sold it for one morsel of meat.

And what a contrast with Laban who made covenants and broke them—changing Jacob’s wages ten times. And coming to Genesis 29, we find, in verse 14, that Jacob has been with Laban for about one month when in verse 15:

“Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be? And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter. And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.”

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And little does Laban care—

• That Jacob did not want two wives;
• That Jacob didn’t want to work seven years for Leah;
• For the consequent evils that would come on Jacob, his wives and his children.

And why was it that Laban was prepared to do such evil to his nephew? There is only one answer—avarice!!

This is demonstrated in Laban’s later dealings with Jacob. Come to Genesis 30 verse 27. Here Jacob has just completed his second seven year period, for the wife he never wanted, and is ready to leave Laban’s service, but “Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.”

At Bethel, God promised to bless Jacob and God has blessed Jacob—or rather he has blessed Laban for Jacob’s sake, for Jacob has worked fourteen years, and, financially, has nothing to show for it. God’s blessing is so abundant, so overflowing, so apparent, that even Laban cannot fail to see and freely admit to it.

Laban could see his golden goose preparing to fly away. So he substituted Leah, to gain seven more years of the blessing intended for Jacob. He does this great evil, for the love of money.

And what was Jacob to do? Is he to refuse to accept Rachel as his second wife, remembering that in the beginning it was not so?

“Heave ye not read,” said the Lord “that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh” (Matthew 19:4-6).

One wife, and one wife only, was the principle...

“And wherefore one?” asks the prophet Malachi. “That he might seek a godly seed.”

Or would Jacob succumb? He was desperately in love with Rachel. He had worked 7 years so that she would be his wife, and he was in no way to blame for the position in which he now found himself. We read, “And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he (Laban) gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.”

And yet what trouble came upon him because of this. Firstly we are specifically told in Genesis 29 verse 31 that Rachel was barren, because Leah was hated. Leah has many children and consequently Rachel’s anguish increases to a crescendo where she forces a third wife on to Jacob. But then Leah sees her position being eroded and presses a fourth wife on him. Jacob knew that he was guilty of not loving Leah. He knew that he had treated her unfairly, and no doubt exhausted by the family feud, submitted and took Zilpah also. And, of course, we all know of the jealousy that arose between the brothers, and the consequent loss of Joseph, the early death of Rachel, and his fearfulness that he would lose Benjamin too. What troubles Laban brought upon Jacob—all for the love of money.

And if Jacob had been a less honourable man, once he had married Rachel, he could have simply left with her. But though he had been exploited, swindled and materially injured in a way that would bring trouble all of his life, Jacob keeps his side of the bargain and works another seven years.

And so, after those further seven years, we come to Genesis 30. We have already read of why Laban did not want to lose Jacob, and how Jacob was told to name his price, and so we read in verse 31-34,

“And he (Laban) said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock: I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire. So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me. And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.”

And well might Jacob have echoed Laban’s words;

“I would it might be according to thy word.”

…but Laban was not a man of his word.

So Jacob now works 6 years for wages in cattle. We remember that he arrived at Haran with nothing but the clothes on his back. We remember that for the last 14 years, his wages have been his two wives. And yet by the time he leaves, he is a wealthy man. We read in Genesis 30 verse 43,

“And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.”

His abundance is so great, that a short while after leaving Haran, when he meets his brother Esau, he makes a gift of 220 goats, 220 sheep, 30 camels, 40 cows, 10 bulls and 30 donkeys. So we can judge from that how great his possessions were. Not bad, we might think, for 6 years work as a farm hand.

And certainly that was how Laban and particularly his sons had grown to see it. We read in Genesis 31 verse 1-2,

“And he (Jacob) heard the words of Laban’s sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father’s; and of that which was our father’s hath he gotten all this glory. And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before.”

And perhaps we might sympathise with their point of view. How wealthy Jacob had become, apparently at their expense, in such a short time. The truth, of course, was very different. Laban had been blessed for Jacob’s sake.

It was little that he had before Jacob came, and now he had a multitude (chapter 30:30).

But Laban had grown used to fourteen years
And so we read in Genesis 31 verses 3-8, “And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee. And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, And said unto them, I see your father’s countenance, that it is not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me. And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire: then bare all the cattle ringstraked.”

Whilst the human mind might sympathise with Laban, God does not. He was a deceitful, money grabbing man, not content with great blessing that came his way, through Jacob. And so we read in verses 11-12, “And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.”

And in verse 13 God says, “I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedest a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.”

The contrast with Laban is stark. Jacob had made a vow all those years previous, at Bethel, to the God of his Father—and Jacob has kept that vow and God acknowledges him.

As for Rachel and Leah, they are all too familiar with their father. In verse 14-15 we read, “And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father’s house? Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.”

And though it was quite normal, at that time, for a man to give gifts to the father of a woman that he wished to marry, Laban had gone far beyond that, and simply treated his daughters as chattels to be sold and as a means to exploit Jacob. He cared not what the cost would be to them, to their husband Jacob or to their children.

And so Jacob secretly departs, but Laban pursues. We read in Genesis 31 verse 23, “And he (Laban) took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days’ journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.”

We might wonder why Laban so determinedly pursued after Jacob, and why he needed to bring his brethren with him. God, I believe, gives us the answer. We read in verse 24, “And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.”

And at verse 29, Laban tells Jacob… “It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.”

Laban had brought sufficient brethren, so that it was in his power to do Jacob hurt, or to use that power as a threat, to get what he wanted. And down at verse 31, in explaining why he left secretly, we read, “And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.”

Jacob knew what kind of man he was. He knew that even now Laban would be willing to extract, what he desired, by force. And we read in verse 41-42, “Thus have I been twenty years in thy house: I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.”

This was Jacob’s inheritance, given of God, and Laban had no cause for complaint.

Come back to Genesis 28 verse 13—back to Bethel, when Jacob had just begun his flight from Esau. We read, “And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.”

And, of course, God is fulfilling that promise on several levels.

• He brought Jacob back to the land of Canaan, and in fact back to the camp of his father Isaac, then at Hebron.
• He brought Israel back from Egypt by the hand of Moses and Joshua.
• He has brought Israel back from the Diaspora, to that primary and partial restoration in the land.
• He will bring the whole nation, under the hand of Elijah the prophet.
• And He will bring the glorified saints, both Israelite and adopted Israelite, all united as that one seed of Abraham.
• The land is the inheritance given them of their Father in heaven—and just as with Laban there is no justification for the complaints of any other people, that Israel has taken that which was theirs.

Faithful Jacob was a man who sought the blessing of God throughout his life, and so was blessed with the name Israel—one who will be a ruler with God. Let us likewise seek to inherit the blessings of that age to come and we too will live to see the glories of eternity.
When Will Asher Dip His Foot in Oil?

By Glenn Blair Ford  LONDON, U.K.

In Deuteronomy chapter 33:24-25, Moses gave a prophecy concerning Asher. At the end of verse 24, he said of Asher, “let him dip his foot in oil.” The first part of this article showed that this prophecy spoke of the blessing of well-being and prosperity that the territory of Asher was to be especially bestowed with. It concluded that these blessings form a microcosm of God’s blessing upon the whole nation. At the start of verse 25, Moses went on to state that Asher’s “shoes shall be iron and brass” (KJV). Much like his previous statements concerning oil, this statement also presents some difficulties to Bible students and scholars as to exactly how this prophecy is to be understood. The obvious question is, what shall be iron and brass? Depending upon which translation of the Bible you use, you can read that, the metal objects will be Asher’s “shoes” (KJV), “bars” (ESV), “bolts of his gates” (NIV), “locks” (NASB), “sandals” (NKJV), “footwear” (LXX), or “bars of his gates” (NB).

Naturally, we wonder how a single Hebrew word can be understood to express concepts as diverse as “footwear” and “bars of gates.” The Hebrew word “minawleykh” (יֶלָעְנִמ), for shoes in verse 25, has the core functional concept of containment or a restriction of progression by fastening or bolting; hence we get bolts, and bars. The idea of a sandal arises because sandals are bound or latched to the feet. This is a form of constraint on the foot. Thus a word for “sandal” is also derived from naw-al (נָע). Hence some translators have designated and translated the word as footwear and others as a constraining device. Both understandings are superficially somewhat enigmatic in the context of Moses’ prophecy. So the question remains… Which understanding is the most sensible choice, and why? When we...
the rest of the Bible, we find that the same Hebrew word “minawleykh” (מִנַּהְלֵאָלְךָּ), occurs seven times, and is only once translated as footwear, and even then only in some versions. All other times it is translated as something like bolt or bar. Furthermore, when the Old Testament mentions shoes or sandals, Deuteronomy 33 is the only place where this form of the Hebrew word is used. “Footwear” seems to be a unique and peculiar understanding of this word. “Bolt” or some form of constraint seems to be consensual.

The word “minawleykh” (מִנַּהְלֵאָלְךָּ), in the manuscript, is a noun derived from the verb “naw-al” (נָעַלְךָּ). So if “naw-al” is the verb meaning ‘to constrain,’ then “minawl” is the noun meaning ‘constrainer’ or ‘that which constrains’ (a bolt is the thing which constrains a gate, and a sandal is which constrains the foot). Thus Deuteronomy 33 is speaking of a constrainer of Asher. The suffix “eykh” at the end of the word basically means “your.” Hence which occurred in A.D. 70, is an example of how iron is frequently used in a figurative sense, to denote affliction. It reads

“Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.”

Brass (or more accurately bronze), like iron, is also a metal which gave a military advantage. Goliath’s armour was made of brass (1 Samuel 17:5-6). Brass is also associated with captivity. Samson (Judges 16:21), Manasseh (2 Chron. 33:11), Jehoiakim (2 Chron. 36:6), and Zedekiah (Jeremiah 52:11) were each bound in fetters of brass and taken captive by the contemporary adversaries of God’s people. Along with iron, brass is also a metaphor for that which is hard, inflexible and obstinate. Isaiah 48:4 is an example of this. “…thou art obstinate…thy neck is an iron sinew, And thy brow brass.” Thus we see how iron and brass together can be understood to symbolise military strength and dominance with characteristics such as inflexibility, obstinacy, oppression and constraint.

**Iron and Brass Powers—The Biblical Precedent**

The Bible provides us with an understanding of powers with the qualities of iron and brass. Daniel chapter 2 speaks of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon’s revelatory dream of an image of a man, made of four metals, which was obliterated by a rock. The head and shoulders of the image were made of gold and represented King Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian Empire. The chapter reveals, and history confirms, that Babylon was succeeded by the Persian Empire, represented by silver, this was followed by the Grecian empire which is represented by brass. The fourth empire was the Roman Empire, represented by iron. We have already seen this in Deuteronomy 28:48.

**Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, makes it clear that Europe is too great a subject to cover here. However, notwithstanding the book of Esther, it is worth noting that, according to the Encyclopaedia Judaica, “The first serious manifestation of anti-Semitism in history was the concentrated attack on the Jewish religion in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes (175–164 B.C.E.).” This is the era of the Ptolemies and Seleucids of the Grecian empire represented by brass. The principal “constraint” of the Jews has been brass and iron since that time.

Despite the high profile of the Arab/Palestinian/Muslim anti-Semitism of our present era, the impedance of God’s people by the European/Catholic anti-Semitism far outstrips the effects of any other anti-Semitism in terms of longevity, effectiveness and bloodshed. Thus we see how that which was to constrain, not only Asher but all Israel, was the iron and brass of the anti-Semitic spirit of the Grecian and Greco Roman Empire.

Ezekiel 38 tells us of the same event that
leads to the appearance of the Lord with 10,000’s of his saints as the start of Moses’ prophecy foretells. And it confirms for us that the constraint on Israel at that time, will indeed be the iron and brass of Europe. Ezekiel 38 and 39 are prophetic chapters, which tell us about the circumstances of a pivotal conflict to come, where the military power of the kingdoms of the world will be defeated by the hand of God. Ezekiel’s prophecy makes it clear that Israel is to be invaded and overrun by the mighty armed forces of a confederacy of nations. It identifies the member states of this confederacy as being led by Gog, the land of Magog, Rosh prince of Meshech and Tubal (ancient names for Russia, Germany and Eastern Europe), and including Gomer, Togarmah (ancient names for Western Europe and Turkey) and having with them Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya (ancient names still used today for North Africa and Iran). When we compare the location of these places with territories of the ancient Roman Empire (iron) and the ancient Grecian empire (brass), we find that Ezekiel 38 identifies essentially the same territory.

Asher ‘Locked Down’ by the Powers of Iron and Brass in the Latter Days

In the last days these nations of Iron and Brass will lock down or impede Israel’s prosperity and well-being. Zechariah 14:2 states that Jerusalem “shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; And half of the city shall go forth into captivity, And the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.” Zechariah 13:8 informs us that “Two parts therein shall be cut off and die; But the third shall be left therein.” And God will subject the remainder to the refining as silver and gold is purified in the intense heat of a furnace. Thus there shall be a comprehensive distress and ruin of the nation of Israel by the European powers of iron and brass. The motivation for this invasion is stated in Ezekiel 38:11–12 ... “And thou (the leader of the Confederacy) shalt say, I will go up to the land ... To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon ... the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land (i.e. have gotten “shemen” GBF).”

Moses set the context for his prophecy in Deuteronomy 33:2-3 foretelling the time of Christ’s revelation to the world with legions of changed saints. The following testaments about each of the tribes, including Asher’s, fit within the context of this establishment of the rule over all nations under Christ. The history, the current state, and prophetically revealed future of Israel are a testimony as to how Moses’ prophecy concerning Asher illustrates one aspect of God’s plan with all Israel. The prophecy juxtapositions the Jews’ blessing of prosperity with their curse of oppression. The two have been in contention throughout history and will finally clash at the catastrophic despoiling of Israel. The Lord has structured his plan such that it is precisely Israel’s prosperity and well-being that will be the hook in the jaw of the powers of “iron and brass” and act as the catalyst to induce this last violation of Israel by these nations. It is in this way that the Lord will gather many nations against Israel, like sheaves into the floor as we read about in Micah 4:11-12. At this stage the tables will be turned, and the sandals will be on the foot. By the hand of God, Israel shall become the strong, dominant and obstinate warrior power of the earth. We read of this in Micah 4:11–13 which says “Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: For I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: And thou shalt beat in pieces many people: And I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, And their substance to the Lord of the whole earth.”

So it will be that just as God had brought judgements upon his people through the powers of iron and brass, so is it that Israel shall become iron and brass themselves and they shall carry out God’s retribution on the oppressors of his people. This shall be done by their hand but not by their power as we see in the conclusion of Moses’ Prophecy.

“There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, Who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, And in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, And underneath are the everlasting arms: And he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: And shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: The fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; Also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, The shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; And thou shalt tread upon their high places” (Deuteronomy 33:26–29).

Robert Roberts

We can hardly expect that the United States will transfer themselves to the dominion of Judah’s Lion peaceably

John Thomas

Eureka

Daniel was an Israelite and a saint. Hence his people are Israelites and saints, both of which classes are delivered in “the time of the end”

John Thomas

Eureka

On no subject will Christendom be found to have gone more astray than on the subject of the Kingdom of God

Robert Roberts

Christendom Astray

The doctrine of God is not something to be detached from life. It is rather something that has to be worked out in life.

John Carter

Delight in God’s Law

The world is “a dark place” as Peter describes it (2 Peter 1:19), a “squalid” place, foul and unclean. The light shone in this darkness, and since light makes manifest (Eph. 5:13), its evil was revealed.

John Carter

Delight in God’s Law

The Deity is never in a hurry, but deliberate, effective, sure.

John Thomas

Eureka
Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shocoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shocoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammim. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them. And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron" (1 Samuel 17:1-3, 52).

In 1875, Lieutenant Claude Conder wrote in his reports for the Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly, that "Few events in Scripture have the site more definitely indicated. The valley of Elah has long been known, but the interesting attempt to fix the very spot where David slew Goliath has been rendered difficult by the fact that Shocoh alone of all the sites enumerated (not including Ekron) has been definitely identified."

The difficulties which Lt. Conder experienced have been largely overcome in the intervening period of more than a century. Shocoh, as he knew it then, was identified with the mound of Shuweikhe by Edward Robinson and Eli Smith in 1838, as they travelled from Jerusalem to Gaza, in search of Eleutheropolis. The book of Joshua links Socoh with other towns in the vicinity laying in the shephelah or lowland.

"And in the valley, Eshtaol, and Zoreah, and Ashnah, And Zanoah, and Engannim, Tappua, and Enam, Jarmuth, and Adullam, Socoh, and Azekah, And Sharaim, and Adithaim, and Gederah, and Gederothaim; fourteen cities with their villages" (Joshua 15:33-36).

The valley in which Socoh lies, contains the old Roman road which links Jerusalem and Bethlem with the coast at Gaza, through Bet Guvrin (Eleutheropolis). It is quite possible that this was the road travelled by Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch on the journey described in Acts 8. This was one of the two main routes which would have been used by travellers to Egypt from Jerusalem and Bethlem. Joseph, Mary and Jesus may have come this way, but the route through Hebron and Beersheba may have been preferable, if they wished to visit Elisabeth, Zacharias and John in Hebron, their most likely residence.

We are familiar with Azekah in the book of Joshua when the Israelites pursued the Amorites, and also in Jeremiah, where it is identified as one of the last cities of Judah, with Lachish, to hold out against the Babylonians. Lachish lies within sight, only a short distance to the south. The remains of Azekah crown the hill overlooking the Valley of Elah, both north and east. To the north a short distance is Beth-Shemesh and the scene of Samson’s exploits at Eshtaol and Zorah.

West of the intersection of these roads below Azekah, the Elah valley continues to Gath on the southern edge, and Ekron to the north. After the defeat of Goliath, the Philistines fled homeward,"... even unto Gath and unto Ekron." This road along the valley provided access for the Philistines to the cities of Judah—Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron. Ephesdammim is referred to as lying between the opposing armies in the valley. Rather than being the name of a settlement, the name, meaning "boundary of blood." It seems that this access road had been the scene of conflict for an extended period. Further east, Keilah was a target for the Philistines and David helped to drive them away, but was betrayed to Saul by the inhabitants.

The highway that runs east from Gath to Azekah appears to have been known as the "...way to Shaaraim." Until recently, the location was unknown, but as the other sites in the area have been identified since the days of Lt. Conder and Edward Robinson, the search became more focussed. Khirbet Qeiyafa, which at one time was thought to be Azekah, has never been excavated because it was disguised with a Hellenistic fortress built over it. In 2008, an important discovery helped with the identification of the site. Two gates in the monolithic walls were uncovered, one facing
The archaeological site of Khirbet Qeiyafa, a fortified city in Judah from the time of King David, is located on the hills that border the Elah Valley on the north. This is a key strategic location in the biblical kingdom of Judah, in the main road from Philistia and the Coastal Plain to Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron in the hill country. In this area one of the world’s most famous battles took place, the battle between David and Goliath.

As familiar as we are with the story of David and Goliath, and the battles between the Philistines and the Israelites, archaeology has confirmed the accuracy and detail of the scripture record in our day. As we read the record from I Samuel, we can picture the events of the battle in their location, as the Philistines fled homeward between Azekah and Shaaraim, and then were cut down on the highway by the Israelites as they fled westwards to Gath and Ekron.

East toward Jerusalem, and the other facing west. Shaaraim means ‘two gates’ in Hebrew, and this is the only known city in Judah or Israel with two gates. Excavations show that the city was only occupied for a short period, before and during the life of David. Perhaps it fell into disuse as David expanded the kingdom. An important discovery in the dig was a potsherd covered with writing from the period, apparently the earliest Hebrew inscription known to date.

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A fragment of rock was excavated in northern Israel bearing the inscription: “the House of David.” It is a reference to the Royal House of David that ruled over the Kingdom from about 1040 B.C. until it disappeared with the Babylonian captivity, 610 B.C. The Bible promises the restoration of this monarchy as follows: “After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up...” (Acts 15:16). Also: “...call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”— Luke 1:32,33

It is written, “For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: ” (Isaiah 62:1,2). And again: “Behold, the days come, saith the L ORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah... this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the L ORD, 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 31:31-33). The apostle Paul wrote: “...all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Romans 11:26).

The King “shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth” (Psalm 72:8). “Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him” (verse 11). Such is the promise of the Bible. After the tragedy and corruption of human mis-government “shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed... it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever” (Daniel 2:44). Thus shall the great chorus sound: “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our L ORD, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”— Revelation 11:15

“Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people” (Isaiah 56:7). “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations... shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the L ORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.” — Zechariah 14:16

“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the L ORD, 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 L ORD from Jerusalem.” — Isaiah 2:3

Zechariah 14:9.