THE CALL TO PROTECT ISRAEL
A course that cannot be evaded
January 2013

A WITNESS OF BIBLE TRUTH FOR OUR TIMES

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THE BIBLE MAGAZINE Vol. 26 ISSUE No.1
EDITORIAL

The Hope of Humanism

Contrasted with the One Hope of the Bible

That the world is in a wretched and sorry state has to be admitted by all who digest and think about the news that comes through the various media. We are constantly made aware of terrible human suffering, of horrendous poverty, of despicable crimes and incurable illnesses. There are untold millions on the face of this earth who are “subject to sin, disease, and death.” As one writer declared: “What shall we say to these things? Is the world as we behold it a finiteness? Are generations of men, rebellious against God, and destroyers of the earth, to occupy it successively through an endless series of ages? Are men to repeat the history of the past for ever? Is the earth always to be cursed, and sin and death to reign victorious? Who can answer these inquiries? (Elpis Israel John Thomas).

Many have pondered these questions, and the answers that have been offered vary; answers come from atheists, religious people, humanist philosophers and socialist leaders—and occasionally philanthropists who donate large sums for what they consider to be worthy causes.

In spite of all the gallant efforts made however, both practical and political, the suffering and the poverty remain. Attempts to relieve the human pain are mere drops in the ocean, and the realist must acknowledge that this state of the world is beyond human solution. Men will continue to slaughter his fellow—as in Syria, in the ocean, and the realist must admit that this state of the world is beyond human solution. Men will continue to slaughter his fellow. Attempts to relieve the human pain are mere drops in the ocean, and the realist must acknowledge that this state of the world is beyond human solution. Men will continue to slaughter his fellow—a fact that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:1-3).

And this: “...By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Genesis 22:16-18).

So at some future time “ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH!” are to be blessed in Abraham’s seed because of that man’s obedience. There is much detail given in the Scriptures concerning this blessing upon all nations, and it is summarized in Numbers 14:21 in these words: “But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD” (Numbers 14:21).

The sense of this future time of blessing in Abraham’s seed is revealed in such Scriptures as Isaiah 64:4 and 65:16-25. These blessings answer the world’s needs. The “seed” of Abraham is both physical, national and spiritual (see Romans 9:3-13). The “seed” is not physical only it is national and spiritual as well (Galatians 3:16 and verses 28, 29; Ephesians 2:11-13 and verse 19).

There is no blessing promised to anyone who is not a true son of Abraham, or who does not become such. There is no blessing available outside of the covenants of promise or for those who are “aliens from the commonwealth (Greek: Politeia, “polity”) of Israel” (Ephesians 2:12). The world may not like this arrangement of God’s choice, but their votes against it are of no significance or value—the Creator of the universe will accomplish His declared purpose through Israel whether the governments of the world like it or not.

It is a very good thing that men and women do what they can in response to the need of others who suffer hardship, poverty, illness and misery. It brings limited and temporary relief, but it only scratches the surface of the world’s problems. Charitable organisations with their soup kitchens and refugee relief cannot reach the heart of the problem. The only power capable of providing a solution is God Himself. The apostle has said (1 Corinthians 13:3) “though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity (love), it profiteth me nothing.”

The need of humanity then is not goods, it is love!

The manner of love that needs to be bestowed upon humanity has been provided by the God that so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Humanism is heartless. It views the situation through materialistic eyes and offers no hope beyond the present conscious existence. “The Hope of Israel,” as the apostle defined the Gospel, is rooted in those promises made to Abraham “having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come” (1 Timothy 4:8). If we would love our neighbour as ourselves, we ought to spend our energies in making known that Hope which is in Jesus Christ.

Humanism— even religious humanism (sometimes called an “authentic humanism”) does not answer the world’s needs. Human need is met in what God has provided in the Gospel; it is to be met in the blessings brought upon all nations through the Hope of Israel.
From a Lecture by John Thomas given in 1869

“...and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.”

Daniel 12:7

In 1869 when this lecture was delivered by John Thomas many scholars accepted the Septuagint (Greek) version of the Old Testament which is now known to be corrupt. Consequently the dating that the writer accepted is now known to be faulty so that in this extract we have corrected the text of Daniel 8:14 to harmonize with the standard K.J.V.

C.C.Walker attempted corrections to the study in 1920, but his results also proved to be mistaken. A helpful comment on the topic was made in The Christadelphian magazine (1907, page 158). As to the commencement and end of the period during which the sanctuary is trodden under foot (Daniel 8:14) please see the panel on page 6 with reference to the book by R.Milligan—Editor.
Now, this decree affected Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the four Jewish captives, because they had all, by a process peculiar to the Chaldeans, during three years, been prepared to stand before the king among the wise men of his estate. When Daniel heard it, he said to the captain of the king’s guard, “Why is the decree so hasty? If the king will only give time, I will inform him about this matter; for,” said he, “there is a God in heaven—the God of Israel—that revealeth secrets, and we will enquire of Him, and I doubt not, that for the sake of those affected, He will communicate the king’s matter.”

This caused a delay in the execution of the decree, and Daniel and his companions proceeded to offer up a prayer to the Revealer of secrets, that He would grant them a knowledge of the king’s matter. “Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night-vision.” Armed with this revelation from God Himself, concerning what He had impressed upon the mind of Nebuchadnezzar, he went before the king, and told him that what he had seen was a representation from God of what should come to pass hereafter. “There is a God in heaven,” said Daniel to the king, “that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.”

Now it is necessary to bear this in mind—that the whole representation that had been impressed in dream upon the mind of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel—was to illustrate a great purpose to be developed in what is termed “the latter days.” I may here remark that there are two periods—one called “the last days” and the other called “the latter days.” The last days passed away 1,800 years ago. They are thus referred to in Hebrews 1:1: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in THESE LAST DAYS, spoken unto us by a Son.” They are again referred to thus in the same epistle—(Heb. 9:26)—“Once in THE END OF THE WORLD hath he (Jesus) appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” So that you perceive there was a certain world in existence at the time when Jesus was crucified. He was crucified in the end of that world, and not in the end of the world we are now living in. The end of the world in which Jesus was crucified, is what Paul terms “the last days,” in the first verse quoted. These were the last days of the world constituted by the law of Moses—a world that began when God brought Israel out of Egypt, and constituted them a kingdom.

That kingdom continued in existence until it was subverted by the Chaldeans. It is represented by the pink margin at the left end of the chart (page 6) It is represented as belonging to the past, that is, the times...
antecedent to, or before Nebuchadnezzar’s reign—before the Chaldean overthrow of the city and country. It is described on the chart as “the kingdom of God as established under the Mosaic law, constituting the old Mosaic heavens and earth.” The kingdom continued in a modified form, till the days of the apostles; and at the time Paul wrote his epistle to the Hebrews, he described it as “waxed old and ready to vanish away” (Heb. 8:13). Peter, in his second epistle, chapter 3, gives a description of the passing away of the Mosaic heavens and earth. The whole system disappeared with a tumult and great noise, before the fervency of God’s wrath and indignation against the rebels of Israel. This was the catastrophe of the last days.

But Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that what he saw in his dream was the representation of a great catastrophe to be manifested, not in the last days, but in “the latter days.” Now, we are particularly interested in that catastrophe, for it has reference to our own time. “The latter days” is a phrase used in Scripture to indicate the time of Israel. This was the catastrophe of the last days.

What Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream was an image in human form—a man—with head, breast, arms, body, legs, feet and toes, made of different kinds of metal, in order to represent the different dynasties that were to obtain in connection with human government as a whole. The head was of gold; the breast and arms of silver; its body and thighs of brass; its legs from the knee downwards, were iron, and its feet part iron and part clay. This was what Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel both saw—an immense metallic human figure, of gold, silver, brass, iron and clay.

**Chart at the Top of the Page**

These metals are represented by these different squares of colour in the body of the Chart, extending from the pink border on the right to the purple border on the left. The colours you will perceive, approximate as nearly as possible to the colours of the metals themselves.

The image, however, was not all that the king Nebuchadnezzar had seen in his dream; for while he contemplated this image, which no doubt was of immense height—for he afterwards set up a similar image on the plains of Dura, 90 feet high)—he saw a stone poised in the air (not held by human hands), by the side of the image. While he looked, the stone acquired motion, and descending, struck the image—not this, when we come to consider the meaning of the vision. We all know what would be the effect if a stone were to strike a marble statue on the pedestal, with sufficient force to break it: the support of the statue would be fractured, and the statue itself would fall to the ground, and be shattered into fragments. This was what

**Reason & Revelation by R. Milligan**

Published in 1868

A footnote in Milligan’s book reads: “The principal difficulty consists in fixing the terminus a quo, or the epoch from which the two thousand three hundred years are to be reckoned. It seems most probable, however, that this period is to be reckoned, not from the rise or birth of the Ram, as some writers have alleged, (for he was in his full strength and vigor when Daniel first saw him,) but from the time when he was first attacked by the He-goat. If this assumption is warranted by the context, it fixes the beginning of this period to the spring of the year 334 B.C., and consequently it will terminate in the spring or about the middle of A.D.1967.”

Milligan’s conclusion is reflected in the above chart and replaces the dates given for the Evening-Morning period by John Thomas (which he had running above chart and replaces the dates from which the two thousand three hundred years are to be reckoned.

**For Vision of the Image, see Dan. 2; Vision of the Four Beasts, Dan. vii; Vision of the Evening-Morning, Dan. viii, Vision of the Seventy Weeks, Dan. ix**
Nebuchadnezzar witnessed. The stone smashed the feet, and the whole fabric came tumbling down, and lay scattered in ruins on the ground. But he saw more than this, for while he was looking at the shattered image he perceived the stone increase in size, until it attained the magnitude of a mountain, filling the whole earth.

Such was the dream which all the king’s wise men could not bring up before his mind, but which Daniel, by the revelation of the God of heaven, was enabled to revive before him. But what was the interpretation of it? Daniel was able to make this known also. He told Nebuchadnezzar that the head of gold represented his own government—his own dynasty—his own power and majesty, whereby he had been able to bring into subjection all the civilized people of the earth. Hence, therefore, the head of gold is identical with this yellow square to the left of the chart (Pg. 6), marked with the inscription—“the Babylonian Empire,” which dates from B.C. 612, when Nebuchadnezzar overthrew God’s kingdom—destroyed God’s people, and took the survivors captive to Babylon. This event commences that long-prevailing order of things called “the kingdom of men,” as distinguished from the kingdom of God, which existed in the land of Israel prior to the conquest by Nebuchadnezzar. That order of things will continue till the appearing of Jesus to establish the kingdom of God, in the restoring of the kingdom to Israel, as represented by the perpendicular belt of pink colour to the right of the chart, which you will see is inscribed with the words: “The kingdom of God or the kingdom of Israel re-established as the new or millennial heavens and earth.”

The long interval between the kingdom of God, as it was under the Mosaic constitution of things, and the kingdom of God as it will be under Christ, is filled up by the kingdoms of men. These are all founded by the sword; they are all in the hands of sinners; they are all of them governed upon the principles of diabolism. nevertheless, they are under divine supervision. The fact that order continues in the world—that anarchy does not prevail—that the world is in such a state that decent men can live in it, goes to show the truth of the lesson taught to Nebuchadnezzar—that the Most High rules the head of gold, that the Most High rules the kingdoms of men. These are all founded by the sword: they are all in the hands of sinners; they are all of them governed upon the principles of diabolism. Nevertheless, they are under divine supervision. The fact that order continues in the world—that anarchy does not prevail—that the world is in such a state that decent men can live in it, goes to show the truth of the lesson taught to Nebuchadnezzar—that the Most High rules them, that the Most High rules the kingdoms of men; and so much order in the world, goes to prove that God rules among the kingdoms of men, has a certain purpose to accomplish, and men know not what that purpose is. Those who have the government of the world in their hands seek to establish their own policy. If they were to establish their policy uncontrolled by God, God’s purpose would be subverted and perverted. But He over-rules them; for we see things tending to the development of a certain declared purpose, as mankind are the agents employed in the development of the events that are to lead to that crisis, and are profoundly ignorant of what that crisis is, it follows that God is making use of them, and shaping their rebellious policy to the accomplishment of what family of Cyrus; thus the breast and arms of silver were historically illustrated.

The leg and thighs of brass, Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar, represented the first kingdom that was to arise after the silver dominion had passed away. Brass was selected to represent the first kingdom, because the people who constituted that kingdom selected brass as their representative metal. Hence you read in history of the bronze-coated Greeks. The brazen part of the image represents the Macedonian or Grecian dynasty which was caused to supersede the Medo-Persian empire by the conquests of Alexander the Great, in B.C. 334. The silver empire came to an end with the overthrow of the last Persian monarch, Darius, after having continued 200 years. The brazen element of the image has its counterpart in the chart before you in the brass-coloured square to the right of the silver-blue of the Medo-Persian Empire.

Daniel told the king that after the brazen would come the iron phase of the kingdom of men. The iron was to represent a power stronger than any that had preceded it. Hence, Daniel says that as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all these (the preceding metals), so would the fourth kingdom break in pieces and subdue all others. The iron portion of the image consisted of legs of iron, and feet that were part iron and part clay. Now, as you know, iron or clay are not in their nature cohesive. They will not mix together so as to form a solid substance. Hence, their mixture in the feet of the image represents a fragile combination of political powers at the time signified by the feet. The iron as a whole is the fourth section of the image, and represents the great empire that succeeded the Grecian dynasty, viz., the Roman Empire, which in the chart has two sections of colour to represent the two aspects symbolised by the pure iron and the iron mixed with clay. I refer to the lead-coloured patch after the Grecian square, and the lighter and longer square immediately to the right of that. The Roman power swallowed up the provinces of the Grecian Empire, and some of the provinces of the Babylonian, so that the fourth empire was representative of all the dominions which had preceded it.

This same kingdom of men, in its various dynasties, is represented in another of Daniel’s visions by a tree, which, with its outspread branches, sheltered all the beasts of the earth, and gave roost to all the fowls of heaven. At a certain time, the tree was cut down, its stump was allowed to remain in the earth, and the stump was banded with two bands, one brass and the other iron. The brass band of the tree stump corresponds with the brazen portion of Nebuchadnezzar’s image—answering to the Grecian element, while the iron band of the
great mountain, in the fulness of its represented by this little stone becoming a power. Now, the question is, what is dominion. There is no room for any rival follows that there is no room for a second filled by the mountain dominion, it whirlwind, but the little stone which saw. The stone having acquired motion, not the threshing-floor, and capable of being blown earth. It was necessary not only that the image something more had to be done before the little stone, striking the image on these brittle clay—a brittle mixture, easily fractured. The

people, but it shall break in pieces and subdue all these kingdoms (represented by the ten toes), and it shall stand for ever.”

When the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar was shattered to pieces, and the fragments were all lying on the ground, they are said by the prophet to be shattered to pieces together or ground together. That is a very important item in the understanding of the vision. The stone did not demolish the image piecemeal. It did not break first the head; then the breast and arms; then the body, and then the legs and feet. It struck the image on the feet, and thus shattered the whole image into fragments, and afterwards, the fragments were ground to pieces together.

“Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.”

Now, the feet could not be struck till they were in existence, and they were not in existence in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. Hence, the breaking of the “iron and the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold together,” is an event which we have to look for in our own future. The things represented by the different metallic parts of the image have never been “broken to pieces together.” Daniel continues, “Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter, and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.”

In this verse, we have an exposition of the statement in an earlier verse, that God made known to Nebuchadnezzar what should come to pass in the latter days. These latter days are now upon us: we are contemporary with them.

Daniel had a vision of these things which he records in the 7th chapter. He saw a storm in the Mediterranean Sea, representing the conflicts in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean, out of which the various dynasties would arise, for the beasts are said to “rise up out of the sea,” and “out of the earth.” It also goes to show that the storm on the sea which developed the results of the storm, was to be taken as a storm affecting the countries bounding the Great Sea or Mediterranean. While he was contemplating the strife of the elements, he saw four extraordinary looking beasts arise out of the waters. These may be called the first beast, the second beast, the third beast, and the fourth beast.

The Vision of the Four Beasts

The first beast is described as a lion with eagles’ wings in the first manifestation of it. Afterwards, its wings were plucked, and it stood upon its feet, and a man’s heart was given to it. The second beast was a bear with three ribs in the mouth of it, and one shoulder higher than the other, representing two distinct dynasties. The higher shoulder corresponds with the higher horn of the ram in the vision of the 8th chapter, representing the Persian dynasty of the Medo-Persian empire. The three ribs in the mouth of the beast represented the three presidential divisions into which the Medo-Persian empire was divided, and their being in the bear’s mouth signifies that the presidential divisions were subject to the sovereign power of the Persian dominion. It was said to the second beast, “Arise, devour much flesh.” The third beast was like a leopard, and it had four heads and four wings like a fowl on the back of it. This beast as a whole, answers to the brass of Nebuchadnezzar’s image, representing the third kingdom that should arise: the four heads represent the four dominions into which the third, or Grecian, empire was divided on the death of Alexander, and the four wings, the four quarters of the heavens in which the four dominions were to be found. This is represented in the 8th chapter by the four horns on the head of the Grecian goat (verse 8), the four horns of the one vision answering to the four heads of the other, and pointing east, west, north, and south according to the division of the third empire. In the 11th chapter of Daniel, two of the horns or heads are dropped, and the prophecy discourses on only the northern and southern heads of the leopard. The leopard with its heads and the goat with its horns, represent, as a whole, the Macedonian empire founded by Alexander the Great upon the ruins of the Persian-

stump corresponds with the iron of the image, representing the Roman banding of the kingdom of men.

The feet were part iron and part clay. On each foot are five toes. This signified that the fourth kingdom, in its last form, should be subdivided into ten parts. This is very clear from the 7th chap. of Daniel, where we find the record of a vision seen by Daniel himself, in which the four kingdoms are represented by four beasts instead of four metals. On the head of the fourth beast, were ten horns. We also find ten horns upon the great red dragon of Rev. 12 and upon the head of the beast that comes out of the sea, in chap. 13. Wherever you find these ten horns treated of, whether in Daniel’s book or the Apocalypse, they represent the same powers, which powers, or kingdoms, have existence in our day, and have existed in the world—that is, in Europe—for the last 1,330 day-years, and are now verging, all of them, to their fall; and when they do fall, they will disappear for ever.

The toes of the image bring us down to the latter days—the last period—the last crisis of human government. The feet and toes were partly iron and partly clay, to represent that the metallic image dominion, in its last form would be partly strong as the iron, and partly weak as the clay—a brittle mixture, easily fractured. The little stone, striking the image on these brittle feet, brought it down to the ground, but something more had to be done before the little stone could become a mountain to fill the whole earth. It was necessary not only that the image should be shattered to pieces, but that these pieces should be ground to powder—comminuted into dust, as light as the chaff of the threshing-floor, and capable of being blown entirely away. This is what Daniel says the king saw. The stone having acquired motion, not only fell the image to the earth, but ground the fragments to powder, and a whirlwind carried the powder away.

Thus, all that was represented by the metallic image was completely swept away. Not a vestige remained. Nothing was left by the whirlwind, but the little stone which became a mountain or dominion, filling the whole earth. When the whole earth is filled by the mountain dominion, it follows that there is no room for a second dominion. There is no room for any rival power. Now, the question is, what is represented by this little stone becoming a great mountain, in the fulness of its manifestation or development? The prophet Daniel told the king what the mountain-stone represented, in these words:

“In the days of these kings (that is, the kings or kingdoms represented by the ten toes) the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and it shall not be left to other
bear dominion.

Afterwards, Daniel saw a fourth beast arise up out of the sea. He describes it as dreadful and terrible, and diverse from all the three beasts that preceded it. It had on its head ten horns, answering to the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s image: but what struck him as most remarkable in connection with the head of the fourth beast was this, that while he was looking at the ten horns, another little horn arose among them (verse 9). His attention was directed to that little horn particularly, because, unlike all the other horns, there were in it eyes like the eyes of man and a mouth speaking great things. He observed that when this little horn rose, three of the original ten fell. His attention was particularly arrested by this little (eleventh) horn, and when he wanted to know the interpretation of the vision as a whole, you find him enquiring particularly as to the meaning of the little horn that had eyes and mouth, in which I may say, we of the latter days are particularly interested, for we read that the little horn prevailed until the Ancient of Days came, and that event has not yet occurred.

Daniel says, “I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them.” No wonder he was interested in a horn with eyes and mouth, that made war against his own class, for Daniel was one of the saints. The symbolism pointed to a war on the part of the little-horn community waged against the saint-community—a war that was to be successful for a while on the part of the little horn. This has been the order of things during all the long dreary period of the kingdom of men. Human governments have all been opposed to God’s truth, and they have made war upon all that class of people in their several countries who are entitled scripturally to the designation of the saints. You cannot make peace between them. That is the reason why we who advocate the doctrine of God’s saints are in hostility to the world. Those on our side who would make peace with the enemy are not fit to be on our side. It is war to the knife between the powers that be and all Christadelphians. We accept no truce; we will consent to no compromise. Either they must conquer us or we will conquer them,—by argument now, but when the time for argument is passed away, and the Lord has come with power and great glory, His saints will take the sword and conquer the world, whether the world likes it or not.

“...by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down” — Daniel 8:11.

Grimg evidence remains of the Roman conquest of Jerusalem in the Arch of Titus above and in the huge masonry from the temple buildings which still lie where they fell centuries ago (below). The Roman conquest brought an end to the daily sacrifice and the “Holy” (i.e. the sanctuary or temple) was cast down.


The saints are not always to be prevailed against. They were to be prevailed against “until” the time comes for that event to be developed which we have already called attention to in connection with the metallic image—viz., the breaking of the image to pieces by the catastrophe of the little stone’s descent, and the establishment of the stone dominion by conquest in all the earth. The saints will then no longer be prevailed against, but sit on the throne of universal dominion. This climax is described in the image-vision thus: “The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; it shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and destroy all other kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

In this vision of the four beasts, the matter is put somewhat differently. It is said the little horn prevailed against the saints, “until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High.” Now, who is the Ancient of Days? The Deity; but how is He to “come”? In Jesus of Nazareth, who is Deity manifested in our human nature—justified by spirit. Jesus himself preached this coming in power and great glory. He said,

“When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.”

That is the time when the Ancient of Days comes; judgment shall then be given—to whom? “Judgment was given to the saints of the Most High.” The little horn made war against the saints until judgment was given to the saints who had been made war upon. When judgment is given to them, they will no longer be trampled under foot. When the time arrives for the Ancient of Days to manifest himself, the fortunes to the two parties will be reversed. The saints will have power put into their hands, and they will execute judgment on the powers of the world:

“I beheld, and the same horn—the little horn with eyes—the episcopal horn, the overseeing horn, with mouth that spoke great things and blasphemy against the Most High—made war with the saints, and prevailed against them until the Ancient of Days came.”

That little word “until” indicates that...
nor any existence in the days of John the apostle; they came into existence in the middle ages. “And another shall rise after them”—the little horn with eyes and mouth—“that shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings”—three of the primitive horns—“and he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change the times and laws; and they (the saints) shall be given into his hand (or power), until a time, and times and the dividing of time (or for a period extending over 1,260); but the judgment shall sit and they shall take away his (the Little Horn’s) dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and all dominions shall serve and obey Him. “Hitherto is the end of the matter;” that is, the end of the times of the Gentiles, and the commencement of the new constitution of the world, which will continue undisturbed in peace and righteousness for a thousand years.

The four beasts are represented on the chart by the sections of colour that answer to the metals of the image, and you will find them mentioned in the line below the names of the metals. Above both are the names of the empires represented, and on the extreme right is a pink perpendicular margin representative of the millennium, when the kingdom will again be restored to Israel, and given into the hands of the saints.

The Vision of the Evening-Morning

In the 8th chap. Daniel records a certain catastrophe that was seen by him in vision, viz., the taking away of the daily sacrifice, the treading under foot of the Holy Land and the dispersion of the Jewish people, leaving nothing but desolation and that which makes desolate for a long period. As the Jewish commonwealth was at the time of the vision in ruins, it showed to Daniel that there must be a previous restoration of it before the time of the fulfilment of the vision; and he was particularly interested in how long, after the restoration from the Babylonish captivity, this desolating abomination should prevail against the fortunes of Israel. He was answered, that it was a long period, called the evening-morning of 2,300 years (KJV); and when that period had passed away, a new series of events should be developed the result of which would be to avenge, justify, or cleanse “the Holy.” It matters not which form of speech you employ, for the consummation of its avengement, justification or cleansing results in the building again of the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and the establishment of the Messiah on the throne of Israel, under the Millennial constitution.

This long period of 2,300 years has all passed away. We have not to wait and look forward to it as Daniel had. We (can) look back and see that it is over 2,300 years since (the Goat power overthrew the Ram—Ed) and that therefore the long period of waiting has all passed away (please compare chart on page 6 adjusted from 1869 to the present—Ed). Does this mean anything or does it not?

I believe it means that the period for Israel’s down-treading is at an end, and that we have entered upon a new series of events that will culminate in the cleansing of the Holy. We are not necessarily to look for some great event that will wind-up the purposes of God in a flash of lightning. One series of events having come to its close, another series has already begun and will continue to develop more and more largely until the Ancient of Days makes his appearance and takes things into his own hands. That this will be the order in which the events of these latter days will develop, we are justified in saying, because it is the order of all God’s past relations with Israel. All His purposes and schemes with them have been gradual in development. God is never in a hurry. He has plenty of time at His disposal. He is not bound to do things according to your speculation or mine as to how long He ought to take. He has fixed the times and seasons. He has commenced the development of His events, and
they will not be interrupted by the policy of
men, but on the contrary, the activity of men
to carry out their own purposes will only expedite
His. He has the controlling power, and what He
has decreed will most assuredly come to pass.
None can hinder or stay His hand.

Elements in the New Series of Events

These events have begun. Egypt rises in
commercial importance. You hear of the
fortunes of the Jews being improved in parts of
the world where they were formerly oppressed
in shameful severity. You hear of a canal being
cut through the Isthmus of Suez, to carry the
commerce of the world by a new route along the
Mediterranean, through the Cana, into the Red
Sea, through the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb to
British India, all of which will have an
important bearing on these countries. We in
America know that when you cut a canal
through a wilderness, the land becomes ten-fold
more valuable than it was, because of easy
access to the markets. So when a canal of such
magnitude and such world-wide interest as that
through the Isthmus of Suez, united the
Mediterranean and Red Seas, the results to the
countries adjacent cannot fail to be very
great and vital. Already have we seen an
illustration of this. There is a town called Ismailia, with

from 5,000 to 10,000 inhabitants, where all was
desert before the formation of the canal; and
there is a Port Said at the Mediterranean entry of
the canal, and Suez at the Red Sea entry, both
important places, and rapidly growing in
importance, showing that the cutting of the
channel through the southern portion of Arabia is
bringing those countries into the highest
commercial importance.

These are only elements in the new series of
events which will ultimate in the appearing of
Christ to take the matter in hand, and restore
the Jews to their own land, and set up the kingdom
which the God of heaven is to establish, which
kingdom, put into the hands of the saints, will
destroy all the kingdoms of Europe and
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This period of seventy seeks is represented
by the shorter line or belt of green below the
line representing the 2,300 evening-morning period. At the end of the period, Messiah the
Prince was cut off by the little horn of the
goat—not the little horn with eyes and mouth,
which is seen on the head of Daniel’s fourth
beast, but the little horn that arises out of one of
the horns of the Grecian goat, and waxes great
towards the south and towards the pleasant land,
and by whom also the daily sacrifice was taken
away.

The times allotted for the duration of the
kingdom of men are expressed in seven
symbolic times (Daniel chapter 4). This long
period of 2,520 years is called by Jesus “the
times of the Gentiles.” In his prophecy
centering the destruction that was in his day
impending over the Jewish nation, he says
(Luke 21:24), “Jerusalem shall be trodden under
the feet of the Gentiles until the times of the
Gentiles be fulfilled.” When those times are run
out, the Gentiles will have no more right to
govern themselves and no more power over
Jerusalem. There will be no more vote by ballot.
The people will not be consulted as to who
should rule over them. God will give them
rulers as He thinks proper, and they will be
obliged to submit. The time for the self-
government of the devil will have passed away.
The world will have had enough of that.
Jesus told a Samaritan woman whom he met at Jacob’s well: “Ye worship ye know not what” (John 4:23).

We might think that it was not a very kind thing to say at first—perhaps even a little off-hand, for Jesus continued: “We know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.”

It often does appear unkind and brusque to speak truth, but in those far off days Jews wouldn’t even speak to Samaritans—yet here, Jesus not only speaks to a Samaritan woman but to one who had up to that point lived a very shady life. She had had no less than five husbands and was now living with a sixth man, yet Jesus cuts across all convention and speaks to the woman about God, worship and salvation.

Jesus pointed out that the Samaritans didn’t know what they worshipped, and perhaps we can hear an echo of this in some modern worshippers who, when asked to explain their understanding of God in logical terms, tell us that it is all a “Mystery.” “We are not supposed to understand it.”

So Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that God is essentially force or power! This is the fundamental statement which he makes.

“God” in Hebrew

Jesus said that the Jews understood what it was they worshipped and it is interesting to note the meaning of the Hebrew equivalent of the English word “God.”

The Hebrew writers of the Old Testament used two main words, one singular and the other the plural form. The singular el is formed of the letters aleph and lamed. The plural word elohim has the first two letters the same then adding letters beth, yod and mem.

El means “Mighty One.” It denotes “strength, power” (Gesenius and Bagster lexicons). The plural form, elohim means “Mighty Ones.”

So we can readily see that to the Hebrew the ideas of power, strength, force—were inherent in the very words used for “God.” This helps us to understand what Jesus was saying to the Samaritan woman—“God is spirit”—He is Power! This the Jews understood.

A Powerful Intelligence

Not only does the Hebrew word for God carry the idea of power, but the Scriptures describe God in those terms. For example, the prophet Isaiah tells us to look at the starry night sky:

“Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth... Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD...” (Isaiah 40:26, 28).

Immense power controlling billions of starry orbs in their ordered circuits—each one a world travelling at thousands of miles per hour through infinite space and yet with the precision of the “the cosmic clock.” Not one collides!

Such is the God who reveals Himself to us through the Bible.

Creator of Heavens and Earth

The book of Job, written many centuries before the time of Christ describes God’s creation:

“He stretcheth out the north over empty space and hangeth the earth upon nothing” (Job 26:7 RV).

Such a description made so long ago surely demonstrates a knowledge far superior to that of the ancients who thought the earth was supported on pillars! But verse 13 of the same chapter has more:

“By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens.”

By his spirit—by that infinite power that is subject to his will and direction—God “garnished” the heavens. This carries the idea of beauty. Yes, we can appreciate what is written in the 19th Psalm: “The heavens declare the glory of God.” As we “lift up our eyes high, and behold,” we see evidence of power, evidence of law and order—precision. We also see glorious beauty. This, surely, is the work of an intelligent Power far above anything else we know.

The Word of Power

In Psalm 33:6 we read:

“As we “lift up our eyes high, and behold,” we see evidence of power, evidence of law and order—precision. We also see glorious beauty. This, surely, is the work of an intelligent Power far above anything else we know.

The Word of Power

In Psalm 33:6 we read:

“The word of the LORD was the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.”

Here is that interesting word again breath or
spirit. So the word of God goes forth as the breath or spirit of His mouth. This teaches us the principle that God’s Word is Spirit—it is power. But this power can be perceived in two ways: it is creative power, and it is a moral force.

In Isaiah 41:4 God asks “Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning?” The New English Bible perhaps clarifies the sense here: “Whose work is this, I ask, who has brought it to pass? Who has summoned the generations from the beginning?” The reply is given:

“I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.”

So God says of Himself that He is the First. He is aleph. He is the beginning, the source. This is so in the creative sense for He is the first cause underlying the physical creation—but He is also the first cause in a moral or ethical sense.

Elohim

As we have seen, God is el. In the singular this is the first cause or source of all things. As the apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 8:6, “...to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things...”

But God has created other beings. For example, in Psalm 104:4 we read that He “maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flame of fire.” So these “angels” who are His ministers are also spirit. They are not phantoms or ghosts such as myth and the fictions of paganism describe—they are not fanciful creatures with wings: they are spirit or power.

In 1 Corinthians 15:44 the apostle informs us that “There is a natural body, and there is a spirit body.” What does he mean? Read verse 40:

“There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial.”

Or verse 48:

“As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.”

So a spirit body is celestial or heavenly in origin. It is in itself a “powerhouse” yet derived from the First Cause or source of all power. An earthly body is familiar enough to everyone of us. It is the “natural” body that we all possess—a body which in due course will return to its basic form-dust (compare Genesis 3:19).

But the angels He made “spirits”—they are “Mighty Ones” (Hebrew: elohim). These spirit-beings, or Mighty Ones, are referred to very frequently in Scripture. They are “his angels, that excel in strength,” that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word” (Psalm 103:20).

In our diagram of this concept we see the central source of power (and intelligence) called el. We then see other powers, each a system in itself yet derived from the First Cause. These represent the elohim, the plural manifestation of the One First Cause.

In this way the spirit is radiated and manifested in a multitude of beings who “do his commandments” or will. To those who recognize the reality of the God of heaven, and who stand in awe of His great Power and Goodness—and who “tremble at his word” (see Isaiah 66:2)—there is much help and strength. These angels or elohim are “ministering spirits” to such people (Hebrews 1:14). As the Psalmist has written, “The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them” (Psalm 34:7-8).

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“God” in Hebrew

אֵל (singular) “Mighty One”

אֵלֹהִים (plural) “Mighty Ones”

INCORRUPTIBLE SPIRIT DWELLING IN LIGHT

A first principle with me in all reasonings upon this subject is, that “there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all” His spiritual family. Another axiom is, that “He is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see” (1 Timothy 6:15-16; 1:17). And again, “God is spirit” (John 4:24); and He is “incorruptible” (Romans 1:23). The INCORRUPTIBLE SPIRIT DWELLING IN LIGHT is the scripture revelation of the indefinable essence of the self-existent Eternal One, who is from everlasting to everlasting, God. What His essence consists in, He has not revealed; He has made known to us His name, or character, which is enough for men to know; but to say that, because He is a spirit, He is therefore “immaterial,” is to speak arrant nonsense; for immateriality is nothingness; a quality if we may say, alien to the universe of God.

“Incarnate” is a term, by which one doth mean the Everlasting Father HImself. Elohim is a name bestowed on Him. In the singular “El” occurs in Scripture only in the words, “God” (Hebrew: elohim) and “el” (plural) “Mighty Ones” (elohim). It is the name of God in general. “El” is said to have appeared to Abraham, as he sat in his tent-door (Gen. 18:1); but when he first caught sight of the visitant, he did not see the Lord but “three men,” or Elohim, of whom one was the chief. Read the whole chapter and see twenty-nine of the next, and it will be seen that the Everlasting God talks and acts by, or through, these Elohim, but chiefly through one of them, styled the Lord God. This is the first cause in a moral or ethical sense.

Elpis Israel

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The fact that there are four records of these cities (Numbers 35; Deuteronomy 4; 19; Joshua 20) indicates that perhaps there is more here than just a list of cities to which the Israelites could flee if they were in trouble.

There were a total of six of these special cities, three on the east of the Jordan River and three on the west. They are all named in Joshua 20:7,8 as follows—on the west; Kadesh, Shechem, Kirjatharba or Hebron and on the east; Bezer, Ramoth and Golan. The vast majority of Israel would be within 30km/18 miles of a city, as indicated by the circles on the map; most fit people could cover this distance within a few hours by running.

The first thing is that they each turn out to be a Levitical city. There were a total of 48 of these Levitical cities scattered throughout the land, which were intended to be centres of truth, where the resident Levites could be a lightstand in their locality.

So what were these cities of refuge for? In an agricultural community as Israel’s was, there were many opportunities for accidents to happen, sometimes these could be fatal. God treats the taking of a man’s life seriously. God gave this commandment to Noah, when they had left the ark to start a new life in the post-flood world.

“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man” (Genesis 9:6).

Many years later, God called the nation of Israel to Mt Sinai, and having set out His wishes in the Ten Commandments, added many other rules and regulations. Among them was this commandment.

“He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death. And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee” (Exodus 21:12, 13).

We see the mercy of God in making provision so that further blood-shed should be avoided. Remember this provision was for cases of accidental manslaughter. Various examples are given of how this could happen. In Deuteronomy 4:42 it gives a general description:

“That the slayer might flee thither, which should kill his neighbour unawares, and hated him not in times past; and that fleeing unto one of these cities he might live.”

There had to be no animosity between them; it had to be a case of a terrible accident. More specific examples are given in other passages, such as using an axe and the head flies off and kills someone close by (Deut. 19:5); or clearing the stones from the land, throwing them to the boundaries and accidentally hitting somebody, mortally wounding them (Num. 35:23).

The Cities of Refuge were appointed to be places where such a person, who had shed innocent blood, could flee to safety from the relatives of the person who had been killed, who might pursue them, seeking revenge in their anger. The country had to be divided up and roads prepared to give unhindered access to these cities.

“Thou shalt prepare thee a way, and divide the coasts of thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every slayer may flee thither” (Deut. 19:3).

The reference to three parts applied to the land to the east of Jordan, which they had conquered at this time. Three more cities were added to the west of the Jordan after they had conquered the rest of the land. Jewish tradition says the roads had to be kept clear of obstacles and well signposted with the word miklat—refuge, so that there was no hindrance to getting there as quickly as possible. These words of Isaiah reflect such a picture.

“And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people” (Isaiah 57:14).

Within the city he was safe—the Mosaic Law forbade his pursuers to touch him once he had reached the city gate.

On his arrival in the city gate, he had to explain to the city elders what had happened and they would provide accommodation for him.

“And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him...
into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them” (Joshua 20:4).

Meanwhile the elders of the nearest village or town to where the death had taken place had to investigate the circumstances of the death. The one who had committed the deed would be fetched from the City of Refuge to answer before the elders who had to come to a decision as to whether it was an accidental death or a premeditated murder. In the latter case the punishment was death. If found not guilty of murder, then he would be taken back to the City of Refuge and there would live in safety.

“Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments: And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled” (Numbers 35:24, 25).

It would not be easy, separated from friends and family—they could come and visit him, but he could not leave the city of refuge, at least not without risking his life. There were compensations, being a Levitical city this would—in the days when Israel was faithful—be the centre of Bible study. He could grow crops and look after livestock, provided he remained within the suburbs of the city. The dimensions of

the land surrounding the Levitical cities are given in Number 35.

“And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts. And the suburbs of the cities, which ye shall give unto the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about. And ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits; and the city shall be in the midst; this shall be to them the suburbs of the cities” (Numbers 35:3-5).

There seems a little confusion; did one measure out from the city wall 1,000 or 2,000 cubits? The answer seems to be both! The suburbs stretched 1,000 cubits and then one measured a further 2,000 cubits for what Joshua 21:12 calls the fields of the city, for their crops and vineyards. 3,000 cubits is roughly 1,500 yds. or 1,400 metres. These boundaries would be marked by boundary stones, so it was clear where the limits of the city lay.

If, however, the man who had fled chose to go outside the city boundaries, he took his life in his own hands, for if a relative of the dead person met him, he might exact revenge.

“But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled; And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of blood: Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest: but...
Great High Priest who would come, who would be Prophet, Priest and King. His wonderful work of Israel's Messiah, the one who was not only born to be a King, but a High Priest also. It would be his death that would release him from the sentence of death, it also involves us. You and I are murderers! No, not deliberate murderers, but like the one who had accidentally slain his friend or neighbour, we had a part in the death of a man. There comes a point in our lives that we realised that the Lord Jesus laid down his life that we might have hope of life to come. We weren't there when they crucified our Lord Jesus, but in order to associate ourselves with the hope of freedom from this body of sin, we acknowledge that it was for us he died.

Above: This view of Shechem shows: “The neck of the shoulder” (the place where burdens are carried) between Gerizim and Ebal. In the foreground we see the modern Arab city of Nablus.

After the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession” (Numbers 35:26-28).

Here he had to remain until the death of the High Priest, and then he was free to return to his home village without fear of the relatives taking vengeance (Joshua 20:6). That seems strange; how would the death of the High Priest change the feelings of the “avenger of blood,” the dead person’s relatives? Well it wouldn't. We have to conclude that God is teaching us something; that atoning for death involves the death of the High Priest. Yet clearly the death of the Levitical High Priest could not do that. No! But the High Priest to come after the order of Melchizedek, through his death can come the forgiveness of sins. So although the relatives of the dead may still feel bitter, the Law said that they could no longer take vengeance. The man was free to go home in peace.

For those born in Old Testament times, here was a wonderful pointer to the Messiah who would come; the one who was not only born to be a King, but a High Priest also. It would be his death that would release him from the sentence of death that descendants of Adam all are born to, and allow him to return to his inheritance, that he might dwell again under his own vine and fig tree in his tribal allotment.

If the High Priest was young, the manslayer might never return home; if he was old then his stay could possibly be quite short. This seeming strange law gives us a clear pointer to the wonderful work of Israel's Messiah, the one who would be Prophet, Priest and King. His death signalled the hope of freedom for all who will trust in him.

The cities of refuge were a living parable which is still relevant today! In pointing to the Great High Priest who would come, who would be able, through his death, to deliver his people from the sentence of death, it also involves us. You and I are murderers! No, not deliberate murders, but like the one who had accidentally slain his friend or neighbour, we had a part in the death of a man. There comes a point in our lives that we realised that the Lord Jesus laid down his life that we might have hope of life to come. We weren't there when they crucified our Lord Jesus, but in order to associate ourselves with the hope of freedom from this body of sin, we acknowledge that it was for us he died.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter 2:24).

With that recognition comes responsibility and action is needed! The Lord Jesus died for me and so I must do something in response. For many of us this is a matter which grows over time, as we learn the true message of the Bible and arrive at this conclusion. For the Jews on the day of Pentecost, listening to the words of Peter showing that they had not only rejected the Son of God but their rulers had crucified him, they cried out as their eyes were opened to the enormity of the situation, their consciences being seared with guilt. Peter gave them the advice that they needed.

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38).

And so for us, we have to repent and turn our lives around and join ourselves to the nearest body of believers, who teach the Bible truths. We have to flee for refuge to the place appointed by God. We may not realise it at the time, but God ensures the road to take has been marked out and through angelic guidance we will be brought in contact with the Truth, and have opportunity to become joined with those of “like precious faith.” In the words of the apostle Paul:

“That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. 6:18-20).

Once within the city we have to remain and not depart from the company of our fellow
travellers. We can see the appropriateness of these cities being Levitical cities: centres where the Truth should have been upheld. We have to remain “in the city” walking in the Truth until—in our case—the return of our High Priest. For us his death is in the past, it is his return that we await.

There is another interesting aspect of this living parable. Hidden within these arrangements is the justification of our community’s practice to examine those who wish to enter the ecclesia. The motives are examined by the “elders” and if found “in order,” a place is found for them in the ecclesial “home.”

The time of our pilgrimage might be long—or it might be short. In a sense, the return of the Lord for many comes at the day of their death; they are asleep and are unaware of the passage of time, and their next conscious thoughts will be on the day of the resurrection.

And yet again a wonderful parable unfolds as we consider the meaning of the names of these cities. All is known to our God; nothing is by chance. The order of the cities (we would term them towns) listed in Joshua 20:7, 8 runs like a U with the River Jordan running down the middle of it. It starts from the northwest with Kadesh up in the Galilee region, and works southwest to Shechem and in the extreme south of Israel to Hebron. The listing of the towns then turns eastward across the Jordan to Bezer, not far from Jericho. It then goes northwards up to Ramoth and finishing at Golan in the northeast.

The meanings of the names spell out a little parable about our journey in the Truth. It starts at Kadesh—a sanctuary, which is in Galilee—a circle (from the shape of the lake), in mount Naphtali—my wrestlings (Gen. 30:8). This is where the journey starts. God has appointed a sanctuary, a holy place, to which we flee; the circle points to its culmination and my wrestlings points that this is a matter of much personal thought and struggle. It moves to Shechem—the neck or shoulder as the place where burdens are carried (Gen. 24:15) in Ephraim—double fruit. We are not alone on this journey; there is one who has asked us to share his yoke (Matt. 11:30). Ephraim was not the firstborn, but obtained the blessing. In Christ, we Gentiles partake of the blessing of Abraham and his offspring. It moves to Kirjath-arba—the city of four. Originally this was the city of the 4 giants, Anak and his 3 sons (Num. 13:22) who were slain by Joshua and the city given to faithful Caleb. The greater Joshua overcame the power of sin to allow us into the 4 square city of Zion. It was renamed Hebron—association, league, we are not alone we have those we associate with in ecclesias, assemblies.

The naming of the cities then moves eastward across the Jordan to Bezer—protect. Now crossing the Jordan in the other direction, from east to west, is a symbol of the new life, entering the land of promise. Could therefore travelling in the opposite direction be an indication of death? If so then what a wonderful promise! Though our bodies decay, we are still in the protection of God. Bezer is mentioned as being in Reuben—see a son. Just as God brought forth His Son, so He will bring forth His saints. Moving up we next come to Ramoth—heights, raised up, elevation; this is our hope to be raised from the dead, to be elevated to sit in heavenly places with the Lord Jesus in his Kingdom. The final city was Golan—to remove, take away; to uncover so as to reveal. Our hope lies in this mortality being removed and the Divine life revealed in our bodies, that God’s glory might be revealed through our lives throughout eternity. Golan lay in Bashan—fruitful. Our High Priest has died that he might see his offspring (Isa. 53:10). In the words of the apostle:

“For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Heb. 2:10).

So these laws and lists of places are far from dry. They come to life with a wonderful foretelling of the work of our High Priest and our walk to the Kingdom. How wonderful is God’s foreknowledge, and how privileged we are to not only know these things but to be part of God’s glorious plan. And so we wait patiently for the coming of our Lord and Master to restore Israel to their land, to give them wise rulers at the hands of the 12 apostles (Matt. 19:28) and to bestow that change to immortality to his followers of all ages. When for them sin will no longer be able to exact its price, and a great multitude of men and women will be made like their Lord and Master, immortal. They will then be able to receive their inheritance in God’s fair land where they might enjoy the fruits of their labours in that portion of land around the Temple to be built in Jerusalem, given to the Prince, the Lord Jesus (Ezek. 45:7; 46:16; 48:21). I have a picture of saints, after their daily tasks of caring for the mortal population in whatever part of the globe they are given responsibility for, leaving them at night and caught up in the spirit, as was Philip, will be transported in an instant to their inheritance. Here they will enjoy sweet fellowship with their fellow saints, until it is time to return in the morning! All made possible by the death (and glorious resurrection) of their High Priest! How wonderful the foreknowledge of God, not only to be able, many hundreds of years before the birth and death of His son, to convey these things in living parables, but to cause cities to be given appropriate names, long before they became cities of refuge!

God is a God who delights in detail and who cares for His people. He will restore Israel to favour and joy, and raise from the dust of the earth an innumerable company whom He will redeem and extend His immortality to once mortal men and women. Now this is a God whom we delight to honour in serving Him and keeping His commandments.

THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL

It is a hope very distinct and tangible. Reigning with Christ, as exhibited in this gospel, is a reality. Popular hymns talk of reigning with Christ, but what do they mean? They know not. A mere subsistence of delight—a passive ecstasy, in which they drowsily float in the ethereal clouds of “the happy land”—in bathing in the blue and brightness of heaven—an imaginary bliss. This is not the Bible “reigning with Christ,” though the Bible reigning with Christ will have all the happiness about it that was ever imagined in connection with the orthodox heaven. The Bible reigning with Christ is a regulating of human affairs as they ought to be regulated: a guiding of mankind with power into ways of enlightenment and righteousness, joy and peace, in the then present time, with an unbounded prospect of eternal day beyond. Such a reigning with Christ is exactly adapted to meet the wants of the afflicted human race who will be blessed by it, and to give scope to the noble aspirations and benevolent ambitions of those who will be called upon to take part in it.

Robert Roberts
"The finger of God has indicated a course to be pursued by Britain which cannot be evaded, and which her counsellors will not only be willing, but eager, to adopt when the crisis comes upon them.

“The decree has long since gone forth which calls upon the Lion of Tarshish to protect the Jews. Upwards of a thousand years before the British were a nation, the prophet addresses them as the power which at “evening-tide” should interest themselves in behalf of Israel.”—Elpis Israel, 1849

“A COURSE WHICH CANNOT BE EVADED”

If many considered the above words unlikely to be fulfilled at the time that they were written over 160 years ago, what do we think of them today? Today Britain is not the nation that it was, and no longer “rules the waves”—or much of her former empire either for that matter. To think that modern Britain would stand up to protect the Jews, or interest itself in behalf of Israel might be thought unrealistic. It is true that Britain did once “view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people,” but when the crisis of World War II came upon them, the British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, was adamantly opposed to the idea. The three decades between 1917 and 1947 witnessed a complete change in Britain’s attitude towards the Jews. Even the horrific Holocaust was not enough to gain British sympathy! So what happened?

From Balfour to Bevin

Barbara Tuchman in her book Bible and Sword makes the following comment about Lord Balfour who issued the Declaration that bears his name:

“In Balfour the motive was Biblical rather than imperial. If the Biblical culture of England can be said to have any meaning in England’s redemption of Palestine from the rule of Islam, it may be epitomized in Balfour... Long before he ever heard of Zionism Balfour, steeped in the Bible from childhood, had felt a particular interest in the ‘people of the Book.’ According to his niece, companion, and biographer, Mrs. Dugdale, it was a ‘life long’ interest that ‘originated in the Old Testament training of his mother and in his Scottish upbringing.’”

It was the influence of the Bible upon British statesmen that caused them to “view with favour” the idea of a national home for Jews in Palestine. In order to oppose Balfour’s Declaration and the planned British Mandate, the influence of the Bible upon those in high places would have to be neutralized—and the party that had an interest in doing so was the Roman Catholic Church.

Opposition to the idea of a Jewish State therefore originated with the Vatican (and not with the Arabs, as is so often assumed). The overwhelming evidence for this has been
presented in a book by Sergio I. Minerbi entitled: The Vatican and Zionism: Conflict in the Holy Land—1895-1925. Chapter 6 in this book is titled “The Struggle to Block Approval of the Mandate,” and in chapter 8 we read this:

“On May 3, 1917 Weizmann received a letter from Felix Pinkus, one of the leaders of the Zionist Federation in Switzerland, who spoke of a great danger looming on the horizon. The Vatican, he said, was organizing all the Catholics in the world against a Jewish Palestine under British protection. A meeting on the subject was recently held in Chur, Switzerland, attended by the bishop of Chur, high-ranking Italians and Austrians, Reichstag member Matias Erzberger, and the Jesuit general. It was decided at that meeting to organize the Catholics in all countries, and especially in the United States, to bring about the internationalization of Palestine under the protection of the pope and to oppose British protection for Palestine by all means.”

And again:

“The British government and the Zionist Executive began to work with redoubled vigor to overcome the obstacles to approval. Opposite them stood the Catholic Church, which was applying pressure on the British directly and was working indirectly by mobilizing Catholic powers for the Vatican position and encouraging them to worsen their relations with the Mandate government in Palestine. There were rumors to the effect that the Vatican was even supporting Arab ferment against the Jews and British rule.”

Although Balfour’s Declaration was incorporated into the resulting Palestine Mandate, we can see in retrospect that the Vatican’s opposition to it was never abandoned.

The Vatican’s unrelenting hostility to a Zionist State in the Holy Land was explained by the late Avro Manhattan in his 1982 book The Vatican Moscow Washington Alliance. He wrote:

“Briefly, in Vatican thinking, the stronger Israel became, the stronger would be the ambitions of world Zionism. And vice-versa. Apart from the geographical presence of a Jewish state in the Middle East, the most controversial characteristic of an Israeli establishment, with Jerusalem as a territorial and mystical omphalos (centre, or hub), was its messianic nature, the central focus of the Hebrew teleological (purposed) dream.

“Because of this, the Vatican could not and would not tolerate the establishment of an Israel which claimed messianic privileges, or rather, messianic uniqueness and which, therefore, would compete with the Roman Catholic Church as the centre of a future spiritual kingdom....

“Although deliberately muted in public pronouncements, behind the Zionist banner there was to be found the ancient messianic hope for the coming of a global theocracy, as predicted by all the seers and prophets of Zion...

“The spectre of the creation of such a theocracy has haunted the inner chambers of the Catholic Church from her earliest inception, and is still a dominant fear. Hence her equivocal role in world affairs surrounding the birth and existence of the State of Israel...

“In Vatican eyes, therefore, the millenarian yearning for a global Hebrew theocracy represents a deadly threat to the eschatological teachings of the Catholic Church. When translated into concrete political terms, such a view spells not only rivalry, but implacable enmity.”

A Jewish State in the Holy Land, protected by a powerful Protestant Britain had to be opposed with might and main. It obviously became necessary to fight the battle on two fronts: first there would have to be a determined and accelerated attack on Bible-based Protestantism. In short Britain would have to be destroyed—and if Hitler could not accomplish
that, then some other way would have to be found to render the Island Race ideologically impotent. So that it became both unwilling as well as unable to protect the national home of the Jews. The result was seen in Ernest Bevin. With Protestant Britain immobilized, Arab and other Powers could be stirred up to destroy Israel.

The Papal Conquest

The Roman Catholic Church has been contending with the English nation ever since the time of Henry VIII. But having celebrated 400 years of the King James Version of the Bible, and having reminded us all of the long history and influence that it has had upon British life, it is astonishing to witness the decline in both religion and morality that is apparent in the country today. How is it that there has been such a remarkable change in the national character over the last 60 years or so?

It is not difficult to perceive a link—a cause and an effect—in the development of Britain which has involved the influence of the Bible. As Barbara Tuchman correctly observed:

“The translation of the Bible into English and its adoption as the highest authority for an autonomous English Church, the history, traditions, and moral law of the Hebrew nation became part of the English culture; became for a period of three-centuries the most powerful single influence on that culture... “Wherever the Reformation took hold the Bible replaced the Pope as the final spiritual authority.”

As this was certainly the case, we are justified in pointing out the fact that the popes had no love for the English Bible. History attests to the several attempts that were made to prevent its translation, its publication, and then its distribution throughout Britain’s Protestant empire and beyond. Just to highlight a few instances: It is common knowledge that the Roman clergy had the English Bible burnt in Tyndale’s time and during the period of the Reformation. But later than that, in 1898 the Pope condemned Bible Societies (such as the British and Foreign Bible Society). In December 1907 Bibles and Testaments were collected by priests and burned at Santa Cruz in the Madeira Islands—and later again in Laibach in Austria. As recently as 1957 stocks of Bibles belonging to the British Society in Madrid, Spain were confiscated and burnt. This was accompanied by a relentless campaign to discredit the Bible and have it neutralized as much as possible in Britain itself.

Great Britain

The Book that was once known as “the secret of England’s greatness” (the English Bible and especially the King James Version) was taken out of schools and subjected to slanderous criticism. Meanwhile new versions appeared with overwhelming regularity launching a new fashion every few years. For some years you proved that you were in vogue by quoting the NEB (in case we forget, that was the New English Bible). Then you had to change to the NIV, then to the New King James Version (that was for the reactionaries)—and then the ESB and so on. As has been said, “if the purpose of all this was to

Above: One of many paintings illustrating the gift of the English Bible to the world

Common Market—which became the European Economic Community—which became the European Union. So questions were pondered by some people—having lost its empire, would Britain lose its sovereignty also? Would the once Great Britain disintegrate and the United Kingdom become dis-united, breaking off Ireland, then Scotland, and then Wales? The words of John Redwood, MP were: “The United Kingdom is being destroyed from within and without” (The Death of Britain, 1999).

There are solid reasons for saying that this destruction of Great Britain has come about precisely because she has turned her back on the Bible. To quote the words of Jeremiah 8:9:

“The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?”

Prospects look pretty glum for Britain according to some forecasts. An article in Britain’s Mail read: “Our country has been changed completely.” The context was that of immigration which a 2011 census has revealed dramatically changed the cultural make-up of this country. Immigration occurs gradually—as it did in Britain on and off for centuries—then immigrant communities feel the need to integrate. Over time they become essential, indeed defining, parts of the life of the country. But immigration on the scale revealed in the new census is a recipe not for integration, but fracture. It spells the end of our unified national way of life.”

The suggestion was made by the paper that there had been a politically motivated attempt to radically change the country. Britain is a small country that is already overcrowded, yet in recent decades—and especially under Tony Blair (who
we now must recognize as a camouflaged Catholic) waves of immigrants have landed on the shores and at airports.

The Mail reported that:

“Since the 2001 census the number of people in Britain identifying themselves as Christian has dropped 13 percentage points, from 72 to 59 per cent. The number of Christians in Wales and England dropped by more than four million, with the number of Christians overall falling from 37 million to 33 million.

“But while Christianity has suffered this collapse, nearly all other religions, and Islam in particular, have experienced a vast growth-spurt, largely as a result of mass immigration.

“Over the decade since the last census, the number of Muslims has nearly doubled, going from 1.5 million in 2001 to 2.7 million.”

Who needs to be concerned about a Protestant Britain protecting the Jews, or interesting itself on behalf of Israel?

The Papal Conquest

It is not difficult to understand why Roman Catholics in England would do all in their power to bring about a change in the Protestant ruled kingdom of the 16th century. The Church of England was governed by the 39 Articles established by the Royal Warrant of 1562 which contained “the true doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God’s word.” These “Articles of Religion” contained many statements which were clearly designed to suppress the Roman Catholic religion. For example:

“The Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration, as well of Images as of Reliques, and also invocation of Saints, is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God...

“It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have publike Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people... the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits...”

“Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, are not commanded by God’s Law, either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve to godliness...

“The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England.”

When the King James “Protestant Bible” of 1611 was published, it contained direct references to “that man of Sin” and “popish persons” in the epistle that dedicated the publication to James I. Other remarks in the preface—“The Translators to the Reader” were equally condemning of the “Romanists.” The generous spirit and sense of “fair play” among the British people could not maintain the suppression of its Roman Catholic minority indefinitely, consequently the Toleration Acts of 1778 and 1791 were passed allowing freedom of worship and education. As the Emancipation bill passed through the houses of Commons and Lords in 1829, many voices warned the nation against the consequences for both Government and Crown.

Articles and books were written expressing deep concerns at that time. It was felt that the Roman Catholic objective was not merely toleration, but controlling power—to convert England to Catholicism and, eventually, to destroy the Protestant throne. Nonetheless, the Emancipation bill passed and 21 years later, in 1850, a Roman Catholic hierarchy was restored in Britain under the archbishop of Westminster.

The following extract from the book The Papal Conquest by Alexander Robertson (pub. 1909) explains some of the concerns felt:

“The promoters of former Roman Catholic Disabilities (Removal) Bills, such as those of 1792, when there was removed from the Statute-Book the law forbidding Roman Catholics to vote; of 1829, when there was removed that which forbade them sitting in Parliament; and 1846, when there was removed that which forbade the entrance of papal bulls into the kingdom, all solemnly swore that each concession would be the last to be sought, that each and all were to be “final settlements”; and that the Roman Catholic Church would for ever afterwards avoid political matters, and in each case (as we have already seen in that of 1829) the oaths and promises were deliberately broken.

“Cardinal Newman, replying to Mr. Gladstone’s (who was four times Prime Minister of Britain) complaint “that the English and Irish penal laws against Roman Catholics were repealed on the faith of assurances, which have not been fulfilled,” said: “No pledge from Catholics was of any value to which Rome was not a party.” Mr. Gladstone exclaimed: “Statesmen of the future recollect the words, and recollect from whom they came...”.

“Another, earlier writer expressed it in these words: “Alas! Britain... with mistaken generosity and compassion, she has folded a viper in her bosom, which, it is to be feared, may yet prove her destruction” (Popery in its Social Aspect by R.P. Blakeney).”

The Roman Catholic Cardinal Manning (1808-1892) in addressing Roman Catholic workers and establishments told them:

“It is good to be here in England. It is yours, right reverend fathers, to subjugate and subdue, to bend and to break the will of an Imperial race. You have a good commission to fulfil and great is the prize for which you strive. England is the head of protestantism, the centre of its movements, the stronghold of its powers. Weakened in England, it is paralysed everywhere; conquered in England, it is conquered throughout the world. Once overthrown here, it is but a war of detail. All
the roads of the world meet in one point, and this point reached, the whole world is open to the Church’s will” (Sermons on Ecclesiastical Subjects, Vol. 1, pp. 166-7).

The fact is that the British throne was established on an anti-Roman basis. It is discriminatory—but the question is why? Was it justified? The true answer to this is only possible when we have a knowledge of the history involved, and where there is an understanding of the Biblical principles which identify the great false church that was foretold:

- What was the “falling away” (apostasy) of 2 Thessalonians 2:3, and what was “that man of sin” revealed by it—and who is “the son of perdition”? The answer is Rome.
- Did the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 find a fulfillment in the subsequent history of Christianity? If so, when and where? Answer: A.D. 312, Rome.
- What is “that spirit of antichrist” referred to in 1 John 4:3, and who are they who the world hears? Answer: The spirit of error.
- What is the great Ecclesiastical system that deceives all nations, and in which is found the blood of prophets and saints (Rev. 18:23-24)?
- Who and what is “the great whore” which corrupts the earth with her fornication (Rev. 19:2)? Answer, again, Rome!

The answers to these questions (and many similar ones) lead us to only one conclusion, but it is a conclusion that the deceived do not want to face up to. In a post-Protestant Britain the population is unaware that spiritual devastation has come from an enemy with a smiling face and a warm hand-shake! Yet this is what has happened during a little over a century.

**Britain not European**

That Britain has been deceived and corrupted does not alter her destiny as outlined in the prophetic Scriptures. Today she has lost her empire, she has aligned herself with Catholic Europe and sometimes displays a pro-Arab and even anti-Zionist face to the world, but all this is a passing phase in her history.

It is important to understand the Biblical basis for the expectations penned in Elpis Israel over 160 years ago. There are two main pillars upon which that view rests. First, there is the identity of Britain with the “Tarshish” of Bible prophecy—and second, the reasons for excluding Britain from the ten horns of the European beast, and therefore from the confederacy of Gog as described in Ezekiel chapter 38. The key passage is that of Ezekiel 38:13:

> “Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof, she cannot be on both sides at the same time.

> “Which side will Britain be on? This booklet places before the reader evidence showing that Britain is identified in prophecies that concern those who protest and oppose the aggressive northern power who comes to invade Israel. She cannot and oppose herself, she is therefore perforce, not part of the European system when these prophecies are finally fulfilled. For this reason, writers over many years—some over a century ago—have seen Britain as being separated from Europe.”

Further, John Thomas who did write on this subject over a century ago made reference to the ten kingdoms represented by the toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s Image (Daniel chapter 2), and the horns of the Roman beast (Dan. 7:7; Rev. 17:12). In naming these kingdoms in Elpis Israel he wrote as follows:

> “I have not named Britain, although the island was a part of the Roman dominion. It is, however, no more imperative that she should be included in the ten except Egypt, which is also on the Roman territory. Existing theories require Britain to be counted in; but I have nothing to do with them; I propose to show a more consistent interpretation that shall harmonise with other important and interesting parts of the prophetic word.”

Again, in his exposition of the Apocalypse he had this to say in reference to the ten horns:

> “The ten horns were to ascend out of the Mediterranean upon which Daniel saw the tempest raging. Gaul, Spain, Italy, Illyria, Africa, and Dacia, are political sections of a terrene, whose waters, directly or indirectly, mostly discharge themselves into the Mediterranean. But the British Isles afar off have no relation to it at all. As Origen says in Hom. 6, A.D. 230, “The Britons are divided from our world.” They are no part of the Sea Monster’s interior maritime territory. Even in modern times they are three kingdoms, not a single horn only; and those three horns, the horn of England, the horn of Scotland, and the horn of Ireland, are more imperial than regal, and more Oriental than European.”

Another objection to Britain being numbered among the ten horns is, that though, indeed, she is ruled ecclesiastically by a name of blasphemy her constitution is, in word and deed, opposed to “the Name of Blasphemy” upon the heads of the beast. The ten horns all worship this Name, and recognise it as their Holy Father... But, blasphemer as Britain is in her constitutional ecclesiasticism, she protests against, and repudiates, the Chief Blasphemer of the world. She does not belong to the politico-ecclesiastical system, or body politic, of which he is the Mouth... the heart of the British peoples is hardened against them with the impenetrability of adamant. This hostility is known and understood at Rome, where the will, but not the power, has always existed to reduce Britain to subjection to the so-called “Holy See.” In witness of this, there is the Spanish Armada equipped and sent against England in the days of Elisabeth, at the instigation of the Court of Rome, that by the thumb-screw arguments of the Inquisition, the British nation might be brought within the pale of the Mediterranean Sea Monster, beyond which no heretical soul can be saved! No, the United Kingdom of England, Scotland and Ireland, was never one of the ten horns.”

It is when all this information is compiled and reflected upon that we are led to the inevitable conclusion that present conditions notwithstanding, Britain cannot be allied with the latter-day enemies of Israel. Her interests are moving away from Europe and towards her commonwealth allies, as well as to Islamic Arabia which is quietly developing less hostile policies towards Israel in view of the growing threat from Iran.

**The “Tarshish” Alliance**

Britain’s growing rift with Europe is reported upon almost daily. Newspaper headlines clearly show that the issue is becoming a major one that will effect the next General Election. “Britons’ Hostility to EU ‘at its deepest’ says William Hague,” declared the Daily Telegraph. The Mail reported “UK Independence Party support hits all-time high of 15% as anti-EU sentiment among votes increases.” The Economist had the front cover declaring “Goodbye Europe” and asks “What would happen if Britain left the EU.” The obvious answer to that question is that she would have to find different customers and different partners. Thus, the Mail had the headline: “Hague to launch world wide network of commonwealth embassies to tackle Superpower EU” (September 22, 2012). The article reported:
“William Hague will tomorrow launch a worldwide network of British Commonwealth embassies to rival the emergence of the EU as a foreign superpower.

“The Foreign Secretary is in Canada where he will sign an agreement to open joint UK-Canadian diplomatic missions abroad. He also hopes Australia and New Zealand will join the initiative whereby the four countries will pool their resources to extend their combined influence on world affairs.

“The move by Eurosceptic Mr Hague is seen as a counter to the EU’s fast-expanding European External Action Service, which is setting up offices in the US and other major countries.

“It is seen by some UK diplomats as a direct threat to Britain’s standing as a major world power.

“Now Mr Hague is hitting back with plans to increase the number of British embassies by teaming up with the three Commonwealth allies.

“In remote nations where Canada but not Britain has an embassy, or vice versa, they will share the embassy. Similar arrangements are expected to include Australia and New Zealand.

“Mr Hague said: ‘As David Cameron said when addressing the Canadian parliament last year, ‘We are two nations, but under one Queen and united by one set of values.’

“‘We have stood shoulder to shoulder from the great wars of the last century to fighting terrorists in Afghanistan...

“‘We are first cousins. So it is natural that we look to link up our embassies with Canada’s in places where that suits both countries. It will give us a bigger reach abroad for our businesses and people for less cost.’

“One British diplomat put it more bluntly: ‘For all the grandiose talk of European unity, we have so much more in common with many Commonwealth countries than the EU—and not just the English language.

“There is a saying in the British diplomatic corps that ‘the French want to do us over, the Germans want to lord it over us and the Italians are all over the place.’

“‘We would never dream of trusting them with intelligence secrets, but we share everything with the Canadians, Aussies and Kiwis... We Brits know who we are, who our real friends are, and between us we have been a rather good influence on the world in the past century.’

**A Course which cannot be Evaded**

The way out of Europe for Britain is becoming clear: she must rebuild the Commonwealth, and there is little doubt that the monarchy can be of some help in this. As days go by it is becoming urgent that this course be followed. Not only so, but as the public gradually become aware of what the Mail described as a “Monumental deceit; How our politicians have lied and lied about the true purpose of the European behemoth,” demand for action will surely grow. As the paper noted:

“Even on the Continent, influential voices are now recognising that something very significant is happening in Britain, as they suggest we should perhaps be allowed something never seen before—a mere ‘associate membership’ of the EU, allowing us to continue trading with it but without all its political superstructure.”

The United States believes that Britain’s exit from Europe would reduce American influence on the Continent, as Britain so often shares American views. In an article in Britain’s *Telegraph* under the heading “A united Europe is not in America’s interest” we read the following:

“As we move towards a new bipolar world, America will increasingly need allies against Chinese domination. The Chinese can already rely on Russia, much of Latin America, Africa and the Islamic world, while the US’s strongest allies remain the democracies—Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea and Israel. One of the many reasons that the Israel/Palestine conflict attracts such disproportionate coverage in the media is that it has become a proxy conflict for the West versus the Rest, as this map (above) shows.
On the basis of the information supplied to him, Professor David Freedman as editor of *The Biblical Archaeologist* emphasized the importance of the Biblical associations... The Ebla tablets, said Freedman, generally confirmed or at least supported the work of previous archaeologists who had related their finds to the Bible, “while undercutting the prevailing scepticism and sophistry of the larger contingent representative of Continental and American scholarship.”

Wilson says:

“After the initial claims that the Ebla tablets were highly relevant for early Bible records, there has been a chorus of voices raised to suggest that there should be more caution. It is entirely possible that this is more politic than scholarly as such, and Professor Freedman has been the subject of attack as to his supposed overreadiness to relate the finds to the early Bible records.”

The scholars directly concerned with the discovery—Pettinato, Matthiae, and Dahood—then attempted to minimize the relevance of the Ebla texts to the Scriptures—and it has been suggested that this was due to pressure from various sources, including the Syrian Government. Wilson quotes *Biblical Archaeology Review* for Sept/Oct 1978, “The Syrian government, however, would like to play down, if not suppress this (biblical) aspect of the tablets.” The Syrians, apparently, did not want any evidence that might be construed as support for Israel’s ancient claim to the land of Palestine.

Pettinato, the man who had translated the tablets and announced the Biblical links was banned from the excavation site and “replaced” by Alfonso Archi who subsequently wrote a scathing attack on the work done by Pettinato. — “Warnings From The Dust,” by Paul Billington.
ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE TRUTH

The visible evidence of Bible prophecy fulfilling for over a century

The Secret of England’s Greatness

Queen Victoria presenting a Bible in the Audience Chamber at Windsor
by Thomas Jones Barker
oil on canvas, circa 1863

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A poster from "lions" illustration Ezekiel 38: alternative to chain. It is in Thomas who is chained". Re...
er from the First World War (left) depicts the British Lion with her “young
" illustrating the relationship between English-speaking nations. Compare
el 38:13. And above, a cartoon in the Daily Telegraph in 1992 considers an
ative alliance should Britain’s relationship with Europe become a restrictive
it is interesting to note the language used in this paper for in 1854 it was John
as who published a book entitled “Anatolia: Russia triumphant and Europe
. Recent events indicate that the expectations of early Christadelphians are
quite likely to be realised

the EC binds us in chains,

is there an alternative?
Medal depicts the British Lion overcoming the nazi beast: 1939-1945
Israel Responds to the UN Vote

Controversy on the Mountains of Israel

By Matt Davies NOTTINGHAM UK.

Israel responds to the Palestinians’ UN status upgrade by authorising plans for 3000 new homes causing international uproar. The mountains of Israel are indeed being prepared for the return of Christ. We again see Israel at the heart of international controversy.

On Friday 30th of November, after the United Nations voted overwhelmingly to upgrade the status of the Palestinians to a “non-member observer state,” Israel responded by announcing it was authorising plans to be drawn up for 3,000 new settler homes in the West Bank and East Jerusalem—in an area called “E1.”

The proposed settlements will connect Jerusalem with one of the largest Jewish towns in the West Bank “Ma’ale Adumim.”

There are also other plans afoot for more building in Judea and Samaria.

The international community have been protesting against these Israeli settlement plans. France, Britain, Spain, the EU, Denmark, Sweden, Australia and Egypt have all summoned their respective Israeli ambassadors to express their strong disapproval at Israel’s response to the recent UN vote. Israel’s move has also drawn criticism from many other nations including, the United States, Russia and Japan.

On 3rd December, Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was keen to point out that the unilateral action pursued by the Authority at the UN was directly against the Oslo Accords.

This week, Prime Minister Netanyahu also faced an uneasy visit to Germany—where he met with German Chancellor, Angela Merkel. Despite a lengthy meeting, the two leaders could not reach an agreement over settlement building. The Jerusalem Post reported Angela Merkel as saying “we agreed that we disagree on this,” whilst Netanyahu was quoted as saying “the Palestinians tore to shreds their commitments under the Oslo Accord.” This, he continued, was “somehow dismissed” whilst Israel’s response “which is measured and certainly less than proportional, is blown out sky high.”

The authorisation of the settlement plans was not the only response from Israel. On Sunday 2nd, Israel withheld some 450 million Shekels worth of tax revenue which Israel collects each month for the PA. The withheld funds will be used to pay off part of the PA’s 800 million Shekel debt to the Israel Electric Corporation.

Map showing Jewish settlement in the West Bank surrounding Jerusalem

So far, as we watch at the sidelines, we can see that the nations are against Israel; whilst we can expect to see more Israelis living in the West Bank, if these settlement plans go ahead. How do these things compare with Bible prophecy?

In Zechariah 12:3 we read that God will “make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.”

This describes a diplomatic nightmare fuelled by anti-Semitism, which will eventually lead to the nations invading the land of Israel. It shows us that the angels of God are at work to provide the political climate for this terrible event to be fulfilled.

The specific location which will be invaded is described as the “mountains of Israel” i.e. the area of the West Bank. We are told that this area will be inhabited by the Jews and that the international community will be against the people living there. For example in Ezekiel 38:8 it says that in the latter years a confederacy of nations will “come into the land that is brought back from the sword and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel which have been always waste but it is brought forth out of the nations.” In verse 12 we read that the army is coming “to take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people.”

Back in Zechariah, we read that it is at the time when Israel are on their last legs and the nations look like they have won their conflict, that the Lord will “defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem” (14:2; 3; 12:8) and in chapter 12:10, we read of Christ’s manifestation to the world and to the Jews when “they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son.”

It is at this time then that the Lord Jesus Christ—God’s representative—the one who bears His name, will be revealed and the restored Kingdom of Israel will be set up on the earth. Its capital city of peace and righteousness will be Jerusalem (Micah 4:8), the very city which is currently a “burdensome stone” for the nations. The inspired prophets of the Bible outline a much different world to the one we see today, as is shown by this passage from Micah.

“But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Micah 4:1-2).

The amazing message of the Bible is that God is now calling out of the Gentiles (the non-Jews—Acts 15:14) a people who will assist the Lord Jesus Christ in that day as immortal rulers. These people will have been adopted into the “hope of Israel” (Acts 28:20), they will have been grafted into the nation of Israel (Romans 11:24) and as adopted Jews they will be fellow “heirs” of the Abrahamic promises (Galatians 3:29) through Christ.

It is through having a faith in this wonderful hope called the gospel (the “good news”) that we can find a place in this coming Kingdom and live and reign with Christ in that day. So we encourage you to keep reading your Bibles and keep watching with us, as we see the angels at work bringing about world events to fulfil God’s purpose.
s events connected with Israel move rapidly forwards, Zion’s true watchmen are busy—not only watching, but, also praying for the peace of Jerusalem and for that time when the city will be a praise in the earth. As it is written in the prophecy of Isaiah:

“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... I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth” (Isa. 62:1,6,7).

These watchmen are those people who have embraced the Hope of Israel, which is the true Gospel as taught by the apostle Paul (Acts 26:6,7; 28:20). They are seen again as Living Creatures in the 4th chapter of the book of Revelation, where again “they rest not day and night” in giving thanks to the One who sits upon the throne of the kingdom in the future Age, because he will have then restored again the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6; Rev. 4:6-8). Today these Living Creatures are the “Watchmen” who are “full of eyes” and are therefore a people with vision. They are “full of eyes within” (Rev. 4:8) because “the eyes of their understanding have been enlightened” and they know what is the Hope of their calling, and what is the riches of the glory of their Lord’s inheritance in his saints—Ephesians 1:18.

Looking at events connected with Israel through the eyes of understanding, they know what to expect and consequently they know what to pray for. Their constant prayer is that of Psalm 122:6-8,

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions’ sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.”

But how is the peace of Jerusalem to come into being? How will it be established—and what will cause the righteousness thereof to go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a brightly burning lampstand?

Zion’s Watchmen

These “watchmen” have been alerting us to developments over many years, and they have been able to rightly divide the word of the Truth so as to correctly discern the signs of the times. Long before the modern State of Israel came into being men of vision understood the process of events that would lead to a Jewish restoration. The words of John Thomas written in 1849 will be well known to some readers:

“There is then, a partial and primary restoration of the Jews before the manifestation, which is to serve as the nucleus, or basis, of future operations in the restoration of the rest of the tribes after he has appeared in the kingdom. The pre-adventual colonization of Palestine will be on purely political principles; and the Jewish colonists...
Israel?

will return in unbelief of the Messiahship of Jesus, and of the truth as it is in him. They will emigrate thither as agriculturists and traders ...” (Elpis Israel).

It was a long process spanning many years. Almost 50 years had passed after the above words were written and before Herzl addressed the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, bringing into being Political Zionism (1897). It was another twenty years before Britain’s Lord Balfour published the Declaration (1917) which led to the British Mandate over Palestine, which in turn led to the Jewish State of Israel in 1948 (100 years after the publication of the book Elpis Israel quoted above). What came into being was a “nucleus” or “basis” on “purely political principles” and the return of Jews “in unbelief of the Messiahship of Jesus, and of the truth” concerning him.

Who can doubt the fact that the prophecies of the Restoration were beginning to be fulfilled!

In 1869 John Thomas had given a lecture (reproduced on pages 4-11 of this magazine) in which he said:

“I believe... that the period for Israel’s downtreading is at an end, and that we have entered upon a new series of events that will culminate in the cleansing of the Holy. We are not necessarily to look for some great event that will wind-up the purposes of God in a flash of lightning. One series of events having come to its close, another series has already begun and will continue to develop more and more largely until the Ancient of Days makes his appearance and takes things into his own hands. That this will be the order in which the events of these latter days will develop, we are justified in saying, because it is the order of all God’s past relations with Israel. All His purposes and schemes with them have been gradual in development. God is never in a hurry. He has plenty of time at His disposal. He is not bound to do things according to your speculations or mine as to how long He ought to take.”

Now in the Apocalypse there is a period of preparation foretold in the following words:

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared” (Rev. 16:12).

It is commonly understood that the drying up of the Euphrates has referred to the removal of the Ottoman Empire—but for what purpose? The answer given is “that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” This preparation of the way for future kings is the gradual coming into being of the “nucleus” and “basis” formed by the pre-adventual and partial restoration of Israel. Israel is the basis for future operations. The nation in the land is a necessary part of the preparing of the way for future kings or saints.

So events marched on as indicated in the chart below, and Zion’s watchmen were thrilled as they saw prophecy fulfilling. In The Christadelphian magazine for December 1917 the atmosphere of the time was described by C.A. Ladson under the heading “Britain and Jewish Restoration.” Commenting upon the recently published Balfour Declaration he wrote:

“The declaration of the sympathy of the British government in the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jews, has thrilled to the hearts of the Brethren of Christ the world over. There would be few ecclesias where, on the Sunday morning following the Declaration, the theme would not be joyfully enlarged upon, and the whole service in prayers, hymns, and anthems, be warmly touched with the emotion generated by such a vindication of our faith...”

Then came 1948, and it was three months before David Ben Gurion declared the State of Israel that one “watchman” wrote this:

“We see the Jewish nation forming itself in Palestine at the present moment, and we know that calamity is to again befall it at the hand of the Northern invader. As Zechariah chapter 12 shows, at this time they will be delivered by Divine power, and afterwards “they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn.”

The writer (Graham Pearce) then continued to say this:

“The state of mind expressed in this phrase cannot arise suddenly in a mass of people. There must be a previous foundation of knowledge upon which the events of calamity and deliverance may operate in order to induce a state of humility. This necessary foundation has yet to be laid.”

The dramatic and difficult time of the post-World War II Return followed. Out of the ashes of the European Holocaust and the bloody “war of Independence,” the State of Israel emerged as...
it were by miracle, for the impossible came to pass.

**Prophecy Fulfilled**

Some 700 years before the time of Christ the prophet Hosea had written this:

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days” (Hosea 3:4-5).

After a long period during which Israel had no monarch of their own, and when the daily sacrifice had ceased for some 2,000 years, the children of Israel did what the prophet had predicted. They returned! That much is now partially accomplished. But the prophet continued to say that they also are to “seek the LORD their God”—so a spirit of enquiry is to be expected. The order is: first, return; then seek. This spirit of enquiry began among some Jews in the Land following the events of 1967. It was these events of 1967 that led to the present situation.

As recorded by the historian Martin Gilbert writing of the Middle East Crisis, May 1967, the following picture is given:

“On 25 May 1967, encouraged to do so by Egypt, the governments of Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia moved their troops to Israel’s borders. This was the first time since the armistice agreements of 1949 that Arab armies had gathered in such large numbers. The movement of troops was accompanied by an outburst of anti-Israeli statements by the Arab leaders and by their Government-controlled radios, which convinced the Israelis that war was imminent.”

2,000 people thronged the Birmingham Town Hall where a lecture was delivered on the Six Day War in 1967

On May 27th President Nasser of Egypt stated this:

“Our basic objective will be the destruction of Israel. The Arab people want to fight... The mining of Sharm el Sheikh is a confrontation with Israel. Adopting this measure obligates us to be ready to embark on a general war with Israel.

And on May 30th, Cairo Radio broadcast this:

“With the closing of the Gulf of Aqaba, Israel is faced with two alternatives either of which will destroy it: it will either be strangled to death by the Arab military and economic boycott, or it will perish by the fire of the Arab forces encompassing it from the South, from the North and from the East.”

A ring of steel surrounded Israel as combined Arab forces prepared for the kill: Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and others were all united in the purpose of destroying Israel.

On June 7th 1967 however, Israel Radio (Kol Israel) announced:

“The military spokesman announces: this morning the Israel Defence Forces penetrated the Old City of Jerusalem. Sharm el Sheikh has been captured, the straits are open. The Chief of Staff announces that the entire Sinai Peninsular is in Israeli hands, as is the greater part of the West Bank of the Jordan, the Old City of Jerusalem, Bethlechem, Hevron and the Etzion Block. The Airforce Commander announces the destruction of 441 planes belonging to Syria, Jordan and Iraq...”

Once more there was a tremendous response to these events from Zion’s watchmen. An extract from *The Christadelphian* magazine (July 1967) relates the mood:

“The news from the Middle East stirred brethren and sisters everywhere, and with it came the urge to tell our hope to the world in the light of current events. In many parts of the country lectures were arranged on the relation of Israel and the Middle East to the prophetic hope and the Gospel of salvation... Two thousand people filled all available space in the Town Hall (Birmingham, England), and some three hundred more listened to a relay in the basement. It is believed that about three hundred were visitors drawn by the publicity or brought as friends. Brethren and sisters came from many miles around to give support...”

“The establishment of the nation of Israel in 1948 was one of the great signs of God’s prophetic word being fulfilled in our day. Prophecy shows that Christ is to return when natural Israel is in jeopardy, for Ezekiel prophesies that they are to be assaulted by a northern confederacy.”

Again, faith was vindicated and Zion’s watchmen were encouraged. Had not Jesus said to his disciples that the Jewish people would “fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24)?

In 1967 Jerusalem was back in Jewish hands. Was this not the beginning of a new phase in the fulfillment of prophecy? In 1955—twelve years before Israel took control of Jerusalem, another watchman wrote as follows:

“Because Jerusalem (i.e. old Jerusalem) must be possessed by the Jews prior to Christ’s return, so that he might manifest himself to them as their deliverer and Saviour, the ejection of Hashemite Jordan from there is a foregone conclusion. We can look then for developments which will result in Israel’s getting possession of the whole city, and for a dreadful conflagration kindled by that spark throughout the Middle East” (*Apocalypse and Gospels*, F. Bilston).

Although that anticipated “dreadful conflagration” did not happen immediately, events since that time have been building up to
such a crisis. There is no sign of Islamic nations relinquishing their demand for Israel’s destruction. It is only a matter of time before the situation explodes once again. Who cannot see that the ground for it is well and truly prepared?

Alternate Views

It has to be said that there are several different options to choose from in the prophecy market today, and many of these views or visions may seem attractive at first sight but they cannot all be right. These views began to gain strength in the 1960’s when a new generation (the post-war generation) began to question the expositions of earlier watchmen. The pattern is seen in Judges chapter 2 where we read (verse 10):

“And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.”

Here is a warning for us today as a generation is arising that has no experience of Israel’s modern birth and history. In his book Elpis Israel, John Thomas wrote this:

“Now, no interpretation of prophecy is worth anything which is not sustained by facts; for prophesy is not a prediction of opinions, principles, or feelings, but of tangible and stubborn facts. What, then, are the facts in the case before us?”

The facts of history are before us and demonstrate that we are now in “the times of restitution (i.e. restoration, R.V.) of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:20-21). The political basis for the Jewish nation is now in place, but what lies ahead? Some ideas would lead us to expect events that will never happen, while others fail to take into account the progress of events that will ultimately lead to the restoration of the kingdom in righteousness, but the danger is that many will be taken unawares.

We should understand that the restoration of the kingdom again to Israel involves a process and that the natural or physical stage is well underway. The nation of Israel is now a fact. The suggestion sometimes made is that it could take another hundred years! That suggestion reveals an astonishing blindness to the facts. It is repeating the sentiments expressed by a previous generation who said:

“Son of man, behold, thy house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off” (Ezekiel 12:27).

Another view held in some quarters suggests a future Arab victory over Israel before Christ comes. Such an event has no place in the times of restoration however. The “controversy of Zion” (Isaiah 34:8) is not only an Arab-Israeli war (such as was 1967 and 1973), it involves “all nations” (verses 1 and 2. See also Joel 3:2; Zechariah 14:2). It involves “the whole world” (Revelation 16:14). But with what result?

The apostle Peter says (2 Peter 1:19-21),

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto

a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn: and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

The sure word of prophecy is not a vision of our own heart as was the case with false prophets (Jeremiah 14:14 and 23:16). A right understanding of it is part and parcel of the true Gospel; it is in harmony with the Hope of Israel as it is in Jesus Christ. The prophetic word is sure, it is “steadfast,” it is firm and associated with “the confidence and the rejoicing of the Hope Firm

unto the end” (Hebrews 36). The promises made to Abraham and to David were SURE PROPHECY; they will be fulfilled. Similarly, and just as sure, is the restoration of the kingdom again to Israel.

It is true that the nation is not yet involved in the new covenant—the law of Israel’s God is not yet in the inward parts and written in the hearts of the nation; they do not yet all know Him, but many in the Land are being prepared for that vital development. The apostle Paul wrote:

“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” (Romans 11:25).

He also says:

“Nevertheless he that shall turn many to righteousness shall be as a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

The passages quoted show that this is so, for “Israel” must be something known and distinct. The passage from Ezekiel who, in his 34th chapter, writes of Israel’s return to their own land (verse 13) and of them being then fed upon the mountains of Israel (also verses 14 and 15). But verses 16 and 17 speak of both healing and judgment. So after being fed with knowledge and understanding (c/p Jeremiah 3:15) a trial of some kind is indicated.

“Upon the Mountains of Israel”

In February 1948, and before the State of Israel came into being, Graham Pearce wrote as follows:

“It would appear then that there ought to be a re-education of Israel and a partial revival of Jewish faith prior to Armageddon...”

These Scriptures teach us to expect an enlightenment of the nation. The apostle Paul is in harmony with the prophet Ezekiel who, in his 34th chapter, writes of Israel’s return to their own land (verse 13) and of them being then fed upon the mountains of Israel (also verses 14 and 15). But verses 16 and 17 speak of both healing and judgment. So after being fed with knowledge and understanding (c/p Jeremiah 3:15) a trial of some kind is indicated.

Below: The Independent newspaper reports on building in east Jerusalem

So what are we seeing today, over 60 years later? We ought to be aware of the FACT that there is a development of events in this direction. There is a definite growth in religious Jewish faith based on Scripture, and especially among the young and among those settlers who live in the so-called West Bank (i.e. the mountains of Israel).

We also see a steady growth in anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism, and so often it leads to Israel’s isolation. This is fuelled by developments in the West Bank which are challenging the world’s favourite plan for a “two-state solution”—one Israeli and one Palestinian-Arab. Israel’s “occupation” of the mountains of Israel, in large part inspired by religious Zionism (as much as by economic and security considerations) is frustrating that plan and so is generating world hostility. This is precisely what Zion’s watchmen anticipated on the basis of Bible prophecy. For example, and as was pointed out in the October issue of this magazine, as long ago as 1868 John Thomas wrote that:
The mission of Elijah, like that of the late Graham Pearce, exemplifies the work of a servant of God in a time of crisis. We can learn much from the challenges he faced and the lessons he applied, as well as from the opportunities for spiritual growth that arose during those times of testing. The work of Elijah is a model for us today, as we too face challenges and crises that demand faith, courage, and a commitment to the Lord and His people.
FORMATION OF ISRAEL

ELIJAH THE PROPHET

ike that of John the Baptist, is to prepare the way of the Lord. This article written in 1984 by the ce, examines the situation in Israel in the light of Scripture. It is still highly relevant today.

Elijah the Prophet

Malachi’s words are:

“Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah before the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth (eretz—land) with a curse” (chapter 4:4-6).

Some of the implications of this prophecy are important and not always appreciated. “Before the great and dreadful day of the Lord;” Malachi’s prophecy was addressed to Jews in the land, shortly after their return from Babylonian exile. So it is reasonable to understand that this prophecy applies primarily to those Jews who today have returned to the land. What is the “great and terrible day of Yahweh”? Clearly it relates to Armageddon as the context is speaking of this “For, behold, the day of Yahweh”? Clearly it relates to Armageddon as the context is speaking of this “For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the inhabitants thereof shall be salted: and the day that cometh shall burn the proud yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn as an oven, and all the transgressors thereof shall perish” (Mal. 4:1-3). Zechariah also makes this clear with his multiple references to “the day of Yahweh” and speaking of the same matters (Zech. 12:2,4,6,8,9,11; 13:1; 14:1).

So before the final invasion of Russia’s confederacy upon Israel in the land, and after the Resurrection, Malachi indicates that there will be some divine instruction by the hand of Elijah. The period may well be associated with the peace and prosperity prophesied by Ezekiel before the invasion (38:8, 11, 13, 14). These are two pleasing aspects of the future programme for Israel which at present is so beleaguered by grave political, financial and moral problems.

Isaiah chapter seventeen gives a graphic description of this day of the Lord.

“In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow” (v. 11).

Then there is the description of the invading armies:

“Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!” (v. 12).

Finally the destruction of the host of the invader:

“And behold at eveningtide trouble; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us” (v. 14).

This is the dramatic end of Ezekiel’s northern host that comes “to spoil us,” to “take a great spoil” (38:13). In the extremity Zechariah tells us that “Jerusalem is taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished, and half of the city shall go into captivity” (Zech. 14:1).

This is, indeed, the great and dreadful day of the Lord for those in the land. And Malachi says Elijah carries out a work of instruction before this.

The Elijah Work Before Christ is Revealed to the Nations

There is Scriptural appropriateness in this view of Elijah’s work among Jewry in the land. It is surely true that even today the great portion of Jewry are outside of the Land and that this means Elijah’s work of restoral must go on, after Armageddon, into the lands of the Gentiles as clearly expounded by John Thomas. These large companies of Jews will be brought through the nations unto the Land of Israel, passing over the Euphrates and the Red Sea in a kind of national baptism after the rebels have been purged from their ranks (Ezekiel 20:33-34; Isa. 11:11-16; Mic. 7:14-17). Yet the predicament of these Jews in the land is more urgent than those abroad. They inhabit the vortex of the coming day of judgment of God Almighty. Paul tells us that it is when a Redeemer comes to Zion that ungodliness is turned from Jacob and their sins removed (Rom. 11:26-27) and Zechariah says, “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for him...” (Zech. 12:10). Yet these passages do not preclude a work of repentance before Christ “to prepare the way of the Messenger of the Covenant” (Mal. 3:1), just as John Baptist did at the first coming.

We know that the invasion of the land and its devastation has the effect of two thirds being killed and one third being saved:

“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein” (Zech. 13:8).

The next verse enlarges on what happens to the third:

“And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will answer them; and I will say in Israel, The Lord God is my redeemer” (Zech. 13:9).
refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them...” (v. 9).

Divine fire of judgment either destroys or refines. It destroys the two thirds and refines the third. So there must be some gold and silver material (even though it contains dross) for this refining fire to work on. The refining fire has the purpose of removing the dross from the gold and silver. Where has this ‘gold’ and ‘silver’ in the third part come from? Surely there must have been some sound instruction to create a change of heart that accepts the moral standards of the Law through Moses. Such is the requirement of Malachi’s words: “Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel.” It seems a proper conclusion that an Elijah work is essential to create some ‘silver’ and ‘gold’ for refining.

The simile of purifying metal in Zechariah is also used by Malachi in the section we are considering. Malachi uses almost identical words to Zechariah. In the third chapter, the Messenger of the Covenant—Jesus Christ—comes and sits as a refiner:

“But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver’” (Mal. 3:2-3).

Now Malachi tells us that before this refining there will be a preparatory work. In the previous verse he says that before the appearing of the Messenger of the Covenant to do the refining, a messenger will be sent to prepare the way before him. This messenger, Malachi tells us in the fourth chapter is Elijah; and the nature of his work is there described, as we have seen. So Malachi fills out the idea of the refining in Zechariah, and makes it clear that before the great and dreadful day of the LORD on latter-day Judah in the land, and their fiery deliverance by the Messenger of the Covenant, there is a preparatory work of instructing the people.

We may see this as the beginning of those gracious words in Jeremiah:

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

This, of course, is in the future, for it leads to the time of the kingdom, when “At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD” (3:17).

“I will give you pastors after mine own heart.” If this begins with the Elijah work, the plural, pastors, suggests that Elijah is not alone, but he is helped by others—just as Elijah historically, as John Baptist, as Jesus, had helpers or disciples. This would mean that the resurrection has taken place before the Elijah work begins: for “pastors according to mine heart” must be resurrected faithful Jews. This sequence of events is possibly contained in Malachi’s record. Chapter three ends with the day of the LORD of hosts making up his jewels, and chapter four introduces fiery judgment—the wicked being burnt up as stubble. Then follows, “But for you who fear my name (referring back to chapter three), the Sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings. Ye shall go forth leaping like calves from the stall (with joy). And ye shall tread down the wicked...” (RSV). It is immediately after this picture of the resurrection that there is added the description of Elijah’s work before the day of the LORD.

Since Elijah’s work is after the resurrection, it makes us realise that though much has yet to happen in Israel, the day of our calling to judgment may be near.

The Parallel with John the Baptist

It may help us to put into perspective what will be the effect of this Elijah work by remembering it was carried out by John Baptist before the first coming. John Baptist came in “the spirit and power of Elijah,” and was a partial fulfilment of Malachi’s words. Jesus made it clear that John’s work was not the final fulfilment, for he told the disciples in response to their questioning: “Elias truly cometh first and restoreth all things” (Matt. 17:11). Elijah will be in charge of the whole restoration of the nation, those in the land, and those still scattered abroad. Now of John Baptist’s work it was prophesied:

“And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1:16-17).

The time and circumstance in the future will be different, but the objective will be the same. Though John’s forceful preaching made a big impression, it did not change the nation. It was a minority—the ordinary people rather than the leaders and the ‘Jews’—who were stirred up in expectancy and repentance from wickedness. So for the future it will be the ‘third’ in the land that will be influenced. Whether Elijah will support his work with miracle as in his original ministry among the ten tribes, or whether it will be like John Baptist “who did no miracle,” we do not know. The Elijah teaching will be concerned with the coming of Messiah, but probably will not deal specifically with Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. This comes at a later stage, after they have been delivered from the northern invasion, and as Zechariah says God “will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced...” (Zech. 12:10).

In Revelation 16:12, under the 6th vial, there is the important work of “preparing the Way” for the kings from the rising of the Sun—the saints. This preparing of the Way we ourselves have witnessed in the return of some of the Jews to the land and their organisation into a nation. May we not include in the ‘preparing the Way’ this work of Elijah, before the Messenger of the Covenant sits as the refiner of the silver?

The proposed outline of future events in the land before Christ is revealed raises the ‘problem’ in some minds concerning the start of the miraculous in the earth. Yet the situation is so very similar to that in John Baptist’s day. At that time there had been 400 years of darkness, without prophet or miracle. To start gently, in this way of a John Baptist kind of voice in Israel is quite appropriate. And the divine hand will become more visible as events unfold.

We would expect that this return in part to the truth concerning Israel’s God and the promises amongst the nation of Israel, will have some public effect. Almost certainly there will be a greater hostility by the Jews to the ‘Christian’ desecration of their land and Jerusalem in particular. This may well be a factor in stirring up Christendom to join in the invasion of the land and deal with ‘infidel’ Jewry. We know from Revelation 16:16 that after the resurrection and judgment indicated in verse 15, there is a period, probably years, in which there is a work of gathering the nations to Armageddon. These events in the land may well be part of the gathering process.

One other related matter may be mentioned: the difficulty we have in seeing peace established in the land, as required by Ezekiel 38. Israel’s generally godless attitude today makes it seem inappropriate that God should grant them a state of peace, even though it is temporary. But if this Elijah teaching has developed some ‘salt’ in the nation, then in furthering his purpose God would respond in improving the lot of his people. It is many times laid down that there must be a turning to God before he responds. Even so, the initiative, the grace, must come from God; and this could be expected at a time when God is about to favour Zion after long centuries of displeasure. Throughout the record of the kings, when a monarch started to do the right things, God granted help and success.

Footnote


The above article is taken from Milestones 1984.
Edward Heath signs Britain into the Common Market in 1973

Building up the Image of Europe in readiness for the great crash that Scripture foresees

By Don Pearce  Rugby, U.K.

No sooner had Milestones 2012 been completed than we need to write this latest update for the Bible Magazine. Yet though it is only the 2nd of January there have been several items which have caught my eye in the past 2 days.

First a few words about this year’s Milestones. It is 35 years since it first came out, typed by my father on an old manual typewriter, with cuttings from newspapers pasted in and all posted off to Australia to be typeset, printed and returned as the first of a long series of yearly reviews. What a contrast between the world of 1977 and 2012!

Then the USSR (yes, I had to double check what that stood for—Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) covered a huge portion of the map, we called it “the Soviet” for ease. Communism was on the march, East and West were divided—the Berlin Wall was erected years earlier in 1961. American troops were stationed in Europe to hold back the Communist advance. This was the era of thousands of missiles being lined up against East and West. The Soviet navy encircled the earth.

Israel was in a bad way economically, dominated by powerful unions and spending 40% of its income on weapons. Britain, broken by the burden of costs of fighting two World Wars had a few years earlier cast her lot in with the European Economic Community—which later become the EU. My father concluded “Many are already disillusioned with the attraction of a European system, with its economic and political bondage. There will be no easy release.”

What a contrast to today. Yesterday was the 40th anniversary of Britain’s accession to the EEC, yet there was no bunting, no celebration in the streets of London to mark this historic anniversary. Far from it; the European dream has gone sour and voices are clamouring for an exit. We shall look at this in more detail in a moment.

What of the other changes in the 35 years since the first Milestones? Where is the Soviet Union? Gone! Well not really, it has been reborn. As we shall see, under the “Putin Doctrine,” Mr Putin is putting his efforts into rebuilding the old empire and as the “Tsar of the 3rd Millennium;” he is determined to bind together as much of the old Soviet empire as he can. He is strongly supported by the Russian Orthodox Church in his endeavours. He regards himself as the head of the Eurasian Union. It is a mirror image of what is happening in Europe. Under Angela Merkel and supported by the Vatican, Europe is driving towards the political union of Europe! What we are seeing growing before our very eyes are the two legs, feet and toes of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar saw 2,600 years ago! The image is going through the final stages of preparation in order for it to stand on its feet for the first and brief time, when the Kingdoms of Men come together to destroy God’s people Israel, only to be crushed to powder by Christ and the saints.

The final Stage of the Kingdom of Men

“And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay” (Daniel 2:42, 43).

The basis for this coming World Power is a shaky one. Iron and miry clay, as the passage says, don’t mix. Yet it is a coming together out of convenience. Iron in the language of Daniel chapter 2 points us to Rome, Clay points us to people—God created Adam from clay (Gen. 2:7). The Roman iron was manifest in two aspects—military might and religious power. The Caesars and Emperors of Rome were in control of the military and were the heads of the pagan religious systems—they were regarded as gods among men.

This is what is so interesting about what is happening in Europe and Russia, two areas that we look to, together with parts of the Middle East, that will form the image in these latter-days (Dan. 2:28). We see the ordinary people submitting to an authoritarian control of a central power that will control their affairs, including their military, with a strong support from the churches.

Political Union—European style

The drive to make Europe a political entity with its own government, control over the finances of its members, defending itself with its own army, with one currency has been the dream of the European leaders since the time of Hitler and his concept of a United Europe. Those plans came to nothing—the time was not right, but the groundwork he laid down is the basis of what we have today. Its leaders knew that they could not move straight to political union, that would have been a step too far at the time. Behind the drive to economic union, with the euro, was the understanding that this could not thrive without the controls that political union would bring. It was even understood that monetary union would create a crisis, of such a scale that when it came, its members would see that political union was the necessary price to pay to solve these problems.

Merkel Urges Overhaul of European Union

“German Chancellor Angela Merkel called for an overhaul of the European Union, advocating closer political ties and tighter budget rules, in her most explicit prescription for ending the debt crisis.”

“Speaking to her Christian Democratic Union party’s annual congress in the eastern German city of Leipzig today, Merkel said leaders must create a ‘new Europe’ by deepening ties in the 27-nation EU.”

“The task of our generation now is to...
complete the economic and currency union in Europe and, step by step, create a political union,’ Merkel said. ‘It’s time for a breakthrough to a new Europe’ (Bloomberg 14-Nov-12).

Ms Merkel is the undisputed leader of the EU. This year she rose to the No. 2 position in the annual Forbes top 100 people list—the highest position for a woman and 2nd only to President Obama.

Germany “Taking the lead”

German Foreign Policy is a private German site that keeps a critical eye on German affairs. This article reviewed an article on the mood in Germany and reviewed an article in Internationale Politik which is the magazine of the German Society on Foreign Relations, looking at contemporary topics in international affairs.

"Taking the lead" is the title and focus of the current edition of ‘Internationale Politik.’ As the ‘European Union’s most important shareholder,’ as its ‘biggest beneficiary’ and particularly as an ‘economic powerhouse,’ Germany has ‘a duty, to take the lead,’ alleges the journal’s editor in chief in her editorial.

‘Whoever leads, has to show the direction and convince the others of the chosen path,’ writes the editor in view of the Federal Republic of Germany’s European hegemonic ambition. The journal is presenting a series of proposals for a ‘German leadership’ role (German Foreign Policy 05-May-12).

Merkel’s Foreign Secretary took his lead in promoting Germany’s dream of a Europe united politically as well as it was economically. It was on the occasion of the awarding of the Charlemagne Prize

“This has been awarded once a year since 1950 by the German city of Aachen to people who contributed to the ideals upon which it has been founded. It commemorates Charlemagne, ruler of the Frankish Empire and founder of what became the Holy Roman Empire, who resided and is buried at Aachen. Traditionally the award is given to the recipient on the Ascension holiday in a ceremony in the town hall of Aachen” (Wikipedia).

This has been awarded to many leading lights who have worked to promote the vision of a united Europe. In 2002 it was awarded to the euro! This year it was the turn of German Finance Minister, Wolfgang Schäuble, a very pro-European and like many of his fellow visionaries was Jesuit educated. An assassination attempt in 1990 has left him wheel-chair bound.

We now have to create a political Union in Europe

His speech was strong and forthright and frog-like (Revelation 16:13).

“What unites us Europeans? What holds Europe together? Certainly its mix of freedom and social justice, democratic participation and the rule of law, which is unique in the world. It has something to do with Europe being shaped in the early stages by the Judeo-Christian tradition, and also with the legacy of Classical Greece. The triad of Athens, Rome, Jerusalem. But I would also like to call to mind the legacy of the French Revolution: Liberty, equality, fraternity. Freedom based on the dignity of each individual, as our Basic Law puts it, which of necessity presupposes equality. Because we are dependent on coexisting with others that is not possible without solidarity, social equity and social justice.”

He then spoke of the need for political union.

“We now have to create a political Union in Europe, boost Europe’s democratic legitimacy, improve Europe’s efficiency and reform European institutions.”

And a European President who could lead them.

“That is where the proposal for a European President who is directly elected by the entire European Union originated. He or she would then be the political head of a European executive that the Commission should be developed into. Europe’s political unity must have a face and that face must represent real authority.

No. 1. candidate for that position of the elected European President, let’s not be modest, is a certain Dr Schäuble!

In the EU’s “Grand Area”

Germany is already contemplating the next stage beyond a united eurozone with a zone of influence covering a much wider area, with eerie parallels with Hitler’s plans for a vast Greater Germanic Reich of the German Nation stretching from the borders of France to way across Russia as shown on this map.

“A European think tank, with ties to Germany, is calling for the establishment of an EU controlled ‘Grand Area’ stretching from the Arctic, through Central Asia, the Middle East to North Africa. With this ‘Grand Area,’ the ‘Group on Grand Strategy’ (GoGS) seeks to create a power base for a European Federal State, it considers necessary to establish. This ‘Grand Area’ should also serve European interests in resources and deter foreign powers from meddling. This concept, which corresponds, in many ways to German interests, also includes the establishment within the ‘Grand Area’ of a network of ‘European’ military bases, which therefore would be outside any national control. The
Bertelsmann Foundation, one of the most influential German think tanks, also has a representative on the GoGS Advisory Board. The ‘Grand Area’ plan was elaborated by James Rogers, one of the co-founders of the Group on Grand Strategy (GoGS). In his comprehensive paper, ‘A New Geography of European Power?’ Rogers makes a plea for the EU to take control over such a ‘Grand Area.’ European military and civilian forces should regularly intervene to arrest ‘disorders’ and ensure a ‘liberal order.’ According to Rogers the ‘Grand Area’ should ‘show the least likelihood of significant encroachment by powerful foreign actors’ and should be defended ‘most cost-effectively through the expansion of the Common Security and Defence Policy.’ The ‘Grand Area’ covers all of Europe including Iceland and Greenland, stretches to Central Asia and parts of South East Asia all the way to the Middle East and North Africa. For the most part, the map is oriented along current, internationally recognized, borders, however in the case of Russia, it dissects its national territory.” (German Foreign Policy 27-Jul-12).

It is intended to stretch to longitude 70° east—precisely as Hitler’s was planned to do!

**Pope calls for World Government, ‘New World Order’**

Running hand-in-hand with the politicians’ call for a united Europe comes the Pope’s call which is even more far-reaching! Not Europe, not even a “Grand Area,” he has his eyes set on the world!

In 2009 he was asking for a world political authority:

“Pope Benedict XVI on Tuesday called for a radical rethinking of the global economy, criticizing a growing divide between rich and poor and urging the establishment of a ‘true world political authority’ to oversee the economy and work for the ‘common good’” (New York Times 07-Jul-09).

This December he was strengthening that call, asking for “world government” and a “new world order”!

“In a speech made at the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace on Monday December 3 2012, the Pope called for the ‘construction of a world community, with a corresponding authority,’ to serve the ‘common good of the human family.’ As a means of defining global peace and justice, the pope’s vision for the establishment of World Government and a New World Order is supposedly not to create a new superpower, but a new governing body that offers to those (politicians) who are responsible for making decisions, criteria for judgment and practical guidelines. The Pope also described his vision as a ‘moral force’ or moral authority that has the ‘power to influence in accordance with reason, that is, a participatory authority, limited by law in its jurisdiction’” (Associated Press 11-Dec-12).

Again, let’s not be modest, who would claim the high moral ground to be such a leader? Why Benedict himself! After all this is the position he claims as spiritual leader of over 18% of the world’s population. The Pope is a skilled theologian; he is not asking what would be impossible. He sees that the time is ripe for a greater role for the Roman Church in the affairs of the world.

**The Putin Doctrine**

What about events in Russia? We can see a mirror-image. State and Church working together with the aim of centralising command of a Greater Russia, known as the Eurasian Union. Putin, encouraged by the Patriarch Kirill has been pushing for a far-reaching union of many of the former Soviet satellites. There are two strands. At the moment there is a Military Alliance which consists of Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, which is responsible for security integration and cooperation. The Customs Union consists of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan and deals with economic integration.

“Increasing economic and security integration with these countries will key to Russia’s goal of forming a Eurasian Union by 2015 and, more important, bolstering the country’s presence in its periphery as its regional neighborhood evolves and becomes more unpredictable” (Stratfor 05-Dec-12).

Russia is ahead in the integration of religion into Russian society, the EU is ahead in the political and economic union. Developments on both these two “legs” of Nebuchadnezzar’s image show what a lot has happened in quite a short period of time.

“...The Putin Doctrine.” Its essence is to consolidate political control at home and expand his country’s influence in Central Asia at the expense of the West. Putin said his third term would give rise to a stronger military, improved social programs, and the creation of a Eurasian Union, a confection of states that resembles a watered-down version of the old USSR. By and large, Putin’s cult of personality has continued to grow in the 12 years he’s been in power. Patriarch Cyril [Kirill], the head of Russia’s Christian Orthodox Church took things a step further, calling the former KGB agent a ‘present from God’” (Newsweek 26-Nov-12).

**If we can’t do a Deal with Europe, Leaving it should hold no Terrors**

Meanwhile back in Britain, Europe’s drive for political union has succeeded in alienating Britain. She joined 40 years ago for the purpose of trade. Although there were warning voices in Britain who could see that the ultimate destination of Europe was political union, these matters were suppressed by a euro-enthusiastic press. Trade was the prize, a bigger market to sell her goods to. Few would have predicted that the mighty Europe would be the millstone that it is, and the then despised Commonwealth would prosper as it has. Suffice it to say it has been a humbling experience for Britain to feel her power and authority being sucked away by Brussels. Virtually every piece of draft regulation has in truth come from Brussels. Those in power in Britain try to mask this, because it only stresses just how powerless Britain’s politicians are. An interesting article today speaks of the shock that David Cameron and his colleagues had when, on coming to power, they found out how powerless they were.

“What has changed? Why, having meticulously avoided the subject, is Mr Cameron now proposing the most substantial change in our European policy in 40 years of membership?”

“One reason is that government has opened many ministers’ eyes to the extent of Brussels jurisdiction” (Daily Telegraph 02-Jan-13).

No longer can Britain export undesirable terrorists, Brussels over-rules British Court decisions. The regulation on the 48 hour week has played havoc with staffing our hospitals and doctors’ hours—a gift from Brussels. The littering of the countryside with wind farms in a vain attempt to boost renewable energy is an unwanted present from Brussels. The decimation of our fishing industry is another result of losing control of our waters to the EU. Plans to reform our education system have been scuppered by the long reach of Brussels’ jurisdiction.

“Just as ministers become frustrated with the EU, the EU itself is more or less forcing the United Kingdom to reconsider its membership terms.

“Monetary union is impelling its participants toward fiscal integration, debt pooling, a common finance ministry and thus, by implication, political federation.

“The European Community of which we have been members for four decades is, in practical if not legal terms, ceasing to exist. Since almost no one argues that we should join the single currency, the question arises: what relationship should we have with the new entity that is taking shape?” (ibid).

Expect a growing clash as Britain attempts to claw back powers. The problem for the EU is that if they allow Britain an exemption in one area, then they will make demands for their pet schemes. It is hard to see anything less than a clean break working or a radical change in the EU’s...
structure.

“It is possible to envisage a solution, whereby the euro countries form a federal union, while Britain, the Efta states and possibly some other existing EU members form a broader free trade nexus around it.”

“Is such a deal on offer? Plenty of commentators respond to that question with Olympian authority, but no one really knows. I have spent the better part of 14 years in Brussels trying to learn the answer, and have concluded that we’ll only find out when the moment comes. We can be certain of one thing, though: there is absolutely no chance of getting an acceptable deal unless it is clearly understood by all sides that the alternative is withdrawal.”

“I’ve noticed that even supporters of EU membership are no longer as frightened of that prospect as they used to be. The reason is simple: the EU’s share of our trade is falling by the minute. British exports to the EU fell by 7.3 per cent in the past three months for which we have data, while exports to the rest of the world rose by 13.2 per cent.”

“The EU remains an important market, but it is increasingly just one market, alongside Asean, Nafta, Mercosur and the rest—and no one argues that we need to join them in order to trade with them.”

“All of which gives us a credible bottom line. We are in surplus with the rest of the world, but in deficit with the EU. Or, to flip it around, the EU is in surplus with us, selling more to Britain than to the US and Japan combined. Customers generally have the upper hand in their talks with salesmen.”

“If such a deal is not available, leaving should hold no terrors. We are the seventh largest economy on Earth, the fourth military power, a member of the G8 and one of five permanent seat-holders on the UN Security Council. We are connected by law and language, habit and sentiment, to every continent. In the words of Tennyson: ‘Though we are not now that strength which, in old days, moved Earth and Heaven, that which we are we are’” (ibid).

Bible students rejoice to see such signs. It had been written by Hugo Swire who is the UK’s Minister of State for the Commonwealth and was appointed by David Cameron a few months ago in order to boost trade links.

“The numbers for the 54-nation Commonwealth of today look impressive. Total GDP in terms of purchasing-power parity is pushing past that of the eurozone and average growth for the five years ahead is expected to be 7pc or more.”

“Today’s Commonwealth contains at least seven of the fastest-growing countries, with ballooning new markets. Hitherto, the stars have been mostly in Asia but African states are coming up fast. Ghana, Tanzania, Mozambique are examples. The UK is connected to all of these nations through historical ties but also through our Queen, a strong advocate of the Commonwealth, who in 2012 marked her 60th year as its head. The Royal family unifies the institution.”

“Trade in the Commonwealth is booming, with member states collectively exporting more than £1.5 trillion of goods and services each year. Research conducted by the Royal Commonwealth Society found that when two trading partners were members, their trade was likely to be a third to a half more than when one or both trade partners was non-Commonwealth. There is clearly the potential to build on this in 2013 and beyond.”

“It is an important institution that countries are queuing to join and that can, through dedication and reform, become stronger and speak with a louder voice than ever before.”

Britain: encourage a Stronger Partnership between British and Israeli companies

As one door is shutting another is opening! Although many are fearful as to how Britain could cope outside the EU, there are interesting signs that there is still life in the old lion yet and she shouldn’t be dismissed as irrelevant. We have seen in past issues Britain’s drive to work with Israel, a matter which is described as a key element of their overseas trade. The Department for Business, Investment and Skills (BIS) put out a strategy paper in November 2011 entitled Trade and Investment for Growth. Israel was picked out in several paragraphs and in a list of 18 country-specific items the government wanted to promote. Israel was at No. 5. This item was expanded later (and the emphasis is in the original!)

“2.33 The Government will encourage a stronger partnership between British and Israeli companies to exploit the potential synergies between Israel’s high levels of innovation and British strengths in design, business growth and finance, as well as the UK’s own high technology and scientific strengths.”

Cameron affirms he is ‘Passionate Friend of Israel’

Addressing the Conservative Friends of Israel, David Cameron had this to say:

“‘I’m not an acquaintance of Israel. I’m not a colleague of Israel. I am a passionate friend of Israel—and that is how it will always stay.’

“Cameron expressed his personal understanding of Israel security concerns, saying, ‘It’s only when you visit the Lebanese border as I have done, when you look through binoculars and see the Hezbollah flags just hundreds of yards away that you can really understand the fear that so many Israelis live with day-in, day-out.’

“The Prime Minister also reaffirmed the UK government’s commitment to the flourishing trade relationship between Britain and Israel, saying, ‘we are going to keep on working with Israel, doing business with Israel, trading with Israel.’ Cameron praised the success of the Israeli hi-tech economy, which he ascribed to the “the aspiration and drive of its people” (BICOM. 12-Dec-12).

Surely a Britain working with Israel will be blessed.

Defence chief signals major UK military presence in Gulf

Britain may be at a significant turning point in the focus of its military. Is the Merchant of Tarshish power once more preparing to become more involved in the Middle East as America concentrates on other markets?

The above headline was from a speech made by Britain’s Chief of Staff, General Sir David Richards.

“His speech was highly significant. It follows from what the Obama administration has been telling the Europeans—they have got to take more responsibility looking after the security interests not only of their own continent but those in the Middle East and Gulf.”

“And it reflects David Cameron’s view that British interests—not least commercial ones and arms sales in particular—lie among the emirates, sultanates, and kingdoms, of the Gulf.”

“Though more conceptual work is needed, given the importance of the region and clear prime ministerial intent, I envisage two or
more adaptable brigades forming close tactical level relationships with particular countries in the Gulf and Jordan, for example, allowing for better cooperation with their forces.’

“British defence chiefs are holding out the prospects of British barracks in Bahrain (already a Royal Navy as well as US navy base) quarters in Qatar, and Typhoon hangars on the air bases of the UAE (which are toying with the idea of buy some Typhoons for themselves)” (Guardian 18-Dec-12).

A few days later the message was being reinforced. With up to 4,000 troops coming home in 2013 from Afghanistan, David Cameron is looking to deployment of some of them in the Middle East.

Britain could Deploy more troops to Gulf, says David Cameron

“Britain could deploy more troops to the Gulf in the coming years as it reduces its combat commitment in Afghanistan, the prime minister has said before a visit to Oman.

“David Cameron expects to seal a £2.5bn deal with the Oman government for 12 Typhoon fighter jets, the latest sales of a plane the prime minister said he was ‘very keen’ to promote. The government hopes to secure sales of 100 aircraft to the Gulf next year.

“Cameron’s visit to Muscat comes weeks after an agreement to set up a defence partnership with the United Arab Emirates, potentially focused on the Typhoon jet, made by BAE Systems. The Emirati government expressed interest in ordering up to 60 of the aircraft, Reuters reported.

“‘What you are seeing specifically with the United Arab Emirates is not just a plan to sell Typhoon aircraft, but a big, significant defence co-operation, which could lead to more British troops stationed in their country,’ he told journalists at Camp Bastion in southern Afghanistan.

“This is an exciting possibility for both countries to have a proper strategic defence relationship, a defence partnership, and I think that’s the way the world is going. People don’t just want to just buy equipment now, they want to have a proper industrial and defence partnerships.’ Britain has a small military presence in Bahrain, Qatar and the Emirates, Cameron added” (The Guardian 21-Dec-12).

There are signs of Britain’s growing prestige in manufacturing. Cars made in Britain are exported around the world and there is a high demand for them. More jobs are being repatriated back to Britain as technology drives down manufacturing costs.

The world’s most sophisticated deep-sea port is being constructed on the north bank of the Thames just 25 miles from the heart of London, combined with the biggest logistic park in Europe. London Gateway promises to drive down shipping costs as the world’s largest vessels will be able to use it thanks to a huge dredging project that has deepened a channel way out to sea, and used the spoil to create the reclaimed land upon which the port is built.

London still continues as the world’s financial and trading centre.

Operation Pillar of Cloud

Let’s briefly turn to Israel. Elections have been called for 22nd January. Mr Netanyahu is expected to be returned with a strong mandate, which he needs if they are to deal a blow against Iran, something expected before the summer, if sanctions don’t bring about a substantial change of direction.

During November Israel mounted an effective and intense bombardment on Hamas’ supply of Iran rockets in Gaza. With pinpoint accuracy, Israel seems to have brought a large degree of respite, with no more missiles being fired at Israel. The Israel-designed Iron Dome effectively neutralised the hundreds of rockets fired at Israel. The product is still under development and each night the results were handed to the manufacturer’s software engineers at Rafael, who worked through the night to update the software. This has continued since the ending of Pillar of Cloud, and the Israelis are quietly confident that they have a world-class piece of equipment which is receiving a lot of interest from the military forces around the world.

The Israeli military have promised a different type of tactic should Lebanon or Syria launch a war against her.

Israel’s air force gets ready for a blitz against Missile Foes

“Israel’s air force, the Jewish state’s strike arm, was reported Thursday to be planning massive, pulverizing strikes against foes who bombard the country with missiles.

“That means switching from the recent focus on passive defense with anti-missile systems developed at great cost and hefty U.S. funding, to Israel’s long-held military doctrine of large-scale offensive operations, taking the fight to the enemy.

“Hizbollah, the most powerful force in Lebanon and ally of Iran and the beleaguered regime in war-torn Syria, is believed to possess more than 43,000 rockets and missiles, including hundreds able to wreak havoc on Israel’s population centers and strategic installations” (UPI 20-Dec-12).

Ireland’s EU takeover Bad News for Israel

“Israel’s harshest critic in the EU assumes the organization’s presidency in a time of diplomatic turbulence.

“Ireland, perhaps Israel’s harshest critic inside the European Union, assumed the position of the EU presidency on Monday at a time when Israel is already bracing for a rocky period with the body over the stalled diplomatic process and construction beyond the Green Line” (Jerusalem Post 01-Jan-13).

Israel has been under a lot of fire since the UN upgraded the status of the Palestinians from non-state observer to a non-member observer state. It alters little on the ground, Fatah and Hamas are still divided, there is no state. One of the items this brought out was that since 1998 her seat was next to the Vatican’s—and continues to be. In fact Abbas shortly after the
vote visited the Pope to thank him for his support. Knowing the influence the Vatican has with its network of Papal Nuncios it would not be surprising if a lot of help has been given to the Palestinians in their conflict with Israel. The Vatican wants to take control of Jerusalem away from Israel and make it an international city.

Fatah, like Hamas are dedicated to removing Israel from the land, both use logos which show all of Israel as under Palestinian control. This is the logo Abbas used on the letter heading to his speech asking for the change to be made.

Israel and the E1 Buildings

Many strange claims have been made about Israel’s announcement that it was moving another step in the long process of giving approval for the building of houses in Jerusalem. Like most capital cities there just aren’t enough houses to go round. Incidentally not all the houses are for Jews, some are for Arabs. The main cry is that the development of the block East 1 will cut the West Bank in half. A glance at a map will show that this is far from the case. There is more space beyond E1 than is across Israel at its narrowest point! It is an area that has always been regarded as being part of Israel should a Palestinian State be set up. It is next to Maale Adumim which is a Jewish settlement. It is an important area to Israel because of its strategic position on the road to Jericho and the Jordan Valley.

Israel is doing much to defend herself against her enemies. One day this is going to count for nothing. All her skills will prove in vain when the nations of the world band together to drive Israel out of their land. A day of grief and sorrow for Israel, but a day that is the last stage in Jacob’s troubles. Her Saviours will be at hand to rescue her from her enemies and open their eyes to the fact that the one they rejected so long ago really was—and is—their Messiah.

Well before that day the Master will have come to his household, to prepare his bride for the great work that lies ahead. We marvel at the speed at which things are happening and can be confident that our Master is at the door. Let us watch and pray that we be not ashamed in that day.

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By Brian Luke Adelaide, Australia.

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.”—The 4th Vial, Revelation 16:8-9

Through the winter months of 2012 the National Gallery of Victoria (Australia) exhibited the life and times of Napoleon Bonaparte in a massive display of paintings, documents, letters, maps and artistic pieces, the number running into many thousands. Nothing like it had ever been exhibited in Australia before so it provided an excellent opportunity for those interested in the subject to see, in their own country, many famous articles, so characteristic of Napoleon’s life and times. The death of Napoleon was almost 200 years ago (1821, in fact) but the interest was so great that daily attendance was strong right up to the last day, Sunday the 7th October.

Available in the book shop of the Gallery was a beautifully prepared volume with the same title, “Napoleon—Revolution to Empire,” with more than 300 large, glossy pages covering almost the entire scope of the exhibition itself. The book is an excellent presentation with great thanks due to the staff of the National Gallery of Victoria and the Foundation Napoleon in Paris. Outstanding photography and skilful presentation are matched with informative and interesting notes on every page and feature. The book is a classic and without doubt in many ways the best publication ever made on the subject. The lover of history will find it absorbing.

Why such a Popular Response?

The fact that so many thousands have attended this exhibition is in itself intriguing, for matters historic are not usually so popular with the public of Australia. An unexpected story in the latter section of the book seeks to make a link with Napoleon and Australia. Emperor Napoleon spent his last six years (1815-1821) in the isolated small island of St. Helena, where he resided for some months in the home of William Balcombe, the Superintendent of Public Sales with the British East India Company who administered the island. The name of the residence was The Briars. William Balcombe later moved to New South Wales and his son Alexander subsequently found a residence in Victoria, on Mornington Peninsular, just south of Melbourne and called it The Briars in memory of the family’s home in St. Helena where they had provided for the exiled Bonaparte in the last years of his life. In 1959 this same home was gifted to the French Government with a fine collection of Napoleonic memorabilia now in the National Gallery.

This is an intriguing story but hardly
accounts for the mass infatuation of Napoleon Bonaparte. This fame rests upon the fact that this short yet remarkable Frenchman was the most significant personality of the last 200 years in human history. For almost twenty years he dominated the continent of Europe passing through scores of countries and kingdoms, drawing many armies of tens or hundreds of thousands with him, trudging along on foot behind him, sweeping Europe with fire and sword. It has been calculated that between 1797 and 1815 Napoleon mobilised some 3.5 million troops, almost 2 million of these drawn from French citizens and another 1.6 million Italian, Dutch, Swiss, German and Polish soldiers drawn from countries that had been annexed into the Empire. Vast new industries of war were generated for artillery, rifles, swords, uniforms, ammunition, transport, let alone the supplies of items of livelihood, clothing, bedding, food, medicine and health.

All this remarkable industry, military activity and international turmoil came forth essentially from one man, whose dynamic leadership stirred the passions of the French people, and Europe as a whole, to such heights as had never been seen before. He arose from the excitement of the French Revolution that broke out in Paris in 1789 when a bitterly resentful populace rose up in fury against a regime of indulgence in which the Bourbon kings were in league with the hierarchy of the Church. The seasons were contrary and the despair of the common people of city and country was proudly dismissed by an evil conspiracy of Church and State, of a Roman Church where a fifth of the land surface of France was owned by the bishops and the Louis kings basked in elegant splendour. Louis XVI was the regent in 1789 and was married to Maria Antoinette, the daughter of the Austrian emperor, also of the Bourbon family. It was a symbol of Europe of the times where the Holy Roman Empire was master of Europe and had its sons and relatives scattered through various countries yet in league in every place with a dominant Roman Church whose Pope in Rome was the spiritual head of the Empire and to whom the kings and rulers gave special powers and liberties.

Exporter of Revolution

So the explosion of rebellion in France in 1789 was something waiting to happen and its shock waves were felt throughout Europe: for the conditions that brought it on in France were common throughout all of the Holy Roman Empire.

The motto of this Revolution has been symbolised by the catch-cry, “Liberty, equality and fraternity,” yet it was anything but pleasant. The Bible described it as a “noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast and upon them which worshipped his image” (Revelation 16:2). Joseph Mede (1640) and other Bible scholars had foretold the revolution, in France, 150 years before the event. So accurate were his words that Sir Isaac Newton 100 years later made this comment.

“Master Mede’s interpretation of the Vials (of

*Forwards to Empire!*

Rev. Chapter 16) is not much amiss.”

The first six Vials of Revelation are portrayed in Scripture as a build-up to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, to “Armageddon,” the Great Day of God Almighty (Rev. 16:16, 14). So the French Revolution was and is a great pointer of the significance of our own times, for the world has never been the same since and the political, social and religious consequences were enormous and have reached down to our times.

But how is all this related to Napoleon Bonaparte? Bonaparte was neither French nor born in France. His father was from Tuscany in Italy and his mother of favoured rank in the island of Corsica South of France. At the age of just twelve years his parents saw the opportunity of sending their young Napoleon to Paris. Corsica had resisted French rule and his father was active in that insurrection but it had failed and the parents saw that the time was ripe to co-
operate with the greater power. Their young son was never an academic but greatly fascinated by history and adventure and found an entry into the Ecole Militaire where he graduated as a skilled officer in artillery, a feature throughout his whole life's story, for which he later was known as “the man of fire”—and fulfilled the Bible phrase, “power was given unto him to scorch men with fire” (Rev. 16:8.9).

The Revolution went through various phases and although Bonaparte strongly agreed with the principles of the Revolution he quite despised the disorder and rebellion that so often accompanied its development. But of what significance was a young migrant now bound to a lowly duty in the French army? This young man however had immense potential and a vast ego. His chance came in 1793 in the Southern port city of Toulon where he was stationed. The English navy, very dominant in the seas, was lending support to a counter-revolution in Toulon and looked likely to succeed. His commanding officer Barras was amazed to see the decisive manner of his understudy who never hesitated to line up the artillery guns, in critical positions, and literally blow the insurrectionists to pieces (“Bonaparte” indeed!).

It was all very significant of what was to come in the next twenty years. Britain in the sea locked in combat with Napoleon on the land and the little Corsican victorious on the land and conceding the seas to England! (compare Rev. 16:3).

Yet no promotion followed this skilful and daring exploit. However in July 1795 the same officer Barras had the role of defender of the Revolution in Paris. It was a bad time for the new Parliament who were challenged as they sat in the former royal palace, the Tuileries. The rebels consisted of loyal royalists and fervent anti-revolutionists. Barras was alarmed as it looked very likely that the armed rebels could overthrow the government; with good presence of mind he remembered that Bonaparte was on leave in Paris. He found him and gave the youthful artillery officer the responsibility of saving the revolutionary government. With a relish he brought the guns from the local barracks and murderously raked the opposition with gunshot. The crowds dispersed, many slain and others swept into the Seine River alongside. The Government of the revolution was saved and Bonaparte was on the way up, the wonder boy that the Revolution was looking for.

The principles of the French Revolution were of great concern to the Emperor in Austria and to all the royalist governments of Europe and they prepared to make their presence felt on all the borders of France. In January 1792 King Louis XVI was publicly beheaded in Paris to the obvious dismay of all the aristocracy and church hierarchy of Europe. France was under increasing pressure and the Directory determined to attack the region of northern Italy rather than be swamped by antagonistic neighbours. A special man of action and insight was required to lead the new French revolutionary army over the Alps and on to the plains of Piedmont. Napoleon Bonaparte was the man chosen for this critical campaign upon which depended the whole French nation and its new Republican government.

General consul to Administrator

In twenty-six battles in the Italian Campaign the twenty-six year old general led his untried troops to remarkable victories against the armies of the Austrian Empire, at that time the most feared in the world. His secret was speed and his fierce courage inspired his soldiers who he often led into battle. The grounds were rich and fertile, among the most desirable lands in all Europe. He issued out spoils and rewards for those cities and regions that responded positively to his new policies and humiliated those rulers who frustrated his cause. These French soldiers were indeed a new breed but with such continuous
battles a number of his officers became accomplished generals in their own right. He compelled his new subjects to feed and provide for this new "liberating" army, imposed strong taxes and rewrote the constitutions of their governments. His special focus was to pilage the wealth of the Church, to re-organise its priesthood, sell off its real estate and ban the monasteries. The principles of the French Revolution became the new code of government and in all this feverish activity the young General took an active part even writing a new catechism for Sunday Schools! He utterly humiliated the Pope's inner sanctum and took off art treasures of all kinds in the manner of Rome's old generals of pagan days. Paris was the recipient of all this booty; it was Paris the first city of this new world and Rome but second.

For almost the next 20 years this was the recurring picture and experience in Europe. There may be quiet for some months or perhaps a year as in 1804 when he concentrated his massive energy upon his coronation as Emperor, but then off he would embark on yet another conquest. It may be against Belgium or Holland or German territories, or Prussia, Austria, Switzerland, Russia, Italy, Spain or Portugal. Six times various coalitions of countries sought to break his victorious spell over Europe, always assisted by England the clear ruler of the waves, yet not with any significant success. The Law of Paris was the Law of all European countries; none were to trade with England and the Napoleon Code of law was universal, governing all aspects of life in those countries. The Jews were granted citizenship and liberated from their ghettos. What Napoleon did in the Italian Campaign he did in every country and regency of Europe. The economy was one with France. The French were on top of the world and wealth and prestige came home to Paris as she expanded and beautified her civic features.

All this incredible achievement by the influence of one man, a young emigre from lowly Corsica, now enthroned over Europe, only to be compared in history to Alexander the Great (BC 306) and Charlemagne, Emperor of Europe 1000 years before. These two historical figures were his inspiration, whom he sought in every way to eclipse in glory and power.

The stamp of Napoleon was all over Catholic Europe and his republican ideals largely persisted and became the standard of most modern countries of the world. The Napoleon Code still lies at the heart of much European Law.

"The Most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men"

The truth of these words quoted from the Book of Daniel (4:17) can be so clearly seen in the life of this incredible man. As we have indicated the achievements of Napoleon were spoken of in the 16th chapter of the book of Revelation. The revolution in France was to cast its pain over the region of "rivers and fountains of waters" (16:4—the Italian Campaign), upon "the sun" (16:8—the central Austrian Empire), and upon "the seat of the beast" (16:10—Rome, the throne of power and influence in Europe for 14 centuries). All this came to pass in order and in amazing fullness, through the man Napoleon and his exporting of the principles of republican democracy.

When he kept to the Divine charter he was singularly successful. When he reached beyond this he suffered frustration and defeat. He sought for many years to invade England across the Channel but things never worked for him (c/p 16:3). He sought in 1799 to dominate Egypt and Palestine but lost his entire fleet and most of his 50,000 soldiers and returned home with only 10,000 of the 600,000 army that had gone with him to Moscow. He sent voyages of scientific men to plot new coasts of far southern lands and prevent the continued growth of colonial Britain but all he obtained were cages of kangaroos, emus and birds to enhance the 74 hectare garden of Queen Josephine his wife. He named the gulfs of South Australia, Bonaparte and Josephine and put his own name over all the vast expanse of the strange new country of Australia. All these new lands were only being mapped in the 1800's and although a number of French discovery teams were dispatched to complement the glory of France yet almost everywhere the colonies became British and therefore Protestant. These far escapes had to do with the Divine plan for Napoleon and stand in embarrassing contrast to his superhuman achievements in Catholic Europe.

"Napoleon Revolution to Empire"

This remarkable book provides wonderful insights into the life of this significant man whose wars and political code turned the world upside down. The effects go on even today for wherever democracy is voiced the shrill echoes of the Revolution's motto are still heard, "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity."

These eternal desires of man were never satisfiied by the vicious cannon of Napoleon's armies but they will be soon realised when the son of God rules with righteousness and peace.

"Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgement" (Isaiah 32:1).

This book can be obtained from CSSS agencies, Price approx. Aust $40.

THE NAME “CHRISTADELPHIAN”

The world is called “Christian,” but the word has lost its meaning, from which it comes to pass that for a believer to call himself a Christian, is to utter a lie so far as the sense it conveys to neighbours is concerned. Names represent things. The name Christadelphian represents the recovered faith of Christ, with its testimony that men are without hope apart from the gospel and obedience of Christ. This is the offensive part of the testimony of the truth: and this is what is represented to the public by the name Christadelphian. It was the cross that was the great offence in Paul’s day: but he did not avoid it on that account. In our day, it is the mortal and hopeless state of men apart from the hope of Israel (conventionally represented by the name “Christadelphian”) that is the offence. And a faithful soldier of Christ will not pull the flag down because it is odious.

Historical Patterns for Latter Day Events

By Ron Kidd  

When looking for information about events at the time of the end the Bible student is directed to the Old Testament prophets. Questions invariably are asked about where certain events fall in the latter day sequence: does Ezekiel 38 occur before or after Jesus’ return? Will the Arabs humble Israel? At what point will the saints be taken away for judgment? At what point will the Church of Rome experience the judgments of God? These questions and many more have been resolved over the years by a patient review of the scriptures so that a broad picture of what we might expect to happen around the time of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ has been produced with the result that we can identify key events fairly accurately.

However, not all Bible prophecy is recorded in the prophetic writings; many of the events recorded in the Old Testament provide patterns for latter day events which, as one would expect, follow the same sequence as outlined in the prophets, providing confirmation that we are on the right track.

This aspect of Bible prophecy can be a fascinating study and this writer would encourage the reader to look for such patterns when reviewing the various Bible narratives.

In this article we will attempt to whet the reader’s appetite for further Bible study.

The slaughter of the kings

One of the earliest historical patterns in scripture is recorded in Genesis 14. There we read of the capture of Lot, Abraham’s nephew, and what the apostle Paul described as “the slaughter of the kings” (Hebrews 7:1).

When Jesus said, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad” (John 8:56), it is quite possible that Jesus was referring to the events at the time of the end and not necessarily the sacrifice of Isaac. Jesus described the day as “my day” and the scriptures frequently refer to a particular day when Christ will manifest himself. We read of “the day of the Lord” (1 Thess. 5:2; 2Cor. 1:14) or “the day of Christ” (2 Thess. 2:2; Phil.1:6) and John described the time period he saw in the vision of Revelation 1:10 as “the Lord’s day.”

All the above references point forward to a day yet future, when Jesus will manifest himself as the Judge of all the earth, and the time when the Melchizedek king priest will appear on the scene to commence rebuilding the earth after the judgments of Almighty God.

We can summarize chapter fourteen as follows:

• Five kings of Canaan are invaded by four kings from Mesopotamia, verses 1-3.
• The kings of Canaan become servants for a period of twelve years, but in the thirteenth year they rebel, verse 4.
• In the fourteenth year the four kings of Mesopotamia return, sweeping through the land and defeating the Canaanites, verses 5-10.
• The spoil of Sodom and Gomorrah is taken along with Abraham’s nephew Lot and his family, verses 11-12.
• Abraham learns of the captivity and gathers an army, including 318 of his own trained servants born in his house and pursues the enemy, verses 14-15.
• Abraham destroys the enemy and delivers Lot and his family, verse 16.
• Upon his return Abraham is met by the king of Sodom and Melchizedek, king of Salem. The former offers Abraham riches and the latter bread and wine, verses 17-24.
• Abraham refuses the riches of this world and is blessed by Melchizedek, verse 19-20.

Now recognizing that all the details may not necessarily have a bearing on the latter days, nevertheless the details bear a striking resemblance to Armageddon. The invasion comes from the north of Canaan and involves a confederacy of nations. The battle takes place in a valley (Genesis 14:3, 10). Abraham, who is the man of the covenant, pursues the enemy to save his brethren with a company of men who have been born in his house. He returns victoriously and the king priest Melchizedek, king of Jerusalem is revealed.

The details bear a remarkable similarity to the message of the prophets. At the time of the end Jesus Christ—the man of the covenant—will come to save his brethren, the people of Israel. Jesus will be accompanied by his household (the saints), those who have been born into his house.

The introduction of Melchizedek after the slaughter of the kings provides a
glimpse of the future when the enemy of God is finally overthrown and a king shall reign in Zion. By transposing the characters into a latter day sequence we arrive at the following outline.

- Land of Israel is invaded from the north (Gen.14:1-3, 5-10)—Ezekiel 38; Joel 3; Daniel 11:40-15.
- The Jews in the land are taken captive (Gen.14:11-12)—Zechariah 14:1-2; Daniel 11:45.
- Jesus, with the saints, is revealed to save his people (Gen.14:14-16)—Ezekiel 38:18-19; Zechariah 14:3, 5; Psalm 149:5-9.
- There is a great slaughter (Gen.14:17; Heb.7:1)—Isaiah 34:2, 6; Ezekiel 38:19-21.
- Israel is saved from oppression (Gen.14:16)—Daniel 12:2; Joel 3:16; Zechariah 14:7; Isaiah 66:20.
- Jesus, the Melchizedek king priest is manifested in Jerusalem (Gen.14:18)—Zechariah 14:4; 6:12-13.

This historical pattern provides us with a picture of the sequence of events at the time of the end. It also identifies that the northern invader as entering the land prior to the manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The Parable of the Feasts of Yahweh—Leviticus 23**

The Law of Moses was a shadow institution which pointed forward to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are accustomed to identifying the many typical references to Christ in the various sacrifices; even the Tabernacle and its furniture details aspects of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This being the case it would be reasonable to conclude that there should be evidence of latter day prophecy also embedded in the law.

Leviticus 23 presents us with the details of the various feasts under the law, beginning with the Sabbath day right through to the Feast of Tabernacles. Do these various feasts offer any clues as to the sequence of events at the time of the end? The different feasts and their associated events are outlined in the chart. For our purposes we will examine briefly the events that are relevant to our study. All the details of the feasts have their counterpart in the work of Jesus Christ; some were fulfilled at his first advent whilst others will be fulfilled when he returns. This can be illustrated as follows:

**Jesus’ first advent**

*The Feast of Passover:* Jesus Christ is described as “our Passover” and the memorial feast is linked with the feast of unleavened bread (1 Cor. 5:7-8).

*The Sheaf of the firstfruits:* this has reference to Jesus, who is “the firstfruits of them that slept” (1Cor.15:20). The sheaf was waved before God the day after the Sabbath following Passover and this was true of Jesus, who rose from the dead the 1st day of the week.

*The Feast of Weeks:* this is Pentecost, fifty days after Passover. During this feast a “new meal offering” was offered in the form of two loaves. The offering is called “the firstfruits unto the Lord” (Lev.23:17). At Pentecost both Jew and Gentile (two loaves) became described as “a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (James 1:18).

This is a very brief summary of the significance of these feasts in the early part of the year, but it serves to illustrate that they detail prophetic events associated with the work of Jesus at his first advent. The question follows that if this was true of his first advent could it also apply to Jesus’ second advent?

A clue is found in the Feast of Tabernacles, this feast mentioned by the prophet Zechahriah:

“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zech. 14:16).

The Feast of Tabernacles is identified with the kingdom period. It should also be noted that the feast of weeks and the feast of tabernacles are separated by verse 22 which describes the poor and stranger gleaning in the fields. Why would this be inserted right in the middle of all these feasts? The obvious answer is that from the time when Jesus ascended into heaven to the time of his return is described as “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24). It is during this period that the Gentiles glean in the fields; we have become the beneficiaries of Israel’s downfall (Romans 11:11-12). Ruth provides us with a perfect example of this; she was both poor and a stranger in the land of Israel (Ruth 1:21; 2:10).

**Jesus’ Second Advent**

*The Feast of Trumpets:* It is not without significance that the resurrection of the saints is heralded by the sound of a trumpet (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16). So the pattern begins to develop.

*The Day of Atonement:* Every 50 years when the year of Jubilee occurred another trumpet was blown—“shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land” (Lev. 25:9). This jubilee trumpet signaled the restoration of every man’s possession (Lev. 25:10). The prophets identify this jubilee trumpet sound with Israel’s return to their land in the last days (Isaiah 18:3; 7:27;13), in conjunction with the time of Israel’s Day of Atonement when their sins will be forgiven and all Israel shall be saved (Isaiah 58:1-7, 59:20-21; Romans 11:25-26).

*The Feast of Tabernacles:* We have already pointed out that this feast will be commemorated in the kingdom of God (Zechariah 14:16).

There was a ten day period between the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement. What happened during this period? According to Edersheim it was a period of reflection, he comments: “One of its (i.e. trumpets) main purposes was to arouse men to repentance...” What would Israel be reflecting about and what could have happened to cause them to repent? The solution is found in the purpose of the Day of Atonement; it was a national day of forgiveness and for Israel to find forgiveness something must happen to create a contrite mind. What else but the humbling effect of an invasion from the north and the humiliation of Israel?

Once again a series of historical events become a pattern for the latter days providing the following sequence of events.

- The resurrection of the saints is heralded by the blowing of trumpets
- The Jewish nation is in a state of humiliation and reflection
- Israel’s Day of Atonement takes place
- At the sound of the Jubilee trumpet Israel begin the process of restoration
- The nations gather in Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

This sequence provides additional information that can be incorporated into the previous example and by doing so the picture of the latter day events can be filled out further.

*Samson and the Foxes*

There are several examples which can be drawn from the book of Judges and particularly Samson’s life; we will examine one event during the time of Samson. The first five verses of Judges chapter fifteen record the unusual incident of the three hundred foxes being used to destroy the economy of the Philistines (16:24). There are a number of details contained in this section which we have listed below:

- The land is occupied by a foreign power—the Philistines in this instance.
- The time period is described as “the time of harvest” (verse 1).
- The incident took place in Timnath which is located in the valley of Sorek (cp. verse 1 and 14:1).
- The area was full of stacks of grain (verse 5).
- Samson tied “firebrands” to the tails of the foxes, thus destroying the harvest (verse 4).

All these details combined provide one more pattern pointing to the events at the time of the end. As we are aware the word Armageddon is described as being in the Hebrew language (Revelation 16:16), which directs our minds to the meaning of the word rather than a specific
location as some have claimed. There are three words in the Hebrew language which appear to make up the composite word Armageddon; they are, Aremah-Gay-Duwn, meaning A heap of sheaves in a valley of judgment.

The Old Testament picture of this event uses the same graphic language. When Jesus reveals himself to the nations the land will be occupied by a foreign power (Ezekiel 38:14-16; Daniel 11:45; Zechariah 14:1-2). It will be a time of harvest (Joel 3:13; Micah 4:12; Habakkuk 3:12).

The nations will be gathered to a valley of judgment (Joel 3, 12, where the name Jehoshaphat signifies judgment). Perhaps the most revealing comment is the reference to “firebrands”; it is the Hebrew lappid (Strong’s no. 3940). It is translated lamps in connection with God saving Jerusalem from the oppressors:

“In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem” (Zechariah 12:6).

During the time of Samson, like the fields in the valley of Sorek, the Philistines became “a heap of sheaves in a valley of judgment.”

The days of David and Solomon

Our final example is taken from the time of David and Solomon. Both individuals portray the various roles of the Lord Jesus Christ; David displays all the characteristics of the “lion of the tribe of Judah” whilst Solomon reveals the work of the “Prince of peace.” The scriptures we will consider are 2 Samuel 5:8 and 1 Kings 1-6. The sequence of events in these sections of scripture once again reveal an historical pattern.

Prior to David becoming king over all Israel Jerusalem was occupied by the Jebusites (2 Samuel 5:6), a name derived from a Hebrew word meaning trodden down. In this reference we are introduced to the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24).

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<td>Zion established as the spiritual centre</td>
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<td>David performs the role of king priest</td>
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<td>David subdues his enemies</td>
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<td>Accumulates the spoil of the Gentiles</td>
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<td>David’s sons described as priests</td>
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<td>Slays those who reject his ruler ship</td>
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<td>Makes an alliance with Egypt</td>
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<td>Judah and Israel swell safely, under his vine</td>
<td>Jer. 23:6; Mic. 4:4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>All enemies under his feet</td>
<td>1Cor. 15:25</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Satan (the adversary) restrained</td>
<td>Rev. 20:1-2</td>
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<td>Commence building the Temple</td>
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REVELATION & SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The book of Revelation is as much part of the word of God as all the other inspired books that make up the Bible. To read it regularly and not understand it is unprofitable; not to read it is to despire the word of God. This does not mean that someone desiring to be baptised must understand the detail of the book of Revelation. As in all fields of education, one passes from the simple to the more complex and difficult; so in spiritual things. But it is essential that we progress in our understanding of the divine Will. We have to pass from babes in Christ to the full stature of the man in Christ Jesus. So much in the book of Revelation are themes taking their meaning from previous scriptural matters, that understanding the book of Revelation naturally takes its place as we progress in our studies. It must be the object of all who love God’s word to attain to a fair understanding of this last message; especially so when we remember the insistence of this by God himself in the opening words, “Blessed is he that readeth... and they that keep those things which are written therein.”

The book of Revelation is probably of more importance to us than to any previous generation. We are living in the period when all its promises and warnings reach their climax. It may surprise some to realise two thirds of the Revelation—fourteen out of its twenty two chapters—deal with the time of his return and the setting up of the kingdom. We live in this time, and the Revelation is in a special sense our book—given specially for us... we have a key to present events, and God’s view of man’s present behaviour; and from our vantage point near the end of history, we can see the outline of the startling events that lie ahead. So we can be assured and enthusiastic about his imminent return.

From this point onwards many of the events in David and Solomon’s life point forward to the time when the anti-typical David and Solomon will be revealed to the nations. The accompanying chart reflects some of the parallels between both time periods.

By blending all of the historical events in this article together a master list can be created. This can be added to as further historical patterns are accumulated.

We can draw a number of conclusions from this exercise: first of all we cannot afford to dismiss the historical narratives as having no bearing on the prophetic message; secondly we must take great care in reading the details of Old Testament events; thirdly we need to recognize that the events at the time of the end are patterned after earlier situations and that there is much to learn from a consideration of the earlier narratives. Let us remember the words of the writer of the Proverbs, who said, “It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter” (Proverbs 25:2).
The Sons of the Prophets

By Ken Loveridge

Where Samuel Started the School in Shiloh

When Hannah brought her son Samuel to the site of the tabernacle in Shiloh, to put him under the care of Eli, the high priest, he did not join a group of other children learning to serve the Lord. Samuel’s mother had pledged that he would be given to the Lord and he spent his life in working first with Eli in the sanctuary, and later with the people. Only the sons of Eli were there to help with the work. His experience with Hophni and Phinehas helped teach him what not to do as a judge in Israel. Following the loss of the ark to the Philistines, the sanctuary at Shiloh was destroyed, probably by those same Philistines, and Samuel returned to Ramah.

Samuel recognized the impact of the ministry of Eli on his life, and he knew that the spiritual leaders of Israel had to be trained to do the work properly. Although we don’t know the details, Samuel must have gathered to himself those who were called to the work, to prepare them for their work as prophets with the people.

Working from his base at Ramah, Samuel took on the work of a judge, traveling from city to city to pronounce judgement, and encouraging the people in the work. In the book of Judges we are told that “...every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” There was no leadership from a king or central government, as would later be the case.

Knowing he was living in a nation that had gone astray, Samuel saw the need for the people to be taught what the “right way” was. We are told nothing of the upbringing and mentoring that Samuel received in the household of Eli, the High Priest, but Samuel knew that the people needed to learn the ways of God. Samuel began the tradition in Israel of training preachers and prophets.

When Saul, the son of Kish, was seeking his lost animals, he went to Gibeath to ask advice of Samuel the seer. In 1 Samuel 10 we read that, after anointing Saul, Samuel told him that he would meet “a company (or band) of prophets, coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy.” This was to be a sign to Saul. The anointing brought great changes to Saul’s life, but his encounter with the sons of the prophets also had an impact. The changes were seen by the people who asked “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

The way these men are described implies that there were other bands or companies doing the same work. The book of Samuel does not give us any other detail of the beginning of these groups. Samuel is their director (1 Sam. 19:20), and their work appears to consist of making praise with instruments of music, as we see carried on by the families of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun in 1 Chronicles 25, as well as copying the scriptures, which later was the work of the scribes. Jehu was anointed by one of the sons of the prophets sent by Elisha, and 2 Kings 4 implies that Elisha and the others led the people in worship on the sabbath and on feast days. They were a recognized group throughout the kingdom, as Amos implies when he describes himself as “no prophet, neither the son of a prophet”—he was not a professional, in other words. Not every prophet in Israel was part of the group called the sons of the prophets. These groups or schools of the prophets had been established to teach the Israelites the revealed Word of God.

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These groups form the beginning of the prophetic order whose existence can be traced down through the Old Testament records. There are references to prophets before Samuel, but it is only after his time, that we see the ministry of the prophets bloom and become a spiritual influence in the nation’s history. The word ‘Naioth’ is used only six times in scripture, all in the space of eight verses in 1 Samuel chapters 19 and 20.

The meaning and usage make it appear to be a dwelling place in Ramah for these prophets, and a place of instruction. We also see both David and Saul, the first two kings of Israel, using the ‘Naioth,’ which may mean that they also received some instruction from Samuel. Jonathan, the son of Saul may also have a connection.

Two centuries later, Elijah, and Elisha were contending with an active opposition led by Ahab and Jezebel. The sons of the prophets were dwelling in Bethel, as well as possibly Gilgal, and Jericho, which Elijah and Elisha visited before Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind. Earlier, while the ark of God rested in Kirjath-jearim in the house of Ahinadab, it was probably cared for by the sons of the prophets. Uzza and Ahio, who drove the cart which was ignorantly used to carry the ark, were probably part of this group. In 2 Kings chapter 6 we read that the sons of the prophets told Elisha that they were in need of more room, because “the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us.” The movement was flourishing in those days. Although they apparently lived in smaller centers, we must not conclude that these companies were small in number. The other thing that we learn about the school of the prophets is that there were generally a large number of them that met together. In 1 Kings 18:4, Obadiah is hiding prophets from Ahab and Jezebel and 100 of these men were divided in half and sent to hide in the caves. In Kings 22:6 there were about 400 prophets banded together and in 2 Kings 2:15 there were 50 in the company. The sons of the prophets had a large part to play in resisting Baal worship in the land. Jezebel recruited large numbers of priests of Baal in the process of persecuting the faithful in Israel. This simply teaches us that there were still many who chose to serve God and give spiritual leadership to the people. Even knowing this,
Elijah had to be reminded “Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.” Elijah and the sons of the prophets were not alone.

While Moses was leading the children of Israel through the wilderness, his father-in-law saw that he needed help in judging and advising the people. His suggestion led to the establishment of a group of 70 elders to help guide the people. They had the gift of the holy spirit, and they “prophesied” to the members of the congregation. The work of prophesying can help us to understand the work of the sons of the prophets under Samuel. They obviously relieved Moses of his administrative burden, and judged with spirit guidance.

In the days of Hezekiah, the sons of the prophets appear to have moved to Jerusalem. Perhaps the fall of the northern kingdom brought them to consolidate in Judah. Was Isaiah the head of the school at that time? Consider the words of Isaiah 8:16-18.

“Bind up the testimony, seal the law (RV teaching) among my disciples. And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwelleth in mount Zion.”

We have preserved in scripture, books by Hosea and Micah, written during this same period. The “valley of vision” of Isaiah 22 was probably refers to the residence of the sons of the prophets, while the college or yeshivas—educational institutions that focus on the study of traditional religious texts. The principles of these schools remain as they were in Samuel’s day. God in his purpose worked with men who were trained to study of traditional religious texts. The principles of these schools remain as they were in Samuel’s day. God in his purpose worked with men who were trained to

with apostate prophets in Jerusalem. The witness of the sons of the prophets of earlier days did not stop the decay of either the northern or southern kingdoms. Jeremiah wrote in chapter 23.

“For both prophet and priest are profane... the prophets of Jerusalem... commit adultery, and walk in lies... from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land... they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD.”

In chapter 27, he warns,

“Hearken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, the vessels of the Lord’s house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you.”

The next chapter tells us of his encounter with Hananiah who falsely promised Zedekiah the king a return from Babylon within two years time. Two months later Hananiah was dead. Just as Elijah was assisted by Elisha in his work, so also was Elisha aided by Gehazi, and later Jeremiah by Baruch. We can see in Baruch’s work particularly, the ways in which the sons of the prophets could help one another.

Ezekiel, prophesying in Babylon during the captivity also contended with false prophets as we read in Ezekiel 13. “Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!” Daniel was taken earlier into Babylon with others of the royal seed, that “...they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.” It was Daniel who, in the first year of Darius, “...understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.” After his schooling in the king’s palace, Daniel went on to become the “chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.” The prophetic tradition was carried on as Daniel supervised the schools, and the wise men or magi of Matthew’s gospel were probably trained in the same way by Daniel.

After the return from Babylon, Nehemiah tried to revive the tradition of the schools of the prophets in Jerusalem, but he too had to contend with a rival school of false prophets. In Nehemiah 6, Sanballat accused Nehemiah of appointing “...prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem,” while Nehemiah later mentions “…the prophets Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that have prophesied unto thee at Babylon.”

From their beginnings under Samuel, the sons of the prophets were trained to guide the people according to the law, to help them in combating the religious and social evils of the day, and to strengthen them against false worship. By the time we come to Jeremiah, the priests and religious leaders were looking after themselves rather than the people, and the people were being led further astray. When the Romans took control, the Pharisees and the scribes sought to maintain their positions, and their was no voice of prophecy in the land. John the baptist and Jesus were supported by disciples who helped to spread the good news of the kingdom of God. The Dead Sea scrolls tell us of groups who separated themselves from the political leadership in Jerusalem, and worked to preserve the word of God particularly in their work as scribes. Just as Jesus worked with his disciples, we later read of Paul’s charge to Timothy,

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2).

Today, young Jewish men continue to study in yeshivas—educational institutions that focus on the study of traditional religious texts. The principles of these schools remain as they were in Samuel’s day. God in his purpose worked with men who were trained to prophesy, and to preach his word, and today each of us as individuals, have a responsibility to read the scriptures ourselves, and to seek to understand the message it contains.
How long does it take for a plant to trap a fly? or to trap an evolutionist? How long did it take for this Australian Sundew plant to evolve a mechanism that could catch its prey in just 400 milliseconds? How many flies got away while the process was being perfected? Well that’s guesswork! The plant relies on its several parts working together in order to make a kill! When a fly walks on the snap-tentacles it triggers a catapult action propelling the prey onto some glue-covered tentacles, and once stuck, the fly is gradually moved down to a hungry leaf-trap for consumption. If you try to work out how this could have evolved over millions of years you get stuck!

TRAPPED IN 400 MILLISECONDS!

The Drosera glanduligera has touch-sensitive tentacles to catapult insects into its digestive area. But, says one recent report, how “exactly the outer tentacles work is a bit of a mystery” because plants do not have muscles! Oh, and a tentacle can only flip once — not much time for practice!