

**Focus**  
**on the**  
**Middle East**

**Arlen L. Chitwood**

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# CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	vii
I. ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS .....	1
II. EVER BURNING, BUT NOT CONSUMED .....	15
III. AGAINST MY PEOPLE ISRAEL .....	29
IV. LET US CUT THEM OFF .....	43
V. BUT IN THAT DAY .....	55
APPENDIX .....	61
DANIEL'S IMAGE	
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS	
THE BEAST AND FALSE PROPHET	
THE EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET	
ISLAMIC TEACHING / THE TEMPLE MOUNT	
JIHAD	
PROFILES OF MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES	

*By the Same Author —*

THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE  
HAD YE BELIEVED MOSES  
THE MOST HIGH RULETH  
RUN TO WIN  
SO GREAT SALVATION  
SALVATION OF THE SOUL  
FROM ACTS TO THE EPISTLES  
IN THE LORD'S DAY  
FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE EAST  
FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN  
LET US GO ON  
REDEEMED FOR A PURPOSE  
JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST  
MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM  
THE BRIDE IN GENESIS  
SEARCH FOR THE BRIDE  
SEVEN, TEN GENERATIONS  
GOD'S FIRSTBORN SONS  
THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE  
JUDE  
RUTH  
ESTHER

## FOREWORD

In the Middle East today there are two half brothers who have been engaged in a continuous war with one another for over forty years; and though this war has been fought mainly in one part of the world, repercussions have been felt worldwide. The war involves the rightful ownership of a particular piece of real estate (the land of Palestine), a particular city within that piece of real estate (Jerusalem), and a particular place within that city (the Temple Mount).

Both brothers lay claim to Palestine, the city of Jerusalem, and the Temple Mount on the basis of their common descent from Abraham and that which their individual religious faiths teach — Islam for one, and Judaism for the other. The claim by both, thus, has roots going back four millenniums in human history.

And in order to understand the problem or deal with the problem after any fashion, one *must* go back to the days of Abraham and begin at this point. It is a *religious problem* involving *two world religions* and *two sons in one family* — sons having the same father but different mothers.

FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE EAST begins at this point, brings the matter down into modern times, and then projects everything out into the future. This thus allows one to view current events in the Middle East from two perspectives — from the perspectives of *Bible history* and *Bible prophecy*. And viewing Middle East events from these two perspectives is really the only possible way they can be properly understood.



# 1

## **Israel and the Nations**

**In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.**

**And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.**

**And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land**

**of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.**

**And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!**

**And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.**

**And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.**

**But my covenant will I establish with Isaac... (Gen. 15:18; 17:7, 8, 18-21a).**

Genesis is the book of *origins* or *beginnings*. The Hebrews referred to this book by the first word appearing in the Hebrew text — *Bereshith* — translated in the English text, “In the beginning.” The title appearing in English translations today though was taken from the title given to this book in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament). And the translators of the Septuagint took their title from a word used in each of ten verses which begins ten separate parts of Genesis (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2). The Greek word *genesis* — meaning “generation,” “birth,” “origin” — appears in each of these verses; and the English title, “Genesis,” is simply a transliteration of this word. All things associated with man and the earth have their *origin* someplace in the book of “Genesis.”

There is a beginning in relation to the earth (Gen. 1:1), and there is a beginning in relation to man in this book (Gen. 1:26-28). And the beginning of God’s revelation relative to His purposes for the earth and man begin to unfold in Genesis. It matters not what particular point of beginning man wants to pursue — creation, fall, redemption, origin of nations, languages, etc. — he will always, without exception, have to go back to this one source, given by God through Moses.

The importance of understanding beginnings is to be seen in the character of God, the One existing before all things and by Whom all things were brought into existence (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-17). The infinite God, unlike finite man, does not change. He brings things to pass within the scope of predetermined plans for predetermined purposes which will ultimately be realized.

The manner in which God looks at matters after this fashion is set forth in Rom. 11:29: “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance [‘without a change of mind’].” God does not, He cannot, change His mind concerning the reason He brought into existence all that presently exists. When God establishes a matter — a point of beginning — there is a plan and purpose in view, and God will always follow through with His plan and purpose to a predetermined, accomplished goal.

To accomplish predetermined goals, God never gets in a hurry, as man is too often prone to do. God waits, sometimes millenniums, before He acts. And His actions always have preestablished bases, which can always be traced back to particular points in the record of

the beginning of all things, to particular points in the Book of Genesis.

God, for example, from His original promise in Genesis concerning a Redeemer for fallen man (3:15), waited two millenniums before He called one man out of the human race to be the channel through whom the Redeemer would ultimately be brought forth (Gen. 11:31; *cf.* Gen. 12:1-4). Then God waited another two millenniums before He actually brought the Redeemer forth. The Redeemer was brought into the world when “the fullness of the time was come” (Gal. 4:4) — not before, not after.

Then God is waiting two more millenniums — six millenniums from man’s creation — to ultimately fulfill His plans and purposes for bringing man into existence. A pattern is set forth in the opening verses of Genesis concerning how God restores a ruined creation, the time involved, and what God does following restoration. The ruined creation was restored entirely through Divine intervention, God performed this work over a six-day period, and He then rested on the seventh day (Gen. 1:2b-2:3).

God, following this pattern, is going to work another six days to restore a subsequent ruined creation — man (along with the material creation). And, as in the original pattern, He will then rest on the seventh day. Each day in the latter restoration though is 1,000 years in length (II Peter 3:8). God is going to work 6,000 years and then rest the seventh one-thousand-year period, which will be the Messianic Era. And all Scripture falls within a septenary arrangement after this fashion, having its origin in Genesis (*ref.* the author’s book, *WHAT TIME IS IT?* Ch. III).

### **Beginning with Abraham**

Today we are living very near the end of the 6,000 years allotted to man, and things happening in the world — especially the Middle East — clearly point to the fact that man doesn’t have much time left. Man’s history began in the Middle East, and it will also end in that same part of the world at the conclusion of Man’s Day, at the conclusion of man’s allotted 6,000 years.

The prophets have already recorded what’s about to happen, and the stage is rapidly being set for all these end-time prophecies to be

fulfilled — prophecies recorded throughout Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. That which is happening in the Middle East today, from a prophetic standpoint, is like a hand in a glove or like the pieces of a puzzle being set in place. And once all things are in place, the Church will be removed and that which the prophets previously recorded will rapidly come to pass.

The geographical focal point for God's dealings with man is *the Middle East*. It always has been, and it always will be. And the *key* to understanding what's presently happening and what's about to happen in that part of the world, which will affect all parts of the world, is understanding *the place which Israel occupies in relation to the surrounding nations insofar as God's plans and purposes are concerned*.

The only way to properly understand these things in their correct perspective is to go back to the Book of Genesis and pick up at the beginning, which is really the only way to properly understand anything in its correct perspective in Scripture. This book *alone* contains the foundational material necessary for a proper understanding of events in the Middle East, both present and future. And this foundational material begins to unfold in Genesis with the call of Abraham after 2,000 years of human history.

### 1. *Through Abraham*

In Genesis, chapter eleven God called one man out of the human race to be the channel through whom His plans and purposes for bringing man into existence would ultimately be realized. God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees; and through Abraham God set about to 1) effect man's redemption (the Redeemer would come from the loins of Abraham), 2) reveal Himself to man (through the prophets, and in His Son [Heb. 1:1, 2] — all descendants of Abraham), and 3) manifest His blessings upon the nations of the earth (awaiting the Messianic Era, wherein God's plans and purposes for the restoration of this earth and man's creation, recorded in the opening verses of Genesis, will ultimately be realized).

God, by calling Abraham from Ur for specific, revealed purposes, established not only a division between Abraham and the remainder of mankind but also a means by which God, from that point forward, would deal with the remainder of mankind. Abraham was called for

special and particular purposes which would affect the remainder of mankind; and following Abraham's call, the remainder of mankind would accordingly, without exception, *always* be dealt with in relation to God's dealings with Abraham and his seed.

After Genesis, chapter eleven, though individuals and nations who are not of Abraham's lineage occupy a prominent place in Scripture, the central point upon which Scripture focuses *never* changes. The focal point *remains* on "Abraham and his seed," and individuals or nations are dealt with *only* in relation to God's dealings with this one man and his progeny.

Within the framework of God's dealings with mankind following Genesis, chapter eleven, Abraham had more than one "seed." God had decreed that he would be "a father of many nations" at a time when he had only one son (Gen. 17:5); and this would ultimately be fulfilled, not through the birth of this son alone, but through the birth of other sons as well.

Abraham became the progenitor of those nations descending from Ishmael, his firstborn (by Hagar); and he also became the progenitor of the nation descending from Isaac, the son of promise (by Sarah). Then he also became the progenitor of those nations descending from the six sons of Keturah and from Esau (the son of Isaac but the father of a separate nation than the nation descending from his brother, Jacob).

## 2. *Ishmael, the Sons of Keturah, Esau*

Ishmael though, unlike the six sons of Keturah and unlike Esau, received God's special blessing relative to his seed being multiplied: "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold I...will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation" (Gen. 17:20; cf. Gen. 16:10).

Descendants of the sons of Keturah can be traced only to a limited extent in history (the descendants of Jokshan and Midian possibly more so than the other four). Then their separate national identities become lost, mainly, it appears, through intermarriage with the descendants of Ishmael (the Iraqi people of today would dispute this, claiming to be descendants of Midian instead. This though is questionable).

And the Edomites were the descendants of Esau, who occupy a prominent place in the Old Testament. The ancient kingdom of Edom lay south of the Dead Sea; but beyond the first century A.D., the Edomites, as a separate people, disappear from the pages of history. The territory occupied by ancient Edom is today part of either Jordan or Israel.

The Ishmaelites though have continued as a separate race of individuals since the birth of Ishmael, 4,000 years ago. Not only have they continued to possess a separate national identity, but they have been multiplied within the scope of this identity to the point that today they comprise many nations; and all of this is in direct fulfillment of God's promise in Gen. 17:20.

Essentially, the descendants of Ishmael (allowing for an assimilation of descendants from other sons of Abraham, et al.) are the Arabic people of today; and these people presently populate all the countries stretching from Morocco in northwest Africa to the Persian Gulf in the Middle East. The present Arabic population of the world is well in excess of one hundred million.

Mohammed, in the seventh century A.D., claimed descent from Ishmael. And today, most Arabs throughout North Africa and the Middle East will voice this same claim with Mohammed (*e.g.*, Anwar Sadat openly claimed his descent from Ishmael before traveling to Israel in 1977).

Though other descendants of Abraham (save Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's descendants through his twelve sons) occupy their place in history, they have ceased to exist as separate and distinct families of nations. But the descendants of Ishmael have not. Rather, the Ishmaelites have been multiplied in complete keeping with God's promise, and their origin can be traced all the way back to Abraham's firstborn.

### 3. *Isaac*

Isaac, on the other hand, is the progenitor of the people we know today as the nation of Israel, the nation springing from the loins of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons. And it is this branch of Abraham's seed around which Scripture centers, not the other descendants of Abraham.

The other descendants of Abraham occupy their place in Scripture only in instances where they are dealt with in relation to God's dealings with the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons (they are actually looked upon as Gentiles in this respect, and this is the manner in which all the Gentile nations are dealt with in Scripture). In such instances, Scripture centers around the descendants of Abraham through the son of promise but it also focuses upon another descendant or other descendants of Abraham as well.

In the preceding respect, the sons of Keturah and their descendants (apart from their association with the Ishmaelites [and apparent amalgamation into this branch of Abraham's seed]) do not occupy a place of particular or special prominence in Scripture, though they are mentioned in several instances. However, Ishmael and Esau do occupy places of particular and special prominence; and when one moves into the present day and time, along with viewing Biblical prophecy, *Ishmael alone occupies center-stage in this respect.*

### **Ishmael and Isaac**

Thus, to understand what's happening in the Middle East today (or, for that matter, what's about to happen), one must understand, first of all, that which is recorded about Ishmael and Isaac in the Book of Genesis. This is fundamental and primary, for everything rests upon that which God has revealed in the beginning of His revelation to man about these two individuals.

Then, with this as foundational material, one must understand the direction in which God led the descendants of Isaac and the direction which he allowed the descendants of Ishmael to take over the past 4,000 years insofar as a knowledge of the one True and Living God is concerned. The descendants of Isaac were led in one direction, but the descendants of Ishmael were allowed to go in an entirely different direction. Both, after 4,000 years, are monotheistic, but that's where the similarity ends. Their separate religious beliefs are diametrically opposed, one to the other. And that which is held by each, within the framework of their beliefs, is a major governing factor in the actions of both at the present time.

Resultingly, in the Middle East today, there are two half-brothers who have differences of a nature which make it *impossible* for them to co-exist after a peaceful fashion. There was no peace in the tent of Abraham when Ishmael and Isaac tried to dwell together 4,000 years ago, and there can be no peace in the Middle East today when their descendants find themselves trying to do the same thing.

The whole matter, at its beginning point, can be traced back to the Abrahamic Covenant. This covenant involved a *seed* and a *land*, and only the son of Abraham which God recognized as the heir could have any claim on the land in the covenant. The other son was given no recognition whatsoever insofar as the covenant was concerned.

God, in making this covenant with Abraham, rejected one son and accepted the other; and to Abraham and the accepted son (along with his lineage), God gave a clear title deed to a tract of land in the Middle East for an everlasting possession.

Then the religious differences which came into existence at a later point in history — with the advent of Islam in the seventh century A.D. — really involve the same thing and can be traced back to the same point. These differences can be traced back to Genesis, to the revealed identity of the seed of Abraham who, along with Abraham, holds the title deed to this land.

### 1. *Isaac's Claim*

The nation descending from Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons, according to the clear teaching of Scripture, is the only nation on the face of the earth with a clear title deed to the land of Canaan in the Middle East. God said, "...*in Isaac shall thy seed be called*" (Gen. 21:12).

God gave this land to the progeny of Abraham through Isaac by an unconditional covenant before Isaac was even born (Gen. 15:18-21; 17:7, 8, 21). Then God reiterated the covenant to Isaac (Gen. 26:3, 4), and later to Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15). And for those who recognize the validity of Scripture, no question can exist concerning who owns the land of Canaan in the Middle East. *It belongs to the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob alone — to the nation of Israel.*

However, all do not recognize the validity of Scripture and thus the validity of Israel's right to this land. Resultingly, on May 14, 1948,

when Israel announced her independence, dwelling in and possessing a portion of the land in the Abrahamic Covenant, trouble erupted; and not a single day of peace has existed in the Middle East since that time.

Within hours after a nation emanating from the loins of Isaac was born in the midst of nations emanating from the loins of Ishmael, seven surrounding Ishmaelite nations which had previously banded together to form the Arab League (Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Trans-Jordan [later called Jordan], Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Egypt) attacked this new nation. And though the attack eventually ended in failure, the attitude of the surrounding nations has never changed; and the attitude of these nations will remain unchanged throughout Man's Day.

(Several of these surrounding nations are not as openly hostile as others today. However, hostility among all the Arabic nations *does* and *must* exist during the present time for reasons which become obvious when one understands the Islamic [central religious faith of the Arab world] mind-set in relation to Israel [*ref.* also Gen. 16:12]. And basic tenets in this Islamic mind-set, bringing this about, have their roots farther back than the founding of Islam, for basic tenets in the Islamic faith have their origin in a corrupted understanding of that which is revealed about Ishmael and Isaac in the Book of Genesis.)

The wars of 1956, 1967, and 1973 followed the Arabic nations' initial war against Israel in 1948. And between these wars, and since 1973, a continuous state of war has existed — one often breaking out into open hostility (street fighting, border skirmishes, Israeli air retaliations, etc.).

Problems between the Jews and the Arabs have intensified significantly during the last several years, since the beginning of what is called "the intifada." This is a name given to the Palestinian uprising over Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, territories captured during the Six-Day War of 1967. However, this continued occupation of these two territories is only the immediate problem. Should this land be relinquished, the problem would not be resolved. The land of Israel itself would then become the central issue. A Jewish nation existing in that land is simply not acceptable to the surrounding Arabic nations.

(The peace efforts by Anwar Sadat, President of Egypt — traveling to Israel in 1977 and, in 1979, jointly signing a peace treaty with Menachem Begin, Prime Minister of Israel — were not efforts shared by other Arab leaders or those in their countries. Even in his own country, Sadat's popularity fell dramatically after the peace treaty with Israel had been signed. And he was assassinated by Moslem extremists in 1981, resulting in rejoicing in the streets of Arab cities throughout the Middle East, for, in their way of thinking, he had betrayed the Islamic faith.)

In short, to state the matter another way, since May 14, 1948, with the announcement of Israel's independence by David Ben Gurion, the world was set on a particular course from which there could be no departure. And a deteriorating, explosive situation has existed in the Middle East since that time — a deteriorating, explosive situation of such a nature that it cannot be defused by man.

## 2. *Ishmael's Claim*

The thought during modern times should be expressed more in the sense of *The Moslems' Claim*. However, the matter must first be traced back to Ishmael, then from there forward to the Moslem nations in the world today.

All of the Arabic nations (except Lebanon) are Moslem nations (with various types of governments), though they are by no means the only Moslem nations. Moslem nations stretch in an unbroken line from Morocco eastward to Pakistan, and back northwest through Afghanistan and Iran to Turkey. Then most of the nations in North Africa lying south of the Arabic countries along the Mediterranean have a population which is predominately Moslem.

Also, elsewhere in the world, this religion has become firmly entrenched in almost every country, though it occupies a minority status in almost all of these countries. There are over 800,000,000 Moslems worldwide today, and it is one of the fastest growing religions in the world.

This religion though was founded in the Middle East, and that remains its center today. Its three most holy places — Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, in that order — are in the Middle East. And these holy places occupy a significant role in Islamic worship and life.

Israel in the Middle East finds herself completely surrounded (except for the Mediterranean on the west and Lebanon along the country's northwest border) by Moslem Ishmaelite nations; and beyond these nations to the north, east, and south are other Moslem nations — some Arabic and some non-Arabic.

(Lebanon is comprised of numerous ethnic groups of people, with approximately as many Christians [includes all "Christian" sects and denominations] as Moslems. Lebanon though is officially recognized as an Arabic country — with Arabic the official language, etc. — and has been the home of numerous Palestinians since 1948 [along with Syria, Jordan, and the disputed West Bank and Gaza Strip territories]. Because of the presence of a large Palestinian population in Lebanon [mainly southern Lebanon], many of the problems between Israel and her Arab neighbors over the years have come from this country.)

The present alignment of nations in the Middle East could not, under any circumstances, be considered something which just happened through a random course of events over a period of centuries. It is no accident or coincidence that Ishmaelite nations surround Israel at this particular point in history; nor is it an accident or coincidence that these Ishmaelite nations, with only Lebanon as an exception, are also Moslem nations; and to carry the matter beyond that, it is also no accident or coincidence that nations lying beyond the Arabic nations, on all three sides, are also Moslem nations.

(Also note Gen. 16:12, which points to hostility on the part of the descendants of Ishmael. The latter part of the verse, "...he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren," should literally read, "...he shall dwell *over against* [implying hostility toward] all his brethren.")

Israel presently lies in a sea of Islamic nations, with a hostile Moslem half brother dwelling in the countries which immediately border her land. And the reason for this can only be looked upon as the same reason for the *Nephilim* being in the land of Canaan when the Israelites left Egypt under Moses, or the same reason for Russia's and Antichrist's impending moves against Israel during the coming Tribulation. The present state of affairs can only be looked upon as a well-developed plan by Satan himself, centering around his *unchanging*,

*single purpose* relative to Israel: “Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance” (Psa. 83:4).

#### A) *Islam and the Abrahamic Covenant*

Israel is not the only nation which looks to the Abrahamic Covenant for the title deed to the land which God gave to Abraham and his seed. The Moslem nations also look to this same covenant and regard Ishmael, rather than Isaac, as the son through whom the promises were to be realized. To accomplish this though, they have had to change what had previously been recorded in the Genesis account relative to Ishmael and Isaac, for God rejected Abraham’s request, “O that Ishmael might live before thee!” and instead said, “...my covenant will I establish with Isaac” (Gen. 17:18-21).

And this is exactly what has been done. In fact, those of the Islamic faith so change the clear statements in the Genesis account that they even look upon Ishmael, rather than Isaac, as the son who was offered as a burnt offering on the mount in the land of Moriah in Genesis, chapter twenty-two. Thus, in this respect, the Islamic faith, in places of this nature, is simply a corruption of revealed truth as given by God through Moses and the prophets.

The descendants of Ishmael by birth though are not looked upon as those who, alone, possess the title deed to the land in the Abrahamic Covenant. They do not view the “seed” of Abraham as pertaining strictly to Abraham’s lineal descendants in this respect. Rather they look upon all Moslems, by faith in “Allah [‘God,’ as He is called by the Moslems],” as being “children of Abraham”; and these “children of Abraham” (in this particular case, “the Palestinians”) are to possess the land for “Allah,” who owns the land. The Moslems would thus look upon their *initial right* to the land after this fashion.

#### B) *Religious Dominance of the Land*

Though their *primary claim* would go back to a corrupted understanding of the Abrahamic Covenant, Moslems actually seem to place the *emphasis* on their post-Mohammedan occupation of the land (Moslems think mainly in the sense of either *pre-Mohammedan* or *post-Mohammedan* with respect to time and events). Within the framework

of their Moslem faith, the land presently occupied by Israel has been possessed for “Allah” in *post-Mohammedan times* by those of the “true faith.” And from that point on, this land (the central part of the land in the Abrahamic Covenant, the land in and around Jerusalem), rather than being strictly a territorial matter per se, becomes more of a *religious matter*. It becomes a matter of *control through religious dominance within that territory*.

From the seventh century until modern times (when British forces under Gen. Allenby took the land from the Ottoman Turks in 1917) the Moslems occupied that land (save for two periods during the 11th-13th centuries when the land was taken from the Moslems and controlled by the “Christian Crusaders”); and a tenet of the Islamic faith regards land which has been occupied by Moslems and brought under Islamic control as land belonging to “Allah,” which must always remain under Islamic dominion and control. Should the land ever be lost, then what is called *Jihad* — Holy War — becomes necessary, for the land must be recovered for “Allah” (which is what occurred after the “Christian Crusaders” took the land).

The wider Islamic goal is *world conquest*, with the entire earth ultimately being brought under subjection to “Allah” through Islamic dominion and control (and the thought of *Jihad* is present here also). Apart from this wider goal though, a primary interest at the present time among Moslems, especially those in the Middle East, is centered around *one small tract of land*, which belongs to “Allah” but is presently occupied by “infidels” — *Jews*, who the Moslems hold to be inferior and subservient to them.

The whole matter of non-Moslems, *especially Jews*, dwelling in and controlling matters in this particular tract of land is humiliating for those of the Islamic faith; and the defeat of the Arabic nations surrounding Israel in four major wars only adds to that humiliation. Because of how Moslems view their right to this land, Israel’s presence as a nation in the Middle East is looked upon by Moslem nations as a personal affront to them. And that is the reason for the *continuous* “state of war” which has existed between Israel and the Arabic nations in the Middle East since May 14, 1948.



## 2

### **Ever Burning, but Not Consumed**

**Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.**

**And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.**

**And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.**

**And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush... (Ex. 3:1-4a).**

The Book of Exodus records the historical account of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt under Moses, and this historical account forms a type of the future deliverance of Israel from a worldwide dispersion by the One greater than Moses, the Lord Jesus Christ. In this respect, the Book of Exodus is an account dealing with both history and prophecy as it pertains to Israel and the Gentile nations.

“Egypt” is always a type of the *world* in Scripture, and God sending Moses back to the Israelites in Egypt is a type of God one day sending His Son back to the Israelites scattered throughout the world. An Assyrian monarch ruled Egypt at the time Moses was sent back to

his people (Isa. 52:4), and an Assyrian monarch will be ruling the entire earth at the time Jesus is sent back to His people (Isa. 10:5; 14:25; Micah 5:5; cf. Dan. 8:8-14).

Ten plagues were brought upon the kingdom of the Assyrian in history (Ex. 7:20ff), and these plagues point to judgments which will be brought upon the kingdom of the Assyrian yet future. These future judgments are described in the Book of Revelation through the opening of seven seals, the blowing of seven trumpets, and the pouring out of seven vials of wrath (Rev. 6:1ff).

“Seven” and “ten” are both numbers showing *completeness*. “Seven” is God’s number and is used in Scripture to show *the completion of that which is in view*. “Ten” is a terminal number and is used to show *ordinal completion*. Then there are three sets of judgments yet future, with seven judgments in each set; and “three” is the number showing *Divine perfection* (e.g., the triune Godhead).

The “ten” plagues befalling Egypt during Moses’ day point to *all of God’s judgments* which fell upon the kingdom of the Assyrian in history; and that which is depicted by the seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vials — judgments befalling the whole world during the days of the Son of Man — points to *Divine perfection within God’s complete judgment* upon the kingdom of the Assyrian yet future.

Then, in the type, immediately following God’s complete judgment upon the kingdom of the Assyrian, the Israelites were led out of Egypt under Moses (Ex. 12:40, 41). And it will be exactly the same in the antitype. Immediately following God’s complete judgment upon the kingdom of the Assyrian yet future — judgments during the Great Tribulation — the Israelites will be led out from a worldwide dispersion by the One greater than Moses, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 24:30, 31; cf. Deut. 30:1-4).

In the type, the Israelites under Moses were led to Mount Sinai where God had previously appeared to Moses in the burning bush. Here the Old Covenant was made with Israel, which had to do with rules and regulations governing the people of God within the theocracy which was about to be established. Then instructions for the building of the tabernacle and for worship therein were given through Moses (Ex. 19-35).

The Israelites constructed the tabernacle in the wilderness of

Sinai, and the work was completed a few days short of one year from the time they had left Egypt (Ex. 36:1-40:17). Upon completion of the tabernacle and everything connected with the tabernacle, “as the Lord commanded Moses,” “a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle” (Ex. 40:18-34).

At this point in Old Testament history a theocratic kingdom came into existence, and the Israelites were then ready to enter the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and realize their calling as “a peculiar treasure” unto the Lord, placed “above all people” as “a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Ex. 19:5, 6).

In the antitype under Christ it will be the same as in the type under Moses. Once the Israelites are led out from a worldwide dispersion, God is going to make a New Covenant with the house of Israel; and this covenant *must*, as the Old, have to do with the theocracy (Jer. 31:31-34).

Then Messiah Himself is going to build the temple (Zech. 6:12, 13), and the Glory of the Lord which filled the tabernacle during Moses’ day (and later Solomon’s temple, departing after the Israelites had been taken into Babylonian captivity [II Chron. 5:1-14; Ezek. 10, 11]) will return and fill the temple which Messiah will build (Ezek. 43:2-5).

Only at this point will a theocracy once again exist upon this earth. And Israel, having appropriated the blood of the Passover Lamb (slain by Israel in Egypt in the type [Ex. 12], and slain 1,500 years later by Israel in the antitype [Acts 2:23, 36; 3:15; I Cor. 5:7]), will then be able to realize the nation’s calling. Only then can Israel be placed back in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob within a theocracy and be “a peculiar treasure” unto the Lord, placed “above all people” as “a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”

### **Persecution First, Then...**

The preceding briefly outlines the beginning of Israel’s history and Israel’s national future — from the brickyards of Egypt to the nation being placed in the land within a theocracy. But first, Israel must endure the fires of a persecution so intense that it has no parallel in history. Israel being persecuted in Egypt by the Assyrian was a type of this future persecution by another Assyrian, but the future persecu-

tion will be far more intense than the one in Egypt. Scripture describes the end result of this future persecution in these words: “And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect’s sake [Israel’s sake] those days shall be shortened” (Matt. 24:22; cf. vv. 9, 15-21).

The burning bush during Moses’ day was a picture of Israel undergoing persecution in the kingdom of the Assyrian — *past* in the type, and *future* in the antitype. That God meant this to be a picture of Israel is plain from the context (Ex. 2:23-25; 3:7-9). The picture is the same as the account of the three Hebrew men — Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah — being cast into the fiery furnace in Babylon during the days of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 3:19-25). The bush burned during Moses’ day, but it was not consumed; and the Israelites cast into the furnace during Daniel’s day were not harmed by the fire.

God Himself was *in the fire* in both instances. He spoke to Moses “*out of the midst* of the bush” (Ex. 3:4), and Nebuchadnezzar saw a fourth person “*in the midst* of the fire” (Dan. 3:25), whom he identified as one “like the Son of God [*lit.* ‘like a son of the gods’].”

(Nebuchadnezzar did not know the one True and Living God at this time, and seeing a fourth person in the fire, whom he called, “a son of the gods,” was undoubtedly a reference to a heathen deity. However, had he passed through a similar experience in later years, he would have known the identity of this fourth person [*cf.* Dan. 4:30-37], which, in the light of the type from Exodus, could only have been *God Himself*.)

The picture in both instances portrays the nation of Israel *ever burning* in the fires of Gentile persecution, with God Himself residing *in the midst* of the nation and *in the midst* of the fiery persecution. Israel cannot be destroyed because God cannot be destroyed. The whole matter is as simple as that. In this respect, Gentile persecution of Israel is persecution directed against God Himself (*cf.* Matt. 25:41-45). And the short of “anti-Semitism” in this same respect is simply, *anti-God*.

(Note that the inverse of the preceding is also true. One’s attitude toward and actions in relation to the Jewish people (blessings or curses) are looked upon in Scripture as that person’s attitude toward and actions in relation to God Himself (*cf.* Matt. 25:34-40). And, accordingly,

God either manifests *blessings* or *curses* upon individuals or nations, dependent upon their attitude toward and treatment of His people Israel [Gen. 12:3].)

Anti-Semitism began with a persecution of the Jewish people in Egypt over three and one-half millenniums ago during the reign of an Assyrian monarch, and it will be brought to an end at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation after a worldwide persecution of the Jewish people under the reign of another Assyrian monarch. Between these two times, though the type and antitype refer more specifically to Jewish persecution under the first and last Assyrians, the fires of Israeli persecution are *never quenched* (cf. Gen. 4:14 [Cain slaying Abel is a type of Israel slaying Christ, with *continuous persecution* following]). And, in that respect, the picture in both Exodus and Daniel could be broadened to reveal spiritual truths concerning the entire history of the nation — Israel dwelling in a *continuous fire*, but never being consumed, for God himself resides in the midst of the fire.

Sometimes the fire burns brighter than at other times, but it never goes out. Anti-Semitism has always been present in some form since the days of the Assyrian Pharaoh in Egypt, and it will remain present until Christ returns at the end of the Great Tribulation and takes care of the matter Himself.

### *1. The Amalekites, Assyrians, Babylonians.*

The first act of anti-Semitism after Israel had left Egypt was the attack by the Amalekites in Rephidim as the Israelites were enroute to Sinai. The Amalekites hold the dubious honor of being *the first of the nations* to war against Israel after this new nation had left Egypt (Ex. 17:8; Num. 24:20). And because of this, God pronounced a *terminal judgment* upon the Amalekites. God said, “I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Ex. 17:14).

The Israelites were later appointed the executioners of God’s decree (Deut. 25:17-19). God elected to carry out His judgmental decree against Amalek by using the very nation which Amalek had come against, resulting in the decree. However, the Israelites were lax in carrying out God’s pronounced sentence, and it was not until some seven hundred years later, during the days of Hezekiah, that the

Amalekites were completely destroyed (I Chron. 4:39-43).

The Amalekites have always been somewhat of an enigma to archaeologists and historians over the years, for God did exactly what He said that He would do. God literally “put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.” Today archaeologists can find no trace of this nation. The slate has been wiped clean, and the Amalekites do not exist beyond the days of Hezekiah after any fashion except on the pages of Scripture.

Assyria and Babylon are two other kingdoms which suffered or will suffer a somewhat similar fate. The Assyrians took the northern ten tribes into captivity about 722 B.C., and the Babylonians took the southern two tribes into captivity about 605 B.C.

Shortly before the Jews were taken captive into Babylon, Nineveh (the capital of the Assyrian Empire) had fallen to the Babylonians (about 612 B.C.); and the Assyrian Empire at this time — the empire having previously taken the northern ten tribes into captivity, an empire which could trace its beginning to the third century B.C. — not only totally collapsed but three months later the Kingdom of Assyria ceased to exist. The Babylonian Empire rose on the ruins of the conquered nation, and the people of Assyria, over time, as the nation itself, gradually passed out of existence.

So complete has been the destruction of the Assyrian civilization that no trace of these people remains today. This is something which has puzzled historians, for when kingdoms are conquered, the people of those kingdoms normally live on. This though was not the case with the Assyrians.

The reason for this is evident. The Assyrians, like the Amalekites, made a *fatal mistake* by moving against Israel. By going down into the land of Israel and carrying the northern ten tribes into captivity, the Assyrians, through this act, committed *national suicide*. And God brought the matter to pass through the outworking of the principle set forth in Gen. 4:15; 12:3.

The kingdom of Babylon though is somewhat different, for God’s terminal judgment upon this kingdom for its anti-Semitism awaits a future date. Such a judgment upon Babylon, according to Biblical prophecy, will occur at the end of the coming Tribulation, described in prophecies such as Isa. 13; Jer. 50, 51; Rev. 18. It will be then that this

kingdom, under the last king of Babylon, Antichrist, will be destroyed through suffering a similar fate to that experienced by Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain during the days of Abraham (*cf.* Jer. 50:40; Rev. 18:2, 9, 10, 21).

In the light of Biblical prophecy, this is one of the things that makes present world attention centered on the Persian Gulf area of especial interest. Babylon is in Iraq, some 55 to 60 miles from Baghdad. And Saddam Hussein, the leader of Iraq, has, for years, looked upon himself as a latter-day Nebuchadnezzar. For the past couple of decades he has been trying to restore parts of the ancient city of Babylon, and with his hatred for the Jews, that which Nebuchadnezzar did to the Jews would have to occupy a significant place in his plans and purposes.

Saddam Hussein though is not the last king of Babylon or a modern-day Nebuchadnezzar. He is only a forerunner of a man yet to appear, and when this man does appear and becomes the last king of Babylon, the center of world power and commerce will be located in a rebuilt city of Babylon back on the Euphrates River in what is today Iraq.

According to Zechariah, two women, possessing wings like those of “a stork [an unclean bird]” will carry “an ephah [often used as a symbol of commerce]” to “the land of Shinar” to “build it an house” and set it “there upon her own base” (5:5-11). And events in the world today appear to clearly indicate that these two women are about ready to make this flight.

When the Stone strikes the image upon its feet (Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45), that smiting will occur in the Mesopotamian Valley (*cf.* Jer. 51:49). This will have to be the case, for the image is Babylonian in its entirety, from the head of gold to the feet part of iron and part of clay. As the power represented by the head of gold reigned from Babylon, so must the powers represented by all other parts of the image reign from Babylon. These things necessitate the rise of Babylon as the center of world government in the latter days.

(Antichrist is thus associated with both the kingdoms of *Assyria* and *Babylon* in Scripture. He is called an “Assyrian” because he will arise from within the borders of the ancient Assyrian kingdom, even

though neither this kingdom nor its people presently exist; and he is seen in Scripture as the last “king of Babylon” because he will be the last of the world rulers enthroned in this city, immediately preceding its destruction [Dan. 2:40-45; 7:7, 23-27; 8:8-14, 22-25.]

Between the destruction of Assyria 2,600 years ago and the impending destruction of Babylon yet future, history is replete with accounts of anti-Semitism. The fire which Moses saw at Sinai has continued to burn from that day until the present time, and it will continue to burn until the end of the Tribulation. Anti-Semitic nations have risen and fallen throughout history, as they will in days ahead; and the epitaph on their tombstones has always been and will always be the same, in keeping with the principle laid down by God through Moses in Gen. 4:15; 12:3: “Risen and fallen according to this nation’s attitude toward and treatment of the nation of Israel.”

## 2. *The Nations Today*

Viewing the matter more with respect to modern times, preceding Babylon’s impending destruction, the leadership of Germany, immediately before and during World War II, sought to take up the mantle which previous anti-Semitic nations had laid down. The Third Reich under Adolf Hitler (1933-1945) sought to bring about the “Final Solution [a code name used by the Nazis]” to what was known as “the Jewish question,” or “the Jewish problem.” The ultimate aim of those in the Third Reich was to produce a Jew-free society throughout a German-controlled Europe.

### A) *The Fate Awaiting Germany*

Because of Hitler’s aspirations to bring about this “Final Solution,” six million Jews died in Europe between the years 1939-1945. God then used the Allied powers to overrun Germany; and twelve years from the time Hitler rose to power, he lay dead in a German bunker, and the country which he had ruled lay in ruins. But a people with a national identity going back to a lineage from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob continued, for the fire could not consume them.

God though is not through with Germany, and the reason is

evident. Germany will be among the nations allied with Russia when Russia (another anti-Semitic nation) comes down against Israel during the coming Tribulation period (Ezek. 38:6). The final judgment on Germany has merely been delayed for about half a century, and Germany in that future day when her final judgment is executed will experience the same fate as Russia — a destructive fate which always has and always will await nations having a part in anti-Semitism.

(Even in the interim, those individuals comprising the leadership of German during the days of the Third Reich and surviving the war have been unable to find an escape from their past. At the end of World War II, numerous trials [numbering in the thousands] of Nazi war criminals occurred in countries throughout Europe, including the famous Nuremberg trials in Germany [about 80,000 Germans were tried and convicted in all these trials]. Then, since that time, down through the years, certain Jews have hunted continuously, throughout the world, for escaped Nazi war criminals. And many have been captured and dealt with.

The most notable of the German war criminals, captured in later years, was Adolf Eichmann [the man Hitler had placed in charge of the “Final Solution”]. He escaped to Argentina after the war and assumed a new identity; but he was tracked down, captured in 1960, and taken to Israel for trial. He was tried in 1961 in an Israeli court [a trial lasting almost nine months, in which the entire Holocaust was fully documented] and put to death for his crimes in 1962 by the very people he had sought to destroy — a modern-day rendition of Haman hanged on the gallows which he had built for Mordecai, the Jew [Esther 5:14; 6:13; 7:9, 10]. Germany itself though, because of what was done at a time in the past — during the days of the Third Reich — has a yet-to-be-kept date with destiny.)

### *B) The Fate Awaiting Middle East Nations*

With the birth of an Israeli nation on May 14, 1948, only three short years after the conclusion of the war in Europe, the fires of Israeli persecution began to burn brightly once again; and the flame has remained since that date, settling down at times but burning brighter at other times. The Moslem half-brother of the Jews, surrounding the nation on all sides but the Mediterranean to the west, has seen to that

(*ref.* Chapter I in this book).

Then bringing the matter up to date, persecution began to increase in Israel during the latter part of the '80's with what is called "the intifada" (a name given to the Palestinian uprising over the continuing Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip — territories captured from Jordan and Egypt during the Six-Day War of 1967). Hardly a day passes anymore without word coming out of Israel about terrorist acts by Palestinians against Jews. There are stabbings on buses, in the streets, rock-throwing incidents, etc. And the Palestinians have vowed to even go so far as to take these activities right into the Israeli homes before it is over.

The surrounding Arabic nations, with a very powerful weapon at their disposal — "oil" — have tried to make it as difficult as possible for nations dependent on Middle East oil to take a pro-Israeli stand. Numerous nations have succumbed to this type strategy, and the Arabic nations patiently wait for other nations to fall in line. Even in the United States, because of *who* controls the supply of Middle East oil, an increasing number of individuals are beginning to question this country's policy toward Israel.

The OPEC nations in the Middle East — all Moslem nations — use their control over the supply of oil to numerous nations throughout the world as their main weapon in what is called *Jihad* — Holy War. This war is primarily against Israel at the present time, but in a larger scope it extends worldwide. Not only must the land which Israel occupies be reclaimed for "Allah," but all lands must be conquered and claimed for Him.

This is the *near* and *far* Moslem goal; and insofar as Israel is concerned, the Moslems feel that patience on their part will result in the United States eventually departing from its pro-Israeli position and going the way of numerous other nations. They look at the United States' involvement in Vietnam and see what eventually happened there, and they feel that the United States' involvement with Israel will one day take a similar turn. In this respect, the Moslems see time and history as both being on their side.

The Moslems also look at time and history in another respect. They look back to the "Christian Crusades" and see that it took eighty-eight years to reclaim the land for "Allah" then, and they are prepared

to wait another eighty-eight years to reclaim this land during the present time if that's what it's going to take.

And to bring this about they hold a weapon far more powerful than anything held by their predecessors in the twelfth century. They own the richest oil fields in the world; and they know, as Lenin in Russia foresaw during the first part of this century, that oil from the Middle East is the sea upon which Western economies presently sail.

The OPEC nations need look no farther back than the Yom Kippur War of 1973 to see the power of the weapon in their possession, lying beneath their feet. During the early days of this war, when Israel was running dangerously low on military equipment and the United States began a massive resupply via air, no European country would allow American planes carrying materiel to Israel to fly into or through their air space. Thus, all flights had to be made non-stop from either the United States or an American Air Force base in the Azores; and these flights had to be routed entirely over open water outside the territorial limits of all the different countries enroute — across the Atlantic, through the Straits of Gibraltar, and across the Mediterranean to Israel. The actions of all the European countries, denying the United States access to their air space, was governed by their dependence on Middle East oil.

The whole thought of *Jihad* — Holy War — directed against Israel in the Middle East becomes quite interesting when one views anti-Semitism strictly from a Scriptural perspective. The Moslems believe God is on their side, and because He is on their side, they will be victorious. The war they are fighting is being fought *for* “Allah” *against* “the enemy of God [Israel].”

However, the opposite of that held by the Moslem nations is, in reality, true. The Moslem nations warring against Israel are fueling a fire which was lit over three and one-half millenniums ago, during the days of Moses; and by doing this they are fueling a fire in which God Himself resides. Resultingly, by warring against Israel in this fashion, they are, in actuality, *warring against God*.

When Arab leaders in the past have threatened to push Israel into the sea, they have, in effect, threatened to push God into the sea. And when an Arab leader today threatens Israel with missiles containing chemical warheads or threatens to burn Israel and wipe it off the face

of the earth, as the leader of Iraq has done, he has, in effect, threatened God with these things. *He is doing no more than fueling the fire wherein the Holy One of Israel resides.*

The OPEC nations are thus using the weapon placed beneath their feet to fight a Holy War against the people of God residing in the furnace and thus against God Himself residing in the midst of the furnace. And because of the principle set forth in Gen. 4:15; 12:3, any type of anti-Semitism, no matter to what degree, can *never* be overlooked by God (and the inverse of that is equally true). Resultingly, the outworking of this principle, as it pertains to the actions of the Gentile nations in the Middle East, *will have to be brought to pass*. This is the ill-fated path down which the Moslem nations surrounding Israel have been led by their religious faith.

### No Peace, Until...

Strictly from a Biblical perspective, there is no need to even talk about peace between the Jews and the Arabs in the Middle East during the present day and time. *It's not going to happen* simply because *it can't happen*. According to Scripture, throughout the remainder of the age, Israel *must* remain in the furnace (Ex. 3:2-4; Dan. 3:19-25), and the Arabic nations *must* continue dwelling “in the presence of [‘over against,’ *i.e.*, be antagonistic toward]” all their brethren (Gen. 16:12).

Israel cannot emerge from the furnace *until* the end of the Tribulation when Messiah returns and brings the matter to pass Himself. At this time the nation will emerge from the most intense fire of all — that of the Great Tribulation, “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7) — when the furnace will be heated “*seven times* more than it was wont to be heated [‘seven times hotter than usual,’ NIV]” (Dan. 3:19).

And no change can occur among the Arabic nations *until* this time either, for in Biblical history Ishmael did not die (his status in accord with Gen. 16:12 remained unchanged) until the bride had been acquired for Abraham’s son and Abraham had remarried (Gen. 24:1-25:17).

Within the framework of typology, the reference is clearly to a future change in the status of the descendants of Ishmael, in accord with prophecies such as Isa. 19:21-25 (which will occur “in that day” [vv. 21, 23, 24], not during the present day). The Arabic nations will remain unchanged until the bride has been acquired for God’s Son and God restores Israel. Then, *and only then*, can a change occur, which moves the matter into the Messianic Era. “In that day,” *not before*, Israel will no longer be in the furnace, and the Arabic nations will no longer be antagonistic toward their brethren.

Thus, to talk about peace between Israel and the surrounding nations at any time preceding Messiah’s return is completely out of the question. Antichrist will succeed in bringing about what appears to be peace in the Middle East during the first part of the Tribulation, but this will not be true peace, nor will it last. During this very time, Russia, accompanied by certain other nations (which will include Arabic nations), will make her move against Israel; and “wars and rumors of wars” will continue (Matt. 24:6).

The nations will remain unchanged, and this false peace — brought about through what Scripture calls, “a covenant with death” (Isa. 28:15) — will last for all of three and one-half years. And this period of false peace will immediately precede the most intense time of Israel’s persecution throughout the entire 3,500-year history of the nation, which will also last three and one-half years.

But afterwards, the seventh day (the seventh millennium) will dawn (Heb. 4:4, 9), “the Sun of righteousness” will arise “with healing in his wings” (Mal. 4:2), and He, “*The Prince of Peace*, will raise Israel up to “live in his sight” (Isa. 9:6, 7; Hosea 6:1, 2).



# 3

## **Against My People Israel**

**After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have always been waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them.**

**Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee (Ezek. 38:8, 9).**

The nation of Israel is the focal point for God's dealings with the Gentile nations of the earth. Jerusalem has been placed "in the midst of the nations," and Israel is the "apple [*lit.*, 'pupil']" of God's eye (Ezek. 5:5; Zech. 2:8). Jerusalem has been placed at the exact geographical center of the earth, and God looks upon the surrounding Gentile nations through the nation of Israel. Israel has occupied this status since the inception of the nation, and Israel will continue to occupy this status throughout time and eternity.

Today as possibly never before the attention of the world is focused on the Middle East. For forty-two years the two most powerful nations on earth, the United States and Russia, avoided direct intervention in the affairs of nations in the Middle East. Their previous intervention had always been of an indirect nature, with the United States on the side supporting Israel, and Russia on the side

supporting Israel's enemies. But with the United States military buildup in the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia, and the subsequent war with Iraq, intervention of an indirect nature in Middle East affairs is now a thing of the past for one of these two nations. And it is about to change for the other. In the immediate future Russia will directly intervene in Middle East affairs by invading Israel, in fulfillment of Ezek. 38, 39.

It is these things which God, unlike man, views through the nation of Israel. Israel is God's firstborn son, brought into existence for special and particular purposes, which either have been or ultimately will be realized. And all of these purposes have to do with the well-being of the surrounding Gentile nations throughout both time and eternity.

Israel was brought into existence to give man the Word of God, give man the Redeemer, and be the channel through which the nations of the earth would be blessed. The first two parts of this nation's three-part calling have been realized; this nation has provided man with the Word of God and the Redeemer. But the fulfillment of the third part awaits a future date; the nations being blessed through Israel awaits the Messianic Era.

The nation which God called into existence for these specific purposes is the very nation in the Middle East which is presently coming under attack, both directly and indirectly by the surrounding nations. This is the nation which the Moslem nations have allied themselves against during the present time, this is the nation which Russia will come against in the immediate future, and this is the nation which Antichrist will come against in the middle of the Tribulation and seek to destroy throughout the last three and one-half years of that time, in accord with Psa. 83:4 (note the ten nations which "have consulted together with one consent" in vv. 5-8, pointing to the future ten-kingdom confederacy under Antichrist).

The nations, in their ignorance, because of the working of Satan in time past, are determined *not* to let God bless them through the nation of Israel. But in spite of present and future antagonism toward Israel — brought about by Satan because of Israel's position as God's firstborn — *this is the nation* through whom God has decreed that He will ultimately bless all the other nations of the earth (Gen. 12:3; 22:17,

18). And God's decree will one day be carried out, for not only is this an integral part of Israel's birthright (the rights of the firstborn) but "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance [without a change of mind]" (Ex. 4:22, 23; 19:5, 6; Rom. 11:29). Regardless of the attitude of the surrounding nations toward Israel — past, present, or future; hostile or friendly — God cannot, God will not, change His mind concerning the reason He called Israel into existence.

### The Russian Invasion — When?

Scripture clearly reveals in Ezek. 38, 39 that Russia, accompanied by five other nations, will, in the immediate future, directly intervene in the affairs of the Middle East by invading the land of Israel. Russia will be the leader of the nations participating in this invasion (translate "guard" as "commander" in Ezek. 38:7 [ref. NIV]), and the invaders will have one thing in mind: the destruction of the nation of Israel, in order "to take a spoil, and to take a prey..." (Ezek. 38:11-16). When this invasion occurs, God states, "...my fury shall come up in my face." And God will then directly intervene on behalf of His people, destroying the invaders on the mountains and plains of Israel (Ezek. 38:18ff).

Scripture presents this Russian-led invasion after a two-fold fashion. Not only is Russia going to "think an evil thought" and *willingly* make her move against Israel (Ezek. 38:10-12; cf. v. 15), but Russia is also going to have "hooks" put in her "jaws" and *be brought down* into the land of Israel by God Himself (Ezek. 38:4; cf. vv. 16, 17). God, residing in the midst of the fire in which He and His people have dwelt for the past 3,500 years (cf. Ex. 3:2-4; Dan. 3:19-25; see Chapter II in this book), is literally going to bring Russia, with all her military might, down into the land of Israel for a face-to-face confrontation.

By *coming down* and *being brought down* after this fashion, the Russian military might, with its atheistic leadership, is going to be moving not only against the people of God but against God Himself, the very One Whom the leaders of this nation deny even exists. And direct intervention on Russia's part will result in direct intervention on God's part.

(Several nations will voice their objection to Russia's actions, but

God will step in and act Himself before these nations have a chance to so do. These nations are identified in Ezek. 38:13 as “Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof.”

“Sheba” and “Dedan” were progenitors of ancient tribes which settled in what is today Saudi Arabia, and “Tarshish” with her “young lions” can only be a reference to Great Britain and those nations emanating from the British Isles, with the United States by far the most powerful of these nations today. Thus, Ezek. 38:13 would refer to Great Britain, the United States, certain other countries in the Western Block, and Saudi Arabia questioning Russia’s actions [note this alignment in the light of the present U.K.-U.S.-Saudi alliance, with Russia absent].)

The Russian military might (with the accompanying five nations) will be brought into the land of Israel but stopped short by the One bringing the nation down. God will cause a great earthquake to occur in the land of Israel. This will be followed by God producing confusion in the ranks of the invaders of such a nature that they will begin fighting against and killing one another; and He will then rain “great hailstones, fire, and brimstone” upon them. Five-sixths of the invaders will be destroyed on the mountains and plains of Israel, and God will then burn the countries from which they came (Ezek. 38:19-39:6).

The human carnage strewn across the land of Israel will be so great that it will take the house of Israel seven months to bury the dead. Their flesh will be devoured by “the ravenous birds of every sort” and “beasts of the field”; and that which is left will be buried in a valley set aside for this purpose, called, “The valley of Hamon-gog” (Ezek. 39:4, 11).

“Hamon-gog” is simply the Hebrew rendering which has been transliterated rather than translated in the English text. *Hamon* means “many” or “multitude,” and *Gog* is the name used throughout these two chapters to refer to the invaders (used specifically for their leader at the beginning of chapter 38 but used beyond that in a more generally fashion for the entire Russian military force [those nations accompanying Russia are mentioned after a separate fashion but still buried with “Gog” in “The valley of Hamon-gog”]). If “The valley of Hamon-gog” were to be completely translated into English, one could translate, in the light of the context, “The valley of a multitude of dead

Russians, along with those accompanying them.”

When though will this invasion occur? Will it occur during the present dispensation? or will it occur after the Church has been removed, after the rapture? or can we even ascertain a time in this respect?

Answers to the preceding are really very simple. The time with respect to the rapture can definitely be known, and seemingly the time within the framework of a specific year can also be known, though not a specific year which one could point to on the Julian calendar which we use today.

### 1. *Old Testament Prophecy*

Old Testament prophecy centers around *Messiah, Israel, and the nations*. And prophecy always moves toward one terminal point — that future time when Messiah reigns over the earth, Israel occupies her proper place on earth, and saved Gentile nations are blessed through Israel. *Old Testament prophecy knows no other subject.*

Prophetic events such as those in Ezek. 38, 39 are simply events surrounding Israel and the Gentile nations at a time immediately preceding Messiah's appearance to reign over the earth. Both chapters are structured after this fashion: The invaders come down against Israel, God overthrows the invaders, and then the Lord sets His Glory among the nations (*cf.* 38:23; 39:21ff).

Unlike events in Ezek. 38, 39, millenniums often separate God's dealings with Israel and the Gentile nations from Messiah's appearance to reign over the earth. But His dealings with Israel and the nations *always* have the latter in view. Or to say it another way, There is no such thing in Scripture as God dealing with either Israel or the surrounding nations apart from His looking out ahead to that day when Messiah will reign. The former *always* has some connection with the latter.

One place which may serve to illustrate this possibly as well as any place in Scripture would be God's dealings with Israel and the kingdom of Babylon. Babylon, though mentioned very early in Scripture (Gen. 11:1-9), begins to occupy a prominent place in Scripture *only* when this nation is allowed to take the southern two tribes of Israel (Judah and Benjamin) into captivity (about 605 B.C.). From that

point forward, Babylon occupies a central place in the prophetic framework of Scripture. In fact, insofar as Gentile world power is concerned, Babylon occupies *the central place*.

In the Book of Daniel, God gives the entire history of this kingdom — from the time Nebuchadnezzar ruled as king in Babylon until that future time when Antichrist will rule as king in Babylon (Dan. 2:31-45; 7:2ff). This is a period of time covering about 2,600 years, called in Scripture, “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24; cf. Rev. 11:2). And at the end of this time Messiah will be given (by His Father) “dominion, and glory, and a kingdom.” Then, Babylon will be utterly destroyed, and the kingdom of Christ will be established (Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 17-27; Rev. 11:2, 15; 18:2ff).

But what about the Church? Where does God’s dealings with a people during the present dispensation fit into the matter? Insofar as Old Testament prophecy is concerned, the Church is not in view at all; nor is the present dispensation in view.

The Old Testament prophet, when prophesying of events beyond 445 B.C., the beginning point of Daniel’s prophecy of the Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:24-27), saw events only within the scope of the time covered by Daniel’s prophecy (seventy periods of sevens, 490 years). Insofar as Daniel was concerned, and insofar as any sequence of events given by any Old Testament prophet was concerned, this prophecy was to run uninterrupted until it’s conclusion 490 years later. And at its conclusion the Messianic Era would be ushered in.

That is, the Old Testament prophet saw no time-break at any point in the 490 years. So far as he was concerned, the Messianic Era would be ushered in 490 years after the beginning of the prophecy in 445 B.C. And that which he prophesied remained either within the scope of time covered by the prophecy or within time beyond the 490 years, time during the Messianic Era.

However, God stopped the clock at the end of exactly 483 years (at the end of exactly sixty-nine of the seventy sevens), seven years short of the total (the seventieth seven). This corresponded to the year 30 A.D. on our calendar. Messiah was crucified at the end of 483 years (Dan. 9:26a), and the clock has not moved since.

Time during the interim covers an entirely separate and distinct dispensation, unseen by the Old Testament prophet, during which

God is calling out a bride for His Son. This separate and distinct dispensation lies between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, *completely outside* the scope of Daniel's prophecy. And during this time — during the entire present dispensation, lasting approximately two millenniums — the clock does not move insofar as the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks is concerned. And, accordingly, it must also remain immobile insofar as any fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy is concerned. The prophets simply did not prophesy of events during the present dispensation, for they did not see this period.

The Old Testament prophet looked out ahead and saw events leading up to and including the crucifixion of Messiah (this is where the sixty-ninth week ended). He then saw a covenant being made with “many [*lit.* ‘the many’]” (which is where the seventieth week begins), that covenant broken (after three and one-half years), a time of unparalleled trouble for the Jewish people (for three and one-half more years), and then he saw Messiah reigning after making a full end of the Gentile nations and establishing Israel in her rightful place.

Thus, if Old Testament prophecy has not been fulfilled in the past, it cannot begin to be fulfilled until at least the beginning of Daniel's unfulfilled seventieth week, the beginning of the Tribulation when God once again turns to and begins dealing with Israel on a national basis. Accordingly, passages such as Ezek. 38, 39, not having been fulfilled in the past, cannot be fulfilled during the present dispensation, preceding the Tribulation (note also that the period following the removal of the Church but preceding the beginning of the Tribulation likewise falls outside the scope of time in which Old Testament prophecy can be fulfilled). The fulfillment of Ezek. 38, 39, along with all other unfulfilled Old Testament prophecy, can occur only after the clock begins marking off time once again in relation to Daniel's prophecy of the Seventy Weeks.

Failure to follow this interpretative principle has resulted in confusion in certain instances. A case in point would be the interpretation of Ezekiel's prophecy surrounding the valley of dry bones in Ezek. 37. This prophecy has to do with a restoration of Israel back to the land, and it is usually interpreted within the framework of that which began to occur in 1948, with the reestablishment of Israel as a nation.

However, such an interpretation cannot be correct. The restoration which is in view in Ezek. 37 has to do with “the whole house of Israel” (v. 11), both the dead and the living (vv. 12ff), at a time when Messiah Himself restores the nation and raises David from the dead to be the nation’s king (vv. 21ff). This is exactly the same time also in view at the end of chapter thirty nine, following Russia’s destruction on the mountains and plains of Israel (39:21ff). Chapters thirty-seven and thirty-nine both end at the same point in time, the same point in time as chapters thirty-four and thirty-six also end.

The present restoration of a remnant to the land is *not* a subject of Old Testament prophecy. Old Testament prophecy picks up at a point in time *after* a remnant has been restored. That is, a remnant will be present in the land at the beginning of the Tribulation.

This is necessitated by Daniel’s prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, for how could Antichrist make a covenant involving Israel if there was no remnant in the land? Also in Ezek. 38:11, 16, Russia will come down against a people who had previously been reestablished in the land. Thus, one could know from Old Testament prophecy that a Jewish nation would be present in the Middle East at the end of this dispensation, though the Old Testament prophets do not speak of the rebirth of this nation. They only speak of conditions existing and events occurring at a time over four decades later.

Numerous events presently occurring among Israel and the nations in the Middle East are prophetically significant. But this prophetic significance has to do with prophecy which is about to be fulfilled, not with prophecy being fulfilled. Through events presently occurring, rather than prophecy being fulfilled, the stage is being set for a rapid future fulfillment of innumerable prophecies.

Somewhat within this same realm of thought, students of the Word are sometimes perplexed by the fact that the Old Testament prophet did not make a greater separation between the *sufferings* and the *glory* of Messiah. After all, approximately two millenniums separate one from the other. But keeping matters within the framework of the way the Old Testament prophet saw these things, only seven years, in his eyes, separated the two events. The Old Testament prophet saw Messiah suffer at the end of sixty-nine weeks (483 years), he then saw the last week run its course (the last 7 years), and he then

saw Messiah enter into his Glory (to last 1,000 years).

Note Isa. 53, 54 in this respect. Isaiah 53 refers to Messiah's sufferings; then Isaiah 54 refers to Israel's restoration, the time when Messiah will reign. Also note the words in Isa. 61:2: "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God..." The two parts of this verse — having to do with events surrounding Messiah's two advents (*cf.* Luke 4:16-21) — are separated by time covered by the present dispensation, which the prophet did not see and did not prophesy concerning.

(Old Testament typology — which has to do with Biblical history rather than Biblical prophecy [types are interwoven throughout history, not prophecy] — is an entirely different matter, even though large portions of typology are prophetic in nature. The present dispensation and the Church are seen throughout typology, beginning with the account of Adam and Eve in Genesis, chapter two [note particularly typology involving Isaac and Rebekah, Joseph and Asenath, and Moses and Zipporah]. Thus, this must not be confused with the manner in which the prophets wrote.

Also, since Israel relinquished the right to rule from heavenly places in the coming kingdom by rejecting the proffered kingdom of the heavens at Christ's first coming, the Church would have to now be in view in Old Testament prophecies having to do with this heavenly rule, even though the Old Testament prophet had Israel in view when he wrote. Israel was made the repository for both heavenly and earthly promises and blessings, but Israel rejected the heavenly promises and blessings, and the Church was called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel rejected. Thus, the Church would now be in view in sections of Scripture such as Gen. 22:17, 18 [heavenly seed only] and Dan. 7:18, 22, 25, 27, though Israel alone was in view when the prophet wrote.)

## *2. Time of the Invasion*

Ezekiel places this Russian-led invasion at a time immediately preceding God's restoration of "the whole house of Israel" (39:21ff; *cf.* 37:11; 39:25), which would have to be understood as time during the Tribulation. Then, two places in the prophecy reveal that the invasion

will occur during a specific part of this seven-year period.

Ezekiel reveals that Israel will be “at rest” and dwelling “safely” in “unwalled villages” when the invaders enter the land (38:11-14). This would place the invasion at a point during the *first* three and one-half years of the Tribulation, between the time Antichrist makes and breaks his covenant (Dan. 9:27 [the ratifying of this covenant begins the Tribulation, and the covenant will be broken three and one-half years later]).

After Antichrist breaks his covenant in the middle of the Tribulation, the people of Israel will no longer dwell in the land “safely” and “at rest.” Rather, they will then “fall by the edge of the sword,” “be led away captive into all nations,” and “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15-22; Luke 21:20-24; Rev. 11:2).

Then Ezekiel appears to be even more specific yet concerning the time of this invasion. After God has destroyed the Russian-led military forces in the land of Israel, those dwelling “in the cities of Israel” will go forth and, for a period of “seven years,” burn the weapons left behind by these overthrown invaders (39:9).

This would appear to clearly indicate that this invasion will occur sometime before the end of the first year of the Tribulation, with the burning of these weapons occurring during the remainder of that year and the succeeding six years of the Tribulation. If it occurred any later, the seven years would have to extend into the Messianic Era beyond the Tribulation, and conditions described by Ezekiel are not in keeping with conditions which will exist during that era.

(The remaining part of the first year, following God’s overthrow of the invaders, would be looked upon as a complete year within the framework of the “seven years” mentioned in Ezek. 39:9. Scripture looks upon a part of a day or a part of a year as a whole day or year in this respect.)

### **The Russian Invasion — Why?**

Russia has been moving against Israel for over three decades, dating back to the mid-’50’s. Russia’s interest in expanding her

borders into the Middle East was actually made known as early as 1940, in a proposed four-power pact between Germany, Italy, Japan, and the Soviet Union. One condition, stipulated by Russia within this pact, stated, "Provided that the area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf is recognized as the center of the aspirations of the Soviet Union" (a quote from the draft of this pact which the Allies found among captured secret documents in the German Foreign Office at the end of World War II). And, now, over fifty years later, Russian aspirations remain unchanged.

For decades Russia has tried to expand her borders into the Middle East through using the Arab nations. Russia has provided them with innumerable billions of dollars worth of military hardware and has provided training for their personnel on the use of this equipment, on military strategy, etc. (this was especially evident immediately preceding, during, and immediately following the Six-Day and Yom Kippur Wars). And this has all been done with one goal in view.

Russia moved in this direction because of a situation which developed in the Middle East — the emergence of Israel as a nation and the attitude of the Moslem nations (especially those in the Middle East) toward Israel's presence in the land of Palestine. These Moslem nations all possessed one burning desire: Drive the Jews into the Mediterranean Sea and reclaim the land of Palestine for "Allah" (see Chapter I in this book). And Russia began to take advantage of the situation through courting several of these nations, particularly those nations bordering Israel. This is the direction Russia took in her attempt to gain a foothold in that part of the world. Russia sought to help the Moslem nations destroy Israel and reclaim that land, though Russia's interest was much broader.

Very early in this approach, Russia began to train specialists on Middle East affairs at the Institute of International Relations in Moscow, with a view to these specialists occupying diplomatic positions in the Middle East. These individuals, among other things, were trained in all aspects of existing conditions in the different countries to which they would eventually be sent — local languages, Islamic law with its history and customs, regional economics and politics, etc. Individuals trained in Moscow subsequently began to occupy key

diplomatic posts in different Middle East countries, and the whole matter was so effective that the term “Muslim Communist” eventually became part of the Soviet political jargon.

It was through this means that Russia began her penetration into the Islamic nations in the Middle East (information supplied by Vladimir Sakharov, a former member of the elite corps on Middle East affairs, trained in Moscow).

Russia’s main interest though has never been the destruction of Israel per se. Russia has been (and remains) interested in destroying Israel *only* because this is what must be done for the nation to realize her expansionist aspirations in the Middle East. Russia is interested in exercising control over the whole Middle East — particularly the oil-rich Persian Gulf area. Exercising controlling over that part of the world is a *must* for exercising control over the remainder.

In the Six-Day and Yom Kippur Wars of 1967 and 1973, Russia found that the Moslem nations surrounding Israel would probably be unable to ever destroy Israel, even with full Soviet backing. And it is evident that such is even more so the case today. Israel’s military strength has steadily become stronger and stronger since 1973. Thus, Russia is really left with only one recourse. Russia is going to have to go down and try to take care of the matter herself, which is exactly what Scripture states will occur.

Russia will one day directly intervene in affairs of the Middle East by moving her military forces into the land of Israel, with the intention of doing what the Moslem nations, with Russian backing, have never been able to do — drive the Jews into the Mediterranean Sea. Four Moslem nations and one non-Moslem nation will accompany Russia. These nations are named in Ezek. 38:5, 6. “Persia” and “Togarmah” can be identified with *Iran* and *Turkey* north of Israel. “Libya” and “Ethiopia” can be identified with nations south of Israel — modern-day *Libya* and probably the area covered by *northern Sudan and possibly northern Ethiopia* (looked upon in Scripture as one nation, referring to ancient boundaries rather than those of modern times). The Hebrew word translated “Ethiopia [*Cush*, descendants of Ham]” seemingly refers to a people who settled in the area south of Egypt and eastward to the Red Sea, an area inhabited mainly by Moslems today.

Then there is “Gomer,” which can be identified with modern-day

*Germany*, a non-Moslem nation, completely separated from the Middle East geographically and completely outside Russia's goal of Middle East control through using the Moslem nations. Thus, Why Germany? The answer is obvious, and it can be stated in a word: *Anti-Semitism*, which dates back to the days of the Third Reich (*ref.* Chapter II).

The picture appears to be that when Russia comes down, there will be a Moslem block to the north of Israel and another to the south, with Israel caught in the middle, caught in the vise. Then Russia will attempt, through direct intervention, to help these Moslem nations do what all the Moslem nations in the Middle East have not been able to do in over forty years. Success would, in turn, give Russia more than her present foothold in the Middle East. All the Moslem nations would undoubtedly welcome her with open arms, and Russia could then expand her borders into that part of the world.

However, the results of a Russian-led victory in the Middle East is something the world will never know, for it is not going to happen. Russia's fate, along with those nations accompanying her, has already been pre-written. And the matter is going to turn out exactly as Ezekiel foretold over 2,500 years ago.



# 4

## Let Us Cut Them Off

**They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.**

**They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.**

**For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee:**

**The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes;**

**Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;**

**Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah (Psa. 83:3-8).**

The eighty-third Psalm presents ten separate nations joining themselves together for *one* purpose — *the destruction of Israel* after such a fashion “that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.” This Psalm sets forth not only a ten-kingdom confederacy in history but it also pictures the ten-kingdom confederacy under Antichrist yet future.

The ten nations named in Psa. 83:6-8 refer to ten small nations in the Middle East, located in the vicinity of what is presently modern-

day Israel. And it is evident that this Psalm has a prophetic fulfillment. The Psalm closes in a Messianic manner; and, according to corresponding Scripture, Antichrist with his ten-kingdom confederacy will attempt to do exactly the same thing which the ten nations in Psa. 83:6-8 attempted to do (*cf.* Dan. 9:27; Rev. 11:2; 12:3, 6, 13-16).

Interestingly enough, the ten-kingdom confederacy under Antichrist will consist of nations in the same area as the nations in Psa. 83:6-8 — modern-day nations also surrounding Israel. It will be the Moslem nations surrounding Israel which will be allied with Antichrist when he makes his move against Israel, not European nations as so many believe and teach today. Antichrist will arise and be active, not in Europe, but in the Middle East; and Moslem nations in that same part of the world will form his ten-kingdom confederacy.

The eighty-third Psalm has to do with that future time when the present-day move of the Moslem nations against Israel reaches its apex, to be followed shortly thereafter by the putting down of these same nations, the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, and the elevation of Israel to a position at the head of the nations.

### The Approaching Storm

From a prophetic standpoint, The recent buildup of military forces in the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia, and the Red Sea occurred *for the right reason, in the right place, at the right time*. This buildup occurred because of world economics, it occurred in the area where the kingdom of Antichrist will be centered, and it occurred near the end of the sixth millennium of Man's Day.

The stability of the world's economy is unalterably tied to the Middle East after a fashion which can be spelled out in one word — *OIL*. The nations of the world have come into a state where the stability of their economic systems is completely dependent on an uninterrupted flow of oil at a relatively stable price. Everything is mechanized, and oil fits somewhere within almost every avenue of daily living in our present society.

Then, most of the industrialized nations of the world look to one source more than any other for this energy need — the Middle East, particularly the Persian Gulf area. And projecting this out into time

immediately ahead, according to men who study these matters, world dependence on Middle East oil can only be expected to *increase* for at least the next ten years (the U.S. is presently the largest consumer of Middle East oil, though most nations are far more dependent on the Middle East for their energy needs).

The coalition of nations which assembled in the Persian Gulf and in Saudi Arabia, with aircraft carriers and other ships located not only in the Persian Gulf but also in the Red Sea, provided ample evidence of this fact. Military forces from numerous nations of the world assembled themselves in and near the Gulf (a total of thirty-four nations formed the coalition at this time, though all did not send military forces); and then war broke out, primarily because of this one energy need which the world, because of its present mechanized structure, cannot do without. *Everything else, though by no means unimportant, was secondary.*

Iraq, under Saddam Hussein, fought an eight-year war with Iran during the years 1980-1988 when the Ayatollah Khomeini was in power. Saddam Hussein denounced a 1975 territorial agreement and sought territorial gains. And he didn't seek territorial gains through launching an attack against just any part of Iran. Rather, he attacked the oil-rich province of Khuzistan on the northern end of the Persian Gulf.

Hundreds of thousands were either killed or wounded (approximately one-half million on each side), and it appears evident that the war had a central purpose (aside from providing much-needed additional coastal land). And this central purpose was the same reason Saddam Hussein took over Kuwait and set his sights on land along the Gulf south of Kuwait, along the Saudi coast to at least Qatar and possibly farther south through the United Arab Emirates to Oman at the Strait of Hormuz — OIL.

Slightly more than half of the world's known oil reserves (55 or so percent) lie in *one part of the world*. They lie beneath the desert sands of the Middle East. And these reserves lie mainly in *one part of the Middle East*. They lie mainly beneath the land near and bordering the Persian Gulf — particularly the northern half of the Gulf — in Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Qatar (as well as beneath the shallow waters of the Gulf itself). Then there are also substantial

reserves of oil inland in Iraq, away from the Gulf

When Saddam Hussein occupied Kuwait, he increased his hold on known world oil reserves to about twenty percent. Had he not been stopped at that point and been allowed to take the fields south of Kuwait, he would have increased this hold to about forty percent. And, had his war with Iran been successful, he would have held an additional fifteen or so percent. It appears evident that he could have had only one thing in mind — a control over matters which reached far beyond the Persian Gulf.

Then, in apparent connection with the whole matter, since 1979 Saddam Hussein has worked on restoring parts of the ancient city of Babylon, while, at the same time, thinking of himself as a latter-day Nebuchadnezzar. Even the government of Iraq under Saddam Hussein printed a book to attract tourists entitled, *FROM NEBUCHADNEZZAR TO SADDAM HUSSEIN, Babylon Rises Again*.

Nebuchadnezzar was ruler in a world empire centered in Babylon at the beginning of that period called in Scripture, “the times of the Gentiles” (cf. Dan. 2:31-35, 38; Luke 21:24); and Saddam Hussein sought to occupy a similar role in world affairs at the end of “the times of the Gentiles.” The only way he could succeed would be to control the Middle East oil supply; and, had he succeeded in doing this, he would undoubtedly have set his sights on two things: 1) a governmental and commercial center located in Babylon, and 2) the destruction of Israel, following in Nebuchadnezzar’s footsteps.

Saddam Hussein, in control of Middle East oil, would have been the most powerful man in the Moslem world; and he would have possessed the potential to be the most powerful man anywhere in the world. He could have been more than a latter-day Nebuchadnezzar in that respect. And he could then have been in the best position possible to lead the Moslem world in an attack upon Israel to reclaim the land of Palestine for “Allah” (ref. Chapter I).

## Russia

Russia is a nation which is rapidly changing in practically every realm. The nation is crumbling internally because of economic problems and governmental disarray. One high ranking official in the

Soviet Union recently summed up the matter when he answered the question posed by a Western journalist, "Who is calling the shots in your country today?" His reply was, "No one!"

Russia's immediate future is uncertain, but Russia's future after the Church has been removed and Antichrist appears on the scene was foretold by a Jewish prophet two and one-half millenniums ago. Russia is going to look once again toward the Middle East and militarily move down into that part of the world. The nation's interest in the Middle East, particularly the Persian Gulf area, was made clear in a pact which Russia proposed to enter into with three other nations in 1940; and Russia's interest in that part of the world has remained *unchanged* over the years.

Russia, for the most part, sat on the sidelines watching the latest Middle East conflict. The nation contributed nothing to the war effort, but immediately prior to the Allied invasion of Kuwait, Russia sought to gain influence in the region through trying to stop the war short of a clear-cut Allied victory. Then, beyond trying to gain influence in the region (along with seeking to prevent the U.S. from, instead, gaining similar influence through a military victory), Russia knew from past experience what was about to occur. The outcome of a Middle East conflict was about to, once again, negatively reflect on Soviet military science and technology through the defeat of a Russian equipped nation whose training had come more from Russia than anywhere else. And, along with this, billions of dollars worth of Soviet equipment was about to be lost, equipment which the Russians knew they would have to eventually replace.

Russia had followed a similar course of action eighteen years earlier toward the end of the Yom Kippur War of 1973. After little more than two weeks of fighting, when a Jewish victory appeared inevitable once again, Russia stepped in and tried to stop the war. Russia had done everything the nation could do to foster the war through helping the Arab cause (resupply of arms, etc.) so long as it appeared that the Arabs could win; but when the tide of battle turned, Russia did everything the nation could do to stop the war, even threatening to directly intervene militarily.

And today another Arabic nation has added an additional chapter to the overall Soviet failure in the Middle East (a failure dating back to

particularly the 1967 Six-Day War). And though the Gulf War was somewhat different than past Middle East wars, Russia undoubtedly now knows, *as never before*, that if the nation's Middle East aspirations are to be realized, *direct military intervention* will have to be involved.

Everything points to the day being very near at hand when Russia, accompanied by four Moslem nations and one non-Moslem nation, will militarily move against Israel. Russia will attempt to help the Moslem nations accompanying her do what she has been trying to do through all the Middle East Moslem nations for years — destroy Israel for the Moslems and allow them to reclaim the land of Palestine for “Allah.” This would, in turn, allow Russia to gain the type foothold in the Middle East which she needs; and the nation could then set her sights on the Persian Gulf, where the cure for every known ill in her present ailing economy lies.

Russia, through achieving such a goal, could be catapulted almost overnight from a country in economic and governmental chaos to a country in a position to rule the world. When Russia comes down and the coalition of nations (particularly the U.S.-U.K.-Saudi coalition, identified as such by Ezekiel) asks Russia the question in Ezek. 38:13, these nations will know exactly what Russia is attempting to do. Russia will be attempting to take that which these other nations have fought so hard to defend; and not only this, but Russia will be attempting to do it at the expense of Israel.

This will be the day of Russia's madness, for no nation could possibly become more insane than to use a pagan religious system in an attempt to destroy the people of God for the reason at hand. Nor could this particular nation become more insane after another fashion, for Russia, with its atheistic governmental system, will be moving against God Himself residing in the midst of the ever-burning fire with Israel.

Russia will not only fail in her attempt to destroy Israel but will, in the process, be destroyed herself by the God of Israel. Russia's cup of iniquity will have become full at this time (*cf.* Gen. 15:16), and Russia will then be destroyed by the very One Whose existence the nation denies (*ref.* Chapters II, III in this book). It will then be left to Antichrist to establish a power-base in the Middle East and lead the Moslem nations in their final attempt to bring about Israel's destruction.

## The Kingdom of Antichrist

God has provided a wealth of information in His Word concerning Antichrist. He is first introduced as “thy seed [the seed of the serpent]” in Gen. 3:15, 6,000 years before his appearance, and he is last seen when cast into the lake of fire at Christ’s return and 1,000 years later when Satan is cast into the same place (Rev. 19:20; 20:10). And between God’s announcement concerning Antichrist following Adam’s fall and his being cast into the lake of fire 6,000 years later, Scripture is replete with information about this man.

He is seen in type, for example, in the persons of Nimrod (the founder of Babel [Babylon]) and the Assyrian Pharaoh in Egypt during the days of Moses, and he is mentioned numerous times by the prophets and New Testament writers (*cf.* Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9; Ex. 1:8ff; Isa. 16:4; Jer. 6:26; Ezek. 21:25-27; Micah 5:5, 6; Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:3-9). The two sections of Scripture which supply the most information concerning this man though are the Books of Daniel and Revelation. Daniel centers on the history of the kingdom of Babylon from the beginning to the end of “the times of the Gentiles,” and Revelation centers on the last seven years of this time, particularly the last three and one-half years. And both books outline in minute detail numerous things concerning Antichrist and his kingdom.

He will be the last king of Babylon and the central figure on earth during the last three and one-half years of “the times of the Gentiles.” He is the man whom the world is presently waiting for to bring about peace in the troubled Middle East, though the world has no knowledge of this fact. All peace efforts by the nations are doomed to eventual failure, but this man will come up with a seemingly workable plan. At least it will work for a time, and then...

### *1. AS PRESENTED IN DANIEL*

God’s revelation through Daniel centers around a history of the kingdom of Babylon, beginning with Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar and ending with Babylon under Antichrist. This book outlines the complete history of the Babylonian kingdom, which extends over twenty-six centuries within the scope of “the times of the Gentiles”; and Daniel is the only book in Scripture to do so.

Daniel begins his revelation with that time when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came against Jerusalem in the first of three invasions (about 605 B.C.), which began the Babylonian captivity for the Jewish people (1:1); and he concludes his revelation with that time yet future when the last king of Babylon will be put down, after he comes against Jerusalem, followed by the Jewish people being raised up to live in God's sight (11:45; 12:1ff). Between these two points in the Book of Daniel, all of the revelation, after some fashion, has to do with *the kingdom of Babylon*.

The history of Babylon in Daniel is presented in four parts, depicted by the four parts of the "great image" which Nebuchadnezzar was allowed to see in a dream (Dan. 2:31ff) and by "four great beasts" which Daniel was allowed to see in a dream and in visions (Dan. 7:2ff). Then, when the first part of the image was about to become history, additional things were revealed to Daniel in a vision about the last three parts through depicting "a ram," "an he goat," and "a little horn" (Dan. 8:1ff; cf. Dan. 7:8); and to conclude revelation concerning Babylon through these four divisions, chapter eleven is taken up with additional things about the last three divisions, particularly the last of these three. And interpretations are provided for the dreams and visions, leaving no room for error concerning their meaning.

The dreams and visions all refer to the same thing — the history of the kingdom of Babylon, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar (or the succeeding Medo-Persian rulers) and ending with Antichrist. And the emphasis at every point is *always* the same. The emphasis is on *the fourth part of the image* (2:40-45; cf. vv. 37-39), *the fourth beast* (7:7, 8, 19-26; cf. vv. 4-6, 17), *the little horn* (8:9-14, 23-25; cf. vv. 3-8, 20-22), *the vile person* (11:21-45 [also vv. 5-20]; cf. vv. 2-4). The emphasis is *always* on the final form of the Babylonian kingdom during the days of Antichrist, and more space is given to this final form than all the other three forms combined.

One thing above all else must be kept in mind when studying these dreams and visions in the Book of Daniel: *The matter at hand is about the kingdom of Babylon alone. It is not partially about a history (and corresponding revival) of the Roman Empire nor about any other sequence of historical events separate from the Babylonian kingdom.*

The Roman Empire, though the world empire following the

kingdom of Babylon under Alexander the Great (corresponding to the third part of the image, or to the third beast), has no connection with the fourth part of the Babylonian kingdom in the Book of Daniel. The Roman Empire was a kingdom separate from the kingdom of Babylon. *All* of that part of the Babylonian kingdom depicted by the fourth part of Daniel's image or the fourth beast has yet to appear (see the author's book, PROPHECY ON MOUNT OLIVET, Ch. V).

And any prophecies concerning events by individuals or nations throughout the book (such as Dan. 8:9-14; 11:5-45) must have to do with the kingdom of Babylon. They *cannot* be understood as events occurring apart from this kingdom.

Note that in the interpretation of the dreams and visions *nothing* ever lies between the end of the third part of the kingdom and the beginning of the fourth part (2:39, 40; 7:17-19; 8:20-23). The third part ends with the death of Alexander the Great and the division of his kingdom among his four generals, and revelation then goes *immediately* into the fourth part, into that part having to do with the kingdom of Antichrist.

(Revelation concerning Babylon in the Book of Daniel is very much like revelation concerning the Seventy Weeks prophecy in this same book [9:24-27]. There is an unrevealed time-break between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, and there is also an unrevealed time-break between the third and fourth parts of the Babylonian kingdom. Daniel though did not see either break; and, consequently, he did not prophesy of events during either.)

This will rule out understanding the little horn in Dan. 8:9 to be a reference to Antiochus Epiphanes (who appeared about 150 years after Alexander the Great died) or understanding Dan. 11:5-35 to be a history of disputes between Syria, Egypt, etc., along with another supposed reference to Antiochus Epiphanes. These disputes or that which Antiochus Epiphanes did had nothing to do with the kingdom of Babylon. Thus, they cannot be in view in these verses.

Daniel 11:3, 4 has to do with Alexander the Great, his death, and the four-way division of his kingdom (paralleling Dan. 8:21, 22). Succeeding revelation, in keeping with all which has preceded in the book, *must* then go immediately into the fourth part of the image, into

the kingdom of Antichrist, though Antichrist himself is not mentioned until later in the chapter (vv. 21ff). Thus, since Dan. 11:5-20 has to do with the kingdom of Babylon yet future, these verses could only refer to the power struggles (occurring in the Middle East) which will exist in relation to this kingdom during the first part of the Tribulation. Antichrist will not be enthroned as the last king of Babylon until near the middle of the Tribulation, but he will be an increasingly significant figure in these power struggles prior to this time.

## 2. *As Presented in Revelation*

The Apostle John, unlike the Prophet Daniel, does not deal with the entire scope of the Babylonian Empire. Rather, he deals only with the final form, the fourth part, the only part still having a future fulfillment at the time he wrote (the Book of Revelation deals with prophecy, not history [Rev. 1:1]). And, in dealing with this final form of the kingdom and its ruler, almost everything he was shown has to do with Antichrist's person and actions in relation to the Babylonian kingdom, the nation of Israel, and the Gentile nations *after* he is enthroned as the last king of Babylon.

The power struggles in Daniel, chapter eleven would appear to involve the seven kings in Rev. 17:10. Antichrist will be the seventh, who, throughout the first half of the Tribulation (for almost three and one-half years) will go forth "conquering, and to conquer" (Rev. 6:2). He will do this in view of one day exchanging the *stephanos* which he is seen wearing in Rev. 6:2 for the *diadema* which he is seen wearing in Rev. 12:3; 13:1 (*stephanos* and *diadema* are two Greek words for "crown." *Diadema* alone has to do with the monarch's crown [see the Author's book, IN THE LORD'S DAY, Ch. IV).

Antichrist will be a super-intelligent being who will come in after a peaceful fashion and "obtain the kingdom by flatteries [*lit.*, 'by plotting and scheming']," working "deceitfully" (Dan. 8:23; 11:21, 23). He will undoubtedly create numerous enemies as he rises to power, which possibly accounts for his assassination once he becomes the seventh head and Satan gives to him "his power, and his seat ['throne'], and great authority." This man will be killed, raised from the dead, and then, with the power and authority given to him by Satan, no one will be able to stand in his way (Rev. 13:2ff; 17:8-13).

There will be absolute rule and control by this man from a rebuilt city of Babylon on the Euphrates, and ten Middle East Moslem nations ruling *under him* will have “one mind” *with him* and give their “power and strength” *unto him* (Rev. 17:13). Babylon will be the political and commercial center of the world in that day, and Antichrist’s control over the nations of the world (though he will continue to make enemies among the nations [cf. Dan. 11:40-45]) will undoubtedly be derived through a power base which the ten nations giving their “power and strength” *unto him* will control, which, in the light of the way matters are rapidly moving today, can only be one thing — *oil beneath and around the Persian Gulf*. With this power base and the power and authority given to him by Satan, he will sit on Satan’s throne in the city of Babylon as *absolute ruler over the entire earth*.

### 3. A Covenant with “The Many”

Antichrist will arise from within the borders of the ancient Assyrian kingdom. He is seen coming out of this area in Dan. 8:9 (the northern segment of the four-way division of Alexander the Great’s kingdom was Assyria [also Asia Minor farther to the west]); and he is called “the Assyrian” several places in Scripture, typified by the Assyrian Pharaoh ruling Egypt during Moses’ day (Isa. 10:5; 14:25; 52:4; Micah 5:5, 6). The territory covered by ancient Assyria would include Syria, northern Iraq, and northern Iran today. Thus, Antichrist will arise someplace from within this overall area.

He will arise as “a little horn” among “a small people” (Dan. 8:9; 11:23) and bring about peace between Israel and the surrounding Moslem nations through a covenant which he will institute (cf. Dan. 9:27; 11:21-23; Ezek. 38:8, 11, 14). A “horn” refers to a *king*, a *ruler* (Dan. 7:24). He will, during his rise, apparently rule a country in the Middle East (a “small” country compared to other countries or nations of the world), though he may not occupy such a position at the time he makes his covenant with “the many.”

(In Rev. 6:2, Antichrist is seen wearing a *stephanos*, not a *diadem*, when he appears at the beginning of the Tribulation. A *stephanos* would indicate one not occupying a regal position. However, the word could

be used in this passage strictly in relation to his *anticipated position* as “world ruler,” realized in Rev. 12:3 near the middle of the Tribulation.)

The covenant which Antichrist makes in that day will not be made just with Israel, though Israel will be the central nation, and “the many” in Dan. 9:27 would refer to Israel alone (note Dan. 11:39; 12:2 where the same expression appears relative to Israel). This covenant will consist of a peace treaty established between Israel and the surrounding Moslem nations.

(Dan. 11:30 refers to Antichrist having “intelligence [‘an affiliation’] with them [an apparent reference to the surrounding Moslem nations] that forsake the holy covenant,” immediately before the covenant is broken [v. 31].)

The covenant will possibly also have something to do with allowing Israel to rebuild her temple and restore the Old Testament economy within the nation’s practices and worship, for a desecration of the temple and a termination of the Old Testament economy are things specifically stated to occur at the time the covenant is broken.

# 5

## **But in That Day**

**For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.**

**And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.**

**And it shall come to pass in the day that Jehovah shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy trouble, and from the hard service wherein thou wast made to serve,**

**That thou shall take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!**

**Jehovah hath broken the staff of the wicked, the sceptre of the rulers;**

**That smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, that ruled the nations in anger, with a persecution that none restrained.**

**The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing.**

**Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid low, no hewer is come up against us (Isa. 14:1-8, ASV).**

Israel's darkest hour will occur immediately before the dawn of the millennial day, during the reign of Antichrist, immediately prior to that time when the "Sun of righteousness" arises "with healing in his wings" (Mal. 4:1, 2; cf. Matt. 24:15-22). Israel is to pass through the furnace, heated "seven times more than it was wont to be heated ['seven times hotter than usual,' NIV]" (Dan. 3:19); and while in the furnace, the Israelites, "in their affliction," will seek the Lord "early" (Hosea 5:15). The Lord will, at that time, hear their cry, remember His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, come down, and deliver them from the hand of the oppressor (Ex. 2:23-3:10).

This will occur "after two days [after two thousand years]," dating from the time Israel crucified her Messiah; and it will be "in the third day [in the third one-thousand-year period]," dating from the crucifixion, that Israel will be raised up to live in God's sight (Hosea 6:1, 2). This third one-thousand-year period will be the seventh millennium dating from Adam's creation, which will be the Sabbath rest presently awaiting the people of God (Heb. 4:4-9; cf. Ex. 31:12-17; ref. the author's book, WHAT TIME IS IT? Ch. III).

### Reborn, Regathered, and Reestablished

The day is coming when it will no longer be said, "The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt." Rather, in that day it will be said, "The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all lands whither he had driven them" (Jer. 16:14, 15).

There are two great deliverances of the Israelites in Scripture. One deliverance is *past*, and the other is *future*. The first deliverance was under Moses, and the second will be under the One greater than Moses, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The *past* deliverance constitutes an overall type of the *future* deliverance. "Moses" is a type of *Christ*, and "Egypt" is always a type of the *world* in Scripture; and the deliverance from Egypt under Moses is a type of the future deliverance from a worldwide dispersion under Jesus the Christ.

Then events on both sides of the actual deliverance from Egypt complete the overall type. There was the death of the paschal lambs

in Egypt immediately prior to the deliverance of the Israelites, and there was the destruction of the Assyrian and his armed forces in the Red Sea immediately following their deliverance (Ex. 12-14).

The type has been set, and the antitype must follow the type in exact detail. Israel has slain the Passover Lamb, Jesus the Christ, but Israel has yet to appropriate the blood. A two-thousand-year period separates these two events in Israeli history, but just as surely as Israel appropriated the blood of the paschal lambs which the nation slew in the type (Ex. 12), Israel is going to appropriate the blood of the Passover Lamb which the nation slew in the antitype (Zech. 12:10-14; cf. Isa. 53:1ff).

Israel's appropriation of the blood of the Passover Lamb will be the first thing occurring within the framework of God's dealings with the nation at the time of His Son's return. Israel, as the Apostle Paul on the Damascus road when Christ appeared to him in his unsaved condition (Acts 9:1-6), will look on the One "whom they have pierced"; and, as the Apostle Paul, the nation, through believing, will experience the birth from above (Isa. 66:8; cf. I Cor. 15:8; I Tim. 1:15, 16). Only then can God (according to the type) regather the nation and destroy the kingdom of Antichrist.

God will deal with His people in relation to the sin problem first. This is the way it was done in Egypt during Moses' day, and this is the way it will be done in the day of the coming of the Son of Man.

The seven feasts of the Lord in Lev. 23 constitute the prophetic calendar of Israel and provide a chronology of the order in which God's dealings with His people will occur at the time of His Son's return. The first two of these festivals — the feast of the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread — were kept by Israel prior to the Exodus from Egypt. In the type, the Israelites *first* applied the blood of a slain lamb (Passover); then the matter of sin in the lives of those who had applied the blood came into view (unleavened bread).

(Note the brazen altar and brazen laver in the courtyard of the tabernacle, or the two washings [the complete body, and parts of the body] in John 13:5-11. The thought is the same in the first two festivals

of the Lord.)

When Christ returns, Israel will not only look on the One Whom they pierced in an *unsaved condition* but also in an *unclean condition*. Israel is presently unclean through prior contact with the dead body of God's Son. The Israelites will first appropriate the blood of the Lamb which the nation slew 2,000 years ago (through receiving the One Whom they presently reject), and they will then acknowledge their sin in the presence of the very One Whom they offended (*cf.* Gen. 45:1ff; Hosea 5:15; Zech. 12:10-14; 13:6).

Atonement will be provided for Israel's sin (the sixth of the seven feast days), but events set forth by the intervening feast days must first be brought to pass.

Prior to Israel's day of atonement, the resurrection of Old Testament saints will occur (the feast of first-fruits [I Cor. 15:23]), the Spirit of God will be poured out on all flesh (the feast of Pentecost [Acts 2:1, 15-21]), and the Israelites will be regathered from a worldwide dispersion (the feast of trumpets [Matt. 24:30, 31]). Then cleansing will be provided for the nation (the day of atonement [Ezek. 36:24ff]) immediately prior to the fulfillment of the feast of tabernacles (the seventh and last of the feasts of the Lord).

The feast of tabernacles was a time of rest in the camp of Israel following the termination of all activity surrounding the previous six festivals, pointing to that future day of rest (the Sabbath rest) awaiting Israel following the termination of all activity surrounding the first six festivals.

### Ishmael and Isaac at Peace

The present Arab-Israeli dispute is "the most intractable problem that there is."

— James Baker  
U.S. Secretary of State  
March, 1991

The leaders of nations worldwide recognize that Middle East peace must center around a solution to one problem — *the Arab-Israeli*

*conflict*. And many also recognize, as the U.S. Secretary of State, that this is “the most intractable problem that there is.”

This problem has its roots buried 4,000 years in human history (*ref.* Chapter I), and it is a problem which man will never be able to solve. There *though is a solution*, which will be brought to pass when Israel’s Messiah returns.

In the chronology of events in typology, Ishmael died after Abraham remarried (Gen. 25:1, 17). Abraham’s remarriage, in the chronology of events in Gen. 21-25, points to that future time when Israel will have been restored to her proper place, positioned back in her land at the head of the nations. Then, and only then, did Ishmael die in the type; and then, and only then, will Ishmael die in the antitype. Until that day, Ishmael will continue as described in Gen. 16:12 — a “wild man” whose “hand will be against every man.”



# Appendix

## Part I

### Daniel's Image

The most widely held position among premillennial students of the Word concerning Daniel's image in Daniel, chapter two (or the "four great beasts" in chapter seven) views the four parts of the image (or the "four great beasts") as representing 1) *Babylon*, 2) *Media-Persia*, 3) *Greece*, and 4) *Rome*. This would be the position set forth in the Scofield Reference Bible footnotes for example, a position followed by most premillennial commentators.

The only part of the prophecy really in question would be the fourth part. Daniel identifies the first three beasts (and, correspondingly, the first three parts of the image) as particular nations conquering Babylon, and this part of the prophecy has been fulfilled and is a matter of history.

But should the fourth part of the image (or the fourth beast) be identified as *Rome*? There are two main reasons why people interpret the prophecy after this fashion: 1) *Rome* was the next world power following Greece, and 2) the words, "and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary," in Dan. 9:26, are usually associated with *a Roman destruction in history* and *a Roman prince (Antichrist) in prophecy* — both connected with the fourth part of the image.

*Greece* was the third kingdom (represented by the belly and thighs of brass on the image), and the fourth kingdom (represented by the legs of iron, and in its final form by the feet part of iron and part of clay) would, from history, seem to be *Rome*, with the final form looked upon

as a *revived Roman Empire*. This interpretation would appear to be substantiated by Dan. 9:26. In this verse, “the prince that shall come” is *Antichrist*, and “the people of the prince [understood as ‘his people’]” are said to be *the Romans destroying Jerusalem in 70 A.D.* Thus, Antichrist is said to be *a Roman prince who will rule a revived Roman Empire in the latter days.*

In other words, all of Daniel’s image except the feet would have a historical fulfillment. The legs would represent the Roman Empire in history, and the feet would represent the revived Roman Empire during the Tribulation. And the same would hold true for the corresponding description set forth by the “four great beasts” in Daniel, chapter seven. The first three beasts would have a historical fulfillment, and the fourth would have a partial fulfillment in history. The fourth beast would represent the Roman Empire in both history and prophecy, corresponding to the legs and feet of the image.

Is the preceding though the way Scripture sets forth the fourth and final part of the Babylonian kingdom? or is this an attempt to interpret Biblical prophecy through events in secular history rather than interpreting prophecy by comparing Scripture with Scripture? The answer is easy to ascertain if one remains solely within that which Daniel (and related Scripture) reveals about the whole matter.

Note first of all that Daniel’s image is seen *standing* in Babylon (2:31). This image has to do with a *Babylonian kingdom* from beginning to end. The head of gold has to do with the kingdom of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar and any immediate successors prior to the conquest of the kingdom by the nation or nations represented by the breast and arms of silver (2:37, 38). The breast and arms of silver have to do with the Medes and the Persians coming in and conquering the preceding kingdom (2:39; 5:28, 31). And the belly and thighs of brass have to do with the Grecians coming in and conquering the kingdom ruled by the Medes and the Persians (2:39; 8:6, 7, 20, 21). The mechanics of the preceding, of course, is the interpretation held in common by almost anyone reading Daniel. This is simply what the record in Daniel states, along with secular history.

But note something often overlooked about the preceding: *This kingdom is Babylonian throughout.* The powers represented by the head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, and the belly and thighs of

brass *all reigned from Babylon*. For example, when the Medes and the Persians came in and took the kingdom in 538 B.C., they reigned from Babylon and were still there when Alexander the Great came over in 330 B.C., 208 years later. Then, when Alexander the Great took the kingdom, he also reigned from Babylon. In other words, the image is not seen lying down, with the head of gold in Babylon, the breast and arms of silver in Media and Persia, and the belly and thighs of brass in Greece. That's not the picture at all. The image is seen *standing in Babylon*. It is Babylonian in its entirety.

This is one place where those who view a Roman Empire next in the prophecy go astray. Rome had nothing to do with a reign from Babylon in history. The capital of the Roman Empire was Rome, not Babylon. And Rome is not Babylon. If there were such a thing as a revived Roman Empire though, there could possibly be room for the final form of the Roman Empire to be connected with Babylon, for Babylon, back on the Euphrates, will be the capital of the earth during the last half of the Tribulation. Such though will not be the case.

Those viewing Rome as representing the fourth part of the image try to press secular history into Biblical prophecy at a point where it seems to possibly fit, but really doesn't. Then they further complicate the matter by a misinterpretation of Dan. 9:26.

The most interesting thing about the whole matter is the fact that Daniel identifies all four parts of the image, and he identifies the fourth part as being *other than the Roman Empire*. Daniel, in his identity, has Antichrist coming into power immediately following a four-way division of the kingdom after the death of Alexander the Great. The kingdom under Antichrist follows the Greco-Babylonian kingdom and is represented by the legs of iron, and in its final form by the feet part of iron and part of clay.

The first part of the image is identified in Dan. 2:37, 38. Then following this the remaining three parts of the image are given, though not identified. Then note the prominence given to the fourth part — two verses cover the first part (vv. 37, 38), one verse the next two parts (v. 39), but six verses are devoted to the final form (vv. 40-45). And such prominence relative to the fourth part is true elsewhere in Daniel also (see chs. 7, 8, 11). Why would such prominence be given to Rome and not to nations associated with the first three parts of the image? It's not!

Rather, it's the kingdom of Babylon under its last king (Antichrist) which occupies the forefront in the Book of Daniel.

The identities of the other three parts are given in the vision of the "four great beasts" and the interpretation of this vision in chapters seven and eight. The four beasts are said to represent four kingdoms (four sequential kingdoms forming *the one Babylonian kingdom* [7:17; cf. v. 23]), and beginning with the second beast, the last three are identified in chapter eight. For the identity of the second, compare vv. 3, 4 with v. 20 (cf. Dan. 5:28, 31); for the identity of the third, compare vv. 5-8 with vv. 21, 22; and for the identity of the fourth, compare vv. 9-14 with vv. 23-26. Note that the identity of the second is *Media and Persia* (corresponding to the breast and arms of silver on the image), the identity of the third is *Greece* (corresponding to the belly and thighs of brass), and the identity of the fourth is the *kingdom under Antichrist* (corresponding to the legs of iron and the feet part of iron and part of clay). Where is Rome? Rome is not in the prophecy!

Following Alexander the Great's death, the kingdom was divided among his four generals (vv. 8, 22), and the vision then goes immediately into the days of Antichrist yet future (the "little horn" in v. 9 is not Antiochus Epiphanes, but Antichrist [see parallel verses, vv. 23-26]). So, what happened? The kingdom under Alexander the Great's four generals gradually faded from view (though the prophecy in Daniel does not cover events during the reign of these four generals following this division. Daniel's prophecy goes immediately into the power represented by the fourth part of the image [or the power represented by the fourth beast], into the days of Antichrist); and a couple of hundred years following Alexander the Great's death Rome came into the picture as a world power, but not as a world power fulfilling any part of Daniel's prophecy. This prophecy will not again continue to be fulfilled until Antichrist appears during Daniel's Seventieth Week. Then, and only then, will the fourth part of the image from Dan. 2 and the fourth beast in Dan. 7, 8 come into existence.

Now, what about "the people of the prince that shall come" in Dan. 9:26? Does that not refer to a destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and to the Romans being Antichrist's people in history? Not at all.

First note the expression, "the people of the prince that shall come," and compare this with a similar expression in Dan. 7:27 — "the

people of the saints of the most High.” Who will take the kingdom in Dan. 7:18-27? Note in v. 18 that it is “the saints of the most High,” and in v. 27 it is “the people of the saints of the most High.” The latter is the translation of a Hebrew idiom which is equivalent to the former. And it is the same in Dan. 9:26. “The people of the prince” in Dan. 9:26 is a reference to *the prince himself*. Failure to recognize this idiom and properly interpret its usage in Dan. 9:26 has resulted in confusion.

The destruction of Jerusalem in Dan. 9:26 is not a reference to the destruction which occurred in 70 A.D. but rather a reference to a future destruction under Antichrist in the middle of the Tribulation. This is the same destruction referred to in Luke 21:20-24 (*cf.* Rev. 11:2). The destruction in Dan. 9:26 must occur within the framework of the Seventy Weeks (*ref.* Chapter III), and contextually it occurs in connection with Antichrist breaking his covenant with Israel in v. 27. Both the text and context in Luke 21:20-24 show that this section also has to do with the same time as Dan. 9:26 — the coming Tribulation, rather than with events in 70 A.D.

## Part II

### The Mother of Harlots

Refer to the author's book, THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE, for information on Revelation chapters seventeen and eighteen.

## Part III

### The Beast and False Prophet

Revelation, chapter thirteen presents the two principle evil individuals who will appear on earth during the Tribulation, using the expression “beast” to describe both. The first will be a political leader

who arises from a Gentile country (vv. 1, 2), and the second will be a religious leader who arises from within the nation of Israel (vv. 11-15). Both will appear to Israel after a peaceful fashion, but both will later turn against Israel and, together, seek to bring about the destruction of this nation (Dan. 9:26, 27; Rev. 13:11).

The question is often asked, "Which of these two will be the Antichrist?" Students of the Word differ at this point. Some identify the first beast as the Antichrist, while others find reason to identify the second beast after this fashion.

The word "Antichrist" is found in only two books in the New Testament—I John and II John. The word appears four times in I John (2:18, 22; 4:3) and one time in II John (v. 7). Thus, the word does not appear in the Book of Revelation in connection with either beast.

But to say that John does not call either beast in Rev. 13, "Antichrist," is not really a fair statement. Though he does not use the word in Rev. 13, he refers to that coming evil person after such a fashion in I John 2:18. John states, "...ye have heard that antichrist shall come..." And one of the individuals set forth in Rev. 13 would have to be identified as the person John had previously spoken of in his first epistle.

Note that "Antichrist" is a compound word ("anti," prefixed to "Christ," is a Greek preposition, transliterated from Greek to English and often found prefixed to different words [in both Greek and English alike]). It can be shown that those living during the time in which the New Testament was written, during the first century, understood the word *anti* to mean "instead of," or "in the place of"; and this is the manner in which the word is invariably used in the Greek New Testament when it stands alone in a sentence (*cf.* Matt. 5:38; 20:38; Rom. 12:17; I Thess. 5:15). When the word is prefixed to another word though, the thought expressed by *anti*, usually takes on a meaning more in the sense of "opposite" or "against" (*cf.* John 19:12; Acts 7:52; 18:16; II Thess. 2:15 [I Tim. 2:6 provides an exception]).

In II Thess. 2:4, the word *anti* is prefixed to the word "*keimai*['to lie,' or 'to recline']." The compound word *antikeimai* means "to lie opposite to," taking on the meaning of "opposition to." And in this passage *antikeimai* is used relative to the actions of the first beast in Rev. 13: "Who *opposeth* and exalteth himself above all that is called God..."

*Anti*prefixed to “Christ,” forming the word “Antichrist,” would seem, from its contextual usage in I, II John, to also carry this same meaning. Antichrist would be the one “opposed to Christ,” the one “against Christ.” And this could describe either beast.

Using the other meaning of the word *anti*, either beast could also be in view. Both beasts actually appear “in the stead of Christ.” The first beast appears after this fashion in a political sense, ruling the earth instead of Christ (from Babylon instead of Jerusalem); and the second beast appears in a religious sense instead of Christ — as a “false prophet” instead of the true prophet.

Thus, in one respect, either way the word “Antichrist” is to be understood, both beasts could claim this title by their actions. But John only had one in mind when he wrote his first epistle.

The first beast is seen as the central figure among the two throughout Scripture. He is, for example, typified by the Assyrian Pharaoh in Egypt during Moses’ day; and he is the one who will be the last king of Babylon. He is the one who will both make and break the covenant with “the many,” though the second beast may also play a specific part in both; and he is the one who will sit in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, declaring himself to be God. He is also the one who will be the great persecutor of the Jewish people in the latter days, and even in Rev. 13 the prominence is given to this individual rather than to the second beast.

The manner in which the first beast is presented throughout Scripture provides the reason why most students of the Word identify him as the one of whom John spoke in his first epistle; and this is the manner in which the expression “Antichrist” has been used in this book.

## Part IV

### The European Common Market

Under Antichrist there will be a one-world system, something

which the world is rapidly moving toward today. Europe, for example, has been moving toward a “Common Market” system for years; and a number of the world’s leaders today are, for the first time, openly talking about and using the expression, “The New World Order.”

Thus, though Antichrist will rule from the Middle East through ten Middle East Moslem nations, the European Common Market nations (which many Bible students erroneously see Antichrist ruling through) are not without prophetic significance. The nations in Europe are rapidly merging toward a unity which they have never had in the past, a unity which would allow the entire continent to merge quite naturally into Antichrist’s one-world system.

Europe, because of its heavy dependence on Middle East oil, could easily find itself in the position of being quite vulnerable surrounding the dictates of a Middle East ruler controlling this oil. Europe is far more dependent than the United States on oil from the Persian Gulf, and the United States itself is far from being in a position to escape such vulnerability, along with much of the remainder of the world.

Thus, if one man could control this flow, he could easily bring the European Common Market nations to their knees. And controlling a unified Middle East and Europe after this fashion, the remainder of the world could only lie at his doorstep. In this respect, the European Common Market nations may very well be the key which unlocks the door to Antichrist’s centralized worldwide government. That remains to be seen.

One thing though is certain. “The New World Order,” with Europe as a main participant, is going to come to pass. It is no idle dream of man. It’s going to shortly be brought about through the actions of one man — “Antichrist” — whom the world presently awaits. And the stage is rapidly being set today for this man to make his appearance.

(Actually, “The New World Order,” synonymous with a *one-world system*, is not new at all. Such a system had its organized beginning in Babylon over four millenniums ago, during the days of Nimrod [Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9]; and this same system will have its organized end in Babylon in the immediate future, during the days of Antichrist [Rev. 13:8, 16, 17].

Thus, from the time of its inception to the time of its destruction, a system of this nature is, in reality, Babylonian, not European. But Europe, along with the remainder of the world, will be an integral part of this system in the end time.)

## Part V

### Islamic Teaching / The Temple Mount

The existence of a Jewish state in the Middle East forms a contradiction in Islamic teaching. Islam teaches that 1) “Allah” has predetermined all things, and 2) “Allah” is through with the Jews.

Judaism (along with the Christian faith) is looked upon by Moslems as an older religion whose people strayed from the true path of “Allah.” Resultingly, God is through with the Jews (and Christians as well); and since “Allah” has predetermined all things, for the land of Palestine and the holy sites to once again come under Jewish control is looked upon by Moslems as *theologically impossible*.

This belief then naturally gives rise to an unanswerable question: “How can a Jewish nation presently exist in the Middle East, especially in the land of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital?”

This is the land God covenanted to Abraham and his posterity, which Moslems believe was to be inherited by Abraham’s descendants *through Ishmael*; and this is also the land which, for centuries, until modern times, had been under Islamic dominion and control — possessed by Moslems for “Allah,” but now possessed by the Jewish people.

Moslems attempt to answer the question about present Israeli dominion and control of this land, solving the problem for the moment, through simply refusing to recognize the existence of the nation of Israel. This is why the Moslem nations have such a difficult time when it comes to any type dealings with Israel. Such dealings, in their eyes, are with a people who have no right to exist and who form a nation which, according to Islamic teaching, actually, can’t (and, conse-

quently, doesn't) exist. This is one problem which Antichrist will have to solve in order to bring about his covenant of peace.

The actions of Arab delegates at the United Nations assembly provide a case in point to illustrate Moslem thinking about the existence of the nation of Israel. When an Israeli delegate gets up to speak, the Arab delegates (Moslem delegates) either ignore him or get up and leave. They do neither within a framework of what might be called bad manners. Their actions are governed strictly by reasoning within the Moslem way of thinking: "The Israeli delegate is a nobody, representing nothing, so why listen to a nobody saying something about nothing?"

Any negotiations with Israel by Moslems are not normally done directly (as in the case of Anwar Sadat's dealings with Menachem Begin and others in Israel during the late '70's). Rather, such dealings are normally carried out through a third party. And this is possibly the way Antichrist will enact peace between the Moslems and the Jews.

At the heart of the problem today is the Jewish occupation and control of the old city of Jerusalem, the third most holy place in the world for the followers of Islam. The Arabs occupied and controlled this part of Jerusalem from the time of the inception of the Jewish state in 1948 until the Six-Day War of 1967, but the Israelis have occupied and controlled all of Jerusalem (the new and old sections) since that time. And in 1980, the Israeli Knesset passed a law declaring Jerusalem to be "eternal and indivisible."

It is the Temple Mount in the old city of Jerusalem which makes this city the third most holy place in the world for the followers of Islam. This is the place Moslems believe Abraham offered Ishmael as a burnt offering (a corruption of Gen. 22), and this is the place where Moslems believe Mohammed bodily ascended to heaven and remained for a short time (he is buried in Medina).

The Temple Mount though is not sacred to just the Moslems. It is sacred as well to the Jewish people. And to them the Temple Mount is *the* most holy place in the world. In the eyes of the Jewish people, there is nothing which can even remotely compare with the Temple Mount. Moslems face *toward Mecca* when they pray, but religious Jews face *toward the Temple Mount*. These Jews, facing toward this mount, pray for the coming of their Messiah and the rebuilding of their

temple.

On the Temple Mount today there are two Moslem mosques: the Dome of the Rock (the Mosque of Omar, built in the seventh century over the site where Moslems believe Abraham offered Ishmael and Mohammed ascended to heaven), and the Al Aksa Mosque (built at a later date). And it is on this mount that a Jewish temple will stand in the immediate future.

The temple *must* be built on the exact spot where the previous two temples stood; and from the best calculations of those who have studied the matter over the years (such as Rabbi Goren, Chief Rabbi for the Israeli armed forces when the Jews captured the old city of Jerusalem in 1967), conclusions are that the Jewish temple, in order to stand on this exact spot, *must* be built exactly where the Dome of the Rock now stands.

How can this be brought to pass? No one seems to know. Rabbi Goren answers the question by simply saying, "It's a big problem." *But it is going to occur*, and it will occur shortly after Antichrist establishes his covenant with "the many" in Israel.

For decades the Jews have been openly praying at the Wailing Wall for their temple to be rebuilt. And the Moslems, knowing that the only place this temple can be rebuilt is where the Dome of the Rock now stands, have, over the years, expressed grave concern about the Jews praying after this fashion at this particular location. Sometimes the matter breaks out into open, hostile actions, such as the much-publicized outbreak of violence which occurred October 8, 1990 when several thousand Moslems moved toward the Temple Mount to attack Jews praying at the Wailing Wall.

Thus, at the center of the Arab-Israeli dispute over the old city of Jerusalem is *the Temple Mount*. Possession and control of this one piece of real estate is at the center of the intractable problem which exists concerning the old city of Jerusalem as a whole. This is where the impasse is centered, which makes the Arab-Israeli dispute basically a *religious* problem. And until this problem is resolved, very little in the overall dispute can change.

In one sense of the word though, it matters little what Moslems, Jews, or the nations at large do about the matter today, for, according to the Scriptures, during the first year of the Tribulation the Jews are

going to build a temple on this mount (Dan. 8:11-14). The covenant (peace treaty) which Antichrist will establish between Israel and the Moslem nations will either have something directly to do with allowing Israel to rebuild her temple or it will provide conditions which will allow Israel to undertake this task apart from the actual terms of the covenant itself.

In either case, the covenant will be broken by Antichrist entering the temple on the Temple Mount, desecrating the temple, sitting in the Holy of Holies declaring himself to be "God," and then destroying the temple (Dan. 9:26; Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:3, 4). The Moslem clerics will be exercising control over his military endeavors at this time; and, because of the importance of the Temple Mount to the Moslems and Jews alike, it will only be natural for a desecration and destruction of the Jewish temple to occupy a strategic part in Antichrist's initial act of breaking his covenant.

Also, it is possible that the Jews gaining access to the Temple Mount to rebuild their temple will be the trigger-mechanism which brings Russia down into Israel during the first year of the Tribulation, seeking to help Moslem nations to the north and south of Israel do what the Moslems have been trying to do since May 14, 1948 — drive the Jews into the Mediterranean sea and reclaim the land of Palestine for "Allah."

After all, the temple must stand where the Dome of the Rock now stands, something unthinkable within the framework of the current status of events in the Middle East. And any move by Israel toward the Temple Mount today, with a view to building a Jewish temple on the spot where the Dome of the Rock stands, would bring the wrath of the Moslem world down upon Israel.

A few years ago, the head of the Supreme Moslem Council in Jerusalem stated concerning the matter, "The Moslems are *prepared to die* for this place [a statement actually referring to the Temple Mount as a whole]." And certain Moslem nations during the Tribulation (which will possibly not be among the nations having a part in the peace treaty with Israel) may very well look upon the matter after a similar fashion when Israel sets about to rebuild her temple, with Russia taking advantage of the situation at that time through direct military intervention.

Daniel reveals that Israel will rebuild the temple during the same year that Ezekiel reveals Russia will come down to help four Moslem nations destroy Israel — during the first year of the Tribulation. The timing of both events is seemingly right for the events to be interrelated; but they may or may not be. Scripture is silent on this possible connection.

## Part VI

### Jihad

No attempt has been made in FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE EAST to distinguish between the different branches of Islam (there are actually over one hundred fifty different sects altogether). Sunni and Shi'ite divisions form the two main branches, with the Sunni branch being, by far, the larger of the two. The Sunnis are generally more moderate than the Shi'ites in their approach to matters, though both can be quite militant; and the Sunni and Shi'ite branches have differences of a nature which often result in open conflict between the two. However, despite these differences, or differences between any of the Islamic sects, *basic Islamic ideology permeates all branches*. All are anti-Jewish, anti-Christian, anti-Western, and, as a whole, dedicated to world dominion, beginning with the land of Palestine in the Middle East.

The means to bring this about, — *Jihad* (Holy War) — is, correspondingly, also present in all branches of Islam, though some Moslems view the matter in a more moderate sense than others (some even go so far as to view *Jihad* as no more than an internal religious struggle for the individual Moslem, a thought not really in line with basic Islamic ideology regarding *Jihad*).

The Koran and the example set by Mohammed present *Jihad* after the same fashion. The Koran urges all Moslems to war against unbelievers “until idolatry is no more and Allah’s religion reigns supreme.” And Mohammed is looked upon as the one setting the example by his many battles and victories recorded in the Hadith

(Islamic oral tradition of Mohammed's actions and sayings).

Islam, with its *Jihad*, has long been known as "the religion of the sword"; but *Jihad* today is waged more by the power of "oil" than anything else, for the Moslem nations have in their possession something far more powerful than any sword wielded against unbelievers by their ancestors. And, through the use of this weapon (which they believe "Allah" has given to them for the purpose at hand), their long-range goal is an on-going "holy war" which will last until the entire world is brought under Islamic dominion and control.

With reference to *Jihad*, one other thing should be noted in closing. Some individual Moslems shun violent actions today, even toward the Jewish people; but they do this in spite of what their religious faith teaches, not because of it.

## Part VII

### Profiles of Middle East Countries

(Based on 1990 information)

#### *ISRAEL*

Geography: 7,847 sq. mi.

Population: 4,371,000

Ethnic Groups: Jews 83%, Arabs 16%

Religions: Jewish 83%, Moslem 13% (Sunni), Christian 2%

Government: Parliamentary Democracy

#### *IRAQ*

Geography: 167,924 sq. mi.

Population: 18,782,000

Ethnic Groups: Arabs 75%, Kurds 15%, Turks

Religions: Moslem 95% (Shi'ite 60%, Sunni 35%), Christian 5%

Government: Republic

*JORDAN*

Geography: 37,737 sq. mi.

Population: 3,065,000

Ethnic Groups: Arabs 98%

Religions: Moslem 92% (Sunni), Christian 8%

Government: Constitutional Monarchy

*LEBANON*

Geography: 4,015 sq. mi.

Population: 3,340,000

Ethnic Groups: Lebanese 82%, Palestinians 9%, Armenians 5%

Religions: Moslem 50-57%, Christian 43-50%

Government: Republic

*SYRIA*

Geography: 71,498 sq. mi.

Population: 12,471,000

Ethnic Groups: Arabs 90%, Kurds, Armenians

Religions: Moslem 90% (Sunni 74%, other 26%), Christian 10%

Government: Republic (military regime)

*EGYPT*

Geography: 386,650 sq. mi.

Population: 54,139,000

Ethnic Groups: Hamitic 90%, Bedouins, Nubians

Religions: Moslem 94% (Sunni), Christian 6%

Government: Republic

*TURKEY*

Geography: 301,381 sq. mi.

Population: 56,549,000

Ethnic Groups: Turks 85%, Kurds 12%

Religions: Moslem 98% (Sunni), Christian, Jewish

Government: Republic

*IRAN*

Geography: 636,293 sq. mi.

Population: 55,647,000

Ethnic Groups: Persians 63%, Turkomans & Baluchis 19%, Arabs 4%, Kurds 3%

Religions: Moslem 93% (Shi'ite 93%, Sunni 5%)

Government: Islamic Republic

*SAUDI ARABIA*

Geography: 839,996 sq. mi.

Population: 16,758,000

Ethnic Groups: Arab tribes, immigrants from other Arab and Moslem countries

Religions: Moslem 99%

Government: Monarchy, with council of ministers

*KUWAIT*

Geography: 6,880 sq. mi.

Population: 2,080,000

Ethnic Groups: Kuwaitis 39%, other Arabs 39%, Iranians, Indians, Pakistanis

Religions: Moslem 85% (Sunni 78%, Shi'ite 14%), Christian 6%

Government: Constitutional Monarchy

*YEMEN*

Geography: 207,000 sq. mi.

Population: 11,000,000

Ethnic Groups: Arabs, Indians, some Africans

Religions: Mostly Moslem (Sunni)

Government: Republic

*BAHRAIN*

Geography: 258 sq. mi.

Population: 512,000

Ethnic Groups: Bahrainis 63%, Asians 13%, other Arabs 10%

Religions: Moslem (Shi'ite 70%, Sunni 30%)

Government: Traditional Monarchy

*OMAN*

Geography: 82,030 sq. mi.

Population: 1,305,000

Ethnic Groups: Arabs 88%, Baluchis 4%, Persians 3%, Indians 2%, Africans 2%

Religions: Moslem 86% (Ibadhi 75%, Sunni)

Government: Absolute Monarchy

*QATAR*

Geography: 4,247 sq. mi.

Population: 498,000

Ethnic Groups: Arabs 40%, Pakistanis 18%, Iranians 14%, Indians 10%, others

Religions: Moslem 95%

Government: Traditional Emirate

*UNITED ARAB EMIRATES*

Geography: 32,000 sq. mi.

Population: 2,250,000

Ethnic Groups: Arabs, Iranians, Pakistanis, Indians

Religions: Moslem 94%, Christian, Hindu

Government: Federation of Emirates



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The Gulf Crisis, which began August 2, 1990, and the Gulf War, which began January 16, 1991, captured the attention of the world after a fashion which really had no precedent in history. These events, from the perspective of Bible prophecy, were occurring at the right time (at the end of the sixth millennium of Man's Day) in the right place (the Middle East, particularly the Persian Gulf area) with the correct nations present (nations which, according to Bible prophecy, will play a major role in end-time events in the Middle East).

Military personnel being sent to the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia were asking questions which many of them had never asked before. Military chaplains were being so deluged with questions about Bible prophecy and the Middle East that special classes had to be established in order to deal with them, and numerous other Bible classes began to spring up within military groups.

All at once the Bible seemed very relevant, for hundreds of thousands of military personnel suddenly found themselves being sent into a part of the world where, according to Scripture, the most bloody wars in history are about to be fought, concluding with a battle in which blood will run to the depth of "the horse bridles" (Rev. 14:20).

Books on Bible prophecy became very popular almost overnight, and some Bible scholars found themselves hurriedly updating previously written works in order to meet the demand and answer questions which Christians were asking.

In order to understand what has occurred and is presently occurring in the Middle East, one must possess an understanding of two things: 1) Bible history, and 2) Bible prophecy. Conditions are as they presently exist because of events in history, and, through rapidly changing events, conditions are about to merge into that time foretold by the prophets.

FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE EAST deals with the matter from this two-fold perspective, with Israel occupying *center-stage* in everything which occurs.

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