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

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RUGBY PROPHECY DAY
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KENT PROPHECY DAY
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“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” John 17:17
The author is aware that the title-page is an exhibition of startling propositions, very much at variance indeed with the suppositions of those who are considered the most enlightened statesmen and politicians of the day. That Russia should be triumphant with such powers against her as France and England is amongst the impossibilities of those who put confidence in princes, and make flesh their arm. But their thoughts are not the purposes of “the Most high who ruleth over the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” He has decreed the triumph of Russia over the east and west, previous to the final overthrow of its own dominion after the manner of Sennacherib; and he has registered that decree in the sacred archives of the Jewish Nation some 2440 years ago (written in 1854), as will be amply explained in this work.

As to the fall of the French and Ottoman empires, the author repeats emphatically, that it is inevitable, and that too at no very distant future. The normal position of France among the powers is that of a tenth kingdom of the iron empire. Its chief has declared that “the Empire is peace,” and that the time for conquest is past, never to return! This is a very convenient sentiment. But how convenient soever the sentiment, it is essentially untrue. The empire is not peace, nor is the time of conquest past.

The Bible deals in acts, not words; and calls things by their right names. It has shown that the empire of this peace-professing French emperor is war, universal war. But the developments of French policy are not yet complete. It has yet to work up Austria and the whole papacy to a belligerent attitude (which led to the First World War—Ed.). At present Austria seeks neutrality, which French policy will not permit it to attain. There can be no permanent neutrality for any in the coming war; for “the kings of the earth and of the whole habitable” are to be gathered to the conflict by the Frog-power-excited policy of the Sultan, Austrian Emperor, and Italian priest; of whom the policy of the last two will greatly facilitate the strides of Russia to the chieftainship of Babylonian Christendom.
When French policy has fully performed its mission of embroiling the world, the future will be left to the arbitration of the sword. The result of this will be fatal to the French and Ottoman empires. This is not the place to go into the proof, as it will be found naturally presented in a more appropriate connection. It may, however, be remarked here that Gomer is a scripture geographical name which includes France; and Gomer is one of the peoples enumerated as constituents of the confederacy to be formed under the supremacy of the Autocrat of All the Russias (Ezekiel 38); hence, whatever regime may administer French affairs, its ruler will acknowledge the suzerainty of the new Constantinopolitan Autocracy.

“It is impossible,” says the Leading Journal of Europe, “to foretell the results of a war on which we have scarcely entered” (The Crimea War of 1853-1856). The impossibility here expressed is fully admitted by the author, provided the Bible be esteemed authority in the premises. Had the author no other resources than this affords, far would it be from him to offer the public a work with such an extraordinary title as this. Of himself he knows nothing more about what shall come to pass than his contemporaries; but, being instructed by the scriptures of truth, he is as familiar with the grand leading events of the future as with the outline of the past. Believing that the Bible is indeed a revelation of the purposes of God, and having diligently studied it for many years, and by the past verification of his interpretations being convinced that he reads the prophetic word aright, he knows assuredly that it is possible to foretell the results of the present war.

Besides the general title expressive of the subject-matter of the book, it has been thought expedient to give it a name for convenient reference. As the subject relates to the East, and to events introductory to the manifestation of “the Kings of the East,” who are to rule all nations for a thousand years, Anatolia, a euphonious Greek derivative, from Ανατολία, the east, or day-spring, has been bestowed upon it.

Anatolia is original throughout. It is an exposition of the book of Daniel from alpha to omega, with so much of the testimonies of other prophets as is necessary to its comprehension. If a person would understand the end of Daniel he must commence at the beginning of the descriptions of what he witnessed: so if an inquirer would know the truth of what is presented in the title-page of this work, he must begin at the beginning, and having read it through, give it a second reading, verifying the positions as he proceeds by reference to the texts, that his faith may stand, not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. The author has been careful to assert nothing unsupported by proof; as his object has not been to amuse and astonish, but to instruct. The denouement of the book of Daniel is the solution of the great Eastern (or Middle East) Question. There is no other possible solution than what he represents. Hence, to speak rationally upon the subject men must speak according to Daniel, who was a far wiser and more intelligent statesman and politician than any now living. It is because of the profound and universal ignorance of the meaning of his writings, that secular and ecclesiastical scribes and orators so vainly speculate upon the issue of the conflict they have provoked. But the governments of the nations are blind and faithless. If they were enlightened believers on God they would be unsuitable instruments for the emergencies of the times. There is a long account to be settled between God and the world, the measure of whose iniquity is well-nigh full. The crooked policy of its rulers is working out results highly favorable for the great national retribution he has decreed. His tribunal is in the Holy City; for “there will he sit to judge all the nations;” because “his fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.” It is manifest, then, that means must be in operation to convene the forces of the nations there, that they may receive compensation in kind for their abominable desolations with which they have overspread Jehovah’s land and people. This exigency of the approaching future is the scriptural reason of that prominence which is given to the Holy Shrines (places) in Jerusalem in the present (Middle) Eastern Question. The Holy Land and City will increase in political importance as the war proceeds; till the struggle will be not to keep Russia out of Constantinople, but to preserve Jerusalem from his dominion. The endeavor, however, will be without avail; the Czar’s bliss) will take the city—but after that, “The Deluge!”

To the household of faith, and to Israelites, this work will be found particularly interesting and important. It will demonstrate to both classes that the day of their redemption is dawning. It will enable them to discern the signs of the times, which are so luminously indicative of his appearing, whose right it is to reign. Jews by nature and adoption have suffered long and grievously at the hand of the oppressor who has scattered and peeled them by his severities. But the day of retribution approaches, when they shall “Reward Babylon even as she rewarded them, and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup that she hath filled, double shall they fill to her.” Therefore, “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets: for God will then have avenged you on her.” These are the words of him who said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not fail.” This is the principle—Vengeance on Babylon for his people’s sake: a principle overlooked by the knight-errants of the till, whose amnesties conception extend not beyond their balance-sheets and “the light within!”

Having, then, now introduced the reader to the great subject of this work, he is invited to proceed, being well assured that when he shall have reached the end, he will admit that, the Bible being received as true, the startling propositions embodied in the title necessarily result from the establishment of the things herein proved to be noted in the scriptures of truth by his friend and well-wisher,

THE AUTHOR.
The prophet Daniel was a remarkably significant personality. His long life of approximately 90 years straddled the Babylonian exile of the Jewish people, BC 606-536. Daniel was only a young man of teenage years when he was taken captive by the blood-thirsty Babylonians or Chaldeans. These people lived in Mesopotamia, which means "between the rivers", that is the rivers of Euphrates and Tigris, still great rivers in the land of Iraq. For 70 years this prestigious kingdom dominated the Middle East, especially during the reign of their greatest king Nebuchadnezzar, until the city of Jerusalem was an utter ruin, its walls broken down, its palaces flattened and its beautiful Temple, where had dwelt the presence of their God, desecrated and overturned. The kingdom of Babylon was on the rise and Nebuchadnezzar saw opportunity in his conquest; he knew the talents and abilities of the Jewish people and so, in the manner of great kings of history, he wished to gather brilliant sons of conquered people and develop them for his own burgeoning administration.

And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel and of the king’s seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

The city is believed to encompass 25 kms square of rich alluvial soil and the walls were 10 stories high and broad enough for several chariots to pass at the same time. The Ishtar Gates were so grand as...
to be world famous and, in fact, still are for they have been rebuilt in the northern suburbs of Berlin, Germany!

Imagine the impression upon the minds of the young Jewish boys: after a shackled march of some 800 kms across dry country, from Jerusalem to Babylon, under the stern eye of Ashpenaz the master of the eunuchs, these young lads from privileged homes pass through the grand entrance of Babylon, to the curiosity of the local folk whose speech and manners were so strange. The very special golden vessels of the Temple of God in Jerusalem were deposited in the treasure house of Bel, the principal idol of Babylon. Looking back he has memories of destruction, fire and weeping parents and family. Before him is all foreign but the prospects of fame in the administration of the greatest kingdom on earth must surely have had its appeal.

Resolution against Temptation

Even their daily food provision was to be special, taken from that of the king’s own table together with the wine which he drank (Daniel 1:5). Finally they were given new, Babylonian names, to encourage them to think of themselves as sons of Babylon and able to more easily conform to the surrounding populace. Daniel’s name in Hebrew meant “the judgement of God” but his new name, Belteshazzar, signified “keeper of the treasures of Bel”: thus Ashpenaz sought to completely revise the orientation of these young boys.

What was Daniel’s reaction to that?

“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself” (Daniel 1:8).

This was surely a courageous stand and his three close friends stood with him. One imagines that Nebuchadnezzar could have reacted with anger at such an impudent contempt of “his special favours.” However, the God of Israel was with him, even in these very foreign circumstances, for Ashpenaz loved Daniel and thought highly of him and even accepted Daniel’s suggestion that he and his three friends be put on a more vegetarian diet and see how, after 10 days, their health compared to those who had taken the king’s meat and wine. This no doubt was a dangerous course for Ashpenaz to accept but he complied with it and found after 10 days that Daniel and his three friends were in the peak of health!

The Mind of Daniel

This story has a power of lessons. As a young man Daniel knew that God was going to bring judgement upon Judah because of their departure from Yahweh their God; his

I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you” (Jeremiah 29:10-12).

The great challenge therefore was to retain the faith through the 70 years of captivity so that their sons and grandsons could return to Judah and build it again as God was promising. “And ye shall seek Me and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart” (verse 13). The captivity was inevitable. God had spoken. But He had also promised them deliverance and return to Israel. The challenge then was to HOLD ON TO THE FAITH WHEN IN EXILE.

This great picture had been built into the mind of young Daniel and when he saw the glory of Babylon and all that was offered by Nebuchadnezzar he saw them for exactly what they were—snares to assimilate him into the Babylonians’ world and destroy the faith of his fathers. It was this same Nebuchadnezzar that destroyed Jerusalem and desecrated the Temple of the living God in Jerusalem. Would he now destroy the faith of its few remaining people?

Daniel a Leader

It is a matter of great interest what enabled this young foreigner to so triumph in faith when everything around him would have worked against it? Obviously other young Jewish princes did go along with Nebuchadnezzar’s special favours. Besides this was the first of the captivities, the others came later in Nebuchadnezzar’s 8th and 19th years. Daniel was in the very front of the first captivity! How wonderfully significant was that! No doubt he set a pattern for many others to follow, to stand resolute even in the face of desperate odds. In the first chapter of his book we are already informed of three faithful friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego (that’s their new, given names) who took the same stand in respect to the king’s table of dainties. We wonder if they would have done so if Daniel had not advocated the stand. Verse 8 states that it was Daniel who “purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat” (Daniel 1:8). This conviction was taken on by his three friends with similar fervour. Later on in chapter 3 these young men make a remarkable stand against Nebuchadnezzar’s idol worship, successfully surviving the ordeal of the king’s fiery furnace.

There were many thousands of Jews who were taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar. They went in as transgressors yet many had
sons and daughters who returned to Judah after the 70 years were fulfilled. They colonised in Mesopotamia along the banks of the Euphrates. They knew, of course, that it was one of their own people who had risen to very high office in the kingdom of Babylon. No doubt Daniel visited these colonies when he had respite from the King’s business and would have been greatly encouraged to hear that God had shown such honour to one of their own to become “ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon” (Daniel 2:48). The young man who made a stand became the inspiration of his nation in exile.

Daniel surpasses Nebuchadnezzar

There was something almost personal in the king’s relationship with Daniel. He set out to convert the young Jewish boy and use him for the greatness of Babylon. At the end of chapter two he confesses the supremacy of Daniel’s God of Israel. “Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of lords, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret” (ch. 2:47). In chapter four the King boasts of “this great Babylon that I have built” (v. 28) and ends up extolling the God of Daniel in these words “Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extoll and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase” (v. 37).

In the days of his grandson Belshazzar, the Kingdom of Babylon was handed over when Daniel was the presiding ruler and Nebuchadnezzar had been buried 30 years before. In fact Daniel saw in and saw out the period of the Babylonian Kingdom. He passed through its gates in the fourth year of Nebuchadnezzar and he was there in a revived rulership on the night of its eclipse. It specifically states in chapter 1:21, “And Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus,” standing there with the gold chain about his neck, clothed in scarlet and empowered by Belshazzar in the last hour of his life and reign!

The young man of faith and principle was now almost 90 years of age and the King and his empire that had sought to manipulate him were now dead and eclipsed.

Daniel’s place in History

In the most famous vision given to Daniel he foretold the large outline of the world’s greatest powers. It was seen as a vast man of different metals, the head of gold, breast of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron and feet part of iron and part of clay. History has vindicated the vision for the Babylonian head of gold was surpassed by the Persians and then the Greeks that were followed by the Romans. So in a sense Daniel’s prophecy was the mould into which history was poured!

Daniel has been at rest for 2,500 years but his legacy continues to this day and his vision a guiding inspiration for the passing of Kingdoms.

He was promised in his last chapter, that he would “stand in his lot at the end of the days” (ch. 12:13).

Just as everything else that he foretold has come to pass, so will this promise in the day of resurrection, soon to be upon us (ch. 12:1-2, 13).

He was a father to those in his day who went into the 70 years of Babylonian captivity. His prophecies from God have continued to comfort every generation of Bible lovers.

The Vein of Gold

Looking at it as a whole, it must strike the reflecting mind that although the history of past ages appears confused and without method—a mere jumble of facts, of which the generality of people can make neither one thing nor another—yet every thing has been marked out in the mind of God with the definiteness of a plan. All things have been developed in an orderly manner. The great thing in looking back, is to distinguish the gold from the quartz—to identify the prophetic vein in the mass of historic materials with which the reader of history has to deal. Goldfinders can trace the vein if they once strike it in the rock, no matter where it leads to. The great thing is to be able to strike the vein of God in history. When you get on God’s vein there, you will be able, in the light of the Apocalypse, to follow it in all its windings and turnings among the mountains of rubbish that constitute human history. The Apocalypse is history revealed by the Deity to John, in the isle of Patmos, before a single event of it had transpired.

John Thomas
It was around the year 600 BC that one of the world’s most powerful men, Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar King of Babylon, had an amazing prophecy revealed to him in a dream. Through this dream the Almighty Creator revealed the blueprint of His purpose with the Kingdom of Men and showed what state it would be in when His son returns to the earth. This prophecy is one of the most exciting and essential for any student of the Bible to get to grips with. It gives us the framework for the “latter days”—into which all other Bible prophecies relating to this period will fit. It describes the great controversy that will soon be fought out on the earth—the Kingdom of Men in defiance of the Kingdom of God.

The Reason
The purpose of the revelation of the prophecy is very important for us to appreciate. In verses 26-29 Daniel explains why God revealed these things to Nebuchadnezzar. Before going to sleep, Nebuchadnezzar had been wondering what would eventually happen to his kingdom (v.29) and the dream was an answer to this question. The prophecy was revealed to show how Nebuchadnezzar’s empire and power would be handed down to various other kingdoms, until something completely different would replace it upon the earth. By revealing this, God also showed that He is in supreme control over human affairs—He is watching and guiding world events down through time. This knowledge should be of immense comfort to all who follow after the God of Israel (see also Daniel 4:32). We are specifically told that the dream would reveal to Nebuchadnezzar what was to happen during a Biblically defined era known as “the latter days” (v. 28). When considered carefully, we discover a very significant series of events which will occur during this time period—some of these events are set out above.

The events depicted in the dramatic dream of Daniel 2 can also be included.

The Interpretation
So what did the dream mean? Well it had two functions. Not only did it show what was to happen to Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom in “the latter days,” but it also revealed a continual historic outline of the various phases of that kingdom down through time.

From verses 36-45 we read how each metal represented a successive kingdom or empire and when compared with history, we can see how accurate this prophecy was. Nebuchadnezzar is told “thou art this head of gold” (v. 38). Therefore, the Babylonian Empire (or “Neo-Babylonian Empire” as it is called in scholarly circles) that lasted approximately between 626 BC - 539 BC was depicted by the head of gold. The next empire was the silver Medo-Persian (or “Achaemenid”) Empire which is referred to in Daniel 8:20 and 11:2—this empire lasted up until 330 BC. Following this, the Greek (or Macedon) Empire arose as outlined in Daniel 8 and 11, and this is represented by the bronze. This empire would exist until approximately 146 BC when Andricus of Macedon was defeated by the power of the Roman Republic and Macedon became a province of the Roman Empire. The last of the world empires was the Roman—depicted by the iron.

### EVENTS TO TAKE PLACE IN “THE LATTER DAYS”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The return of the Jews to their land after a period of dispersion</td>
<td>Hosea 3:5; Ezekiel 38:8</td>
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<tr>
<td>A terrible time of affliction for Israel—the outcome of which will</td>
<td>Deut. 4:30, 31:29, Jer. 23:20, 30:24</td>
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<tr>
<td>cause them to consider God’s righteousness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>An invasion of Israel from the north by Russia, Europe and North</td>
<td>Ezekiel 38 (see verses 16-23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>African countries, headed up by “Gog”—from which Israel will</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>eventually be saved by God</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The house of God will be established in Jerusalem, to which all</td>
<td>Isaiah 2:2-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>nations will flow to hear God’s word</td>
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### The Dream

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metal</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron-Clay Mix</td>
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The dream recorded in verses 31-35 is amazingly simple. It consisted of a metallic image with a head of gold, a chest and arms of silver, a belly and thighs of brass, two legs of iron and feet made of iron and clay. A stone then strikes the image violently on the feet—breaking the feet to pieces and causing the image to tumble. The other pieces of the image are broken up into very small pieces and the wind blows them away. Finally the stone grows to fill the whole earth. On first reading this may appear very peculiar—however the Scriptures reveal the dream’s interpretation to us.
Above Right: Ruins of the palace at Babylon
Above: Babylonian tablet describes Nebuchadnezzar’s campaign against Judah
Right: One of many prisms relating to Nebuchadnezzar
Below Right: A brick from Babylon bearing the name of King Nebuchadnezzar
Below: Tablet gives details of provisions for “Jaukin King of Judah” (see Jeremiah 52:31).
After this fourth empire there would be no fifth. The fourth empire would be split into fragments with some strong and some weak countries—its territory would no longer be dominated by one single empire.

The Inferiority

As we read through the interpretation, it is inferred that each subsequent kingdom would be “inferior” to the one it replaced (e.g. v. 39). With each successive empire growing in territory, what can this “inferiority” mean? By looking elsewhere in Daniel, we discover that this refers to the diluting of the powers of rulership. For example, we read this about Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 5:19; “whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive”. In other words he had supreme control. However when we come to the next empire, Scripture records that the king was bound by law, even if he himself wished to overturn it; e.g. “the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed” (Dan 6:15). Thus we see that the power of the king was diminished. In the next two empires power would be further diluted from the leader—with more powers given to politicians. Eventually in the interpretation of the feet phase, we are met with this curious statement: “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.” Here, the iron is referred to as “they”? Who might these be? Bearing in mind that the metals of the image initially refer to the rulership (“Thou art this head of gold” Dan 2:38) “they” relate to the rulership of the Kingdom of Men of the time. This is described as mixing with the “clay” or “seed of men.” Clay is often used in Scripture to represent the “principle of inheritance”. In other words, the initial prophecy related to the territory and influence of Babylon. The Medes and Persians then “inherited” the kingdom of Babylon with its capital. Next the Greeks came—taking the capital of the Medes and Persians and dominating the territories once controlled by the Persian kings. Next the Romans would come and take the kingdom of the Greeks—absorbing it into their empire and making it a province. No other power would come to inherit the kingdom of men from the Romans. The Roman territory would disintegrate and split into some weak and some strong. This idea of the “principle of inheritance” fits the context and words of Scripture—the dream was given to show what would happen to the Babylonian Empire (Dan 2:29,37,38) and the dream follows the line of inheritance from that empire. This explanation also agrees with the realities of history.

The Criteria of Interpretation

It is important that we have a clear understanding of this prophecy’s basis of interpretation in order to show forth the wonder of the prophecy. As far as this writer is aware, there are three main suggestions and these are briefly reviewed below:

Suggestion 1—Ruling over Israel!

The metals represent four powers that would control Israel in their land. The problem with this is that it is not the explanation provided by God. In addition, there are certain historical complications with this—whilst it’s true that Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome controlled Israel, both the Ottoman and British Empires also held the land of Israel when there was a minority of Jews present. If this is the criteria, surely two additional metals would be in the image, one for the Ottomans and one for the British.

Suggestion 2—Ruling over Babylon!

Another possibility is that the prophecy relates directly to the territory of Babylon. This can seem to fit with the interpretation given in Daniel 2, however, does not match history. The Ottoman Empire had dominance over the territory of Babylon, so again an additional metal would be required in the image if this was the correct criteria.

Suggestion 3—The Principle of Inheritance!

The final and only suggestion which fits, is that the prophecy is dealing with what we could call the “principle of inheritance”. In other words, the initial prophecy related to the territory and influence of Babylon. The Medes and Persians then “inherited” the kingdom of Men with its capital. Next the Greeks came—taking the capital of the Medes and Persians and dominating the territories once controlled by the Persian kings. Next the Romans would come and take the kingdom of the Greeks—absorbing it into their empire and making it a province. No other power would come to inherit the kingdom of men from the Romans. The Roman territory would disintegrate and split into some weak and some strong. This idea of the “principle of inheritance” fits the context and words of Scripture—the dream was given to show what would happen to the Babylonian Empire (Dan 2:29,37,38) and the dream follows the line of inheritance from that empire. This explanation also agrees with the realities of history.

The Stone and the Mountain

So who, or what, is the stone which is “cut out without hands” in v. 34? The Bible tells us in Matthew 21:42-44

“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner ... and whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.”

Here we have the Spirit Word connecting the person of Christ to the stone of Daniel 2. Christ was created without “human hands” due to the nature of his virgin birth. However we also know from other prophecies that at the time of Armageddon and the destruction of the image, the saints (the immortalized believers in Christ), will also be with him (Zech. 14:5). Therefore the stone represents the authority of God manifested in Christ and the saints in the latter days. This authority, once positioned in Jerusalem, will grow until it spreads across the whole globe and this is depicted in the growth of the stone to fill the whole earth as a great mountain. The mountain is clearly a symbol of the Kingdom of God as outlined in v. 44. This kingdom will be established upon the ruins of the Kingdom of Men. What a wonderful illustration that the Kingdom of God will be on the earth—the restored kingdom of Israel. Not a ruling of Christ in our hearts, not the current influence of the apostle church, not life as an immortal being playing a harp in the clouds, but a tangible kingdom on the earth where men once ruled. Its capital at Jerusalem with Christ sitting on the throne of his father David (Luke 1:32), Israel being the principle dominion (Micah 4:8) and the other nations of the world accepting his rule and being subject to His authority (Zech 14:16-19, Psalm 72:8-11).

The idea of the mountain of Yahweh is also used literally in prophecies about the latter days relating to the Kingdom of God. For example:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days (Heb. latter days), that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it” (Isaiah 2:2).

The Destruction of the Image

Verses 34 and 35 depict a two phase destruction of the image. Firstly in v. 34 we read of the stone smiting the image on the feet which initially breaks them in pieces. The next phase in v. 35, which tells us that after smiting the feet comes a more systematic breaking of the “iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold” until they become like the “chaff of the summer threshing floors” and blow away.

These two phases of destruction form a framework for the interpretation of latter day prophecy. Firstly there is to be an initial battle—Armageddon—where the armies of
Kingdom of Men gather against Israel but are destroyed by Christ and the saints. This is prophesied in Daniel 11, Ezekiel 38, Joel 3, Zechariah 14 etc. When pieced together, all the territories of the attacking nations listed in these prophecies correlate to the united territories of the ancient kingdoms of men and tie in perfectly with the framework depicted here in Daniel 2.

The second phase is when the gospel is preached to all nations and they are given the option to accept this gospel and the authority of Christ (Rev. 14:6-7, Psalm 2:10-12). Those who accept (like Tarshish see Isaiah 60:9, Psalm 72:10) will become subject to the dominion of Christ. However, there will be some nations who will not accept—especially those following the teachings of the apostate church—who, if they continue to spout out their current line of thought, will declare Christ as the “antichrist.” Following the sequence revealed in Revelation 14, this false system (termed Babylon) will then be removed (see v. 8). Further opportunity for nations to submit will then be given (see v. 9) before those nations who still reject the truth are also removed. These events are the breaking up of the image into pieces after the initial smiting.

The Uniting of the Territories

The events which occur in the feet phase also show us that although this dream has aspects of a continual historic timeline; when Christ returns, all the metals will be present “together” (v.35). We understand this to mean that at some point in the “latter days” the image will “stand.” It can therefore be deduced that all the territories dominated by the ancient empires must be united together in the “latter days.” They will all join together in opposition of Christ. This is also described in Ezekiel 38 and Revelation 17. Any interpretation of the great controversy of the latter days has to sit within this framework provided in Daniel 2—it cannot be a local Arab conflict for example. The controversy described in the prophets has to relate to the territories of the Kingdom of men—which will be wiped out by the stone power.

Current Events

It is very clear that we are indeed in the feet phase of the prophecy—the Roman Empire having been divided hundreds of years ago. We know that we have entered into the time period of “the latter days”—as Israel has been gathered to their land (see Hosea 3:5). In addition to this, we have begun to see the uniting of the territories of the image occurring in our days. We can see this development mainly in Europe but we can expect to see unification spreading east. Russia is currently championing the “Eurasion Union”—a project similar to the EU—and has even indicated that it might wish to join Europe at some stage in the future. However we must remember that by the time the stone appears in the political heavens to smite the image, the saints will already be with Christ (Zech. 14:5). Therefore we do not know how much of the God is in control!

2. That the Bible is inspired by almighty God—as no human could have foreseen these events to such a degree of accuracy!
3. That we are in the “latter days,” the final phase of Gentile rule on earth and that very soon the political system around us will be changed.
4. That God’s Kingdom will indeed be on the earth.

Many people today think that to believe in an almighty God is to escape into a fantasy world. People who hold such faith are often considered weak and gullible. Professed Christians are often unable to explain or provide support for their beliefs when challenged by atheists. However our faith is not a “blind faith,” it is a faith based upon God’s word, the Bible, which has tangible evidence as to its authority. Fulfilled prophecy helps us to see that this is no ordinary book. How could a man know that starting with the ancient kingdom of Babylon, the Kingdom of Men would be successively superseded by four world empires one from another; and that the fourth empire would disintegrate into smaller territories with weak and strong nations? As these are now facts of history, the only logical conclusion is that this is a Divine revelation and that it would be foolish to discount the unfulfilled aspects of the prophecy—for it stands to reason that they will also come to pass. Jesus will return to the earth and God’s Kingdom will indeed soon be here. This is not a “blind” faith but a faith based on logical reasoning from God’s word—by which we are convinced of the truth we hold.

How amazing it is that this prophecy has been fulfilled across thousands of years, affecting millions of humans. We are living at the end of the timeline and have the benefit of being able to look back over human history to see the truth of the Bible vindicated. Surely, as we await the final fulfilment of this prophecy, we can be stirred up to follow God’s way in our lives and indeed adopt the words of the prayer of Daniel and reflect them to our heavenly Father:

“Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge and understanding to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.”
Daniel chapter 5 describes how Belshazzar the king of Babylon made a feast, and brought out vessels which had been in the temple of Yahweh at Jerusalem, and he drank out of them to the pagan gods of Babylon. Then, part of a man’s hand wrote upon the wall saying that his kingdom was weighed in the balances and was to be ended. That is the scene on the left depicted by the artist Rembrandt.

Daniel in the Critics’ Den

Belshazzar of Babylon

Scholars such as Dean Farrar (1831-1903) and known as “higher critics” poured scorn on the “story” of Belshazzar. Farrar (pictured right) declared “there was no King Belshazzar.” Another critic, Professor Sayce asserted “Daniel is at variance with the testimony of the inscriptions!” Such is the blind hostility to Holy Scripture that we so often find in academic scholarship. If an inscription says something different to the Bible, then it is assumed that the Bible must be wrong!

Those accusations of falsehood against the prophet Daniel have since been shown to be nothing more than foolish speculations. The tablet above and the two cylinders bear inscriptions of Nabonidus the father of the Biblical Belshazzar.

The bottom cylinder discovered in 1854 by Sir Henry Rawlinson was translated by him in 1856 and first published in 1880. The text reads:

“As for me, Nabonidus, the king of Babylon, protect thou me from sinning against thine exalted godhead, and grant thou me graciously a long life: and in the heart of Belshazzar, my first-born son, the offspring of my loins, set the fear of thine exalted godhead, so that he may commit no sin, and that he may be satisfied with the fulness of life.”

Today these cylinders are in the British Museum in London England. They testify to the folly of man and to the accuracy of Scripture. Recently earthenware vases were discovered in Hillah a suburb of Babylon, they were full of tablets identifying Belshazzar’s staff and stewards. Yes, Belshazzar existed.
When the Apostle wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews he emphasized faith, and in recalling the deeds of faith wrought by many, says that “through faith” some “stopped the mouths of lions” (chapter 11 33). He doubtless had Daniel the prophet in mind when he said this, but as he wrote under inspiration that point would have been made for the benefit of those who would face a similar trial in the First Century. The Apostle Peter wrote this:

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”

Would not the minds of these brethren be directed to Daniel? Daniel had been thrown to the lions, but through faith he stopped the mouths of lions; yet it was not Daniel who did this in his own strength, for we read how Darius (Daniel 6:20):

“...cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.”

What a strength that would be to those who faced the lions in the Roman arena! Indeed, the Apostle Paul would write to Timothy of his own experience saying:

“At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion” (2 Timothy 4:16,17).

Whatever trials we may face today let us always remember that God can deliver us if He chooses to do so. Let the faith of Daniel’s friends be ours:

“If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up” (Daniel 3:17, 18).
"The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king (Alexander). Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up."
ALEXANDER THE GREAT 333 B.C.

ALEXANDER’S GREEK EMPIRE DIVIDED INTO FOUR

THE FOUR GREEK HORNS

- Cassander
- Lysimachus
- Seleucus
- Ptolemy

KING OF THE NORTH (Daniel 11)

KING OF THE SOUTH

The pagan Roman Empire converted to Christendom by Constantine 312 AD

Little horn growth from Pergamum

ROMAN KING OF FIERCE COUNTENANCE

The Roman Bishop claimed superiority over the Church (east & west), and so became “the man of sin” by “exalting himself” above all—see Daniel 11:36; 2 Thess. 2:3,4.

The Roman Emperor Caracalla

GRECO-ROMAN EMPIRE

Constantine moved the seat of Empire from Rome to Constantinople and so established the Byzantine Empire which ruled over east and west. The empire was inherited by Justinian and was both ecclesiastical and territorial. A schism divided the Church in 1054.
Cyrus entered into Assyria, and advanced towards Babylon, the only city of the east that stood out against him. The siege of this important place was no easy enterprise. The walls of it were of a prodigious height, and appeared to be inaccessible. Besides, the city was stored with all sorts of provisions for twenty years. However, these difficulties did not discourage Cyrus from pursuing his design. But despairing to take the place by storm, or assault, he made them believe his design was to reduce it by famine. To which end he caused a line of circumvallation to be drawn quite round the city with a large and deep ditch; and that his troops might not be over fatigued, he divided his army into twelve bodies, and assigned each of them its month for guarding the trenches. The besieged thinking themselves out of all danger, by reason of their ramparts and magazines, insulted Cyrus from the top of their walls, and laughed at all his attempts, and all the trouble he gave himself, as so much unprofitable labour.

As the taking of Babylon is one of the greatest events in ancient history, and as the principal circumstances with which it was attended were foretold in the holy scriptures many years before it happened, I think it not improper before I give an account of what the profane writers say of it, briefly to put together what we find upon the same head in the sacred pages, that the reader may be the more capable of comparing the predictions and the accomplishment of them together.

The Prediction of the Jewish Captivity at Babylon, and the Time of its Duration

God Almighty was pleased not only to cause the captivity which his people were to suffer at Babylon to be foretold a long time before it came to pass, but likewise to set down the exact number of years it was to last. The term he fixed for it was seventy years, after which he promised he would deliver them, by bringing a remarkable and an eternal destruction upon the city of Babylon, the place of their bondage and confinement. “And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years” (Jer. 25:11).

The Decree pronounced against Babylon.

Make bright the arrows, gather the shields; it is the prophet that speaks to the Medes and Persians. The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, for his device is against Babylon to destroy it, because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple (Jer. 51:11).

“Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand, a day cruel both with wrath and fierce anger to lay the land desolate. Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria” (Jer. 51:11; Isa. 13:6, 9; Jer. 50:18).
“Shoot against her round about. Recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her; and spare ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host. Every one that is found shall be thrush through, and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword. Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes, their houses shall be spoiled and their wives ravished. Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, who shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it” (Jer. 50:15, 29; 51:3; Isa. 13:15-18).

Cyrus called to destroy Babylon, and to deliver the Jews.

Cyrus, whom Divine Providence was to make use of as an instrument for the executing of his designs of goodness and mercy towards his people, was mentioned in the scripture by his name above two hundred years before he was born. And, that the world might not be surprised at the prodigious rapidity of his conquests, God was pleased to declare in very lofty and remarkable terms, that he himself would be his guide; that in all his expeditions he would lead him by the hand and would subdue all the princes of the earth before him. “Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight. I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. I will give thee the treasures hid in secret places, the keys of the river and the waters which are hid under the bars of iron. And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know, that I the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel of his elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.”

Particular Circumstances set down, relating to the Siege and the taking of Babylon.

There is nothing methinks, that can be more proper to raise a profound reverence in us for religion, and to give us a great idea of the Deity, than to observe with what exactness he reveals to his prophets the principal circumstances of the besieging and taking of Babylon, not only many years, but several ages before it happened.

1. We have already seen, that the army, by which Babylon will be taken, is to consist of Medes and Persians, and to be commanded by Cyrus.

2. The city shall be attacked after a very extraordinary manner, in a way that she did not at all expect: “Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth” (Isa. 47:11). She shall be all of a sudden and in an instant overwhelmed with calamities, which she did not foresee: “Desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know” (Isa. 30:3). In a word, she shall be taken, as it were in a net, or a gin, before she perceiveth that any snares have been laid for her: “I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware” (Jer. 50:24).

3. Babylon reckoned the Euphrates alone was sufficient to render her impregnable, and triumphed in her being so advantageously situated and defended by so deep a river: “O thou that dwellest upon many waters” (Jer. 51:13): It is God himself who points out Babylon under that description. And yet that very river Euphrates shall be the cause of her ruin. Cyrus, by a stratagem (of which there never had been any example before, nor has there been any thing like it since) shall divert the course of that river, shall lay its channel dry and by that means open himself a passage into the city: “I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry. A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up” (Jer. 50:38 and 51:36). Cyrus shall take possession of the keys of the river and the waters which rendered Babylon inaccessible, shall be dried up as if they had been consumed by fire: “The passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burnt with fire” (Jer. 51:32).

4. She shall be taken in the night-time, upon a day of feasting and rejoicing, even whilst her inhabitants are at table and think upon nothing but eating and drinking: “In her heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake saith the Lord” (Jer. 51:39). It is remarkable that it is God who does all this, who lays a snare for Babylon: “I have laid a snare for thee; who drieth up the waters of the river? I will dry up her sea; and who brings that drunkenness and drowsiness upon her princes? I will make drunk her princes (Jer. 51:57).

5. The king shall be seized in an instant with an incredible terror and perturbation of mind: “My loins are filled with pain; pangs have taken hold on me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it: May heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: The night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me” (Isa. 21:3-4). This is the condition Belshazzar was in when in the middle of the entertainment he saw a hand come out of the wall, which wrote such characters upon it as none of diviners could either explain or read; but more especially when Daniel declared to him that those characters imported the sentence of his death. “Then,” says the scripture, “the king’s countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him: so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another” (Dan. 5:6). The terror, astonishment, fainting and trembling of Belshazzar are here described and expressed in the same manner by the prophet who was an eye-witness of them, as they were by the prophet who foretold them two hundred years before.

But Isaiah must have had an extraordinary measure of divine illumination, to be able to add, immediately after the description of Belshazzar’s consternation, the following words: “Prepare the table, watch in the watch-tower; eat, drink” (Isa. 21:5). The prophet foresees that Belshazzar though terribly dismayed and confounded at first, shall recover his spirit and courage again, through the exhortations of his courtiers; but more particularly through the persuasion of the queen, his mother, who represented to him the unreasonableness of being affected with such unmanly fears and unnecessary alarms: “Let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed.” They exhorted him therefore to make himself easy, to satisfy himself with giving proper orders and with the assurance of being advertised of every thing by the vigilance of the sentinels; to order the rest of the supper to be served as if nothing had happened, and to recall that gaiety and joy which his excessive fears had banished from the table; “Prepare the table; watch in the watch-tower; eat, drink.”

6. But at the same time that men are giving their orders, God on his part is likewise giving his: “Arise ye princes, and anoint the shield” (Isa. 21:5). It is God
himself that commands the princes to advance, to take their arms and to enter boldly into a city drowned in wine and buried in sleep.

Isaiah acquaints us with two material and important circumstances concerning the taking of Babylon. The first is that the troops with which it is filled shall not keep their ground, or stand firm any where, neither at the palace, nor the citadel, nor any other public place whatsoever; that they shall desert and leave one another without thinking of any thing but making their escape; that in running away they shall disperse themselves and take different roads, just as a flock of deer or of sheep is dispersed and scattered when they are affrighted: “And it shall be as a chafed roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up” (Isa. 13:14). The second circumstance is that the greatest part of those troops, though they were in the Babylonian service and pay, were not Babylonians; and that they shall return into the provinces from whence they came without being pursued by the conquerors, because the divine vengeance was chiefly to fall upon the citizens of Babylon. They shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land” (Isa. 13:14).

8. The last circumstance the prophet foretells is the death of the king himself, whose body is to have no burial, and the entire extinction of the royal family, both which calamities are described in scripture after a manner equally terrible and instructive to all princes. “But thou art cast out of thy grave like and abominable branch. Thou shalt not be joined with them (thy ancestors) in burial because thou hast destroyed thy land and slain thy people” (Isa. 14:19-20).

A Description of the taking of Babylon

After having seen the predictions of every thing that was to happen to impious Babylon, it is now time to come to the completion and accomplishment of those prophecies, and in order thereto we must assume the thread of our history with respect to the taking of that city.

As soon as Cyrus saw the ditch which they had long worked upon was finished, he began to think seriously upon the execution of his vast design which as yet he had communicated to nobody. Providence soon furnished him with as fit an opportunity for this purpose as he could desire. He was informed that in the city on such a day, a great festival was to be celebrated and that the Babylonians, on occasion of that solemnity, were accustomed to pass the whole night in drinking and debauchery.

Belshazzar himself was more concerned in this public rejoicing than any other and gave a magnificent entertainment to the chief officers of the kingdom and the ladies of the court. In the heat of his wine he ordered the gold and silver vessels which had been taken from the temple of Jerusalem to be brought out and, as an insult upon the God of Israel, he, his whole court and all his concubines drank out of those sacred vessels. God, who was provoked at such insolence and impiety, in the very action made him sensible as to who it was that he affronted by a sudden apparition of a hand writing certain characters upon a wall. The king, terribly surprised and frightened at this vision, immediately sent for all his wise men, his diviners and astrologers, that they might read the writing to him, and explain the meaning coming upon the noise of this prodigy into the banqueting-room, endeavoured to compose the spirit of the king, her son, advising him to send for Daniel, with whose abilities in such matters she was well acquainted and whom she had always employed in the government of the state.

Daniel was therefore immediately sent for and spoke to the king with a freedom and liberty becoming a prophet. He put him in mind of the dreadful manner in which God had punished the pride of his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar, and the crying abuse he made of his power when he acknowledged no law but his own will and thought himself master to exalt and to abuse, to inflict destruction and death wheresoever he would only because such was his will and pleasure. “And thou his son,” says he to the king, “hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knowest all this, but hast lifted up thy self against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou has praised the gods of silver and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God, in whose hand thy breath is, and whose body is to have no burial, and the land” (Isa. 13:14).
channel of the river as soon as ever they found it fordable. Having given all necessary orders and exhorted his officers to follow him as he marched under the conduct of the gods. In the evening he made them open the great receptacles or ditches, on both sides of the town, above and below, that the water of the river might run into them. By this means the Euphrates was quickly emptied and its channel became dry. Then the two forementioned bodies of troops, according to their orders, went into the channel, the one commanded by Gobryas and the other by Gadases, and advanced towards each other without meeting with any obstacle. The invisible guide who had promised to open all the gates to Cyrus made the general negligence and disorder of that riotous night serve to the leaving open of the gates of brass, which were made to shut up the descents from the keys to the river, and which alone, if they had not been left open, were sufficient to have defeated the whole enterprise. Thus did these two bodies of troops penetrate into the very heart of the city without any opposition, and meeting together at the royal palace according to their agreement, surprised the guards and cut them to pieces. Some of the company that were within the palace opening the doors to know what noise it was they heard without, the soldiers rushed in and quickly made themselves masters of it. And meeting the king who came up to them sword in hand at the head of those that were in the way to succour him, they killed him and put all those that attended him to the sword. The first thing the conquerors did afterwards was to thank the gods for having at last punished that impious king. These words are Xenophon's and are very remarkable as they so perfectly agree with what the scriptures have recorded of the impious Belshazzar.

Thus was the power of that proud city abolished, just fifty years after she had destroyed the city of Jerusalem and her temple. And herein were accomplished those predictions, which the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, had denounced against her. There is still one more, the most important, and the most incredible of them all and yet the scripture has set it down in the strongest terms, and marked it out with the greatest exactness: a prediction literally fulfilled in all its points; the proof of which still actually subsists, is the most easy to be verified, and indeed of a nature not to be contested.

The Completion of the Prophecy which foretold the total Ruin and Destruction of Babylon.

This prediction we find recorded in several of the prophets, but particularly in Isaiah (13:19-22; 16:23-24). It is there declared that Babylon should be utterly destroyed, as the criminal cities of Sodom and Gomorrah formerly were; that she shall be no more inhabited; that she shall never be rebuilt; that the Arabs shall not so much as set up their tents there; that neither herdsmen, or shepherd, shall come thither even to rest his herd or his flock; that it shall become a dwelling-place for the wild beasts, and a retreat for the birds of the night; that the place where it stood shall be covered over with a marsh, or a fen. It is God himself who pronounced this sentence.

1. In the first place, Babylon ceased to be a royal city, the kings of Persia choosing to reside elsewhere. They delighted more in Shushan, Ecbatana, Persepolis, or any other place; and did themselves destroy a good part of Babylon.

2. We are informed by Strabo and Pliny that the Macedonians who succeeded the Persians did not only neglect it, but that moreover they built Seleucia in the neighbourhood, on purpose to drive away its inhabitants and cause it to be deserted. Nothing can better explain what the prophet had foretold: “It shall not be inhabited.” Its own masters endeavour to depopulate it.

3. The new kings of Persia, who afterwards became masters of Babylon, completed the ruin of it by building Ctesiphon, which carried away all the remainder of the inhabitants.

4. She was so totally forsaken that nothing of her was left remaining but the walls.

5. The Kings of Persia, finding the place deserted, made a park of it, in which they kept wild beasts for hunting. Thus did it become as the prophet had foretold, a dwelling place for ravenous beasts, that are enemies to man. Instead of citizens she was now inhabited by wild boars, leopards, bears, deer, and wild asses. Babylon was now the retreat of fierce, savage, deadly creatures that hate the light, and delight in darkness. “Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and dragons shall dwell in their pleasant palaces.”

6. But it was still too much that the walls of Babylon were standing. At length they fell down in several places, and were never repaired. Various accidents destroyed the remainder. The animals which served for pleasure to the Persian kings, abandoned the place: serpents and scorpions remained, so that it became a dreadful place for persons that should have the curiosity to visit. The Euphrates, that used to run through the city, having no longer a free channel, took its course another way so that there was but a very little stream of water left, which ran across the ruins, and not meeting with free passage, degenerated into a marsh.

In the time of Alexander the Great, the river had quitted its ordinary channel, by reason of the outlets and canals which Cyrus had made; these outlets, being ill stopped up, had occasioned a great inundation in the country. Alexander, designing to fix the seat of his empire at Babylon, projected the bringing back of the Euphrates into its natural and former channel, and had actually set his men to work. But the Almighty, who watched over the fulfilling of his prophecy defeated this enterprise by the death of Alexander, which happened soon after. Babylon being neglected to such a degree its river was converted into an inaccessible pool, which covered the very place where that impious city had stood, as Isaiah had foretold: “I will make it pools of water.”

7. By means of all these changes Babylon became an utter desert, and all the country round fell into the same state of desolation and horror.

8. God was not satisfied with causing all these alterations to be foretold, but to give the greater assurance of their certainty, thought fit to seal the prediction of them by an oath. “The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.”

While citizens were feasting and revelling in the palace at Babylon (above) Cyrus enters the city through the sewers (below).
The “fall” of any of the great cities of the ancient world usually comes at the time of its destruction. We have only to consider Nineveh, the Assyrian capital which was destroyed in 612 BC by a combined force of Babylonians, Medes and Scythians, and not “rediscovered” until the days of Queen Victoria—more than two millennia later—when Austen Henry Layard identified the mounds across the Tigris from present-day Mosul (Iraq), as the lost city. For a period of fifty years, during the “Pax Assyriaca,” Nineveh was the largest city in western Asia. The British Museum in London holds a graphic record of the destruction and “fall” of the fortress of Lachish in the form of a series of wall plaques salvaged from the throne room of Sennacherib in Nineveh. Constantinople/Istanbul survived “sacks” from Crusaders and barbarians until it was finally taken in 1453 by the Turks. Rome also, survived attacks over centuries, but did not fall in the sense of being totally destroyed.

The city of Babylon, we are told in Genesis 10, had its beginnings as the first of Nimrod’s cities, and the site of the Tower of Babel. It was the largest of the cities to which the Arameans and Chaldeans congregated, and became the center of worship for Marduk, and others of their gods. Here men sought to make a name for themselves, but God confounded their language and scattered them “abroad upon the face of all the earth” (Genesis 11). Babylon had no natural borders other than the rivers between which it lay. The Medes and Persians resided to the north and east of the Zagros mountains, while the Assyrians lay north and west, in Mesopotamia. Babylon was a center of trade, with access to what we call the Persian Gulf, and the surrounding powers wanted what the Babylonians had.

Just as the scriptures tell us that Nimrod expanded his dominion northward into Assyria with the founding of Nineveh, the Assyrians sought to expand their domain outwards from their homeland, with varying degrees of success—to the Mediterranean coast, north to Armenia, and south through the Plain of Shinar towards the gulf. Tиглата-Пилесер III was the first of the late Assyrian kings to make himself King of Babylon, as well as King of Assyria. Shalmaneser V, Sargon II and Sennacherib, who succeeded him, also followed this path as Babylon was an Assyrian dependency. On his return home from Jerusalem in 700 BC, Sennacherib placed his eldest son, Ashur-nadin-shumi, on the throne of Babylon, but all did not go well. His son was overthrown, and Sennacherib was forced to return to enforce his dominion over the area.

This time, (689 BC) Babylon did indeed fall, and was utterly destroyed. The ruin of the city is described in his chronicles: “... I advanced swiftly against Babylon, upon whose conquest I had determined... I overwhelmed it like a hurricane... With their corpses I filled the city squares... The wealth of the city,—silver, gold, precious stones, property and goods, I doled out... to my people... The city and (its)
houses,—foundation and walls, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire... Through the midst of that city I dug canals, I flooded its site with water, and the very foundations thereof I destroyed."

The "Babylonian problem" which led to the fall of both Nineveh, and the Assyrian Empire, began not with Nabopolassar, but with Merodach-baladan, who features in Isaiah’s account of the Judean king, Hezekiah (Isaiah 39). Merodach sought an ally in Hezekiah, in the midst of his rebellion against Sennacherib and the Assyrians. His uprising brought about the destruction of Babylon in 689 BC.

This act of destruction horrified the people of Mesopotamia, as Babylon, much like Jerusalem, was the Holy City in the region. Sennacherib’s son Esarhaddon (as well as Sennacherib himself, to a lesser extent) found it expedient to restore this center of trade, and worship. Perhaps they thought of the rebuilding as a clean sweep, a new start that would soothe the rebellious nature of the inhabitants. Several inscriptions indicate that Esarhaddon began the work as soon as he ascended to the throne in 681 BC. The rebuilding process extended into the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, 90 years later, (604-562 BC) who is famous for the multitude of individually stamped baked bricks bearing his name.

The empire of the Babylonians did not last a century. In spite of being described as "this head of gold" as part of Daniel’s image (Daniel 2), the empire suffered from a less than dynamic series of leaders. Evil-Merodach succeeded his father Nebuchadnezzar, but reigned for only two years. His brother-in-law, Nergal-shar-user, followed for three years, and was succeeded by his young son, Labashi-Marduk, who was murdered after two months on the throne. The conspirators selected Nabonidus, a commoner, to be king, in 556 BC.

Nabonidus, who ruled until the fall of the city, was the son of the governor of Harran, and a priestess of the moon god Sin. She died age 104 in 547 BC and he continued as a devotee of Sin. He was also an antiquarian, who restored the ancient holy places, and in fact, established a museum of inscriptions and relics related to the early kings. The restoration of the Temple of Sin in Harran, and his antiquarian interests kept him away from Babylon for extended periods, and his son Belshazzar (Bel-shar-user) effectively acted as king in his absence.

The dedication of Nabonidus to the moon god Sin, did not endear him to the people of Babylon and area, who were faithful followers of Marduk. When Cyrus the Persian and his army came up to the city, he did not have to take it by force. On the night that Daniel read and interpreted the writing on the wall to Belshazzar (Daniel 5), he was told, "Peres; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." And “In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.”

The surviving accounts of the fall of the city are found in Herodotus, and the Babylonian Chronicle. It is the later Greek account of Herodotus which tells us something of the military maneuvers of Cyrus and the Persian army through Mesopotamia.

The Medes and Persians were the two forces in the Iranian highlands for several centuries. Legends provide the background for Cyrus gaining the throne over both kingdoms and bringing them together. The Median army had been the force responsible for the destruction of the Assyrian capital of Nineveh, but that force was now under the control of Cyrus. Moving his armies to the east as far as what is now Pakistan, he secured his borders and returned east to face the great Babylonian Empire occupying the Fertile Crescent.

Cyrus and the Persian army apparently ranged freely through the northern reaches of the empire, and into Lydia and Sardis. Finally, he turned south to the capital, and (according to the Cyrus Cylinder), was welcomed with open arms by the populace and the ruling priesthood.

"Thus saith the L ORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut" (Isaiah 45:1). Herodotus says that Cyrus diverted the waters of the Euphrates around the city, and walked his army on the dry riverbed under the city gates to take the city. Choosing a time when Belshazzar and the rest of the population were busy celebrating one of their many festivals, he encountered no opposition.

The Cyrus Cylinder, written afterwards by a Babylonian scribe, says, "He (Marduk) sought out a righteous prince, a man after his own heart, whom he might take by the hand; and he called his name Cyrus, king of Anshan, and he proclaimed his name for sovereignty over the whole world ... And Marduk, the great Lord, the protector of his people, beheld his good deeds and his righteous heart with joy. He commanded him to go to Babylon, and he caused him to set out on the road to that city and like a friend and ally he marched by his side; ... Without battle and without fighting Marduk made him enter into his city of Babylon; he spared Babylon tribulation, and Nabonidus, the king who feared him not, he delivered into his hand.”

Cyrus, then, did not battle his way into the city, and defeat a Babylonian army. The annals indicate that the ruling priestly class welcomed him as a friend of Marduk, who was prepared to follow the ancient Babylonian traditions concerning their god. He was seen as a liberator of the people, and his later actions confirmed their faith in him.

Scripturally speaking, Cyrus is best known as the liberator of the Jews. We read of his decree at the end of II Chronicles, as well as the beginning of the Book of Ezra:

“Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, all the kingdoms of the earth hath the L ORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The L ORD his God be with him, and let him go up.”

So the people returned to the Land for another 600 years before being expelled again by the Romans. Once again they have returned to establish the Land of Israel, and we look forward to the final gathering of all of God’s people. Babylon, as the place of the Jewish exile, was the scene of idolatry and false worship and the people never forgot their experience. Revelation 18 speaks of the end of the age, when the angel will declare "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen... Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”
or 150 years our community has believed and lectured that we are in the Time of the End during which Christ returns to set up his Kingdom. When he returns, Russia and a mighty confederacy invades the land of Israel and is destroyed by Christ. The nation of Israel is delivered from its oppressors and Christ establishes his rule from Jerusalem over all the earth.

This general concept of the Time of the End Prophecies was plainly set out at the beginning of our community, in Part Three of the book *Elpis Israel* (1849). John Thomas’s conviction was expressed in a few sentences in the preface of the book:

“...The Russian Autocracy in its plenitude, and on the verge of dissolution, is the Image of Nebuchadnezzar standing upon the mountains of Israel, ready to be smitten by the Stone.

“When Russia makes its grand move for the building up of its Image empire, then let the reader know that the end of all things as at present constituted is at hand.”

This understanding of prophecy has been the basis of public addresses for two centuries, and was often the starting point of interest that led people to embrace the Truth.

While much has happened over the past 25 years to confirm our faith, this section illustrates how the same trend has continued for a century and a half.

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This understanding of prophecy has been the basis of public addresses for two centuries, and was often the starting point of interest that led people to embrace the Truth.

It has also been a source of encouragement and steadfastness as the brethren and sisters watched unfolding events fulfilling prophecy. Accepted Interpretation Challenged and Vindicated

Since the end of the Second World War this understanding has been challenged by several quite different concepts, with a disturbing effect on some. The element of confusion introduced has brought discouragement; and more important, an increasingly critical attitude to the value of studying the prophetic word. However, recent events over the same period of time have steadily vindicated our traditional understanding of the main lines of God’s unfolding plan. For this we must be thankful.

Furthermore, it is good that the reliability of earlier expositions of scripture are being justified, and one may hope it will help to restore a respect for the work that was performed in reviving saving Truth; and a willingness to read *Elpis Israel*, and also volume one of *Eureka*—an equally essential book.

The Development of Russian Power in the 20th Century

In the second half of the 19th century, Russia was known as an expansionist power, and clashed with Britain in the Middle East on several occasions. The 1917 Communist Revolution stopped Russia’s southward expansionist adventures for a while. Then in 1945, with many ships” Daniel 11:40

“With many ships” Daniel 11:40
World War II, Soviet military power became manifest in Russia’s successful resistance to the best divisions of Hitler’s army displayed along a 1,000 mile front in the East. She sacrificed millions of men to defend her country.

In the 1945 Yalta conference, Stalin as a respected victor from the East, met alongside Churchill and Roosevelt. The Soviet was soon to be recognized as a superpower in the world. General Smuts, the South African elder statesman, warned Europe where their danger lay—‘Beware the Russian Bear.’

In the 1970’s and 1980’s the growing might of the Soviet became manifest—the preparation for aggressive action in Europe with its vast army of tanks; its astonishingly rapid development as a world-wide naval power (cf. Daniel 12 “with many ships”); its establishing of strategic bases in various parts of the world; its massive steps in Afghanistan, Angola, and Cuba.

All this was watched with keen interest by those faithful watchers for Christ’s return. One particular item, the gradual coming together of the Vatican and the Soviet from 1960 onwards, was seen as a key element of prophecy fulfilling.

Over the past 25 years and more (this was written in 1989—Ed), in various articles and addresses, we have followed these moves in East and West that are leading to the uniting of East and West Europe. We have had ample evidence that God is steadily working to His revealed prophetic plan.

Christ’s own Warning

It is Christ himself who gives the warning to our generation in Revelation 16. We have watched the going forth of frog-like spirits—socialism and democracy—to Europe and the world for a very long time, preparing the nations for the greatest “day of the Lord.”

While this is going on, Christ comes to judge his saints:

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

The next item in the sequence of the Vials is: “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” (v. 16). Armageddon is the invasion of the land of Israel—as expressed in the phrase “in the Hebrew tongue.” The gathering to Armageddon must take place before Armageddon itself.

What is this gathering? It must be the final phase of that prophecy in Ezekiel 38 for Christ is involved in that verse: “Behold I come as a thief.” There is no other place in the vials that refers to his coming.

More not less Study of Prophecy

Let us be attentive to the voice of prophecy God has put on record.

“Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

This means that it is the Father’s goodwill that His children should be informed beforehand of things coming to pass, so that they may be prepared and watching. He expects us to take note, to understand, what He has written for our benefit. To not bother is an insult to God.

If we give time and study we shall be able to understand the style of prophetic presentation, even if it is in the form of symbol and not plain language. God told Daniel that the wise would understand.

In chapter 12, after assuring Daniel of a day of resurrection and reward when the wise shall shine as the stars, God told him the words of His prophecy could not in Daniel’s time be understood:

“Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand” (vs. 9-10).

Let us be encouraged by the words “the wise shall understand.”

John in Patmos, like Daniel, was seeking to understand what lay ahead. And he heard the gracious news:

“WEEP not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof” (Rev. 5:5).

John was granted visions in symbol-form that sketched future history down to our time and to the setting up of the Kingdom. For 2,000 years the Revelation has been the “Book Unsealed,” informing and guiding the saints in the affairs of their own day—fulfilling what God said to Amos.

The wise today know in sufficient detail where they stand—near to the end of the sixth vial, in which the Lord returns.
hen writing about certain things that were about to happen during the First Century, and which had been predicted by Daniel the prophet, the appeal is made in Mark 13:14 “Let him that readeth understand.” These were not idle words; they tell us that we would be wise to study the prophecy and then to take appropriate action in the light of what has been revealed. As the apostle Peter put it:

“...And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed.”

However we might read this, the fact is that the prophetic word has been vindicated and made more certain by its fulfillment in the unfolding events about us.

From our stand-point today, the prophecy of Daniel is seen fulfilled in the pages of history books as well as in the news headlines of our time.

Daniel’s story begins with his captivity in Babylon, and can be seen to develop through world history as understood by the image prophecy of chapter 2. Daniel told the King of Babylon:

“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise” (Daniel 2:39-40).

This was presented in chart form (top, opposite) over a century ago, and covers the “Duration of the Kingdom of Men.” It will be noted that this is but one kingdom, though comprised of several kingdoms.

The same kingdoms are represented as “beasts,” as is shown in Daniel chapter 7, as well as on the chart drawn up by John Thomas. But what the prophecy makes clear is that the metals of the image and the beast-kings are all representative of the Kingdom of Men—One Kingdom; it is the Kingdom of Babylon throughout world history. In the latter days it is to form one vast dominion: BABYLON THE GREAT, or Greater Babylon—see Genesis 10:10-12; Daniel 4:30; Revelation 17:5; 18:2, 10 and 21. In his book Anatolia (1854) John Thomas pointed out that the Kingdom of Babylon would be formed into “one united confederacy in the latter days.” He wrote:

“Now, while the head, breast and arms, belly, thighs, legs and toes, have all existed, the Feet have not yet been formed; so that it has been hitherto impossible for the Colossal Image to stand erect, as Nebuchadnezzar saw it in his dream. It is, therefore, the mission of the Autocrat (Russia) to form the feet and set up the image before the world in all its excellent brightness, and terribleness of form; that all men subject to the Kingdom of Babylon may worship the work of its creator’s power.”

We must therefore expect to see Russia working to form the iron-clay feet of the image of the Kingdom of Babylon (that is the Kingdom of Men) in its last and final form.

The iron element has a ruthless character:
“forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.”

But this iron is to be mixed with miry clay: a substance that speaks of human nature. Daniel says “thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men;” that is with enash, with common man. So a democratic, humanistic and socialist character of rulership, but in it the strength of iron ready to break in pieces and bruise. That is the form of rule that is emerging in Russia and Europe today. It will be a christian-socialist system.

It is both significant—as well as being a “marvel” (Rev. 17:7)—that the Assyro-Babylonian system was symbolized as a lion with eagles wings (Daniel 7:4), for that is how it did present itself in contemporary heraldry. That the latter-day Babylon in its papal coat of arms should also present itself to us as a winged lion (with halo) is beyond rational explanation if we leave out of account the Divine hand!

These things become startling when we see Russia and the Vatican making common cause. A Reuters headline was: “Putin says Russia’s power is moral as well as military.” The report quotes Putin:

“‘Nobody should have any illusion about the possibility of gaining military superiority over Russia,’ Putin told hundreds of members of parliament, businessmen and government and church leaders in a vast and ornate Kremlin hall. ‘We will never allow this to happen. Russia will respond to all these challenges, political and military.’

“We know there are ever more people in the world who support our position in defense of the traditional values that for centuries have formed the moral foundation of civilization,” he said, putting ‘traditional family values’ top of the list.

“Putin, 61, has frequently appealed to such values since he returned to the presidency for a third term in May 2012. He has portrayed the Church as a moral guide for a nation unmoored by the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.”

A Roman Catholic message to parishioners recently commented:

“‘In the end,’ Our Lady of Fatima promises, ‘My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, Russia will be converted and a period of peace will be given to mankind.’”

This is the direction of things now. A headline in the UK Mail was:

“Pope writes to Putin urging him to tell Obama and other G20 leaders to oppose Syria strike and pray for a peaceful solution.”

But while much of the world will fall into line with the Babylonian system, Scripture shows us that there will be those who do not belong in that camp. Daniel chapter 11 tells us that there will be a “King of the North” (and that is parallel to the Kingdom of Babylon as it will exist under the guardianship of the Russian Gog), but also a “King of the South” (parallel with the Arabian and merchant nations of Ezekiel 38:13).

This division of world powers seems to be developing now, as recent news items tell us that a “GULF WIDENS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND EU NATIONS” (Associated Press). Also The London based Daily Telegraph says in an article that “Britain should act to stop Russia replacing the US in the affections of the Arab world.” The day following that report it was announced that “UK’S CAMERON TO VISIT ISRAEL.” And this report comes within days of The Jerusalem Post revealing that the Prime Minister of Canada is also heading for Israel.
The political world is an ever-changing scene. Powers rise and fall so that today’s world is tomorrow’s history.

When king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon pondered the future of his empire he was shown this truth in a terrifying nightmare which Daniel the prophet was able to explain to the king because the God of heaven revealed it to him. He made known to king Nebuchadnezzar “what shall be in the latter days” (Daniel 2:28).

What we learn through Daniel is the fact that all things are ordered and controlled by the God of Heaven:

“He changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him” (Daniel 2:21-22).

Daniel pointed out that there are in reality just two great powers; one is called THE KINGDOM OF MEN, and the other, THE KINGDOM OF GOD. The Kingdom of Men was founded by Nimrod (Genesis 10:8-12) and began with Babel, or Babylon. As the occupant of the throne of Babylon Nebuchadnezzar pondered the future and “what should come to pass hereafter.” To satisfy this enquiry Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision the Kingdom of Men as a great image or idol “and the form thereof was terrible,” or terrifying. It was one complete image, but composed of five elements: gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay—showing that the Kingdom of Men would pass through various forms until the whole complete structure would be demolished by a stone-power:

“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 threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth” (Verse 35).

In explanation of this Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar:

“In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. 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” (verses 44-45).

The Divine Programme

In Hebrews 11:3 we are told that the worlds (or rather “ages,” Gk. Aion) were framed by the word of God. Vine’s Expository Dictionary renders the passage as reading literally “the ages have been prepared” by the word of God. Thus, the Babylonian age, the Medo-Persian age, the Greek and Roman ages—all represented by metals in the image of Daniel chapter 2, were all fitted and pre-determined by the word of God. As God said by the mouth of Jeremiah:

“I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son’s son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him” (Jeremiah 27:5-7).

So the ages of world history were all mapped out precisely, according to the Divine plan. The image-prophecy of Daniel 2 informed Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom of Babylon, originally formed by Nimrod, would be broken to pieces in the latter days. Other prophecies fill in much of the remarkable detail, so that the true believers could see the whole plan of history laid out in clear terms.

Now this was largely explained by John Thomas in his 1854 book originally entitled Anatolia, and later known as “A Brief Exposition of the Prophecy of Daniel.” The original title pages of Anatolia are very informative and provide a remarkable summary of the expected fulfillment of the prophecy (see pages 3 & 4). If we examine the full title page it will be seen that a whole programme of expected events is given from the time of its publication in 1854 (during the time of the Crimean War of 1853-56) to the present time and into the future. We present them below as itemized events leading to the
1. The Fall of the French & Ottoman Empires

The first item on the list of propositions which the title-page of Anatolia placed before its readers was the “inevitable” fall of the French Empire. That empire first developed out of the French Revolution (1789) as the Napoleonic Empire, or First French Empire. It came to an end in 1815. The Second French Empire under the rule of Napoleon III existed from 1852 to 1870 and was contemporary with the publication of Anatolia. The fall of this empire is now a fact of history and is largely forgotten: Anatolia’s first proposition was vindicated.

The second item referred to was the “inevitable” fall of the Ottoman (or Turkish) Empire. This had been expected on the basis of Bible prophecy for many years and had been noted by several writers. The Ottoman Empire really became established after the fall of the Byzantine (Greek Orthodox) Empire centred in Constantinople in 1453. It held sway over much of the Middle East for about 450 years and came to an end as a result of joining in with German-Austrian forces during the First World War. The fall of the Ottoman Empire had been foreseen by writers such as Joseph Mede who wrote of it in his Commentary on the Revelation in 1649. He wrote:

“Now together with this conversion and return of Israel (whereby she shall be chosen into the Virgin company of the Lamb, & made a part thereof) there shall be joyed the cutting down, or overthrow of the Turkish Empire: according to that which is read at the sixth vial, but in another figure, The waters of that great river Euphrates are to be dried up, that the way of the Kings of the East may be prepared” (Rev. 16:12).

So that was written over 250 years before the Turkish Empire was overthrown by the hands of the British and Allied armies in 1918.

2. The Occupation of Egypt & the Holy Land by the British

And so it was that the programme outlined in Anatolia moved forward with “the occupation of Egypt and the Holy Land by the British.” This was part of the First World War (1914-18) between the European Central Powers (composed of Germany, the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria battling against Britain, France, Russia and Italy (the Allies). It was the Allied Front against the Ottoman force that brought Britain and her allies into the Middle East opening up the opportunity for Britain to implement the Balfour Declaration which promised a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine.

Daniel & Ezekiel

The image of Babylon’s “Kingdom of men” was reflected in the empires that followed. The Medo-Persian, the Greek and Roman successors—as well as the divided condition of the kingdom—all retained
characteristics inherited from Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon. This kingdom was to continue its career through the ages until it would stand as a complete structure in the latter days. Daniel 2:34-35 describes the collapse of human rule in these words:

“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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 threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

This image, in its complete form, is given substance in the 38th chapter of Ezekiel’s prophecy. We see from this consideration of the two prophecies that the metals of the image are represented by ancient territories which we can identify on a map and thus see their modern counterparts (see map opposite).

The “son of man” of Daniel 8:17 understood the events that would take place “at the time of the end.” The “son of man” of Ezekiel 38 was given a vision of the same subject matter as this would exist “in the latter years” when the “mountains of Israel” had been “brought forth out of the nations” (verse 8). The Revised Version of Ezekiel follows the Hebrew text more literally, rendering the passage from verses 2 and 3 with the proper names of the peoples involved—thus:

“Son of man, set thy face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal...”

As long ago as 1739 Lowth commented as follows:

“The prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. Rosh, taken as a Proper Name, signifies those inhabitants of Scythia, from whence the Russians derive their Name and Original.”

So it was that John Thomas wrote in his book Elpis Israel (1849) of this connection. Many readers will be familiar with his words:

“The future movements of Russia are notable signs of the times, because they are predicted in the Scriptures of truth. The Russian Autocracy in its plenitude, and on the verge of dissolution, is the Image of Nebuchadnezzar standing upon the Mountains of Israel, ready to be smitten by the Stone. When Russia makes its grand move for the building-up of its Image-empire, then let the reader know that the end of all things, as at present constituted, is at hand. The long-expected, but stealthy, advent of the King of Israel will be on the eve of becoming a fact; and salvation will be to those who not only looked for it, but have trimmed their lamps by believing the gospel of the kingdom unto the obedience of faith, and the perfection thereof in “fruits meet for repentance.”

The Growth of Russian Power
The Russian Revolution of 1917 eliminated the Czar and brought to power the Communist regime. The Communists were also atheists (at least officially) and consequently came into collision with the established Church. With the fall of the Orthodox Church in Russia, the Roman (Latin) Church of the West took steps to counter the growth of Communism, and during the 1920’s set up strongly Catholic buffer states in central Europe, they were known as the “Inter-Mariam” states and...
included Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The line was held until the end of the Second World War when Russia conquered them following the fall of Nazi Germany. This shook the Vatican who then mobilized the Western world against “atheistic Communism.” It was Winston Churchill that declared:

“From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the continent.”

This “iron curtain” effectively chained half of Europe which was then dominated by Soviet Russia. This was a divided state of Europe that lasted for well over forty years. Not only that, but Russia penetrated the Middle East so that many Arab states became dependent on the Soviet Union (Russia) who supported them against Israel in the wars of 1956, 1967 and 1973. But Ezekiel had said of the Russian Gog:

“... and I will bring thee forth, and ALL thine army...” (ch. 38:4).

So the picture was not complete. Russia was turned back in 1989 only to be brought forth—and one writer saw this in 1976 when he said that the situation had not yet fully developed. Following the same programme as was outlined in Anatolia (Russia Triumphant and Europe Chained) he wrote:

“... before the invasion of the land all Europe and many Middle East countries are to be formed into a vast confederacy, and the Vatican will have a significant part to play in this. Europe will become a Christian socialist empire with the power of the Vatican dominant in the religious and moral sphere, and the power of the Soviet (i.e. Russia) in the civil and military sphere.”

Back in 1976 there were those writers who could not see this development as being either realistic or Scriptural. For example, one writer who had rejected the conclusions outlined in Anatolia sneered at the idea of the iron curtain being removed. He wrote this:

“... the prospect of the iron curtain being replaced by an entente cordiale is feasible only to the infatuated. Nor will it do to have the EEC suddenly obsessed with enthusiasm of the Catholic Church.”

So believers were misled and confused by such teachers.

Europe United

The Berlin Wall came down in November 1989. The Daily Telegraph ran the front page headline: THE IRON CURTAIN IS SWEPT ASIDE. The “infatuated” were suddenly seen to be the realists! East and West Europe were united. With the Russian Bear turned back and “robbed of her whelps,” Europeans were free to expand and develop their common home.

European unification was already under way in the West, having been brought into being through the 1957 Treaty of Rome and the Common market. Although not given much publicity it received the blessing of the Vatican and was part of the Catholic agenda for the eventual unification of all Europe. Thus, in 1963 the Second Vatican Council dropped its open hostility towards Communism and began to encourage the process which became known as Detente; this process matured under Mikhail Gorbachev who then put an end to the Communist party in Russia. The Russian Orthodox Church was revived so that the “Russian Latino-Greek Confederacy” (as had been described in Anatolia) became possible. Ezekiel chapter 38 and the vision of Daniel chapter 2 required the nations of Europe to combine so as to form an alliance: Magog (Germany and eastern Europe) were to unite with Gomer (France and western Europe)—see map opposite page.

“... before the invasion of the land all Europe and many Middle East countries are to be formed into a vast confederacy, and the Vatican will have a significant part to play in this. Europe will become a Christian socialist empire with the power of the Vatican dominant in the religious and moral sphere, and the power of the Soviet (i.e. Russia) in the civil and military sphere.”


The Second Vatican Council in 1963 came to terms with Communism.

First East Germans arrive in West @ All border crossing points declared legal.

Citizens flock to hated gates.
humanistic socialism in order to preserve the chaining of all Europe through a further step towards integration with Europe. The Churches co-operating in political and ecclesiastical: the politicians (November 4, 2003), as reported by Reuters went on to discuss the fall of Constantinople and Moscow. Tracing the history of the Eastern Roman Empire from Constantinople to Moscow, the article described “Three Romes;” Rome, Constantinople, and Moscow. A graphic in the Byzantine Empire, and one section had the title “Rome of the East.” A graphic that “there was a Russian crusade to put the cross back on top of Hagia Sophia.”

In this way Russia inherited and claimed the position of the Eastern Roman Empire. Quoting Soviet scholars the article admitted that “there was a Russian crusade to put the cross back on top of Hagia Sophia.”

“In 1853 Russia’s dispute with France over guardianship of Holy Land shrines came to a head. The Russians based their claims on the Byzantine establishment of these shrines; the French, on their reconquest by Latin crusaders.”

The result of that dispute was the Crimean War, against the background of which John Thomas wrote Anatolia.

“Neither Britain nor France had wanted Russia in the Mediterranean. Both supported Turkey against Russia in the Crimean War, which put Tennyson’s stirring ‘into the valley of Death rode the six hundred’ on every tongue.”

But the time was not yet ripe in 1854 for Russia to be triumphant in chaining Europe. John Thomas’ exposition had been quite correct, but his expectations were understandably premature. Ironically, Russia came within a hairbreadth of gaining Constantinople and the Straits in World War I. The Allies promised them to her upon Turkey’s defeat. Then her revolution knocked Russia out of the war, scuttling that prospect.

The time was still not quite ripe. The National Geographic article concluded that: “In 1948 the new State of Israel, desperate for diplomatic recognition, acceded to the Soviet demand that all Russian religious holdings in Israel be turned over to its Orthodox Church in Moscow—despite their belonging to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, now headquartered in New York City. The crowning irony: After the Six Day War in 1967, the Soviet Union severed relations with Israel.”

And so the seeds were sown for the fulfillment of the prophecy of Ezekiel chapter 38, as well as that of Daniel’s.

The Situation Today

On November 25th, 2013, The Economist published an article with the heading: Romes one, two and three. When understood against the background given above the Economist article is an amazing illustration of how the same issues are playing out today. If he were writing Anatolia today John Thomas would have to change very little in substance. The Economist said:

“Historically minded Russian nationalists enjoy quoting a pronouncement by a monk, Filofey, in the 16th century: ‘Two Romes have fallen, the third stands firm—a fourth there will not be.’ This was the most famous formulation of Orthodox Russia’s claim to have established the only remaining Christian world-empire: free of doctrinal error, unlike the papacy in Rome, and free of Turkish domination, unlike the city of Constantinople/Istanbul which was also known as New Rome.

“Vladimir Putin does not quite style himself as a Christian emperor, but in at least two ways he has been seeking recently to present himself as a sort of moral guardian and policeman with international standing; as an upholder of socially conservative values, especially over homosexuality, and as an advocate of peace, and in particular the welfare of vulnerable Christian minorities, in the Middle East.

“Both those aspirations were in the background of Mr Putin’s meeting in Rome with Pope Francis.”

Alongside this report is another news item (October 21, 2013) informing us: “Pope Francis invited to Address EU Parliament.” And it is all shaping up towards the final confederacy prophesied by Daniel and Ezekiel. Russia will indeed be triumphant and all Europe will be chained. This appears from Ezekiel 38:7 and in the words:

“Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them.”
Russia's ambition to dominate Europe & the Middle East dates back to the 19th century. There has been a relentless attempt to conquer any foes. But it is the Vatican that has manipulated events (even at the risk of nuclear war) to bring Russia under her influence before allowing the Russian Gog to become head over Europe & the Middle East. The triumphant pope Francis watches Putin kiss an image of Mary (right).
John Thomas wrote the following in his Anatolia (1854):

"By turning to a map of Europe and Asia, the reader may trace out the territory of the Kingdom of Babylon as it is destined to exist in its last form under the King of the North in his Gogian manifestation. The names of countries furnished by Ezekiel will lead him to a just conception of its general extent. Besides “All the Russias,” it will take in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Prussia, Austria, Turkey, Persia, Tartary, Greece, the Roman Africa, and Egypt. This will be a dominion of great magnitude, extending from the North Sea to the Wall of China and Afghanistan, and from the Ice-Sea to the Deserts of Africa and Arabia.”

He continued:

“NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S IMAGE THE SYMBOL OF THE GOGIAN AUTOCRAT’S DOMINION

“The organization which this vast empire will assume, when fully developed, is represented in the second chapter of Daniel by a Colossus in human form, which as an apparition flitted before the mind of Nebuchadnezzar in a dream. Daniel says that the scene of which it was the subject, was representative of what should be “in the latter Days.” This being admitted, it follows that what is recorded in that chapter is yet in the future.”

That was future to 1854—160 years ago! Yet the substance of what was written then is just as relevant today—only more so. We have witnessed, and do witness the building up of Nebuchadnezzar’s image-empire. In the

Apocalypse this system is termed “Babylon the Great” (chapter 17:5 and 18:2). There can be no doubt therefore that we are now in the closing chapters of Gentile world history and are about to enter that epoch when “the long-expected, but stealthy, advent of the king of Israel is on the eve of becoming a fact.”

**A Protesting Power**

Ezekiel tells us that an alliance of nations will protest the designs of the Russian Gog and his “company.”

“Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil? (Ch. 38:13)

This protest is ineffective because Ezekiel tells us of the response to it:

“Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes” (Vs. 14-16).

This will initiate a world crisis such as has never been seen in all history. Daniel says:

“And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall EUROPE CHAINED!

This is how one British newspaper depicted that country’s relationship with the European Union today; Russia waits to take control of it!

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX

LATIN CATHOLIC

“As the head of a confederacy of the adherents of the Greek and Latin churches, it will be his policy to cause their priesthoods to be respected as useful co-operators in the subjection of Europe to his will.” —Anatolia 1854

On his second visit to the Vatican in 2003 Putin said that it was “aimed at overcoming divisions within Christianity... For Russia it is even more important because it represents a further step towards integration with Europe.” —Reuters.
not escape” (Ch. 11:40-42).

Current news headlines are indicating the preparatory steps foretold by Daniel. Understanding that “the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof” refer to Britain and her Commonwealth allies, it becomes imperative that Britain divorces herself from the European Union so that she may “push” (i.e. contend) with the Gogian King of the North and protest. John Thomas wrote of this in his *Anatolia*:

“...unless Britain can form some alliance beyond the limits of the Kingdom of Babylon, she will have to fight the battle of freedom and independence alone, and at the price of her own existence if she fail. France, as I have said, is Gomerian; and as such must come into confederacy with the great Cossack Ruler of the Gogian Image; and then, though not as a principal, she will send her conquered and crestfallen hosts to do battle for the Autocrat on the mountains of Israel’s land.”

A headline on the BBC news website was: “RUSSIA IN THE MIDDLE EAST: RETURN OF THE BEAR” (Nov 14, 2013). It is appropriate that as Russia supports Iran (Persia) she should become the Bear (see Daniel 7:5).

**Changing Alliances?**

Britain has had a long and strong relationship with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States (the Sheba and Dedan of Ezekiel 38:13). As we write these lines a Reuters headline was: “Britain’s Cameron to visit Gulf as UAE ponders $9 billion Eurofighter deal.” But, says the report: “Britain’s refusal to get involved in military actions in Syria in September stirred concerns that it could weaken its business ties in the Gulf.” Britain, as is the case with other nations, must decide who its friends really are.

Another item of news that illustrates the changing scene was published by the Israeli website *Arutz Sheva*. The headline read: “US Removing Navy from Mid-East as Russia Enters” (November 10, 2013).

The BBC (November 25, 2013) joined other media announcing that “IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL TRIGGERS ANXIETY FOR ISRAEL AND GULF.” And that prompted the Associated Press to publish a headline reading “ISRAEL, GULF IN ‘STRANGE ALLIANCE’ AGAINST IRAN.” And:

“Uzi Dayan, a former Israeli deputy chief of staff and national security adviser, said Israel is singled out as the main alarmist over Iran’s nuclear program, but the Sunni Arabs in the Gulf, Egypt and elsewhere are just as galvanized in opposition.

“There are more actors and participants than you might hear. We choose to do it from the main stage in a loud voice,” Dayan told Israel’s Army Radio.”

And it was Britain’s *The Sunday Times* that said,

“Convinced that Iran is tricking the world over nuclear weapons, Israel and Saudi Arabia may work together to curb its ambitions.”

The current infatuation for Iran by the U.S. Obama administration who has welcomed Iran as a “strategic partner” will doubtless bring grief to America. Ezekiel has identified Persia (that is Iran) as a strategic partner of the Russian Gog, and he will prove to be right! The power of the United States is declining so fast that many believe that it is doubtful whether she could recover. A change of heart is a real possibility of course, but it is hard to see the United States as being anything else than a junior member in the Tarshish club of young lions. The prophecy of Ezekiel which has far more to offer than any human speculation does *seem* to require an alliance between the Arabian States and the British Commonwealth of nations. Once Britain separates herself from Europe this is the direction we would expect, but she and her young lions will not be powerful enough to prevent the Gogian confederacy from invading the mountains of Israel.

These changing alliances indicate that the line-up of powers described in Ezekiel 38 are gradually being positioned in accordance with the prophecy, and this at a time when the image-empire of Babylon the Great is forming before our eyes—and a discernable King of the North and King of the South is developing in the Middle-East.

All things are ready, and it is our wisdom to join the Bride who “hath made herself ready” (Rev. 19:7), for with Daniel the prophet we “stand in our lot at the end of the days” (12:13).
The prophet Daniel spent over 70 years of his life as an exile in Babylon, being one of the young men that was carried into captivity in the 4th year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah. In that same year God had pronounced judgment upon Israel by the mouth of His prophet Jeremiah, noting that the judgments would last for seventy years, after which God would restore them to the land once again (Jeremiah 25:9-11; 29:10). The prophecy contained in Daniel chapter 9 is set at the conclusion of this seventy year period and Daniel was eager to see the restoration commence, and so he pleaded for Yahweh to turn away His fury “from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain” (verse 16); to cause His “face to shine upon thy sanctuary” (verse 17) and “thy people” (verse 16). God’s response was swift and while he was still praying the angel Gabriel was sent to give him “skill and understanding” (verse 21-23).

Other prophecies in the book of Daniel amply outline God’s ultimate purpose with His people Israel, and so when Gabriel spoke he focused upon events surrounding the coming of Messiah, and certain details involving the religious operation of the nation.

70 Weeks are Determined

The substance of Gabriel’s message is contained in chapter 9 verses 24-27. They read as follows:

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Daniel 9:24

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

By Ron Kidd

“God’s Victory over Sin

Two groups of three clauses make up verse 24 of the prophecy: the first group concerns God’s determination to deal with sin, in all its aspects:
1. to finish the transgression
2. to make an end of sins
3. to make reconciliation for iniquity

All three expressions, transgression, sins, iniquity, are found earlier in Daniel’s prayer; he acknowledged that “all Israel had transgressed” God’s law (verse 11); God’s judgments had come upon them because of
their sins and their iniquities (verses 5, 8, 13, 15-16, 20). Daniel recognized that Israel had no merits of its own, so he prayed, “O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name” (verse 19). By making reference to God’s name Daniel alludes to the Exodus when God revealed His name to Moses. On that occasion also all three expressions are referred to — “forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin” (Exodus 34:7).

The same three expressions were used by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement as he placed his hands on the head of the live goat, thus signifying the forgiveness of sins for the nation (Leviticus 16:20-22). They are the same words used by the psalmist when he spoke of our sins being removed far from us, even “as the heaven is high above the earth” and “as far as the east is from the west” (Psalm 103:10-12). Gabriel revealed who would accomplish this when he spoke of “Messiah (being) cut off, but not for himself” (verse 26). This was to be the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the lamb of God which would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

The first three clauses reveal God as a Just God, whose standard of right demand the condemnation of sin. Little did Daniel know at this point in time that the very people he was praying for would be the vehicle through which the awful deed would be accomplished. Israel was reminded of this on the day of Pentecost when Peter stood up and accused them saying, “Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts 2:23).

The prophet Isaiah also reminds us that not only God just, but He is also a saviour (Isaiah 45:21). The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus declared the righteousness of God by condemning sin, but this in itself could not declare the righteousness of God just, but He is also a saviour (Acts 3:14), and he described himself as “he that is holy” (Acts 4:27; 10:38; Hebrews 1:9). The going Forth of the Commandment

The prophecy commences with “the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.” Many books have been written about the chronology of this period highlighting the difficulties associated with the various dates. Differences of opinion exist regarding the identity of the Persian kings mentioned in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther which has further complicated a positive identification of the start date. Putting these difficulties aside for the moment, let us examine the scriptural evidence.

There are four decrees recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, these are listed below with the conventional historical dates alongside.

1. Ezra 1:1-4—1st year of Cyrus—536 BC
2. Ezra 6:8—2nd year of Darius—520 BC
3. Ezra 7:11-15—7th year of Artaxerxes—457 BC
4. Neh. 2:3-5—20th year of Artaxerxes—444 BC

We can eliminate the first two decrees as these concern the building of the temple in Jerusalem in order for worship to be re-established. The fourth reference concerns a letter written by Artaxerxes sanctioning the
building of the walls of Jerusalem (verse 8). Technically there is no decree mentioned in Nehemiah 2, but when Daniel refers to “the commandment” (9:25) he is simply referring to the “word” of the king (it is so translated in verses 1-2, verse 12), and could very well refer to the letter that the king sent with Nehemiah. However if we follow the conventional date for the king’s 20th year and add 490 years we arrive at AD 46, which is 13 years beyond the recognized date of the crucifixion. On the other hand Rollins Ancient History places the date at 456 BC which if correct would align the end of the 490 years with Christ’s crucifixion.

Alternatively the conventional date for the 7th year of Artaxerxes, which appears the more reasonable, is also 457 BC which would project the prophecy into the correct time frame, at the year AD 33, but there is no specific mention of building the walls in this decree. In this instance the decree is primarily concerned with financing the worship in Jerusalem (Ezra 7:11-15). Notwithstanding this does not mean that construction was not carried out on the walls, as already noted the decree of Cyrus was concerned with the temple yet we read of the walls of the city also being repaired (Ezra 4:13, 16; see also 9:9). Given the difficulties associated with the dating of that period it would seem that either date could be the starting date for the 490 years but the third decree appears the more reasonable.

One thing we can be certain about is the fact that the opening of the New Testament shows that people were looking for Messiah around the time of Christ’s birth. The birth of John Baptist was heralded with the words, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed his people” (Luke 1:68-70). After 400 years of silence God was about to introduce His work of reconciliation. People like Simeon and Anna anticipated some great event and were waiting in the temple (Luke 2:25, v.38). Thirty years later, when John was baptizing, we read that “the people were in expectation” (Luke 3:15).

The words of the Lord Jesus Christ plainly show that a particular period of time had run its course, for he said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15); likewise the apostle Paul (Galatians 4:4 5). Whatever difficulties there may be with the dating of this time frame, the error lies with the fallibility of those that have established the dates, not with the accuracy of the word of God.

*Unto the Messiah the Prince*

The prophecy states that the issuing of the commandment to restore Jerusalem would bring us “unto the Messiah the Prince.” When exactly would this be? Gabriel says it, “shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks” (verse 25), i.e. 69 weeks or 483 years. Working from the 7th year of Artaxerxes this brings us to AD 26, which is 7 years before the crucifixion and corresponds to the final week of the prophecy. We know that Jesus was “about thirty years of age” when his ministry began

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**PROPHECY OF SEVENTY WEEKS – DANIEL 9:24-27**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From 456 BC</th>
<th>1 Day = 1 Year</th>
<th>To 34 AD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The going forth of the commandment to build &amp; restore Jerusalem Nehemiah 2:1-8</td>
<td>Restoration under Ezra &amp; Nehemiah</td>
<td>Covenant introduced 483 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Weeks 49 years</td>
<td>62 Weeks 434 years</td>
<td>1 Week 7 years</td>
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([Diagram of the Prophecy of Seventy Weeks])

*The Cyrus Cylinder records the decree of Cyrus in which he commands the restoration of peoples taken captive by Babylon.*
We also know that the Gospel accounts identify three Passovers, plus another feast in John 5 which could also be counted as a Passover, giving three full years of ministry. According to John’s gospel Jesus’ baptism occurred sometime before the first Passover (cp. chapters 1:29 and 2:13), this suggests that the ministry of Jesus formed the second half of the last week of Daniel’s prophecy. The difficulties associated with the conventional dates make it hard to identify exactly when John commenced his preparatory work, however Luke records that it began in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1). This could either refer to AD 14 which was the beginning of his reign as sole emperor following the death of Augustus, or to AD 11 or 12 when he became “co-princeps” with Augustus two or three years earlier. This means that either John’s ministry lasted 6 months or 3½ years before the Lord Jesus. Taking the last date as the most likely, Daniel’s final week consisted of the ministry of both John Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ (Daniel 9:27).

In the Midst of the Week

Verse 27 reads, “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation (offerings) to cease”. The covenant refers back to the beginning of Daniel’s prayer in verse 4 as it is revealed in God’s holy name. The prophets declared that Jesus would be given “for a covenant of the people” (Isaiah 49:8; 42:6); the covenant involved the removal of Israel’s sins as well as the Gentiles (Romans 11:27; Ephesians 2:12-16), which could not become effective until after the death of the covenant maker (Hebrews 9:17), i.e. the Lord Jesus (Hebrews 9:15; 13:20). The sacrifices and offerings referred to describe the offerings under the law of Moses. In historical terms these did not cease until the events of AD 70 when the Romans destroyed the temple, but this places the event outside of the 70 week time frame. In Biblical terms, however, this event took place at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Jesus himself said, “I came not to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am come not to destroy, but to fulfil” (Matthew 5:17); the apostle Paul wrote that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth” (Romans 10:4). The sacrifices and offerings under the law ceased to be of any effect with the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus; the law was a shadow of heavenly things and was replaced by “a better covenant” (Hebrews 8:5-7).

The prophecy says that Jesus’ sacrifice would occur “the midst of the week” (Daniel 9:27), implying that it took place in the middle of the last week. However, based upon what we have already concluded the sacrifice of Christ occurred at the close of the final week, not in the middle. Therefore, what exactly does this refer to? The Hebrew word for “midst” does not mean the middle, rather it is usually translated “half” and refers to one half of the week. This is how some Bible translations have rendered it, for example it is translated “and for the half of the week” by the Revised Version. In simple terms Daniel was being told that sacrifices would cease to be effective during one half of the final week, without specifically stating which half. In hind sight we now know that this occurred at the end of the final week.

The Overspreading of Abominations

The final particulars of the prophecy concern events which would occur as a consequence of Messiah being put to death
and would take place shortly after the conclusion of the 70 weeks. The gospels record the hostility that was shown by the Jewish authorities towards the Lord Jesus to the point where they were determined to put him to death (John 11:53). At Jesus’ trial the leaders cried, “His blood be on us, and on our children” (Matthew 27:25). Such hostility brought a scathing rebuke from the Lord who warned them “upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth” (Matthew 23:35), indeed Jesus said it would come upon that generation (verse 36). The blood of the nation was spilled some forty years later when the Roman armies marched through the land destroying Jerusalem, burning the temple and once more removing Israel into all nations (Luke 24:24). This event is detailed in Gabriel’s concluding remarks when he says, “and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” (Daniel 9:26).

The prince is identified in verse 25 as the Messiah, but who are the people in this instance? There are several occasions in the history of Israel when God used Gentile powers to fulfill His purpose. The seventy year captivity of which Daniel was a part, describes Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon as God’s servant (Jeremiah 25:9); the Assyrian power which came earlier against Israel is depicted as “the rod of mine anger” (Isaiah 10:5). And so it was with the Roman armies, they became “the people of the prince”. In the last week, prior to his crucifixion, Jesus spoke two parables concerning God’s judgments upon Israel. The first parable is in Matthew 21 and is about God’s vineyard and the attitude of the Jews towards God’s son and heir, they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him (21:39). Notice what Jesus said next, “When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those wicked husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men” (verses 40-41). Who was going to come? The Lord of the vineyard. Who actually came? The Roman armies. The second parable in Matthew 22 is about the marriage of the king’s son. Once again God’s servants are mistreated and put to death with the result that the king “sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers and burned up their city” (22:6-7). Notice again the details, the armies belonged to the king, which destroyed the city. Which city was destroyed? It was Jerusalem. Which armies carried it out? The Roman armies. These were the people of the prince (the Messiah), he was their commander-in-chief who had been given all power in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18).

This historical event is described as follows by Gabriel, “and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate” (verse 27). The words “abominations” and “desolate” are picked up by the Lord Jesus in his Olivet prophecy, which primarily concerns the destruction of the temple in AD 70 (Matthew 24:2), in it we read, “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains” (Matthew 24:15-16). What does this mean? The Lord provides his own explanation in the parallel record in Luke’s gospel, “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains...” (Luke 21:20-21). The Abomination that makes desolate was none other than the Roman armies surrounding the city of Jerusalem, God’s holy place (described as God’s “holy mountain”) in Daniel 9:16.

**Conclusions**

The concluding comment of Gabriel said that the desolation would continue, “until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator” (English Standard Version). In the Olivet prophecy the Lord comments upon this also when speaking of the desolation brought about by Rome: he decreed that another dispersion of Israel would occur and Jerusalem would be “trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24). The decreed end began to take place in the year 1967 when Jerusalem once again became Jewish property. We wait for the final outcome when God will finally pour out His judgments on the Roman desolator.

The 70 week prophecy provides us with a perfect example of the accuracy of Bible prophecy, and while we may lack the knowledge of the exact dating, “yet believing, (we) rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:8).

**Seventy Weeks Prophecy**

In the 9th chapter of Daniel, there is a prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, at the end of which, the Messiah was to be cut off, but not for his own sins. These Seventy Weeks represent a period of 490 years. They were to commence from an event specified in the prophecy itself—“from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.” The period is divided into seven weeks, 62 weeks, and one week, and two halves of the week. In the first seven, the Jewish State was to be restored from the Babylonish captivity; at the end of the sixty-two, the covenant was to be introduced, and confirmed in the last sixty-two, the covenant was to be introduced, and confirmed in the last week (or seven years) during which John the Baptist and Jesus were occupied in their ministry. The last week was divided into two parts. The first half was the three-and-a-half years during which John the Baptist preached “the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,” in preparation of a people for the Lord when he should appear. The last half of the week was occupied by the ministry of Jesus, and terminated with the Messiah being cut off. So that exactly seventy weeks of years, or 490 years, elapsed from the “going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem” in the twenty-ninth year of Artaxerxes, to the crucifixion, when various things were done, upon the basis of which, the gospel was preached in the name of Jesus.

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.

John Thomas

If you want to understand who Israel’s real enemy is, read this book!

The author writes: “Unfortunately, a century of visceral anti-Semitism had planted deep roots in the Catholic conscience. During the 20th century, the Vatican represented the dejudization of Palestine and the hatred for Zionists as pious deeds. The anti-Zionist stance was supported by an international network of Catholic hierarchies, lay Catholic organizations and the Catholic press. Leading this international Catholic lobby against Zionism were the Catholic bishops of the United States.” Chaim Weizmann is quoted: “The Vatican is moving Heaven and Earth against us.”

**Book obtainable from www.mantuabooks.com**
being the world’s policeman. Obama seems to be retrenching his plans, especially as far as Europe and the Middle East are concerned. If Iran does play ball, then the need for America’s military umbrella is greatly lessened. Much of America’s plans in Europe, which were never popular with Germany and France, centred on countering an Iranian threat. On the other hand countries like Israel and Saudi Arabia feel increasingly vulnerable under Obama’s plans and look to each other to build up links, together with Egypt, in ways which we have been anticipating, but wondering how it could happen. A year is a long time in Middle East politics! How skilfully the angels have been laying the groundwork, to bring about the situation which will see Gog and his allies overflowing into the Middle East. We recognise that much still has to be done, and that the Lord Jesus will be back long before the final piece of the prophetic jigsaw drops into place.

Meanwhile we watch the tussle between the EU and Putin’s Russia as both seek to rebuild alliances from the ashes of the former Soviet Union. Putin’s ruthless streak has been much in evidence this year as he has expertly manoeuvred himself as the strong power, able to look Obama in the eye and see America back off!

Iran pulls Back—or does she?

So let’s begin our review of the closing months of this exciting year by looking at the situation in Iran. For many years the West has been tightening its sanctions against Iran in an effort to stop her drive to become the first Middle East Muslim nation to possess a nuclear bomb. This pursuit of the ultimate weapon has long been seen as a necessary step to dominate the region. Iran is not an Arab power—it traces its origins back to the Persian Empire—but it is a Muslim country which makes it part of a world that embraces many countries from North Africa, across the Middle East to Afghanistan and beyond.

Just because these are Muslim countries does not unite them, there are fundamental differences between the Shia Iranians and the Sunni Arab nations. Even within both the Shia and Sunni followers there are further divisions such as President Assad’s Alawite branch of Shia. The more moderate Arab states of the Gulf region are increasingly concerned that Iran’s desire for a bomb is not just for the purpose of eliminating Israel, but would subsequently be used to replace Sunni rulers with Iranian, Shia, rule.

Iran has aggressively pursued an anticipation of peace and safety!

These fast moving events are changing the face of the Middle East by creating new alliances, as America, with a still struggling economy, faces the reality of the costs of
encirclement of the Gulf States with her sponsorship of Syria, Iraq, Hezbollah, and Hamas. Although the Muslim Brotherhood is Sunni, she saw opportunities for cooperation when the Brotherhood came to power in Egypt in 2012. She has built up her navy so she can support bases in the Red Sea region. However, Iran’s seeming unstoppable advance in power has suddenly become vulnerable. The West’s sanctions have been biting hard; everyday life is being badly affected as imports become scarcer and money transfers very complicated and expensive, making even items which are not on the West’s prohibited list more difficult and costly to import. Her main income is derived from oil exports; markets for this are shrinking due to sanctions and paying Iran for her exports increasingly difficult. The ordinary Iranians are frustrated that their leaders are prepared to bring considerable suffering on their citizens because of this fixation on nuclear weapons.

So it is against this background of the seeming unstoppable quest for the bomb, that several things have happened this year. The collapse of the Muslim Brotherhood, which started in Tunisia in January, spread to Egypt in July, then into Sinai and Gaza where in the past few months the newly-empowered Egyptian military have been battling to break Hamas and the Brotherhood. This was a blow to Iran’s hopes of partnerships. During this year the sanctions against Iran were increasingly effective. The Presidential elections to replace President Ahmadinejad, who, having served two terms could not stand again, brought Rouhani as his replacement, whom many regard as a much more moderate person than the firebrand Ahmadinejad. Under the new President, the annual gathering to condemn Israel was cancelled and a more accommodating tone was set at the nuclear weapons talks which have been ongoing since 2006 between America, Britain, China, France, Russia, plus Germany (the P5+1) and Iran. At the same time Obama showed an increasing desire to pull back from aggressive action in the region. America’s long-term history of intervention in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan has not been popular at home and the American economy is still mired in debt. President Obama seems to be plotting a new course for America, which sees the new threat to be from the Far East and wishes to let Europe look after itself and to some extent the Middle East. This all coincides with America’s increasing energy independence as she exploits her own resources with new technology that makes this economic and considerably lessens her dependence upon Middle East oil. So we see quite a changed situation—we could be at a cross roads. President Assad of Syria has agreed to give up chemical weapons and in spite of initial scepticism, this is proceeding apace as we shall consider later. So the signing of the Iran and the P5+1 document on Nov 24th of an interim agreement on Iran’s nuclear programme marked an historic watershed in US-Iran relations. This was the culmination of many months of secret negotiations between the US and Iran, and the document hammered out represented the first meeting of minds between the two powers for 34 years!

True, there is much which is unclear in the agreement, or even that this is an agreement or is it only a step towards an agreement—the statements by the West differed substantially from those emanating from Iran. To them it was a triumph, with the West acknowledging their right to nuclear weapons and not demanding a serious commitment. To the West it was an agreement to stop her drive to possess a nuclear bomb. It is beginning to emerge that the document signed is only the basis for further talks, aiming at a firm agreement within the next 6 months. Many perceived it as having no more worth than the document that the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, brought back from Berlin in 1938, when he declared, “Peace for our time”, as he waved the agreement he had signed with Hitler. Just a year after World War II was launched!

At this stage it is unclear how far Iran is prepared to pull back from her ambitious programme. The country desperately needs the sanctions to be lifted, and in the aftermath of the signing, many countries were busy scrambling for a share of the potential lucrative business, if it now becomes alright to deal with Iran. Britain has appointed a chargé d’affaires, a long way from having an ambassador, but the first step on a pathway for Iran to be brought back from its pariah status. The US has already released some of the frozen assets. Debka (29-Nov-13), the private Israeli intelligence site, estimates the value of assets the US has unfrozen is worth around $8bn. It also indicated that Obama is offering to reinstate Iran as a member of “the elite club of leading world powers” and promising to involve Iran in negotiations on discussions on the world trouble spots of Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon if she slows down her nuclear drive.

Israel and Saudi Arabia are naturally unhappy that the West has effectively undone years of accumulated sanctions that at last seemed to be working, in return for empty promises. According to the Iranian version of the interim agreement they seem to have agreed little in practical terms and certainly don’t think that they have to give up their dream of becoming a nuclear power. Israel feels that Obama has turned his back on the fears of his friends, in order to curry favour with a power that continues to promote its links with Syria. This cartoon is one that appeared in 2010, but seems to still be relevant. Time will only tell if Iran is serious about long term changes.

From a scriptural point of view, it makes sense that Iran is restrained in the short term. The time has not yet arrived for Iran—Persia—to be chief of Gog’s companions as detailed in Ezekiel 38:5. The Master has to be back some time before the Gogian invasion of Israel. What may well be unfolding is quite a shift in Middle East politics, Iran has a strong influence in Syria—Assad owes his continued influence to Iranian money and arms. If, under American pressure, some solution to the Syrian situation can be found, then much of the current Middle East conflict could cease.

Assad gives up his Chemical Weapons.

Let’s look at the Syrian situation. In our last update we tried to make sense of this civil war, now in its third year. Since then, the destruction of Assad’s chemical weapons has proceeded apace. Initially action was taken to destroy the means of delivering these weapons and then Syria’s production facilities have been broken up. The last—and major—step is to get rid of the stocks of chemicals themselves. Most chemical weapons are the result of mixing two or more chemicals, which then have a relatively short “shelf life.” So far no country has come forward to say that they will take these chemicals back to their country for disposal. What is being “floated” is for the US to convert a ship and carry out the disposal at sea. Norway and Denmark have just agreed to transport the chemicals to the US ship. Whether at the end of the exercise Assad will have truly revealed all his chemical weapons sites is a matter that can’t easily be checked. Assad’s battle against the “rebels” continues and his forces seem to be retaking some of the ground they lost. An interesting Debka report (22-Nov-13) spoke of many of the “rebels” turning away from fighting for the more...
lucrative pastime of controlling fuel smuggling—the taxes charged bring worthwhile income to those in charge of the various groupings. With the last of Syria’s oilfields now under Al Qaeda control, at the moment, Assad has lost access to all his oil fields, but Iran and to a lesser extent Russia, ensure he has good supplies.

**Israel, the Gulf and Egypt**

Obama seems to be driving the Gulf States, Egypt and Israel into each other’s arms! America opposed the military takeover in Egypt, and backed the Muslim Brotherhood, though this is now beginning to moderate, Obama froze US aid to Egypt. Egypt is very dependent on these substantial sums; however the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia in particular have been providing the necessary funds to keep Egypt afloat. Israel has been keen to provide intelligence assistance to the Egyptians in their pursuit of breaking the power of the Muslim Brotherhood; the Israeli intelligence had strong, behind-the-scenes links with the Egyptian military for many years under President Mubarak. Israel and the Saudi leaders are fearful of the duplicity of Iran, having experienced many examples of Iran hiding her nuclear facilities. Indeed, the new President, Rouhani, boasted in the past of his skills in hoodwinking the P5 negotiating team!

Saudi leaders have openly indicated that they would support Israel if she chose to bomb Iran’s nuclear facilities. There are deep cultural differences between Israel and Saudi Arabia; but the practicalities of “the enemy of my enemy is my friend” seems to apply here!

**Quietly, Israel and the Gulf States Draw Closer Together.**

Prime Minister Netanyahu hinted at these changes in a speech to the United Nations.

“The dangers of a nuclear-armed Iran and the emergence of other threats in our region have led many of our Arab neighbors to recognize, finally recognize, that Israel is not their enemy.”

He added: “This affords us the opportunity to overcome the historic animosities and build new relationships, new friendships, new hopes” (*Middle East Forum 26-Oct-13*).

The same article spoke of the possibility of a changed attitude.

“The Saudis were the first to congratulate General Abd al-Fatah al Sissi following his military coup in early July. They are utterly dismayed by the current U.S. withholding of part of Washington’s package of military aid to Cairo because of what the U.S. regards as the insufficiently speedy transition back to elections in Egypt.

“Again, Israel shares these perspectives. The absence of American leadership may well be the key factor in causing Israel and the Gulf states to draw closer.

“On the face of it, any alliance between Jewish Israel and Salafi Saudi Arabia might appear an absurdity. Israel is a liberal democracy and a Jewish state. Saudi Arabia is a repressive absolute monarchy, based on a particular Salafi Muslim outlook which is deeply anti-Jewish and anti-Christian in nature.

“This ideology is not a dead letter for the Saudis. Rather, they invest heavily in spreading their particular rigid form of Islam in the west and elsewhere. Their media and education system are rife with anti-Jewish prejudice.

“But a clear distinction is made by the Saudis between the world of ideology/media/culture and the realm of raison d’état. Hence, there is no reason to think they would not be able to publicly vilify Israel, while maintaining off the radar links with it against more immediate enemies” (*Middle East Forum 26-Oct-13*).

Another report carried this headline:

**“Israel and Saudi Arabia will work Together in case of an Iran attack”**

“Mossad agents met with senior level Saudi officials to formulate a joint attack on Iran, in case the talks between the world powers and Iran fail, the Sunday Times reported. ‘The Saudis are decisive in confronting Iran and the Israelis are ready to provide the help they need,’ a senior level official told the newspaper.

“According to the report, which relies on diplomatic sources, Saudi Arabia has agreed to permit Israel to use her airspace, as well as to provide assistance to Israel through the use of drones, rescue helicopters, and aircraft refueling. In the report, Saudi Arabia is quoted to be very angry with the west and is willing to provide Israel all the assistance she needs to deal militarily with Iran” (*Jerusalem Post 17-Nov-13*). It is obviously early days, but a long-anticipated grouping of southern nations, friendly to Israel is what we have been anticipating from a study of Bible prophecies, especially Daniel’s picture of a King of the North and a King of the South grouping in the latter days.

“And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with charioths, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over” (*Daniel 11:40*).

To see the possibility of a new north/south grouping becoming a reality is very exciting. One of the countries that needs to change camp is Yemen, this is the home of the ancient Sheba and it surely must come into the Saudi camp. We can see the beginnings of a grouping of northern powers, with Iran, Iraq, and Syria working together. Turkey had her own aspirations as a regional power, but recent events have caused Prime Minister Erdogan to think again. He is having to turn back to Iran for support. The fall of the Muslim Brotherhood put paid to a southern corridor of influence. Egypt’s new rulers withdrew their Ambassador from Turkey and expelled the Turkish Ambassador in a growing rift at the end of November.

**The tug of war over Ukraine**

At the same time as we see a north-south grouping in the Middle East, we are also witnessing an east–west struggle between Europe and Russia and the former members of the Soviet Union. We touched on this last time, but what has become obvious in the last few weeks is the extent of the tussle for influence between Europe and Russia. Knowing that Russia and Europe are represented by the two legs upon which Nebuchadnezzar’s image is yet to stand, indicates to us that we are watching prophecy unfold. The Roman Empire was split into Eastern Rome and Western Rome, with the division running down what today we call the Balkans; this guides us as to which leg we expect the nations of the region to eventually be drawn. The EU is seeking to enlarge her influence eastward into the former Soviet Union—a step which several have already
taken, in becoming members of the EU. However a breakup of the EU is a strong possibility and the newest and weakest members, Romania and Bulgaria, may, with the long established, but financially weak Greece, find themselves seeking membership of the Russian EU equivalent—the Eurasia Union. It has been fascinating to watch the ongoing tussle over Ukraine which is the largest country to have to choose between the East and the West. After initially agreeing in March to a link to the West, they failed to do so at the meeting in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, where the agreement was to be finalised by both parties signing each page of a 1,200 page document! This EU ‘Eastern Partnership’ summit had been much trumpeted, but at the last moment, following pressure from President Putin, the Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych and the Prime Minister Mykola Azarov refused to sign.

“For Ukraine, the stakes of signing became too high. Throughout the process, officials in both Brussels and Moscow said that signing the EU agreements would be incompatible with Ukraine’s parallel free trade talks with Russia through the Moscow-led Customs Union. As Ukraine moved toward the EU path, Russia selectively applied trade restrictions on Ukrainian goods and warned of worse to come if Kiev signed the EU deals. Given Ukraine’s economic dependence on Russia and the precarious state of its finances, these threats proved potent enough to derail the EU agreements.

“Moldova and Georgia now find themselves in a similar situation: making significant headway toward signing the EU deals but under intensifying pressure from Russia. Moscow’s tactics are similar to those it applied with Ukraine. Russia recently blocked imports of Moldovan wine, allegedly for sanitary reasons, and Russian officials have warned Chisinau that an estimated 200,000 Moldovan migrants may no longer be allowed to work in Russia due to ‘new regulations.’ Moscow has also said its recent strengthening of economic ties with the new Georgian government could be reversed if it follows through with the EU deals” (Stratfor 05-Dec-13).

There followed many riots in Ukraine as many there felt betrayed by this pressure not to join the West. Ukraine is a country of 2 halves. The Eastern and South are mainly Russian speaking and therefore want to link with Russia; in the West and Central regions, Ukraine is the main language and they dislike Russian interference and so pull to the West. The Churches play a big role, but they are widely split so of the 4 main churches none has a dominant position.

“The dominant religion in Ukraine is Orthodox Christianity, which is currently split between three Church bodies: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church autonomous church body under the Patriarch of Moscow, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev Patriarchate, and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

“A distant second by the number of the followers is the Eastern Rite Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, which practices a similar liturgical and spiritual tradition as Eastern Orthodoxy, but is in communion with the Holy See of the Roman Catholic Church and recognises the primacy of the Pope as head of the Church” (Wikipedia).

The largest Roman Catholic population in the former Soviet Union territory is in Western Ukraine. Pope John Paul II visited here in 2001 at the invitation of the President. In the aftermath of the Vilnius Summit, the Churches played their roles with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev Patriarchate giving active support to the protestors. Those under the Patriarch of Moscow were supported by Archbishop Kirill of the Russia Orthodox Church who has campaigned for these countries to retain their links with Russia. This is a story which will run and run. What is certain is that there will be an Eastern and a Western leg and that both will unite together to drive Israel from their land.

**Putin visits Pope Francis—50 minutes Late!**

President Putin is notorious for his bad time keeping, he was 14 minutes late when he visited the Queen, but kept the Pope waiting for 50 minutes! To be fair, he had a job to leave his hotel in Rome due to a demonstration outside it protesting at the continued imprisonment of members of the “Pussy Riot” protest band.

“Political commentator Dmitriy Abramov says Putin’s ‘affected lateness’ is ‘born of a desire to demonstrate that he occupies a ‘tsar’s place’ in world politics, as in the heyday of the Russian empire’” (BBC...
According to the formal communiqué issued after the audience: “During the cordial discussions, satisfaction was expressed for the good existing bilateral relations, and the Parties focused on various questions of common interest, especially in relation to the life of the Catholic community in Russia, revealing the fundamental contribution of Christianity in society. In this context, mention was made of the critical situation faced by Christians in some regions of the world, as well as the defence of and promotion of values regarding the dignity of the person, and the protection of human life and the family.

Furthermore, special attention was paid to the pursuit of peace in the Middle East and the grave situation in Syria, with reference to which President Putin expressed thanks for the letter addressed to him by the Holy Father on the occasion of the G20 meeting in St. Petersburg. Emphasis was placed on the urgency of the need to bring an end to the violence and to ensure necessary humanitarian assistance for the population, as well as to promote concrete initiatives for a peaceful solution to the conflict, favouring negotiation and involving the various ethnic and religious groups, recognising their essential role in society” (Vatican Radio 25-Nov-13).

Their head-to-head talk lasted for 35 minutes. No invitation was made to the Pope to visit Russia; this was not for Putin to issue, this has to come from the Russia Patriarch, Kirill. There is certainly considerable movement towards reconciliation between the two main branches of Christendom.

In the traditional exchange of gifts Putin received a mosaic of the Vatican Gardens, no doubt this will be stored away somewhere! His gift to the Pope was much more significant, he presented an icon of “Our Lady of Vladimir” or Theotokos (Birth-Giver of God) of Vladimir. Not only is Vladimir, Putin’s first name, the icon is held in great reverence as Mary the Protectress of Russia and is especially associated with Kiev the capital of the Ukraine! The original was thought to have been painted in Constantinople around 1130 AD and sent as a gift to the Grand Duke of Kiev, then taken by his son to Vladimir. It eventually arrived at Moscow—there are many conflicting stories as to when, but it formed an important role in the Russian Orthodox Church and Mary’s “intervention” was credited with the saving of Moscow on several occasions! Pope Francis is of course a great worshipper of Mary, and when Putin presented it, both men crossed themselves and both kissed the icon! Was Putin gently reminding the Pope, that Mary was the protector of Russia as well as Europe, and that he was the latter-day Tsar of Russia? How sad the folly of man to worship fictitious depictions of long dead people who are really asleep in the dust of the earth waiting the day of resurrection.

Netanyahu also visits Pope Francis! A week later it was the turn of Prime Minister Netanyahu to visit the Pope. Their private session lasted 25 minutes and he didn’t keep the Pope waiting! According to the Vatican statement afterwards: “The talks focused on the complex political and social situation in the Middle East, with particular reference to the reinstatement of negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, expressing hope that a just and lasting solution respecting the rights of both parties may be reached as soon as possible.

“They also discussed lingering financial and other questions that have stalled full implementation of a formal bilateral agreement between Israel and the Holy See ‘in the hope that the Agreement which has been in preparation for some time may be concluded forthwith.’”

Mr Netanyahu reiterated the invitation that had already been made for the Pope to visit Israel. Sarah Netanyahu added, “We are expecting you, we can’t wait.”

Again the choice of gifts was interesting. The Pope presented a bronze plaque of the apostle Paul, whilst Netanyahu presented the Pope with a Spanish translation of a book his historian father had written in 1995 entitled “The Origins of the Inquisition”! He had inscribed it, “To the great pastor and guardian of our common heritage.” His late father was an expert on the Roman Catholic Church’s forced conversion and expulsion of Jews in the 15th century. He also gave the Pope a large silver menorah.

Israel, like the rest of the world has fallen for the charms of this Jesuit Pope. Scripture leads us to understand the truth about this system that it is an enemy of the Truth, and will rouse the European nations to fight against the Lamb in the days after Armageddon, when the Lord Jesus will be calling on the nations to submit to his rule. Before this, it also plays an important role in the gathering of the nations to destroy Israel. Israel has to learn that she is making wrong choices of friends. From an Israeli point of view, one can see the attraction of making friendships with those who have been against one in the past, but now seem to have a different attitude towards you. If the Pope is supporting Israel, then he won’t be supporting the Arab nations to get rid of Israel. The logic is clear, but deeply flawed. The only true trust Israel can depend on is that which depends on God (Isaiah 10:20). God has made clear that this Church is a system of deceit and will be swept away.

So we marvel at the foreknowledge of God, under whose hand the angels direct the affairs of men in preparation for the day when all will submit to Israel’s God and their King, the Lord Jesus Christ. What blessings we have in an understanding of these things; we seek our Master’s coming to call us away to Him.
Canada & Israel Linked By Bible Prophecy

By Paul Billington  Brantford, ON,

Canada may possess very little military muscle to speak of, but it is not without a voice in this world. History has demonstrated many times that when it comes to a serious international crisis, Canada has played a significant role. Canada was heavily involved in the First and Second World Wars when she stood alongside Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa and others. Individually these English-speaking nations may not amount to much, but when they stand together with Britain they can be a formidable force. Together they have withstood the world at arms in the past, and could do so again. During two world wars these allies have been the first line of defence (the United States joining in at a later stage).

It is not without significance therefore that Canada’s Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, has declared “Israel will always have Canada.” Harper stressed that Israel, Canada and the western world share threats. He said: “We understand the future of our country depends on having a free and democratic state in the Middle East.” The chairman of the Jewish organization (the J.N.F.) termed it an “unprecedented show of support.” Harper emphasized “Israel will always have Canada.”

In a televised video message the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, said: “Stephen doesn’t follow the herd. He has stood up for the truth, time and time again.” “Stephen doesn’t want to be politically correct, he wants to be correct. He had the courage to stand up for what he believed.” Netanyahu said. “I salute you Stephen, not only as a personal friend, and a friend of Israel but as a great leader.”

Stephen Harper plans to visit Israel in January 2014.

A Biblical Perspective

The development of this friendship between Israel and Canada illustrates once again the reliability of Bible prophecy; it also demonstrates that the understanding of prophecy that has been held for over 160 years is a true representation of what has been written in the Prophets. As far back as 1849 the book entitled Elpis Israel commented upon Ezekiel 38:13 which reads: “Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil?”

“Elpis Israel” (Greek for “The Hope of Israel”) commented: “The merchants of Tarshish and its young lions, identified as the British power.” (For confirmation of this identification, see the previous issue of The Bible Magazine Vol. 26, No. 4).

Now if Britain is identified as being the Tarshish here, who are the merchants? Historically, Britain’s “merchants” were those far-off countries with whom she traded and developed into colonies—countries like India (a candidate for the eastern “Tarshish” of Scripture). It has been customary to see Britain (Tarshish) itself as the merchants referred to. The ancient Tarshish of Scripture traded with Tyre:

“Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs” (Ezekiel 27:12).

But trade is a two-way street. The Tarshish of Ezekiel 27 would both produce their metals and trade them for some other commodity. The Revised Version reads “they traded for thy wares.” We know that Tyre traded her purple cloth in exchange for the products of the colonies. She is described as being “a merchant of the people for many isles” (27:3).
“The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants: they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold” (27:22).

Here, both Sheba and Tyre are called merchants—they traded with each other. The mariners of Tyre did the shipping as well as being a merchant city. Britain is the latter-day Tyre and she traded her merchandise for tea, cocoa, jute, ivory, furs, precious metals etc, etc. The British merchant navy took care of the shipping as she traded with India, Africa, Australia and British North America.

North America

The Hudson’s Bay Company was incorporated by English royal charter in 1670 as “The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson’s Bay” and functioned as the de facto government in parts of North America before European states and later the United States laid claim to some of those territories. From its long-time headquarters at York Factory on Hudson Bay, the company controlled the fur trade throughout much of the English and later British controlled North America for several centuries. Undertaking early exploration, its traders and trappers forged early relationships with many groups of aboriginal peoples, and its network of trading posts formed the nucleus for later official authority in many areas of Western Canada and the United States.

The Dominion of Canada (1867), though now known simply as Canada, is still a member of the British Commonwealth with Queen Elizabeth II as monarch. So Canada was, and still is a merchant of Britain/Tarshish, having become independent through the Statute of Westminster in 1931.

The act established legislative equality between the self-governing Dominions of the British Empire and the United Kingdom, thereby marking the effective legislative independence of these countries, either immediately or upon ratification. The Statute of Westminster’s relevance today is that it sets the basis for the continuing relationship between the Commonwealth realms and the Crown.

Despite the fact that the Statute of Westminster applied to Canada without any need for ratification in its parliament, the British North America Acts—the written elements (in 1931) of the Canadian constitution—were excluded from the application of the statute. This was the result of disagreements between the Canadian provinces and the federal government over how the British North America Acts could be amended, otherwise. These disagreements were resolved only in time for the passage of the Canada Act 1982, thus completing the patriation of the Canadian constitution to Canada.

In short, this means that Canada is today an independent “young lion” as defined by the words of Ezekiel 38:13. So Canada is to fulfill its role in protesting against the invasion of Israel by the Russo-European “Gog.”

The recent statements by the Canadian Prime Minister places Canada in a leading position among the Sheba, Dedan, Tarshish alliance of the latter days. It may be that her courage and leadership in this matter will encourage other “young lions” such as Australia to adopt a similar position. Perhaps, in time, the old lion itself will be moved into standing up against Israel’s enemies. Not only is Canada’s Prime Minister about to visit Israel, but The Jerusalem Post (December 11, 2013) reports that the British Prime Minister David Cameron also plans to visit the country. With Russia seeking to replace the United States in the Middle East Britain and her “young lions” are perhaps waking up to the fact that they must support their allies east of Suez. It is 40 years since the Labour Government of Britain ordered the withdrawal of British forces from the region, but times have changed. Prophecy clearly teaches that the Arabian States (Sheba and Dedan) together with Britain and her family of nations will seek to support Israel against the aggressors. However the case may be, we know that Israel’s ultimate salvation will not come from her would-be protectors, it will come from the God of Israel working through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
The Failure of Judaism

By David Billington  Brantford, ON.

The greatest tragedy of the twentieth century was the Holocaust. The systematic and calculated murder of six million men, women and children is unparalleled in history. God's people the Jews, were in the hands of the nations excelled in cruelty and brutality in their treatment of God's people. They acted as the nations had in the time of Zechariah the prophet and "helped forward the affliction" — Zechariah 1:15.

One of the greatest failures of Judaism occurred between the world wars, in that they rejected the open opportunity to move from Europe and return to the land of Israel in the 1920's. This period is summarized in the book "Pillar of Fire" by Yigal Lossin on page 85:

"The Arab national movement in Palestine was in its infancy and was incapable of interfering. Had they so desired, the Jews could have returned to the Promised Land en masse and might even have established a Jewish State prior to the Holocaust. This, as we know, did not happen. During that very same month, July 1920, the President of the Zionist Federation, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, uttered his famous appeal: "Jewish People, where are you?"

The answer as to why the liberal Jews did not return is quite simple; Yigal Lossin explains: "The vast majority of Jews, however, were not interested in revolutionary solutions—neither the socialist nor the Zionist one. Rather, they simply hoped to obtain freedom and civil rights in their countries of residence. These Jews—of the Liberal school—pointed to the example of Germany, in which Jews were well-established and assimilated and scornfully rejected the idea of the Land of Israel." Yigal continues on page 105: "...in the holy tongue Hebrew, instead of Yiddish. Naturally, it provoked an unholy alliance among anti-Zionists—the revolutionaries and Bundists, who staked all on the class struggle, and the ultra-Orthodox groups, who claimed a monopoly on Jewish educational and cultural activities and resolutely opposed any manifestation of Jewish nationalism as sacrilege, an unnatural tampering with the work of God, and who believed that Jewish redemption would come with the Messiah or not at all."

Rabbi Yisachar Shlomo Teichtal realized that this was a great mistake by European Ultra-Orthodox Jewry and was humble and bold enough to admit it, albeit too late. In an astounding book he wrote during the Holocaust in Europe, entitled, "Eim Ha'banim Semeichah", or "A Mother of the Children is Happy", Rabbi Teichtal wrote in the preface: "Signed by he who is writing in the darkness of night, Monday evening, parashat Tetzaveh, in the year 5703 (1943), here in the capital, Budapest. And I am among the exile. May HaShem put an end to our exile and speedily bring us to our Holy Mountain." Today the exile is over for any Jew who wishes and the doors to Israel are open. Sadly Rabbi Teichtal perished in the Holocaust.

As Rabbi Teichtal sat in Budapest in exile, during the Holocaust in 1943, he realized how different things could have been had religious Jewry supported the return to the land. In the preface on page 22 he wrote: "Had the Orthodox Jews joined those who were engaged in this sacred endeavor sixty, fifty, or forty years ago, and had they inspired all of Israel to do the same, we would have found abundant relief in the Land. Thousands upon thousands of Jews would have settled there and would have been rescued from death...

"However, they opposed this undertaking. Not only did they oppose it, but they caused the simple, Orthodox Jews to despise the rebuilding of the Land so much that if one of them begins to speak or get enthused about it, they consider him repulsive and abominable. They all rebuke him, saying, "You are a Zionist, an abhorrence, and an abomination." Thus, they have truly caused the desirable Land to be despised and detested. The simple man who does not know enough Torah to decide whether this is true or not, chastises those who desire to rebuild the Land. He says, "You are a sinner and a Zionist," for he wants to be considered devout and pious. In this way, he defames both himself and our Holy Land."

Rabbi Teichtal continues on page 28
be on purely political principles..."

Finally, the Orthodox Jews could simply not accept that secular Jews who had left Judaism, could be the means by which the return to the land would take place.

If the wisest and most learned Rabbis of the first half of the twentieth century, failed to understand this important aspect of the work of the Messiah, in regard to the restoration of the Jews; how can it be claimed that the most learned of the Jews, at the time of Jesus, must have been correct in rejecting him as the Messiah?

Orthodox Jewry expected a visible Messiah to come and redeem them from exile. They believed that the Messiah would come and perform all of his work at once.

Rabbi Teichtal came to believe that the redemption would occur naturally. In chapter two, page 139 he wrote:

"Thus, since we will not deserve redemption, it will not occur through manifest miracles, but miracles disguised in nature. Therefore, it will happen little by little, not all at once."

Apparently, this is the reason why the prophets called Mashiach “Tzemach” (the sprouting one), as it says, For behold, I am bringing My servant, Tzemach (Zecharyah 3:8); Behold, there is a man whose name is Tzemach and he will sprout forth out of his place (ibid. 6:12); I will raise a righteous sprout from David (Yirmiyah 23:5). We also recite this in our prayers: ‘May You speedily cause the sprout of Your servant David to sprout forth’...This is also why Mashiach is called Tzemach, because his and Israel’s eminence will ascend little by little until it is very great, just like a plant."

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The L ORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The L ORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The L ORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land."

The context of the Branch prophecy in Jeremiah 23 is the regathering of Israel, both the verses before and after speak of the regathering of Israel. The preeminent characteristic of the Branch is that he is righteous—the “righteous Branch.” He is noted for executing judgment and justice in the earth. Also, notice that the Messiah (the Branch), is connected with the salvation of Judah and his name is to be called, “Yahweh our righteousness”.

There is a parallel passage to Jeremiah 23 in Jeremiah 33:14–16.

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The L ORD our righteousness.”

This passage is very similar to Jeremiah 23, again the context is the restoration of Israel—verse 7. The Messiah is called the “Branch of Righteousness” and originates from the ancestry of David. Again he executes judgement and righteousness in the land and is connected to the salvation of Judah. However, instead of his name being called “Yahweh our righteousness”, here it is she—Jerusalem—that is called “Yahweh our righteousness.” So Jerusalem has taken the name of the Messiah which related to them and this worthy name has been prophetically bestowed upon them. Jerusalem is to be called “Yahweh our Righteousness.” This work of salvation is related to the work of the Messiah.

The Branch in Zechariah

As noted by Rabbi Teichtal, the prophecy of the “Tzemach” or Branch, the Messiah,
comes out again in Zechariah 3 and 6. Zechariah 3 is within the night vision of Zechariah and chapter 6:9–15 is what Zechariah was instructed to do on the same day after the vision, when he no doubt delivered the vision to the people. What Zechariah did is very significant and is in fact a continuation of what he witnessed in the vision. One way that this is apparent is the continuation of the Branch prophecy. Zechariah 3:8 (JPS) says, “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men that are a sign; for, behold, I will bring forth My servant the Shoot.”

Zechariah 6:9, 11–13 reads: “And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying... make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest; and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”

Zechariah 3:8 informs us that Joshua the High Priest is a man of sign. Gesenius Lexicon says that idea is of “men who in their persons shadow forth future events.” So Joshua the High Priest was a man who symbolized future events regarding the Messiah in his person. This is plainly evident from Zechariah 6 where Joshua “The Branch” is crowned to rule on the throne of Israel as a king and as a priest. The high priest was God’s representative to the people and the one who made reconciliation for the nation on the day of atonement. Here we learn a very important aspect of the Messiah—he was to be a king and a priest. The offices of high priest and king are to be united in the Messiah. This is impossible under the law of Moses and requires a change to the constitution of the nation—a change to the law of Moses. The Messiah was to be from the tribe of Judah (2 Samuel 7), while the high priest was to be from the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron (Numbers 18:8).

There is no doubt that the Branch prophecies point forward to the Messiah and Judaism itself regards them as such—as we have seen from Rabbi Teichtal. There is also no question from Zechariah 6 that when the Messiah comes both offices of the high priest and the king will be united together, something not allowed under the Mosaic constitution of Israel. What then of Psalm 110? It is one of the most oft quoted Psalms in the New Testament, yet Judaism has come to count it as not being Messianic, probably as a reaction to Christianity, which has in fact distorted the meaning of the Psalm due to the doctrine of the trinity. Psalm 110 is a Psalm of David, as it says in the title. The Psalm begins with the words quoted by Jesus: “Yahweh said to my Adon (or Lord), sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” The question as to whether the Psalm is Messianic or not rests upon who the “Adon” or “Lord” is in verse 1. Is it the Messiah as the New Testament says? Judaism interprets the Psalm as the “Adon” being King David himself. The Levities would sing: “Yahweh said to my Lord (David), sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Can King David fit into the meaning of the Psalm? There are a number of problems with this view:

1. Did King David ever sit at the right hand of Yahweh until his enemies were made his footstool? In 2 Samuel 7:1 David sat in his house and Yahweh had given him rest from all his enemies and was about to give him the great promises of the coming Messiah, who would come from his lineage. In verse 18 we read, “Then went king David in, and sat before Yahweh, and he said...” David’s enemies were already his footstool and yet he could not sit at the position of Yahweh’s right hand—only before Him.

2. David was never a priest and could not have been under the law of Moses. In the days of David, Zadok and Abiathar were the priests (2 Samuel 20:25).

3. In the promises made to David, nor anywhere else in scripture, is there recorded such a significant promise as that to David that his descendent the Messiah would “build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.”; Zechariah 6, (It is Messiah the Branch, who is the one who “shall build the temple of Yahweh” and be a king and a priest.) and Psalm 110 (The one who rules in the midst of his enemies and is also a priest forever after the “manner of Melchizedek.”)

When we place 2 Samuel 7, (The promise...
Jeremiah 23:3–8

“I will gather the remnant of my flock”

Jeremiah 33:6–16

“I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return”

Zechariah 6:9–15

“Thus saith the LORD of Hosts, My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad...” (Zech. 1:17)

2 Samuel 7:10–16

“I will appoint a place for my people Israel...they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more”

Psalm 110

“Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power”

“I will raise unto David”

“To grow up unto David”

“...he shall grow out of his place”

“I will set thy seed after thee...”

“A righteous Branch”

“...the Branch of righteousness”

“Behold the man whose name is The Branch” (6:12; 3:6)

“I will raise a righteous Branch unto David”

“...shall execute judgement and justice in the earth”

“He shall sit and rule upon his throne”

“I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever”

“...shall execute judgement and righteousness in the land”

“...neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime”

“In his days Judah shall be saved, And Israel shall dwell safely”

“I will dwell in the midst of thee saith the LORD” (2:10,11)

“The Lord at Thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.”

“He shall be called, The LORD our righteousness”

“...this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness”

“I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day”

“...he shall be a priest upon his throne”

“Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

“...he shall build the temple of the LORD”

“...he shall build an house for my name”

made into his footstool. Included in this work is the bringing again the Jewish people to the land of Israel. It is a work of Messiah, but he is not personally visible for the Jews to witness.

**Judaism and Forgiveness of Sins**

Man is unable to live up to God’s standard. Even Moses the great lawgiver, prophet and king failed to enter the promised land as a result of sin. As a result of the weakness of human nature, forgiveness from sin plays a prominent part in religion.

David was a king who needed God’s mercy and forgiveness, especially in the matter of Bathsheba and for instigating the death of Uriah. According to the letter of the law of Moses, David was worthy of death as a result of these sins and there was no sacrifice available which he could offer. Yet David was forgiven by God. While the baby died, which was the direct result of David’s sin with Bathsheba, the second child, which was a result of their union was Solomon; the one chosen by Yahweh to sit upon the throne of the Lord in Jerusalem after David (1 Chronicles 28:5). Furthermore Yahweh bestowed upon Solomon a special name, Jedidiah meaning “beloved of Yah.” Upon what basis did David receive forgiveness? He must have been looking above the law of Moses in some way.

Judaism teaches that the sacrifices of animals under the law have been surpassed. Psalm 51 written at the time of David’s sin with Bathsheba would be used to support this view. In verses 16 and 17, David in the Psalm says: “For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” Today in Judaism, the sacrifices that are pleasing to God are the praise of our lips and giving to charities. In the book “Essential Judaism” on page 419, it says:

“But, above all else, the purpose of Mosaic law is to lead the Jewish people away from the practice of idolatry, from paganism. The ritual sacrifices prescribed in the Torah represent a stopgap, a way station between the paganism that the people Israel had left behind, and a truly ethical and rational monotheism.”

It is surprising that Judaism would minimize the law of Moses in this way. Are the ritual sacrifices just a stopgap to lead the people away from paganism? A kind of bridge from pagan practise to God? This cannot be true. The first sacrifices in the Torah, are the animals that gave their lives in order to provide the covering for Adam and Eve, replacing the fig leaves. Then there is the sacrifice that Abel brought. All of these sacrifices are at the very beginning, before paganism existed. In addition, right after the Branch prophecy in Jeremiah 33 and verse 18 it says, “...neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.” This is a prophecy of the future. Again, in the prophesied future temple there is an altar and sacrifices. There must be a greater meaning to sacrifices—such as is expounded in the book of Hebrews—other than that they are simply a bridge away from paganism.

It is true, that a sacrifice brought with a wicked or disinterested heart was meaningless to God. For example, Proverbs 21:27 says: “The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?” However, was the basis of David’s forgiveness simply the condition of his heart, or was there more to it?

A portion from the last words of David in 2 Samuel 23:5 provides the answer.

“Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.”

All David’s salvation was based upon the everlasting covenant. These were the promises made to David in 2 Samuel 7, yet, David says, “he made it not to grow.” The verb here “to grow” is “Yatzmeach,” the future, 3rd person form; the root is the same one from which the noun for branch in the Jeremiah and Zechariah “branch” prophecies derives from. The idea in 2 Samuel 7 is that “he made him not to branch or sprout.” This is the branch, the Messiah, not then having grown forth from the stump of Jesse. All David’s salvation was a matter of hope, a hope in the coming “branch.”

How was David’s salvation dependant on the coming Messiah or “man whose name is
The Messiah’s relation to the Covenants of Promise

It is essential for one to believe in the covenants of promise made to King David and to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in order to please God. To disbelieve them would put a person in the position of calling God a liar. However, looking at this the other way, when one believes the promises it glorifies God and the blessings of the promises can be bestowed upon them.

Abraham was counted righteous by God as a result of his belief in the promises. He believed in a human impossibility and it was counted to him for righteousness.

“And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness” (Genesis 15:5,6).

While childless and too old to have children, Abraham believed that his children would be as the stars of heaven for multitude. As a result of his faith in God’s promise, God counted him as a righteous person, effectively forgiving his sins. Abraham believed God’s promises and was counted to be righteous.

Psalm 72 is entitled, A Psalm for Solomon. The Psalm definitely is applicable to the reign of Solomon, but can we limit it to that? When Psalm 72 is compared to the “Branch” prophecies that have been considered in Jeremiah 23:5, 6 and 33:14–16; it is plainly evident that these prophecies could be considered a summary of Psalm 72. Consider Jeremiah 23:5: “...a king shall reign and prosper, And shall execute judgment and justice in the earth” — that is Psalm 72. Jeremiah 33 continues in verse 17, “For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel,” and tying it together with the covenant to David in verse 20, “Thus saith the LORD; If ye can break My covenant of the day...Then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant...” The climax of the prayer in Psalm 72 is verse 19, “And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.” This is a prayer for the completion of God’s purpose when all the earth will be filled with His glory in the Messianic age (Numbers 14:21; Habakkuk 2:14). There are many other points that undoubtedly show that Psalm 72 is about the future work of the Messiah and not limited to the reign of King Solomon.

Psalm 72 is the last of the prayers of King David as it says in verse 20, “The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.” 2 Samuel 23 contains the last words of David, “Now these be the last words of David...” In both places David speaks of the righteous king—the Messiah. In 2 Samuel 23:4 he wrote:

“And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.”


“He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.”

Both passages are speaking of the Messiah.

Psalm 72:17 instructs us on a very important aspect of the work of the Messiah.

“His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be as the stars of heaven for multitude. And men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.”

Men shall be blessed in him—the Messiah. The structure for “blessed in him” is a fairly unique verb form, being the Hithpael imperfect form of the verb “to bless.” This is why some translations translate the phrase as, “May men also bless themselves...” In any case, the result is that men are blessed in the king. This is holy blessing and the blessing is a holy blessing — a scriptural blessing to the nations. What is the scriptural blessing to the nations? The blessing of Abraham.

“In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Genesis 22:18).

In the seed of Abraham all nations would be blessed. The structure here in Genesis is very similar to that of Psalm 72, “be blessed” is again the fairly unique verb form Hithpael, except this time in the perfect. Again this is used in Genesis 26:4. Putting this together, we can plainly see that in the first instance, “in thy seed” refers to the singular descendent of Abraham and David who would be the Messiah — the Branch, the King in Psalm 72. Therefore all the blessings of Abraham are to come upon the Jewish people and the nations through the righteous king and priest who is the man called “The Branch.”

Abraham was forgiven his sins and counted as a righteous man by the Creator because he believed the promises. David the King said all his salvation was the everlasting covenant—the promise of the coming Messiah. If we are to be forgiven and counted righteous as Abraham and forgiven as David was for his sin, we must believe in the one, upon whom all the promises rest.

The Real Problem for which Judaism has no Solution

Why was Israel dispersed from the land to suffer in exile? Because the nations were too powerful for them? No, because they turned from God and lacked faith. Herein is the primary problem that the Jews (and all of us) must be delivered from—Themselves. A great Jewish king could arise and deliver the Jewish people from all the nations of the world, but the real problem would not have been overcome. The problem of our sinful nature.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)

Judaism has failed to find a solution to overcome sin within the nation of Israel, so as to secure the inheritance of the land.

In the centuries of argument to disprove that Jesus Christ was the promised Jewish Messiah, Judaism has tried to prove that scripture after scripture is not Messianic and in doing so has forgotten what the true work of the Messiah entails. A primary aspect is that the Messiah, through his work, would cleanse the nation of their sins. This is seen in the Branch prophecy of Zechariah 3. In Zechariah 6, the man of symbol, Joshua the High Priest, prophetically enacts being crowned as the King and Priest of the nation. In Zechariah 3, where Joshua is first introduced he is clothed in filthy garments, which are “his iniquity”—verse 4. The removal of Joshua’s iniquity results in the cleansing of the iniquity of the whole land— verse 9. The Messiah would conquer human nature in himself and then this would enable the whole land to be cleansed. In order for the blessing of Abraham to come, the sins of Israel must be subdue.

“He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, whom thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old” (Micah 7:19, 20).

As we examine these matters, we should be careful that we hold fast to, “the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers” (Acts 26:6), and be not highminded but fear (Romans 11:20). We despair at the tragedies that have befallen the Jewish people and our earnest prayer is that all Israel would be saved (Romans 11:26).
The Scriptures do not leave the reader in ignorance of the death-state into which all go at their decease. While in death they are said to sleep—a state which we are quite familiar with. It is a condition of unconsciousness, in which all the sensory connections between the mind and the outside world are shut down.

“For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?” (Psalm 6:5)

“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten” (Ecc. 9:5).

In the deepest sleep, such as is experienced during general anesthesia, we are completely unaware of passing events, and even the passage of time. The awakening after surgery might be compared with turning on a personal computer, by which there is a re-establishment of two-way communications of the computer with the operator, and access to its memory, stored on floppy or hard magnetic disk. In this case the brain of the sleeping person is like the magnetic disk.

To some it may seem an impossible leap of credibility to accept that a human personality can be reconstructed after death. But the Scriptures show that the life of every person is inextricably linked with God, no matter what their personal attitude happens to be. Paul suggested to the learned men of Athens:

“That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being.”

This being the case, how cannot God be totally aware of our every thought and action at every moment of our lives? If He so desired, He could reconstruct every minute detail of our life from birth to death, and it appears that He does so in the case of those who have received his instruction and discipline. Malachi calls it a book:

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him” (Malachi 3:16-17).

Hence, all the thoughts and actions that make up the character are recorded in God as a book of remembrance. In it is written their history. The body of such a one may be totally dissipated in the dust of the earth and vapour of the sky. But the character is inscribed on the divine page of the spirit. These subtle vibratory impressions are never obliterated, unless He wills never to revive them. Many such impressions He has willed to blot out; as in the case of those who are consigned to a perpetual sleep. These recorded impressions which include “the hidden things of darkness, and the counsels of the hearts” are like the so-called back-up memory of a computer. A personal computer can be totally destroyed, yet the owner can carry on as if nothing happened if he has backed up all the memory of his computer, and transfers the stored information into a new machine. In like manner, at the resurrection the body will be recreated, and then all those stored impressions will be imprinted on the organ of thought, which is the brain. The sensory connections between the mind and the outside world will be re-established and the person that died however long ago will feel as if he has revived after a brief repose.

But from the sleep of death, the Scriptures inform us that some never awake. This is clear from the prophecy of Jeremiah, where he is speaking of the renowned men of Babylon:

“...they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts” (Jeremiah 51:57). Isaiaah speaks of the same order of mankind, saying:

“They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish” (Isaiah 26:14).

The book of Proverbs provides an explanation for the complete obliteration of such persons from existence:

“The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead” (Proverbs 21:16).

The force of this statement is found in the fact that such a man never was in the way of understanding—his whole lifetime was spent wandering from one notion to another, but never coming to understand what life is all about.

So not all who have died will sleep the slumber of death perpetually—as the Psalm puts it:

“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever” (Psalm 9:17-18).

There must be, then, a resurrection in order that those godly persons who have died should be able to come back into existence. Jesus taught his followers to look for the resurrection as their only hope of life after death. Some of his contemporaries, a group called the Pharisees, already believed in the resurrection, because it is taught in the Old Testament Scriptures. But another assembly called the Sadducees, said that resurrection was not taught in the Scriptures. Since they would only accept the writings of Moses as authoritative, Jesus said to them: “Moses has shown that the dead are raised” (Luke 20:37). He then directed their attention to Exodus 3:6, where God says, “I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Daniel 12:2

By Arthur Bull

Vancouver, B.C.

Job 14:14

THE BIBLE MAGAZINE Vol. 27 ISSUE No.1
“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?... Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy days is great?” Job 38:4 & 21

“For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” John 5:46, 47

“...For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth” Exodus 31:17