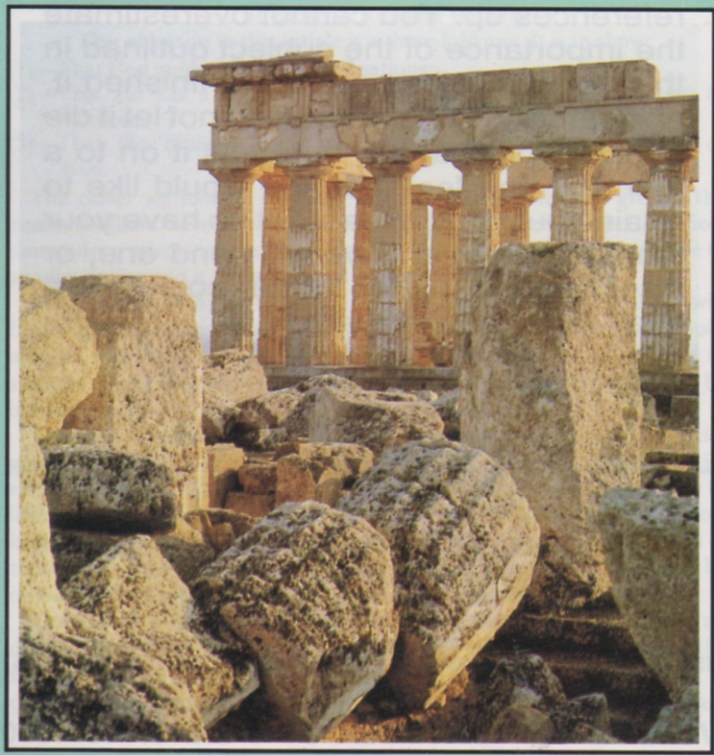


**The
Amazing Witness
of
Fulfilling Bible
Prophecy**



Reader: Earnestly ponder the article now before you. It sets forth a most important theme of Bible truth, one of vital consequence in relation to personal salvation. Carefully consider the comments made in the light of the Scriptures quoted. Take down your Bible from off its shelf, and turn these references up. You cannot overestimate the importance of the subject outlined in this booklet. When you have finished it, and carefully considered it do not let it die by throwing it away, but pass it on to a friend. If you feel that you would like to retain your copy, please let us have your friend's name, and we will send one, or else, apply to us for further copies. We shall gladly supply them.

HERALD OF THE COMING AGE

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The Amazing Witness of Fulfilling Bible Prophecy

"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets and maketh known what shall be in the latter days" (Daniel 2:28).

The Bible: A Reliable Witness

Our objective in this article is a three-fold one. It is to show:

- (1)—That God guides the destiny of nations;
- (2)—That He has a purpose with the earth that is rapidly coming to fruition;
- (3)—That the Bible is what it claims to be: the Inspired Word of God.

The closer we look at anything that man has created the greater the number of flaws there are revealed. Submit a polished piece of steel to inspection under a microscope, and it appears pitted and rough; stand too close to an oil painting and it looks ugly and distorted.

That is not so with God's creation however. Examine as closely as you will the petal of a rose, and its soft beauty will be more wonderfully revealed. Submit the wing of a butterfly, or the wonderful mechanism of the eye, to scrutiny under the microscope, and hidden and complex marvels will be instantly seen.

The same is true of the Bible. The more minutely its pages are studied, the greater beauty and significance there is revealed. It is transforming in its effect. It provides a basis for happier living now, whilst revealing the way to life eternal in the future. As Paul wrote: "It has promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come" (1 Timothy 4:8). And, like the diverse forms of creation about us, the more it is studied, the greater will its wonder be revealed, testifying that the Hand that made it is divine.

The amazing fulfilment of Bible prophecy demonstrates this beyond all doubt. Man cannot predict the future with any certainty whatever, but the Bible reveals the end from the beginning. God has declared:

"I am God, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do

all My pleasure" (Isaiah 46:10).

This is no false claim. The fulfilment of Bible prophecy down the ages is a guarantee not only that God can do what He wills, but that He will do what He proclaims. It is an assurance that complete reliance can be placed upon the Bible, and that God will make good His promise to:

- Send Jesus Christ to reign on earth (Acts 1:11; Acts 3:20-21; Luke 1:32-33).

- Raise from the dead those responsible to judgment (Psalm 49:15-20; 2 Timothy 4:1-7; 1 Corinthians 15).

- Reward with eternal life those found worthy (Matthew 19:29; Romans 2:7).

- Grant them authority with Christ in his Kingdom on earth (Revelation 5:9-10; 2:26; Daniel 7:27).

- Establish universal peace and goodwill on earth (Psalm 72; Isaiah 2:2-4).

Our object is to present some of the wonders of prophecy that the reader may accept with assurance the teaching of the Bible. This is shown by the rise and fall of nations considered in the light of Bible prophecy. The Bible predicted that certain nations would totally disappear, whilst others would remain until the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth. Among the former were Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Philistia, etc.; among the latter were Arabia, Persia (modern Iran), Libya, Ethiopia, Egypt and Israel.

The former nations have entirely disappeared as predicted; the latter still remain, and in the very condition that the prophets declared they would be found.

What other book describes with such certainty events to come?

We propose to briefly consider some of these predictions that the wonder of their fulfilment might be better appreciated.

Tyre: A Place For Fishing Nets

The 26th chapter of Ezekiel records a remarkable prophecy against Tyre. This ancient power had opposed God's people of Israel, and against it the prophet, in the name of God, had thundered Divine judgment. The Tyrians were told:

1. That Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, would conquer Tyre (vv. 7-11).
2. That the city would be made desolate (v. 4).
3. That it would be thrown into the sea (v. 12).
4. That it would become a place to spread nets upon (v. 14).
5. That its maritime supremacy would cease forever (v. 17).

Every detail of this prophecy had complete and wonderful fulfilment.

Few people today know anything about Tyre, so completely was the prophecy fulfilled. But in B.C. 596 when it was uttered, Tyre was the foremost seapower of the ancient world. Strategically situated on the coast of the Mediterranean, in what is now known as Lebanon, Tyrian ships dominated the seas for centuries.

Early in the sixth century B.C., however, Tyre incurred the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar and the rising power of Babylonia. Nebuchadnezzar determined that he would destroy the power of Tyre, and accordingly he marched against the city and besieged it. After a protracted siege that continued for some years, he breached the walls, and the city fell. When the Tyrians saw that resistance was futile, they transferred the bulk of their treasure to an island in their possession, half a mile from the shore. The old city was deserted and from her new water-enclosed fortress Tyre continued to defy her enemies.

Though the original city had been "made desolate" by Nebuchadnezzar as predicted by Ezekiel, the balance of the prophecy had not been fulfilled. Ezekiel (Ch. 26) had declared:

"They shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise; and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses; and they shall lay thy stones, thy timber, and thy dust in the midst of the water ... I (God) will make thee like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more ... I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee" (vv. 12,14,19).

A common scene on the coast line at Tyre! A fisherman spreads his nets in the rock-strewn waters of the Mediterranean. The Tyrians were one of the world's great maritime peoples — but today not even a harbour remains. Bible prophecy declared 250 years before the destruction of mighty Tyre, and proved true notwithstanding the seeming impossibility of its declarations.



None of this was accomplished by Nebuchadnezzar, though he destroyed the original city. The prophecy spoke of an unnamed power as "*they shall do it.*" History reveals that this was Alexander the Great and his Grecian warriors.

Meanwhile, for almost 250 years, the partly-ruined city of ancient Tyre remained on the mainland, whilst from the island fortress Tyrian power rose once more. Contrary to the requirements of the prophecy, the stones, timber and dust of the ancient city had not been "thrown into the sea" as predicted, its site had not been made "bare like the top of a rock", nor had Tyrian power been irreparably broken. On the contrary, the riches of the world flowed through its gates to the east, and Tyrian influence rose once again to its previous eminence.

It must have seemed as though Ezekiel's prophecy had failed. But God is never in a hurry, and delay is but a challenge to faith. At last, Tyre made a fatal mistake. It opposed Alexander of Greece. In their island fortress, protected by their powerful navy, and surrounded by the blue waters of the Mediterranean, the Tyrians could afford to defy his land forces. But Alexander was determined that he would bring Tyre under his control. To do so he had to get at the island fortress, and that meant that he had to build a ramp connecting the mainland with the island across which his soldiers could march.

The stones, the walls, the pleasant houses of the ruins of the mainland city (the one Ezekiel said would be utterly destroyed and never rebuilt) provided him with the means to do this. He ordered that they be thrown "into the sea" (as Ezekiel had predicted) for this purpose. A clean sweep was made of the site, and not a remnant of the city remained. Nor was it ever rebuilt. God had decreed that this would be its fate, and His words were fulfilled to the very letter, though for 250 years every indication seemed to point to the contrary.

Today, the blue waters of the Mediterranean wash over the ruins of Tyre, which has literally become "a place to spread nets upon." Go to the site of ancient Tyre today, and it is possible to see Arab fishermen doing that which Ezekiel, 2,500 years ago, predicted they would do. The geologist Thomson, in his "Land and the Book", writes:

"The number of granite columns that lie in the sea is surprising. The eastern wall of the inner harbour is entirely founded upon them, and they are thickly spread over the bottom of the sea on every side. Tyre must have been a city of columns and temples par excellence ... Should anyone ask incredulously, 'Where are the stones of ancient Tyre?' ... they are found spread over the causeway of Alexander, in

her choked up harbour, and at the bottom of the sea.”

Alexander's attack was successful, and Tyrian seapower was destroyed. No longer did her fleets dominate the seas; no longer were her praises sung in the marts of the ancient world. As a nation she disappeared, never to rise again.

The causeway built by Alexander still connects Tyre's one-time island-fortress with the mainland, but so completely has every vestige of the original city disappeared, that its position can only be ascertained by the distance measured from the ruins of the fortress. The mighty city of ancient Tyre was completely erased.

But the amazing thing is the detail in which the Bible predicted all this, and the wonderful way in which each point was finally fulfilled. Fallible man cannot predict the future with such certainty and detail, but the Bible does. It shows that this wonderful book can be thoroughly relied upon, and confirms that those prophecies which speak of the second advent of Christ, and the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth will come to pass, even though the fulfilment might appear improbable to mortal man.

Egypt — A Base Nation

Egypt was one of the most powerful nations of antiquity. It was renowned alike for science, arts and civilisation. For long epochs of time it exercised world power; for centuries it held at bay the mighty empires of Nineveh and Babylon.

To those who were familiar with Egypt in its greatness it must have appeared most unlikely that the prophecies of God concerning this power would be realised.

In his 29th chapter, Ezekiel declared that the King of Babylon would suppress Egypt for 40 years, and take away captive many of its people. These events were fulfilled within a few years of their proclamation by the prophet; but Ezekiel also spoke of Egypt's condition today, and in a manner so dogmatic, and yet so true, as to confound all critics of the Bible.

The truth of his words cannot be disproved.

Nebuchadnezzar had intended to completely destroy Egypt as a nation, but though the prophet predicted the complete destruction of other nations extant at that time, he declared that Egypt would continue as a nation until the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth, in spite of the intentions of the King of Babylon. Thus Egypt remains today, though other nations have disappeared during the course of history.

The prophet also predicted the very condition in which the nation would be found. He declared that it would remain "a base kingdom" (Ezekiel 29:14); it would "no longer rule over the nations" (v. 15), and, what is more striking, "There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt" (Ezekiel 30:13).

These words were spoken when Egypt was a mighty power, feared by other nations, and disputing with Babylon the sole dominion of the world. Many other nations sheltered under the shadow of Egyptian protection, among them the people of Israel.

Ezekiel's words thus foretold a total reversal of Egyptian power. At the same time as the prophet declared that Tyre would come to a total end, he also proclaimed that Egypt would partially recover from the attack of Nebuchadnezzar, and would continue as a nation, though in a degraded or "base" condition, ruled over by foreigners, and no longer dominating others.

Apart from Divine inspiration, none could speak with such certainty, or in such detail, concerning the future of so eminent and, originally, so powerful a nation. History reveals how completely the prophecy was fulfilled. Following the downfall of Babylon, Egypt was successfully dominated by the Greeks, Romans, Saracens and Mamelukes. Early in the sixteenth century, the Turks took possession of the country. Towards the end of the 18th century, the French came on the scene. They were driven out by the British, who handed control back to the Turks. In 1882, the national party, under Arabi Pasha, revolted, and forced the Turkish rulers to flee. The

The overwhelming distinctive features of the Egyptian scene, the Pyramids of Gizeh, must have been an awesome sight to the Hebrews, who existed for some time as a slave nation in Egypt. These magnificent, glorious buildings were constructed as a burial city for the Pharaoh's. The great pyramid of Khufu covers 13 acres; and when built was 768 feet square, and 482 feet high.



British, however, subdued the rebellion, and occupied Egypt. Ultimately the British withdrew, but foreigners continued to dominate.

Egypt's political weakness has been demonstrated by the defeats she has suffered at the hands of the Israelis. In this, as in other features of modern Egypt, the amazing testimony of Bible prophecy is manifested. The Bible predicts this. It declares that "a perverse spirit" shall be manifested in Egypt, to "cause it to err" with the result that "the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt" (Isaiah 19:14-17).

These words have been fulfilled to the very letter in our times.

Historians have expressed astonishment at the way in which Egypt has been subjected by various races, and ruled by "strangers", down the ages. The student of the Bible is not astonished. He sees in this a further evidence of the hand of God in world affairs; a wonderful fulfilment of the most remarkable book extant: the Bible.

Babylon: To Become a Ruin

The nation that brought about the initial downfall of Egypt, Tyre and other contemporary powers, including Jewry, was Babylon. Babylon was the greatest city-empire of the ancient world. Nebuchadnezzar, its most illustrious king, was a most prolific builder. Under his direction, the capital was almost entirely rebuilt, and ultimately became a symbol of his personal power and prestige. Its massive walls were thought to be impregnable. Its hanging gardens were one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Its towers, buildings, architecture and temples were the pride of all Chaldea. Contemporary historians state that the mighty city which formed a square 15 miles each way (24km), was enclosed with walls 87 feet thick (26.5m) and 350 feet high (107m).

Nebuchadnezzar aimed to make the city a permanent memorial of his greatness.

But all this material strength, pomp and glory were nothing to the God of Israel. Over a century before the birth of Nebuchadnezzar, Isaiah prophesied:

"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be dwelt in from generation to generation ... neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there ..." (Isaiah 13:19-22).

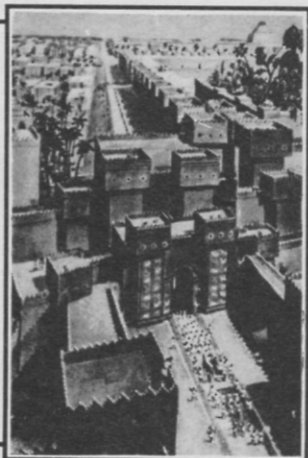
The boldness of such a prediction is startling when the size and strength of Babylon is considered. It was uttered when the city was rising to power. Yet so completely was it fulfilled that until comparatively recent times, the site of Babylon was in dispute among scholars. Some critics of the Bible even went to the extent of claiming that Nebuchadnezzar was a fiction, and that he never existed outside the pages of the Scriptures!

During the 19th century, however, the ruined palaces of this wonder city of the past were unearthed, and to the confusion of Bible critics, the name "Nebuchadnezzar" was found prominently displayed in its records. But all the glory of the past had long disappeared. Babylon was no longer the metropolis of a mighty empire, for the sands of the desert had entirely covered its ruins to blot it out of existence. Its original fertility had been destroyed so that "shepherds do not make their folds there" (Isaiah 13:20). Nor will Arabs pitch their tents there, for some local superstition prohibits them from camping overnight at the site.

Ancient Babylon has become the resting place of the hyena, the wolf and the jackal, as the prophet predicted! The prophecies of the Bible, recorded in the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, have had wonderful and minute fulfilment.

Today, the massive ruins of Babylon are a witness to the veracity of Bible prophecy, as well as to the glory of the ancient city. They con-

Reconstruction of the prospect of ancient Babylon in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, based on excavations. A solemn procession is seen making its way through the great gateway dedicated to the goddess Ishtar. As far as the eye can travel, the broad processional way bisects the vast metropolis. In the distance (right) rises the massive ziggurat, the "Tower of Babel" (Genesis 11:3-4), while more in the foreground lie the famous "Hanging Gardens" with their luxuriant palm-trees. Nearby stood the royal palace, in which later on, presumably after he had been pardoned, King Jehoiachin with his sons and personal attendants also lived.



stitute an archaeological wonder; but those very ruins are avoided by the Arab dwellers of the land who will not stop near them overnight.

This was once the nerve-centre of the greatest empire of all time, and Nebuchadnezzar, its chief ruler, rebuilt the city for perpetuity. In his pomp and glory he boasted: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of my kingdom by the might of my power and for the honour of my majesty?" (Daniel 4:30). How transient is the glory of man!

His words echo down the corridor of time, testifying not to his greatness, but to the infallible truth and reality of Bible prophecy. The answer of God to Nebuchadnezzar's boast was: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the pride of Chaldea, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah ..." "As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth" (Jeremiah 51:49, 58).

It is God who guides the destiny of nations.

In the year 606 B.C., Babylon took Israel captive. Today Jews have returned to their land, but Babylon's palaces shall "never be inhabited." This mighty empire was reduced to nothing, exactly in the manner described by God.

Israel — To Be Restored

Israel was numerically among the weakest of nations in ancient times, and yet, though the prophets predicted the absolute destruction of mightier powers, God declared concerning the Jew:

"For I am with thee to save thee. Though I make a full end of all nations, whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and not leave thee, altogether unpunished" (Jeremiah 30:11).

God's purpose is to be manifested through the Jewish people (John 4:22), and they are destined to assume a very important position among the mortal subjects of Christ's kingdom. One of the titles adopted by the Lord Jesus was "King of the Jews." It was on this basis that they procured his death, but he is to return, to humble, discipline and educate that disobedient nation in the truths of God (Romans 11:26), and to claim his rightful position as King (Matthew 19:28; Luke 1:32-33). From Jerusalem he will extend his power throughout the earth, bringing all mankind under his authority (Isaiah 60:12). Jerusalem will become the metropolis of his power (Isaiah 24:23): it will be reconstituted the "throne of the Lord" (Jeremiah 3:17), and "the city of the great King" (Matthew 5:35).

Thus, despite the past rebellion of the people against the ways of God, the words of Scripture will yet be fulfilled: "As ye were a curse among the nations, O house of Israel! so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing" (Zechariah 8:13).

The return of the Jews to the land of Israel in our time is a step towards that consummation.

In the amazing history of Israel, the wonders of the prophetic word are outstanding. Every major incident of their history has been the subject of prophecy. In three remarkable chapters (Deuteronomy 28, 29, 30) the whole history of Israel, from the time they entered the Land of Promise until the return of Christ is depicted. It includes the captivities to which they were subjected, their scattering among the Gentiles, and even the very feelings of hatred that they would engender in other people.

This prophecy was delivered by Moses, and given to the people before they were constituted a nation in the Land of Promise.

It is the custom of most national leaders to encourage their followers with glowing pictures of future greatness, but when Moses led Israel out of Egypt 3,500 years ago, he had no false illusions as to the destiny of the people. By inspiration of God, he told them plainly that they would prove disobedient to God's commands, and as a result: "The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other" (Deuteronomy 28:64).

He even described the state in which they would find themselves, among the countries of their dispersion:

"Among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the soul of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life" (Deuteronomy 28:65-66).

Does not this exactly answer to the condition of the Jews in persecution? The Eichmann trial showed how Jews were brutally tortured and put to death in the concentration camps of Germany, how that 6,000,000 were destroyed during the Hitler regime. And that is but an incident in a long history of persecution in which most nations have oppressed this people, a treatment that would have destroyed any other nation but the Jews.

The Bible not only predicts that they would be persecuted, but also explains why — because they would turn their backs on God, rejecting the only secure defence available to save them.

Moses also revealed the circumstances by which they would be

scattered into all nations. 1,500 years before it came to pass, he prophesied the siege of Jerusalem that in A.D. 70 brought to an end the Jewish State in one of the most terrible incidents of bloodshed and violence recorded in history. He declared:

"The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand ... and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates until thy high and fenced walls come down wherein thou trustedst ..." (Deuteronomy 28:49-52).

Rome did not appear prominently on the stage of human history until at least 1,200 years after Moses proclaimed these words, but is clearly identified in the passage above. The standard of the Roman legions was a flying eagle; they came from "the end of the earth" (the utmost confines of the then known world), they spoke a language unknown to the Jews (there is no language more foreign to the structure and idiom of Hebrew than Latin).

This nation, so clearly identified in the prophecy, marched against the Jews in A.D. 70, besieged and ultimately destroyed the city, and took the people into captivity. Instructions were issued by the Roman Commander, Titus, that the wonderful Temple was to be preserved, but in the heat and fury of battle, the legions ignored his command, and both city and temple were overthrown. This fulfilled a similar prophecy predicted by Jesus concerning the overthrow of the city and temple (Luke 21:24). He declared concerning the latter: "There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down" (Luke 21:6).

But the Bible not only foretold the scattering of Israel, but also their regathering, "He that scattered Israel will regather him," declared Jeremiah (Ch. 31:10). And Moses also predicted:

"The Lord will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither he hath scattered thee" (Deuteronomy 30:3).

Other Bible prophecies declare:

"I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in Mine anger, and in My fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely ... yea ... I will plant them in this land assuredly with My whole heart and with My whole soul" (Jeremiah 32:37-41).

"I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel" (Ezekiel 34:13). **"It shall be in the latter days"** (Ezekiel 38:8,12,16).

The present return of the Jews to their ancient land is a token fulfilment of these prophecies. The complete fulfilment awaits the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is of the greatest significance, that in our time, more than four million Jews have returned to the land, and after two thousand years of dispersion, Israel is again a nation in the earth. Students of prophecy realise that this is the prelude to the return of Christ, who is destined to reign from Jerusalem over a regenerated Israel, cleansed from their previous unbelief and hardness of heart (Joel 3:16-17; Ezekiel 36:22-29).

Christ's kingdom will extend beyond Israel, however, to incorporate all nations (Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 14:17), so that "many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord in Jerusalem" (Zechariah 8:22). "Peace and goodwill among men" will then replace hatred and war, for he shall cause "righteousness and praise to spring up before all nations" (Isaiah 61:11).

Amazing Deliverance of Jerusalem

One of the most amazing vindications of the prophetic word is the occupation of Jerusalem in 1967. In that year, after the remarkable victory of Israel in the Six Day War, in which the Israeli's defeated within a week the invading armies of Egypt, Syria and Jordan, the Jewish people found themselves in control of the city of Jerusalem after two thousand years of dispersion.

The circumstances are remarkable, almost miraculous. When the UN decreed in 1947 that there would be a Jewish State, it also

Previously barred from Jerusalem, and dispersed amongst many foreign lands for 2,000 years, the occupation of the city by the Israeli forces in 1967 made such scenes, as here depicted, possible. The ancient western wall of the Temple (known as the wailing wall), felt the joyful tears of thousands of Jews as they rejoiced in their liberation and restoration to Jerusalem. But, more importantly, at that time Bible prophecy was fulfilled. Jesus Christ declared: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). The fact that Israel is a nation existing today, is undeniable evidence of the veracity of Bible prophecy.



declared that Jerusalem should be an international city, belonging to neither Jews nor Arabs.

If the city had remained like that, Israel would not be in possession of it today!

Instead, Jordan annexed Jerusalem, and occupied it until 1967. Then, in the dying moments of the Six Day War, when Egypt had been defeated, Jordan suddenly decided to invade Israel. The Israelis pleaded with Jordan not to do so, but they persisted. They declared war on Israel, and were decisively defeated in a few hours. Through that victory the ancient city of Jerusalem, and all of what is called today the West Bank, came under the control of Israel.

In this, Christ's prophetic words were remarkably fulfilled, for when he predicted the fall of Jerusalem, and the scattering of its people throughout the world, he also declared that the Jewish people would **REGAIN THAT CITY IN THE LATTER DAYS**. Here are his words:

"They (the Jews) shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles **UNTIL** the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

The word "until" marks off the termination of the time during which that city would be under Gentile domination.

In fact, Christ was citing the prophecy of Daniel 8:13-14, which also gives a time limit to the "treading down" of the holy city: a period of 2300 prophetic days (or years). And it is an amazing fact, that the city of Jerusalem fell to the Jewish people, exactly 2300 years from the time of the initial prophecy of Daniel 8: the attack of Alexander the Great against Persia in 333 B.C. (cp. vv. 21-22). From B.C. 333 to 1967 is exactly 2300 years.

But the wonder of this prophecy does not end there. Following his words that require the release of Jerusalem, the Lord Jesus Christ spake of economic and political distress among all nations; of "distress of nations with perplexity" (Luke 21:25), of "men's hearts failing them for fear" through prevailing conditions (v. 26), and then of the manifestation of himself on the earth again in glory: "They shall see the Son of Man coming ... with power and great glory" (v. 27).

This very sequence is being amazingly fulfilled. Following the defeat of Arab powers, and the occupation by Jews of Jerusalem, and the West Bank, the economic and political conditions of nations have sharply deteriorated. The nations are faced with perplexing problems they cannot solve; preparations for war with weapons of such destructive might are creating fear in the hearts of thinking

people. How have these conditions developed? Through the effect of the Six Day War and the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. For having failed in war, the Arabs had recourse to economic pressures, including oil. Their objectives were to cause other powers to bring pressure on Israel, and to destroy the nation economically. Their policy has resulted in the inflationary spiral and its associated problems that have affected all nations.

Hence the development of this "time of trouble" has followed the very course outlined by the Lord in his Olivet prophecy relating to the last days. A further evidence of the divine inspiration of the Bible (Hebrews 1:1).

World History Condensed Into 15 Verses

The 2nd chapter of Daniel records a remarkable vision seen by the King of Babylon in which the history of the world is condensed into a few prophetic verses.

In a dream he saw an image of a mighty warrior composed of different metals, and shining with tremendous luminous glory. It had a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, feet and toes of part iron and part clay. As he watched the mighty image, he saw a stone hurling towards it. It struck it upon the feet, causing it to topple over and crash to the ground. The metals broke into pieces whilst the stone grew, crushing the metals to powder, which the wind blew away. The image was gone, but the stone remained. The king saw it grow into a mountain and fill the whole earth.

This awe-inspiring warrior-image, outlined in Daniel ch. 2, depicts the development of world powers since the times of Babylon. Four world empires, answering to the four different metals which made up the image, have existed. And today, the admixture of small kingdoms divided into two separate camps — East and West — is properly depicted by the two legs of the image. Following this stage, the image of man's power was destroyed by the appearance of a small stone cut out of a mountain by Divine hands. So the prophecy predicts the coming of Jesus Christ, as God's mighty warrior, who will bring to utter destruction the ambitions and aims of man.



What did it all mean?

The clergy of Babylon could not supply an interpretation.

But Daniel, the Hebrew prophet did. He pointed out that the four metals of the image represented four world powers that would arise. The fourth, however, would become divided, answering to the toes of the image. Some of these divided nations would be strong, others would be weak, answering to the iron and the clay.

World history has followed the pattern of prophecy outlined by Daniel to the king. There have been four world-powers: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Rome was divided into several parts answering to modern Europe. Today we live in the "clay and iron stage," a stage concerning which Daniel declared the nations would be unable to unite on a common policy, a time when the "clay" of Communism has mixed with the "iron" of religious imperialism to form the political pattern of the present.

Read Daniel's words, and look at the world today and see how exact is the description. He declared that the nations would be "partly strong and partly weak" ... "unable to cleave together" (vv. 42-43).

But there remains a phase of the vision yet to be fulfilled. The king saw the image standing in all its might, and then, suddenly, it was shattered by a "little stone" that broke it to pieces, and grinding the metals to powder, grew into a mountain filling the whole earth. The king was told that the dream revealed "what shall be in the latter days" (Daniel 2:28, 45). Thus the image must yet be caused to exist in all its terrible power (v. 31) before being smitten by the stone. In other words, the modern powers ruling upon the territories of those ancient kingdoms represented by the metals, must be confederated together so as to form one great alliance.

Over one hundred years ago, in 1848, a Christadelphian commentator of Bible prophecy (John Thomas in *Elpis Israel*) wrote as follows:

"In order, then, to prepare for the catastrophe, the image which is now in antagonistic parts, must be confederated; in other words a dominion must arise before the setting up of the kingdom of God which shall rule over the toe-kingdoms (of Europe), and the Turkish and Persian territories, till it meets the British Power in the east ... I shall be able to show, from other parts of the prophetic Word, that the power destined to play the conspicuous part indicated above is RUSSIA. It will dominate all the ten kingdoms (European powers), subdue Turkey and incorporate Persia into its empire; but that when it has reached its zenith, it will, in turn, be precipitated into the abyss,

and its dominion suppressed for a thousand years ... They will contend for the dominion of the East; but neither will obtain it ...”

Why will neither obtain it? The answer is given in the prophecy of Daniel. It is because the “little stone” power will intervene to overthrow the image and fill the earth with its glory. Daniel, in explanation of this, told the king:

“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 stand for ever” (Daniel 2:44).

That is the destiny mapped out for the nations by God. Today, Russia is attempting to confederate the nations in one mighty bloc in accordance with the prophecy of Daniel. Her intention is world domination, of such a nature as to be opposed to God’s purpose, and this was predicted thousands of years ago in Bible prophecy. But there is a limit beyond which Russia will not be permitted to proceed. At the height of her success, when it will seem that all the world is about to succumb to her influence, a new Power will be seen in the political arena. This will be the “stone” power of the vision; the kingdom that God will set up on earth with Christ as king. Associated with the Lord in power will be those who have lived in accordance with his precepts now, for they shall be raised from the dead to receive their inheritance, including eternal life.

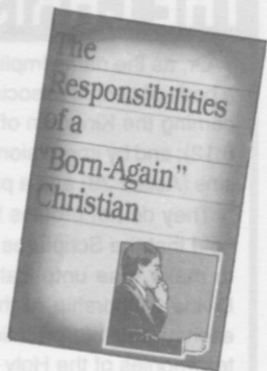
The vision of Daniel 2 depicted this stone as growing into a world-filling mountain to the exclusion of all else. The Kingdom of God will do that. It is small in its beginnings, but destined to rule the whole earth. It is least in the considerations of men now, but ultimately will dominate all mankind. A mountain filling the whole earth is its symbol, which Daniel interpreted as meaning: “A kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and will not be left to others.”

Can we place any reliance in the establishment of such a Kingdom? Surely, with the wonders of the prophetic word in mind, we must answer in the affirmative. Just as surely as Tyre became a “place for the spreading of nets,” as Egypt fell from her eminence and became a base nation, as Babylon was completely destroyed, as Israel was scattered and is now being regathered, so also will this final prophecy be fulfilled! Christ is coming and will reign on earth.

Who can doubt it with the facts before them?

Remember that world events reveal that the epoch of Christ’s return is at hand. The times are significant, the issues are vital, you owe it to yourself and your family to seek God’s way.

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Or, as the name implies, the brethren in Christ (Heb. 2:11), are a body of people associated together by a belief in the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 8:12); and by immersion into Christ (Gal. 3:27) for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) and a part in his resurrection (Rom. 6:5).

They do not profess to have received any new revelation, but hold that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are able to make wise unto Salvation (2 Tim. 3:15,17). Believing in the Divine Authorship of the Bible, they think it only reasonable to eschew any interpretation thereof which fails to harmonise all the testimonies of the Holy Scriptures; and finding that the creeds of the various sects around are, in a great variety of ways, opposed to the direct teaching of the Bible, they feel compelled to stand apart, making appeal in all such matters to the statements of Scripture, and testing all creeds thereby.

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