

# MIDDLE EAST in Prophecy

by Herbert W. Armstrong

**T**HE Middle East is seething with crisis after crisis. The people of the United States do not realize the true significance of this turmoil. They seem to have no conception of the DANGER it threatens — eventual danger to AMERICA!

It's time we woke up to the FACTS! It's time we knew what PROPHECY reveals. It's time we knew the background — the vital factors that have led up to this world danger — the significance of this series of crises!

If full-scale war erupts yet again in the Middle East, WILL RUSSIA JOIN IN — WILL IT PROVOKE WORLD WAR III?

There is only one way to know the answer. The God who made the world — who makes and unmakes nations — He reveals *the future* before it happens so we can know and take warning!

The time has now come to reveal a most amazing prophecy!

## UNVEILING the Future!

What is the REAL SIGNIFICANCE of this seething unrest? To understand it, we must study a MARVELOUS PROPHECY, never before understood — a prophecy that has been CLOSED, and SEALED, until now — a prophecy that foretold, two thousand five hundred years ago, this very series of crises and the war that shall finally draw in all the nations of the world.

It is one of the most amazing prophecies in the Bible. It is most SPECIFIC, describing historical events, up to the present, in more detail than any other prophecy. It is the longest prophecy in the Bible. It is found in DANIEL, chapter ELEVEN. It describes the impending war!

The prelude is found in the 10th chapter of the Book of Daniel. The prophecy came to Daniel in the third year of the reign of Cyrus, king of the Persian Empire (Dan. 10:1). A "man," apparently the archangel Gabriel (Dan. 9:21), appears before Daniel, to make him understand what shall befall God's

people in these present "*last days*" (verse 14).

## The "King of the North" and the "King of the South"

The first verse of the 11th chapter is a continuation from the last verse of the 10th chapter. The angel says to Daniel: "Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will" (Dan. 11:2-3).

Actually there were 12 more kings in the Persian Empire, but only the first four following Cyrus were of importance for the purpose of this prophecy. They were Cambyses, pseudo-Smerdis, Darius, and Xerxes. It was the last, or Xerxes, who was the richest of all and stirred up war with Greece.

Then King Philip of Macedonia planned a great war to conquer the Persian Empire, with an army made up mostly of Grecians. He died before the plans were completed. But his son, Alexander the Great, took over his plans, and invaded Persia. He met the Persian army at the Battle of Issus, B.C. 333 (Dan. 8:2, 5-6). Then he swept down into Egypt, and then to a final crushing defeat of the Persian Empire at the Battle of Arbella, B.C. 331, after which Alexander marched on a conquest clear to India, sweeping all before him. Notice now verse 4 of the prophecy: "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those."

How marvelously — how accurately — that came to pass. We quote from *A Manual of Ancient History* (Student Series) by Rawlinson, one of the authoritative histories: "Cut off unexpect-

edly in the vigor of early manhood [the thirty-third year of his age, June, B.C. 323], he [Alexander] left no inheritor, either of his power or of his projects" (page 237). The Empire was left leaderless and in confusion, but out of this emerged, by the year 301 B.C., FOUR DIVISIONS, just as prophesied, by a division of the Empire into four divisions by Alexander's generals. They were:

1. Ptolemy (Soter), ruling Egypt, part of Syria, and JUDAEA.
2. Seleucus (Nicator), ruling Syria, Babylonia, and territory east to India.
3. Lysimachus, ruling Asia Minor.
4. Cassander, ruling Greece and Macedonia.

Thus was the prophecy of verse 4 fulfilled to the letter.

Now notice what follows. From here the prophecy foretells the activities only of TWO of these four divisions, Egypt, called "King of the South," because it is south of Jerusalem; and the Syrian kingdom, the King of the North, just north of Judaea. It is because the Holy Land passed back and forth between those two divisions, and because their different wars were principally over possession of Judaea, that the prophecy is concerned with them. Here is verse 5: "And the king of the south [Egypt], shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion." In actual history, we learn that the original Ptolemy I, called Soter, became very strong and powerful, developing Egypt beyond the greatest dreams of Alexander. One of his princes, or generals, Seleucus Nicator, also became very strong and powerful. And, in B.C. 312, taking advantage of Ptolemy's being tied up in a war, he established himself in Syria, and assumed the diadem as king.

Verse 6 says: "And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the

north to make an agreement [margin, "rights" or "equitable conditions," or "marriage union"]: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times."

### Fulfilled to the Letter!

At the end of fifty years, this occurred, exactly as described!

Syria's ruler, the "king of the north," at this time was Antiochus II, called "Theos." His wife was named "Laodice." And, says Rawlinson's ancient history, page 251: "Her influence . . . engaged him in a war with Ptolemy Philadelphus [king of the south], B.C. 260, which is terminated, B.C. 252, by a marriage between Antiochus and Bernice, Ptolemy's daughter."

The prophecy says "he that begat her" shall be given up. Also that she shall not retain the power of the arm, neither shall the king of the north, whom she married, stand. All three are to come to their end. Notice how accurately this came to pass.

Says Rawlinson's history, pages 251 and 252: "On the death of Philadelphus [he that begat her], B.C. 247, Antiochus repudiated Bernice, and took back his former wife, Laodice, who, however, doubtful of his constancy, *murdered him* to secure the throne for her son Seleucus (II) B.C. 246 . . . Bernice . . . had been put to death by Laodice."

Nowhere in all the Bible is there so literal a prophecy, giving so many details of FUTURE history. And to read an ancient history of these kingdoms is simply to see unfolded before your eyes, step by step, verse by verse, this marvelous prophecy. THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT of its right application!

### The Holy Land Changes Hands

Next let us notice verse 7: "But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate [margin, "in his office"], which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail."

"Out of a branch," or "shoot," of

her ROOTS. Her parents were her roots. Hence, this must be her brother, who next should occupy the throne of king of the south and fulfill this prophecy. Now listen to this accurate fulfillment, quoted word for word from the same page of Rawlinson's history (p. 252): "Ptolemy Euergetes [the III, eldest son of Philadelphus, page 272, and therefore Bernice's brother, a branch of her roots] invaded Syria, B.C. 245, to avenge the murder of his sister, Bernice . . . In the war which followed, he carried everything before him." The 8th verse of Daniel 11 says this king of the south would carry captives and vessels of silver and gold into Egypt, and continue to reign more years than the king of the north, who at that time was Seleucus II, and verse 9 says he shall return into Egypt. As verse 7 said he should "enter into the fortress of the king of the north," Ptolemy III did seize the fortress of Syria, Seleucia, the port of Antioch, capital of the kingdom! Then he carried back to Egypt immense booty and 2,500 molten images and idolatrous vessels which, in B.C. 527, had been carried away from Egypt. He continued to rule until B.C. 222, while the king of the north, Seleucus II, died in B.C. 226.

When he died, his two sons took over the kingdom of the north, first Seleucus III, B.C. 226-223, who ruled only three years, and then his brother Antiochus III, called "the Great," B.C. 223-187. Both of these two sons of Seleucus II assembled immense forces to war against Egypt, avenge their father, and recover their port and fortress, Seleucia.

And this was accurately prophesied in verse 10: "But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return and be stirred up, [margin, "be stirred up again"] even to his fortress."

"And," continues verse 11, "the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand."

In fulfillment of the latter part of

verse 10, Antiochus the Great, after 27 years, recovered his fortress, Seleucia, and he also conquered the territory of Syria, as far as Gaza, INCLUDING JUDAEA. But the young Egyptian king, now Ptolemy IV (Philopater), was roused, and with an army of 20,000 inflicted severe defeat on Antiochus the Great, and fulfilling verse 12, he killed tens of thousands and AGAIN ANNEXED JUDAEA to Egypt. But he was not strengthened, for he made a rash and speedy peace with Antiochus, and returned to dissipation, throwing away the fruits of victory. Says verse 12: "And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it."

"For," as verse 13 continues, "the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches." It was "after certain years," or 12 years later, B.C. 205, that Ptolemy Philopator died leaving his throne to an infant son, Ptolemy Epiphanes. Then Antiochus assembled a greater army, and won great victories. He now made a treaty allying Philip of Macedon with him, and others, against Egypt, and they wrested Phoenicia and southern Syria from the king of the south. In this they were assisted by some of the Jews. Josephus' Jewish history says many Jews helped Antiochus. But notice how accurately Almighty God had foretold this, many hundreds of years before it happened!

"And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of THY PEOPLE shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall" (verse 14).

### Read It in Your Own Bible!

To save space, the reader is asked from this point to read each verse of the prophecy FROM HIS OWN BIBLE, thus saving us reprinting the prophecy in full here. We give here only the facts IN HISTORY. Verses 15-16: "the glorious land," of course, refers to Judaea, the Holy Land. Antiochus the Great besieged and took Sidon from Egypt, ruined the interests of Egypt in

Judaea at the Battle of Mt. Panium, B.C. 198, and then Antiochus took possession of Judaea.

Verse 17 — “upright ones,” (see margin) in Hebrew means “equal conditions, or marriage,” but the one he marries will not stand on his side. In B.C. 198, Antiochus arranged a marriage between his daughter, Cleopatra (not the Cleopatra of B.C. 31 in Egypt), and young Ptolemy Epiphanes, king of the south, by which he hoped subtly to gain complete possession of Egypt, but the plan failed. Says Rawlinson, page 254: “Coele-Syria and Palestine promised as a dowry, *but not delivered.*” Cleopatra did not truly stand on the side of Antiochus, for it was only a trick to gain possession of Egypt. But the plan failed.

Verse 18 — and so Antiochus turned his attention in another direction and tried to conquer, B.C. 197 to 196, the islands and coasts of Asia Minor — but the Roman general, Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus, utterly defeated him at the Battle of Magnesia, B.C. 190.

Verse 19 — Antiochus next turned his attention to the fortresses of his own land, in east and west. But, attempting to recruit his dissipated wealth by the plunder of the Oriental Temple of Belus, in Elymais, he was killed, B.C. 187.

Verse 20 — Seleucus Philopator (IV) (187-176), his son, in an effort to raise money, sent a tax collector, Heliodorus, through Judaea. But he reigned only 11 years, when Heliodorus *poisoned* him.

Verse 21 — He left no heir. But his brother, a younger son of Antiochus the Great, named Epiphanes, (Antiochus IV), a contemptible reprobate, came by surprise and through flattery took the kingdom. To his aid came his assistant, Eumenes. Rawlinson’s history, page 255, says: “Antiochus [Epiphanes], assisted by Eumenes, drives out Heliodorus, and obtains the throne, B.C. 176. He astonishes his subjects by an affectation of Roman manners,” and “good-natured profuseness [flattery].”

### Antiochus Epiphanes

Verse 22 — “the prince of the covenant,” does not refer to Christ. This

was the attempt of Antiochus to replace the Jewish high priest by another who would be subservient to him.

Verses 23-24 — Although only a few were with him at first, yet by this Roman manner, by deceit and flattery, he crept into power and prospered. He also invaded Galilee and Lower Egypt. His fathers, the former kings of Syria, had favored the Jews, but says Rawlinson’s history, page 255, they “were driven to desperation by the mad project of this self-willed monarch.”

Verse 25 — Rawlinson’s history, pages 255-256, says: “Threatened with war by the ministers of Ptolemy Philometor [now king of the south], who claim Coele-Syria and Palestine as the dowry of Cleopatra, the late queen-mother, Antiochus marches against Egypt . . . B.C. 171” (pp. 277-278). But he was met by his nephew, Ptolemy Philometor, king of the south, with another immense army. But the Egyptian king was defeated through the treachery of his own officers and was outwitted by Antiochus.

Verse 26-27 — Says Rawlinson’s history, page 278, “After his victory at Pelusium, Antiochus advanced to Memphis, and having obtained possession of the young king’s person [Ptolemy Philometor, king of the south], endeavored to use him as a tool for effecting the entire reduction of the country.” In B.C. 174, the uncle of the king of the south sat at a banquet. Antiochus pretended to ally himself with the young Ptolemy, against his brother, Euergetes II, but each was trying to deceive the other.

### The Abomination of Desolation

Verse 28 — B.C. 168, returning from Egypt with great plunder, Antiochus set himself against the Jews, massacred many, and then returned to Antioch with golden vessels from the Temple at Jerusalem.

Verse 29 — The same year, he again invaded Egypt, but with none of his former success, because Philometor, king of the south, got help from Rome.

Verse 30 — The Roman fleet came against Antiochus, and he was forced to surrender to the terms of Popillius of the Roman fleet, and retire from

Egypt and restore Cyprus to Egypt. Returning through Judaea, smarting under the defeat, he vented his exasperation against the Jews, and extended special favors to those Jews who would turn from their religion.

Verse 31 — Then, B.C. 168, the same year, came the climax of the horror. Antiochus sent troops to the Holy Land, who desecrated the Temple and Sanctuary, and ABOLISHED THE DAILY SACRIFICE (see also Dan. 8:11, 24), and (Kislev 15, Hebrew calendar), PLACED THE ABOMINATION OF THE IMAGE OF JUPITER OLYMPUS in the HOLY OF HOLIES, making it DESOLATE (Rawlinson, page 255). And so many who claim to teach the Bible try to apply the prophecy of this verse to Mohammedans in the 7th century A.D., building the Dome of the Rock on the supposed site of the ancient Temple at Jerusalem! But every verse of this prophecy, step by step, verse by verse, unfolded in actual history, just as here recounted, so there can be not the slightest shadow of doubt as to this ABOMINATION THAT MAKETH DESOLATE — it was the idol of Jupiter set in the Holy of Holies, B.C. 168, by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of the north.

### The Prophecy Comes to Christ and the Apostles

Verse 32 — Antiochus tried to END the religion of the Jews. He took away the daily sacrifice, forbade the ministration at the Temple. He perverted by flatteries the Jews who were willing to forsake their religion.

*BUT* — RIGHT HERE, the prophecy CUTS OFF from the continuation of events in the history of those ancient north and south kingdoms. Up to this point, the prophecy was unfolded, step by step, in the actual history of the northern kingdom of the Seleucidae, or Syria, and the southern kingdom of Egypt. But, says the *Exposition of the Bible*, “all accurate details seem suddenly to STOP SHORT,” with this verse.

Now let us notice verse 32 in detail, and particularly the last part:

“And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries.” This, Antiochus Epiphanes did do. But now notice the last part of the verse: “but the people that do know

their God *shall be strong and do exploits.*"

So our question, now is *WHEN*, beginning with, and following, B.C. 168, did people begin to *KNOW* God, and to be spiritually *STRONG*, and to *DO EXPLOITS* in the Lord's service? And the answer is, *AT THE TIME OF THE FIRST APPEARING OF JESUS CHRIST*, and the days of the apostles!

Verse 33 — "And they that *UNDERSTAND* among the people shall *INSTRUCT MANY*: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, *MANY DAYS.*"

### The Apostles Sweep the World!

There was no real *UNDERSTANDING* until Jesus came and restored it. Jesus and the apostles did *INSTRUCT MANY*. The true Gospel was carried into every inhabited nation, sweeping the world. But Jesus was put to death, and history indicates that all the early apostles were martyred, except John. And this continued, *MANY DAYS*, even into the Middle Ages, when between 50 and 100 million were martyred for their faith.

Verse 34 — "Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And [verse 35] some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, *EVEN TO THE TIME OF THE END*: because it is yet for a time appointed."

Here is described in general the whole course of God's people, from the days of Christ to the present. Compare with such passages as Rev. 12:6, 11, 13-17. And notice the vision carries on down to this present *TIME OF THE END*.

Verse 36 — The king of the north — who is he, now, in the early and middle *NEW TESTAMENT* times, to which our prophecy has come? In B.C. 65, Syria was swallowed up by the Roman Empire, and became a Roman province. The Roman Emperor now controlled Judaea, and therefore the king of the north, here referred to, is, at this time, the Emperor of the Roman Empire. This verse says he should do according to his will, and he did — exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and he did, for the

Roman Emperors required all to worship them, and sacrifice to them, as a god. He was as a god. He was to speak *AGAINST* the true God, and he did, and persecuted all Christians.

Verse 37 — His fathers had worshipped idols, but the Roman Emperors set themselves up as gods.

Verse 38 — The Roman Emperors honored the god of forces, or (margin) munitions, and developed the greatest war-making power the world ever knew. "And a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things." After setting themselves up as gods, prior to 476 A.D., the Emperors who followed, beginning with Justinian, 554 A.D., began to honor a god never known to their fathers — the head of the professing Christian church — with gold, silver, and power. (Compare this prophecy of Daniel with Rev. 17:4, 5, and 18:3, 16.)

Verse 39 — The Emperors did *ACKNOWLEDGE* the supremacy of the religious hierarchy and increased the Church with material glory, and caused it to rule over many.

### The Prophecy Skips to the PRESENT

Now we come to the very *PRESENT CENTURY*.

Verse 40 — "And *at the time of the end* shall the king of the south push at him . . ."

*WHO* is today the "king of the south"?

It cannot be the king of Egypt, for in B.C. 31 Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire, swallowed up by the king of the north. Today it is a republic ruled by native Arabs. It has no king of its own.

*BUT*, in the reign of Ptolemy III (Euergetes) (verse 7), B.C. 247-222, Egypt annexed part of Ethiopia, immediately south of Egypt (Rawlinson, pages 272, 273). Since that time, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says, article "Ethiopia," Egypt and Ethiopia were two or three times *UNDER THE SAME GOVERNMENT*. Thus, the two were as one land. And the only portion of that land of the "king of the south" that re-

mained *INDEPENDENT* until today is *ETHIOPIA!*

### ETHIOPIA, the King of the SOUTH

Ethiopia is the *ONLY* country in all East Africa that continued independent, and has a government and kingdom dating back to B.C. 168 and before! It was the southern part of Egypt, the southern kingdom. So it is the *ONLY* possible government that could be the "king of the south."

At the time of the *END* — our time — this "king of the south" was to *PUSH AT* the "king of the north," now at Rome!

In 1896 King Menelik, of Ethiopia, sent an army of 9,000 to 10,000 men against General Baratieri's Italian army.

North of Ethiopia was Eritrea, belonging to *ITALY*. And southeast was Italian Somaliland.

In 1896 General Baratieri tried to defend Eritrea against the Ethiopians with 13,000 men. They lost 4,600 whites and 3,000 native troops, and more than 3,500 were taken prisoner.

In a later engagement the Italians were cut to pieces because of the mountainous country and because they were greatly outnumbered. This defeat was disastrous to Italian expansion in Africa.

Ever since, Italians thirsted for revenge! In 1927, Mussolini set the time, at *JUST 40 YEARS* from that defeat, or 1935, when he would be ready, "finally to make our voice heard, and see our rights recognized!"

1935 came. The hour struck! Mussolini attacked! Now notice verse 40:

" . . . and the king of the north shall come against him *like a whirlwind*, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass *OVER.*"

A whirlwind comes *IN THE AIR*, sweeping all before it. Mussolini did send a great *AIR FORCE* into Africa! Also many modern "chariots" — trucks, tanks, etc. Also many *SHIPS*, loaded with soldiers. More than 100,000 sailed to Ethiopia.

And, notice it, Mussolini's forces were to pass *OVER* — in the *AIR!* It is at this precise point in this astounding

prophecy that Mussolini's struggle in Ethiopia and in WORLD WAR II ended. Mussolini did not finish the prophecy. There is yet another leader to arise in Europe! Notice what will next happen!

Verse 41 — "He shall enter also into the GLORIOUS LAND" — the Holy Land. This is yet to be fulfilled.

When the coming revival of the Roman Empire takes the Holy Land, then the nations will be plunged into the initial phase of the great, last and final WORLD WAR! Other prophecies reveal that this revival of the Roman Empire *will conquer the United States and Great Britain!* (Request our free book *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy.*)

"And," continues verse 41, "many countries shall be overthrown: but these *shall escape* out of his hand, even Edom [TURKEY], and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon." The coming dictator will unite many others with him — TEN IN ALL (Rev. 17:12)

— reviving THE ANCIENT ROMAN EMPIRE.

Verse 42 says Egypt shall not escape, proving Egypt is not now the "king of the south."

Verse 43 says the Libyans and Ethiopians (observe that after its conquest by Mussolini, Ethiopia is not again referred to as "the King of the South") shall be at his steps — and he will then control them. Italy lost control of Libya and Ethiopia after the war.

Verse 44 — But news out of the East and out of the North — RUSSIA and the Orient — shall trouble the revived Roman Empire. Russia will enter the war! Today much of Communist intrigue is for the express purpose of GAINING control of the Mideast! That time is fast approaching.

Verse 45 — The coming Roman Empire shall establish its palace, as capital of the revived Roman Empire, and eventually its religious headquarters AT JERUSALEM! Zechariah 14:2 says the city shall be taken! "*Yet he shall come to his end, and NONE shall help him!*" This

language signifies the end of the "beast" and the "false prophet" at the HAND OF GOD! You will find this end described in Rev. 19:19-20 and Zech. 14:12.

And now what is the TIME of this END, at the close of this marvelous prophecy? The next verse, Daniel 12:1, says at the time of the RESURRECTION OF THE JUST — the *SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST!*

This prophecy BEGINS with the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, soon after the death of Alexander the Great — 2300 years ago. But it ENDS at the time of the resurrection and the second coming of Christ! It is so plain, there can be no doubt of its right application!

Are you *ready* for that event?! It is fast approaching. Now is the time to GET READY, for Jesus said, "*BE ye also READY!*" REPENT! BELIEVE! PRAY! □

#### ADDITIONAL READING

Don't forget to request our free book *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy.*

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