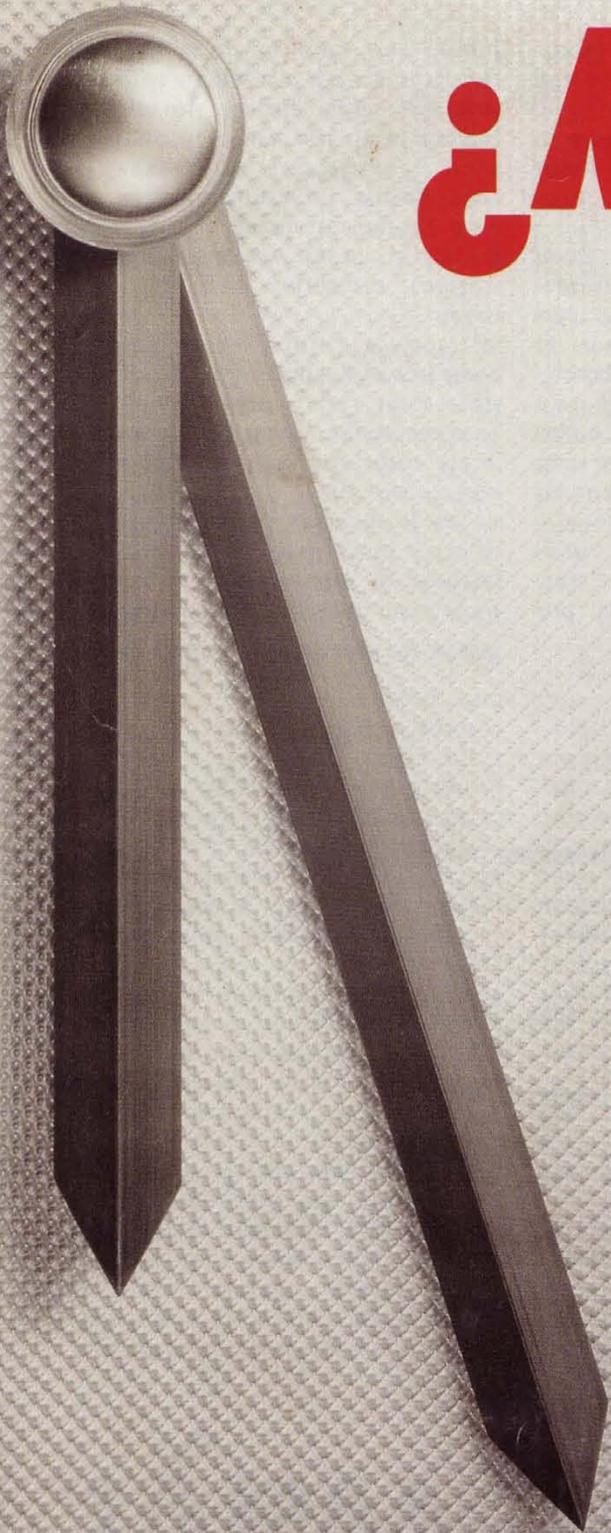


**Where
Are We
NOW in
Prophecy?**



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The difficulties mankind now faces are simply more than any human being can properly handle, because this world of ours has progressed too rapidly in the wrong direction!

"Oh, I wouldn't say that!" many will exclaim. No, people don't want to believe it! They seem to prefer to deceive themselves with wishful thinking.

But therein lies the danger!

Most men are afraid to face the facts! But these are facts nonetheless. The development of engines of mass destruction has far outpaced the development of man's power to control them.

Man has built the awesome Frankenstein monster that threatens to destroy him. Man has reached that stage of development and "progress" where he is utterly unable to save himself!

These relentless forces now set in motion would continue until the fear so frankly expressed by top scientists of the blasting of human life completely out of existence would become a reality, if it was not for one thing—the intervention of almighty God to save us from ourselves!

Shocking? Maybe to some. But thank God! His intervention is sure. It's time millions were becoming alarmed—yes, frightened—aroused by what's happening today and a little more than curious to learn what's prophesied for the not-too-distant future.

Trouble Ahead

For the immediate future—the next five, 10 or 25 years—the sobering revelation of Bible prophecy shows this world will go from bad to worse. World confusion, hatred, strife, warfare and terrible destruction will increase with rapid acceleration. It's the natural course to expect.

The United Nations won't be able to bring peace. The aggressor nations—and we are so gullible we never recognize them until after they plunge the world into another war—will go right on with their scheming and diabolical planning for world rule.

Exciting News —

Peace Is on the Way!

The dreaded nuclear war we have all feared for so long will come—not because God wills it, but because men will choose to unleash this destructive power on one another.

The greatest prophet who ever lived looked down into our time and the now-imminent future and declared: "And there shall be . . . distress of nations, with perplexity . . . Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth—And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass . . . know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled" (Luke 21:25-32).

World Government Needed

World government is needed, but through human leaders it is simply impossible! What man lives today who has the qualifications—who could safely be entrusted with that much power! What man would not abuse such vast power, exalt himself, wield it for his own ambitious and selfish purposes? What man has the wisdom to execute such power, to save this world from itself and to administer his great office for the good of the governed?

Human civilization has "progressed" adversely to the point where now it is utterly helpless to save the world from itself. The world's sole hope now lies in the supernatural intervention of God!

We're so hopelessly involved and entangled in the type of paganized, competitive-government civilization built upon earth that we cannot extricate ourselves. Let's face it. We're in the death grip of an evil system, and only God can save us from extinction.

But God will intervene. He will send Jesus Christ once again to earth, and this time not as a lamb-like, gentle teacher, but in all the supreme, supernatural power and glory of God.

"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things" (Acts 3:20-21). Jesus himself said, "If I go . . . I will come again" (John 14:3). And his coming happens to be the world's only hope.

World Government Through Christ

Few seem to have understood the purpose of either Christ's coming to earth more than 1,900 years ago or his prophesied Second Coming, now imminent.

He came the first time as a divine messenger, bearing a message from God. That message was the good news (gospel) of the kingdom of God—a future world government.

That message was Christ's gospel. In other words, it was the true gospel of Jesus Christ—the very gospel he commissioned all New Testament ministers to preach to all the world throughout this age. Yet almost universally that true gospel message is rejected today, and men have, as prophe-

sied, turned to another gospel—a gospel about a different Jesus, certainly not the same Jesus described so vividly in the New Testament.

Yes, it was Jesus Christ who first proclaimed to the world the idea of world peace through a future world government.

Jesus proclaimed himself the future King of that world government—and for this cause he was crucified (John 18:37).

But what men did not understand about his message was that his kingdom was for the future. He said plainly, “My kingdom is not of this world” (verse 36).

Now notice the descriptions of Christ’s imminent return to this earth: “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war [against evil]... And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations [“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword”—Heb. 4:12. This is not a sword of steel to do physical harm, but the Word of God to correct and do spiritual good!]; and he shall rule them [all nations] with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath... a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords” (Rev. 19:11-16).

Yes, Jesus will be a supernatural, divine world Ruler, a King over all kings of the earth. His weapon will be the Word of God—the truth! And Jesus said it is the truth that shall make men free (John 8:32).

He will be a “world king” who shall judge all nations in righteousness. Surely that’s the world’s greatest need.

Is a Real Utopia Impossible?

People ridicule the idea of a utopia today, as though it were impossible. But why should utopia be thought of as impossible? Why shouldn’t we have it?

The answer comes through an-

People ridicule the idea of a utopia today, as though it were impossible. But why should utopia be thought of as impossible? Why shouldn’t we have it?

other question. Why is there so much unhappiness, strife, injustice, fear and suffering now? Simply because men are thinking, acting and living contrary to all the laws by which such happiness, universal prosperity and joy could come. That’s the plain and simple answer. Because of selfishness, greed and vanity.

Suppose everyone on earth loved all his neighbors equally with himself. Suppose everyone was honest, kind, just, considerate, gentle, pleasant and cheerful, industrious, in perfect health and of keen, alert mind, humble, trusting fully in God and working happily with zeal and enthusiasm to accomplish all the good he could. Can you visualize what a wonderful world would result? Well, it would be a real and practical utopia.

But, you say, that’s contrary to human character. Yes, true. But Jesus Christ is coming to change that! The power of God in a person through God’s Holy Spirit, changes, converts, that person. It gives him power, if he wills, to master—to overcome—the nature within. Through faith he can be changed into the kind of person described above. And the mission of Jesus Christ of Nazareth at his Second Coming is to work exactly that change in humanity!

Impossible! Oh, no! Nothing is impossible with God! And Jesus is coming in all the supernatural power and glory of God!

Preview of Coming Utopia

It’s possible, now, for us to peer into the future—on over past and beyond the hellishness this world

will put itself through during the immediate future—and catch a preview of the world tomorrow!

First, the nature of Christ’s world rule:

“With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth... They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea [none deceived, as most are today—true knowledge universally—true education shall be a basic part of the program]. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse [Christ, the Messiah], which shall stand for an ensign of the people, to it [Christ] shall the Gentiles seek” (Isa. 11:4-10).

Now for the effect—a preview of happiness and world peace:

“But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain [kingdom] of the house of the Lord [that is, the kingdom of God] shall be established in the top of the mountains [that is, reigning over the great nations of earth], and it shall be exalted above the hills [the smaller nations]... And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he [Christ] will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Mic. 4:1-3).

It is when people are no longer deceived by Satan, when God’s law goes forth, when people begin to seek God’s laws and live by his ways and when, through Christ and the indwelling of God’s Holy Spirit, we are able to develop in our lives the character of God that we shall have peace, prosperity, happiness and joy! □

You Can Understand PROPHECY

If we are living in the end time, we need to know it.

YOU'VE HEARD them all: Armageddon. The Second Coming. The beast. The number 666. The Great Tribulation. The Day of the Lord.

What do these seemingly strange biblical symbols mean? Is it possible to know? Is it really possible to understand Bible prophecy?

Unfortunately, when most people think of Bible prophecy they think of the ominous phrase "the end of the world." But what the Bible means by "end of the world" is not what most people think it is!

One Third of the Bible Is Prophecy

Have you ever stopped to think that approximately one third of the Bible is prophecy? Page after page of God's revealed Word has to do with the time immediately ahead of us. In fact, almost 90 percent of the events prophesied to happen in the Bible have not yet occurred.

Whole books of the Bible are devoted to prophecy. Ancient writers such as Isaiah, Jeremiah or Ezekiel wrote their messages hundreds of years before Jesus was born. Their writings have been preserved in the Bible. Many of their prophecies, however, were not intended to come to pass in their time—but in the "time of the end."

For example, the prophet Ezekiel was among the Jewish captives carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, king of ancient Baby-

lon. The prophet said in Ezekiel 1:1, "... as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God." In chapter two, God gave Ezekiel his commission: "And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me. . . . And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them."

Ezekiel had a message to the house of Israel. This was, however, more than 125 years after the captivity of the ten northern tribes of the house of Israel.

Ezekiel remained a captive and never took his message to the house of Israel. The prophecy was not intended for Ezekiel's day—but for a time far into the future. That book has been carefully preserved through the centuries. Its message to warn the modern descendants of the so-called lost ten tribes of Israel has been written and preserved for us.

For the "Time of the End"

In Amos 3:7 God reveals a most important prophetic principle: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."

God has promised he will not personally intervene in the affairs of mankind to bring about prophecy unless he has first had his servants proclaim that message.

Over the past near 6,000 years of human history, God has allowed man to govern himself and to try his own ways. When God has intervened in the affairs of man, he has not done so unless he had first made it known through his prophets. Those prophets, as we have mentioned, often wrote not only of events for their time, but for the prophesied "time of the end." That time is now nearer than world leaders think.

Another important key in understanding prophecy is revealed in the book of Daniel: Let's notice it in Daniel 12:4: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even to the time of the end*: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." And again in verse 13 God said to Daniel, "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

Strange as it may seem, many of the events God revealed to Daniel could not be understood by anyone in Daniel's day—including Daniel himself. Significant parts of the book were indeed shut up, sealed till the time of the end. Now major parts of those prophecies can be understood. But we first need to know which modern nations are affected.

Modern Nations Identified

Think of it. Could the Bible focus attention in prophecy on such comparatively small nations as Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the modern nation of Israel, and not even mention the populous nations of the world today?

What about the great nations in today's world such as the United States, Britain, Canada, Germany, France and the other democracies of northwestern Europe? What about the Soviet Union? What about the People's Republic of China? Japan? What is prophesied for these large nations today?

There are Bible prophecies about ancient cities such as Tyre, Ashkelon, Zidon, Babylon and Jerusalem. Does the Bible ignore modern cities—New York, Los Angeles, Montreal, Johannesburg, Sydney, London, Moscow, Rome and many others?

The Bible does not specifically mention these modern nations and cities by name, of course. But events affecting them are prophesied for the future.

One important principle is that most Bible prophecy relates to the ancient nations of Judah and Israel. A common misconception today is that many people think prophecies concerning ancient Israel relate only to the modern nation of Israel in the Middle East.

But Israel and Judah were not the same nations. Ancient Israel, after Moses and the judges, was a nation divided until the reign of king David. It continued as one nation under Solomon. After Solomon's death, the kingdom was again divided. The northern ten tribes united under Jeroboam and, later, established a capital at Samaria. Judah and Levi, along with a portion of the tribe of Benjamin, retained Jerusalem as their capital and became known as the house of Judah. Since that original split, there never again was a national union of Judah and Israel.

Some 200 years after the split, the northern tribes of Israel were taken into captivity by the Assyrians.

About 125 years later the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar took the house of Judah, the Jews, into captivity. Later, under the Persian kings, the Jews were permitted to return to their homeland.

By this time, part of the northern tribes of Israel had begun to migrate from Persia toward Europe. Over centuries of time, they finally settled in northwestern Europe. Later some came to the Western Hemisphere, the southern portion of Africa, to Australia and other parts of the world.

To understand who are some of the modern nations descended from the so-called lost ten tribes,

you need to write for our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*. It will make plain the identity of the English-speaking world and help you understand the prophetic times in which you live.

Since most Bible prophecy focuses on the modern descendants of ancient Israel and Judah, you can't understand Bible prophecy without an understanding of who these people are today.

Other nations, while not named in the Bible by their modern names, are spoken of in the Bible

end. In that same book of Daniel we find the overview of prophecy.

God chose to reveal the framework of prophecy to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. In the second chapter of Daniel, we read that Nebuchadnezzar had a vision—a strange dream. In the dream he saw a large image with a head of gold, upper torso of silver, waist of brass and legs of iron. He could not understand the meaning of the vision.

God gave Daniel the interpretation, which is recorded in Daniel 2:36-45. In these verses God revealed that Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian empire were symbolized by the head of gold. The vision, however, revealed the empire would not continue indefinitely. In fact, there would be successive empires that would exist until the government of God would be established on earth.

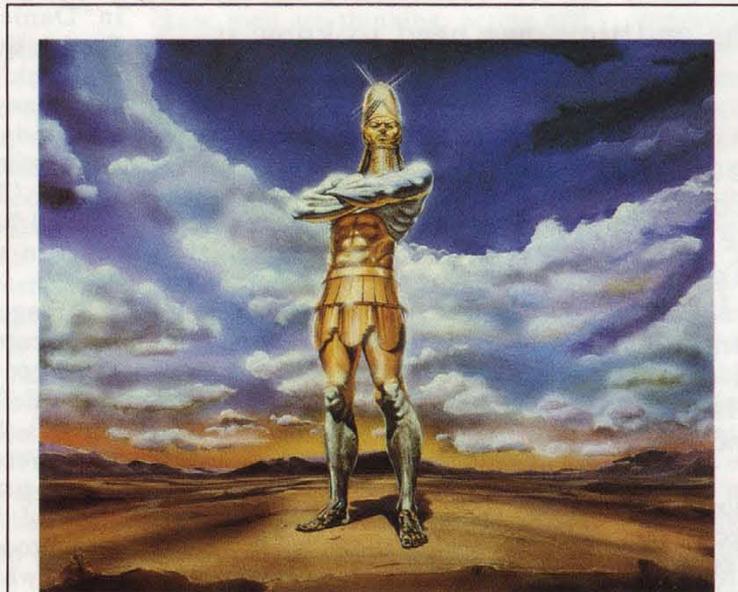
In the early autumn of 539 B.C. the Persian king, Cyrus, conquered Babylon and established the Medo-Persian empire as the second imperial power—the torso of silver. It lasted more than 200 years.

Then, the Macedonians and Greeks came to power. Under Alexander the Great, Greek culture and art were infused throughout the Middle East. That em-

pire, the brass waist of the image, lasted three centuries until Rome became the dominant force in the world.

By 31 B.C. Rome had conquered most of the territory of the previous three empires and much more. Rome divided into east and west—the two legs of the image—and ruled longer than any of the preceding kingdoms—till A.D. 476, when the empire finally collapsed.

But remember the vision given to king Nebuchadnezzar revealed successive kingdoms that would



God chose to reveal the framework of prophecy to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. . . . Nebuchadnezzar had a vision. . . . he saw a large image with a head of gold, upper torso of silver, waist of brass and legs of iron.

as they come into contact, in Bible prophecy, with Israel. So, while nations such as the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China are not specifically named in the Bible by their current names, there are events revealed about them in prophecy.

But first, let's understand the overview.

The Panorama of Prophecy

We have already seen in the book of Daniel how prophecy could not be understood till the time of the

rule until the government of God would be set up. Notice it in Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

The kingdom of God is not yet established over the earth. Man continues to rule—still writing the lessons of human history. How, then, did the Roman empire continue after A.D. 476?

The answer is found in the book of Revelation.

In the 13th chapter of Revelation, the apostle John saw a vision depicting the same empires that God revealed to Daniel. In this chapter, John saw these nations symbolized by a strange animal that he called a "beast." In verse 3 we read: "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast."

When Rome was finally defeated in A.D. 476, it was only a wound. The Roman empire did not die totally in 476. The deadly wound was healed in A.D. 554. The Eastern Roman emperor Justinian restored the empire in the west.

God further revealed to John in Revelation 17:3: "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." This pictures the revival of the Roman empire after A.D. 554.

And that's exactly what happened. Coming out of the ashes of the original Roman empire in the west were to be seven successive revivals. At this time in history, six

of those successive stages have already come and gone.

The seventh and final stage or resurrection of the Roman empire is yet ahead. About it, John wrote: "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of



ILLUSTRATIONS BY C. WINSTON TAYLOR

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kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (verses 12-14).

That final resurrection of the Roman empire is going to be made up of ten nations or groups of nations united together in one final attempt of man to maintain human government. That union of nations will be very short lived, as we read in verse 12, and in Daniel 2:44. The government of God will be established in the days of this final restoration of the Roman empire.

Understanding Bible Symbolism

We've already seen several examples of Bible prophecy using symbols. Nebuchadnezzar, for example, had seen a great image symbolizing human governments in sequence. There are numerous other Bible symbols which, when understood, give important keys to understand prophetic events.

Perhaps a most important aspect of Bible prophecy should be explained here. That simply is: *the Bible interprets the Bible*.

In other words, you do not have to rely on what someone thinks a certain word or symbol means. If you search the Bible, you will find the meaning of each symbol revealed within the pages of the Bible. Sometimes it will be in the same verse. Other times it will be in the same chapter or in the same book. But if not interpreted in proximity to the symbol, it will be interpreted somewhere else in the Bible. You might find a symbol in the book of Revelation interpreted by a prophecy in the book of Matthew. Or something Zechariah saw might be interpreted in the book of Revelation.

We've seen some examples of this in the vision of king Nebuchadnezzar. In the

second chapter of Daniel, God revealed to Daniel the interpretation of the dream. Each part of the image represented an empire.

Another example of the Bible interpreting the Bible is found in Revelation 12. In this vision John saw a great red dragon who had drawn one third of the stars of heaven. Who is the red dragon? And who or what are the stars?

The dragon is plainly identified in the same chapter. Read verse 9: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the

Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. . . .” The dragon is identified as Satan the devil. (Of course, many do not believe he exists today—or they think he appears as the custodian of hell.) In the guise of a serpent he deceived Eve and tempted Adam to sin in the garden of Eden. That same devil has continued ever since as the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4).

But what are the stars? Here is a good example of the Bible interpreting the Bible in the same book, but several chapters away. Turn to Revelation 1:20: “The seven stars are the *angels* of the seven churches.” Here stars are used to symbolize angels. Obviously these seven stars are not the same angels, symbolized by stars, that Satan took with him in his rebellion against God—but we see the biblical principle that stars can be used to symbolize angels. No doubt, the stars of Revelation 12:4 represent one third of the angelic creation that rebelled against God before the time God created the first humans, Adam and Eve. That fascinating story has often been told in *The Plain Truth*. You can read further on it in Ezekiel 28:11-17 and Isaiah 14:12-15.

Many Prophecies Are Dual

Another important principle in understanding Bible prophecy is the *duality* of prophecy. In I Corinthians 15:45, Christ is called the second Adam. The first Adam was the first mortal human being to converse with God. He later sinned, and the death penalty passed on to mankind. The second Adam, Jesus Christ, came and paid the penalty for sin. Thus, it was made possible for man to be forgiven of his sins and to be born into the family of God.

In the same 15th chapter another principle of duality is revealed—mortal human beings can be born again, made into immortal spirit beings by a resurrection from the dead.

Prophetically, the principle of

duality is very important. Many of the prophecies God revealed to the prophets of old had partial fulfillments in their day. Thus, when Isaiah or Amos prophesied to the ancient house of Israel, some of those events occurred in the original captivity. When Jeremiah prophesied to the house of Judah, many of those events came to pass in his day. Some of the events prophesied in the book of Daniel began to happen in the days of Babylon, Persia and Greece, up to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes in 167-164 B.C. But those prophecies were only partially fulfilled or were antetypical fulfillments of yet future times.

Time after time, the prophets foretold events that would lead up to the establishment of the government of God on the earth. The prophets delineated the sins of the people of the ancient houses of Israel and Judah and told the people they would be punished.

And those punishments indeed did come on them and will come on their modern descendants. But the kingdom of God was not established in their day—and has not been yet. These Bible prophecies also tell the sins of people today and the resulting end-time events that will lead up to the Second Coming of Christ and the establishment of the government of God on the earth.

The Focal Point of Prophecy

Almost all prophecies relate directly or indirectly to the establishment of the government of God on the earth—the coming of the Messiah—the Second Coming of Christ.

We read in Daniel 2:44, “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.”

And in Zechariah 14:4, “His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west. . . .”

And in verse 9, “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.”

The coming of the Messiah and the establishment of God’s government is vividly depicted in Revelation 19:11: “. . . heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.”

These same prophecies all show there will be one final battle. The world will not welcome Jesus Christ with open arms. Much of the world, in fact, may well be deceived into believing Jesus Christ’s Second Coming is an invasion from outer space or even the appearance of the antichrist. The nations will gather forces at the valley of Megiddo in Palestine. Hence that last great battle is usually called the battle of Armageddon—meaning armed Megiddo (Rev. 16:16 and 19:19).

That short and final battle will at last be the war to end war. Those rebellious armies will be swiftly put down and the world will enter into the glorious and long prophesied kingdom of God.

The Bible has not specified the exact day, month or year of these final events. But the events themselves have been recorded and hidden in the prophecies of the Bible until our day. We now live in a time in which we need to watch world events as never before. Jesus said, “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:36).

We have only scratched the surface of understanding prophecy. But these keys provide a beginning point—a frame of reference upon which to build a prophetic study of the Bible. As those days approach, those dozens upon dozens of prophecies will begin to be fulfilled one after the other. Be sure you are studying your Bible and watching world news so you can understand the times in which you live. □

Your own future is laid bare, now, in prophecy! The curtain of the future is drawn back.

Prophecies that for centuries were closed and sealed tight now stand revealed. This mystifying, neglected third of the Bible has become plain. Mysteries of God, never before understood, have become crystal-clear. God's own time for this revealing has come. The keys that locked the future have been found.

But what is actually going to happen is not what the world expects!

Today this world is changing—fast! Unprecedented events are shaking the world already. Yet what we have seen is mild compared to the catastrophic happenings that will rock this world in the near future!

You may well have to live into these tremendous times. This is your life! You live here, in this erupting world! It behooves you to know what the Creator-ruler of the universe now makes known!

But first, before we begin the summary of all prophecy, hear the good news—how it all comes out! In this instance, it won't spoil the story to hear the ending first.

Good News First

In the end, we are really going to have world peace! We are going to have actual Utopia—far beyond the dreams of today's world-planners!

It will not be a millennium of man's devising, however. It will not be a world of idleness and ease—but one of production, plenty, health and happiness.

Man does not know the way to peace and happiness and joy. What man is bringing on the world is the diametric opposite—such catastrophic and terrifying destruction that human life will be erased from the earth in this generation unless God Almighty intervenes!

But the Creator and Director of all force and energy is going to intervene! Mankind has some monumental lessons to learn. So far,

What Lies Ahead NOW in Prophecy?

Take a peek, now, into the surprising future, as it will happen! Not what men plan—but what God says! Here, in understandable language, is a quick summary of all prophecy—the neglected one-third of your Bible made plain. It's truly startling!

mankind has merely written these lessons in human experience, while he has refused to learn them.

But God Almighty is working out his purpose here below! We are entering the very crisis at the close of the allotted 6000-year period for working out that purpose. Now, in short order, in constantly accelerating swiftness, events will speed up and mankind is going to be forced, by the supernatural power of God, to learn the supreme lesson of the ages—that God's laws and ways were set in motion for our good, and that the Eternal is Ruler over all!

Yes, the supreme crisis of the ages is nearly upon us. Today we're in the lull before the real storm breaks in imagination-defying fury. Then, suddenly, God will step in and take over! He will speedily punish this world for its iniquity! The divine wrath will quickly subdue a defiant world that has reached the end of its rope! Supernatural intervention will prevent humankind from committing cosmocide. God will send Jesus Christ once again, in person, to

earth in all the supreme power and glory of the Ruler of the universe!

And the misguided humans of earth will be ushered into an unbelievable Utopia of God's making—and delivered, at last, from their own folly!

Now Here's YOUR Future

But where are we, now, in the panorama of prophecy-fulfillment?

Are we being sucked into the vortex of a hydrogen-bomb war between the United States and Russia? That's the inevitable first question.

The answer is that no such war is included in the many prophecies that fill a third of your Bible. It hardly seems possible that the hundreds of detailed prophecies would omit all mention of such a war, if it were going to occur.

Actually, in a different sense, such a war began immediately after World War II. But that war between the super powers is a psychological warfare of propaganda, infiltration, subversion, demoralization. It is a warfare that has attacked minds, moral and spiritual

God allotted 6,000 years for humans hostile to God and God's laws, to write the lesson of the vain, self-centered, getting way of life—the way that appears so alluring and attractive to fallible human minds!

values, as well as bodies and earthly possessions in numerous small wars in many areas of the world.

God Almighty says of the competitive atheistic system in this ongoing psychological and military struggle: "I am against thee" (Ezek. 38:3). Eventually, he will destroy this competitive system and its military power and bring its peoples to spiritual conversion.

But of the American and English peoples and the other nations of northwestern Europe, prophecy says that they allow themselves "to be mixed up with foreigners: . . . foreigners eat away his strength, unknown to him." God says they fly like a silly, senseless dove to seek alliances with foreign nations, forsaking God (Hos. 7:8-13, Moffatt translation).

But the prophecy reveals no military war between the Soviet Union and the United States. The prophecy of Ezekiel 38 and 39—explained in detail in our free brochure *Why Russia Will Not Attack America*, describes a later event.

Meanwhile, however, the U.S.S.R. is exerting a tremendous influence over trends in Europe. All Europe is directly under its shadow.

Many Europeans are becoming distrustful of the bungling capitalist superpower, United States. Also, many Europeans are thinking more and more about the coming United States of Europe!

Americans, with the British, gave Europe the idea. They tried to organize the European nations together against Russia. Bible prophecy, however, reveals that the

Europeans are going to unite and compete against the English-speaking peoples. The stage is being set! What is lacking now is the strong leader! Germany is the economic and military heart of Europe. Probably Germany will dominate the coming United States of Europe, even if a neutral Austrian becomes the dominant political figure.

But Britain will have no part in it in its final stage.

This astounding resurrection in Europe of the Roman Empire is the next prophesied major political event. The world will be dumbfounded when this military colossus actually emerges to solve economic and political problems the United States has been unable to solve in decades of leadership.

While the U.S. has been focusing its attention on the U.S.S.R. with antiquated diplomacy and military might, the world's third superpower has been fitfully trying to unite in Europe.

Yes, This Is Prophesied!

You think all this fantastic? All this was known to God Almighty and recorded by him in his prophecies 2,500 years ago!

You'll find this prophesied in Daniel 2 and 7, and more specifically in the 17th chapter of Revelation—a United States of Europe—a flash in-the-pan final resurrection of the ancient Roman Empire!

It will possess greater military might by far than the Rome of old, but it will also inherit fatal weaknesses. Prophecy symbolizes this admixture of never-equalled military and economic might and unprecedented weakness with the apt phrase, "iron mixed with miry

clay." The European nations will unite economically and militarily—but they are suspicious and envious of each other.

Germany and Italy are coming back from defeat, not as opponents, but within the framework of a European economic community and within an American-directed military alliance.

When this United States of Europe emerges, Europe will have the hydrogen bomb now in French and English possession only, and the guided missiles to defend themselves and to project their power worldwide.

Today the stage is gradually being set! At a certain moment, the new leader of this European combine will appear in the public eye. He's already behind the scenes—in action! But the world does not yet recognize him!

Perhaps even this coming military-political leader does not yet know himself who will finally be chosen to lead Europe and also does not yet know how many, or precisely which nations from Western and Eastern Europe will join in this United States of Europe, the final restoration of the Roman Empire. But you and I can know the number—for God Almighty wrote



it down 2,500 years ago in Daniel 2 and 1,900 years ago in Revelation 17! There will be ten European nations or groups of nations. These ten will give all their military power to the central over-all leader—pictured under the prophetic symbol, “the beast.”

The prophecy does not reveal exactly which ten nations will be included—but this resurrected Roman Empire will bind together some 350 million people! That is more man-power than the U.S.S.R. or the United States has.

The strong indication of these prophecies, then, is that some of the Balkan and other East European nations are going to be torn away from behind the iron Curtain.

Drastic Weather Changes

While this coming European Colossus is developing, an alarming revolution is beginning to occur in the weather. Hurricanes, floods, sectional drought worldwide are increasing.

And now, the next prophesied event—to strike in the full fury of its

climax before the democratic nations are brought low by the resurrected Roman Empire—is a famine, caused by unprecedented drought and/or floods and affecting Africa first, then other areas of the Third World and finally the United States, Britain, and northwestern Europe. And immediately in its wake will come the most frightful epidemic of contagious and degenerative diseases! The disease AIDS is only the forerunner.

Jesus Christ foretold it in his

“and pestilences”—disease epidemics, “and earthquakes in different places” (Matt. 24:7). Already there is an increase in frequency of major earthquakes, all over the world.

“All these,” Jesus continued, verse 8, “are the beginning of sorrows”—(marginal reading, “travail”).

This will be the very beginning, as Jesus said, of what the Bible calls the Great Tribulation!

Jeremiah’s prophecy is more specific. God revealed to the prophet that it is the beginning of the national trouble to come on the United States, the British nations, and the democracies of northwestern Europe! And, as both Jeremiah and Jesus Christ were inspired to record—and also the prophet Daniel—it will be the most catastrophic time of national religious trouble that has ever struck any nation, or ever will!

Still more specific is the prophecy of Ezekiel.

Here is exactly how catastrophic it will be: one third of the American and the British population will die in this famine and disease epidemic!

Read it, in Ezekiel 5:12: “A third part of *thee* shall die with the pestilence, and with the famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee.”

At the outset we stated that the keys that had kept prophetic doors locked and closed from human understanding have now been found—or, more properly, been given to us by God. No denominations possess those keys, for to do so they would have to acknowledge error, and receive correction and new light from the Word of God. What they did not possess and proclaim 50 or 100 or more years ago, they sadly do not acknowledge today. But if you do not yet understand that the “thee” of whom God



great Olivet prophecy: “For,” he said, “nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom”—that’s war!—and we are now in the recess between the 2nd and 3rd rounds of it. “Then there shall be famines,”—that’s the next major world-event now prophesied,

ILLUSTRATION BY C. WINSTON TAYLOR

through Ezekiel is here talking is the English speaking nations and the other democratic nations of northwestern Europe, as set forth and plainly proved in our free book (sent on request) *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, then just remember that these peoples are guilty of the very things that the people it does refer to are guilty of—and God is no respecter of persons; so these things are going to happen to us. Unless we heed and repent!

The details of the Great Drought coming upon us are described in the first chapter of Joel. It's a frightful, desolate picture of starvation and disease!

Then, World War III

But all these things, as Jesus explained, are to be only the beginning of national trouble.

Once we are weakened by starvation, disease, and the resulting calamitous economic depression, the ten-nation European Colossus will suddenly meet the stubborn and foolish United States in a confrontation over the future of Jerusalem. Politics, religion and the life-blood of economics—oil—will be involved. The result will be the destruction of our cities and our centers of industrial and military production!

The very next words of Jesus' prophecy (Matt. 24:9, 21-22) are "Then"—not five years or a generation later, but "then" shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations; . . . and then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days [of mass death and destruction] should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved alive, but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Yes, by the supernatural intervention of God, before all human life is blasted from the earth!

Jesus was there speaking of our peoples nationally, as well as of real Spirit-begotten Christians individually.

But Ezekiel's prophecy adds this specific and terrifying fact: "And a third part"—half our remaining population "shall fall by the sword

round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them."

This is foretold in many prophecies, but here is one that shows the effect that only weapons like the hydrogen bomb can produce—the very next chapter of Ezekiel:

"In all your dwelling places, the cities shall be laid waste" (Ezek. 6:6). A few cities were laid waste in World War II. But not until the production of the hydrogen bomb has it ever been possible to totally destroy all major cities!

Our Great National Calamity

Yes, wake up! American and Britain! You have grown calloused and indifferent to world revolution, wars and the threat of hydrogen-bomb war.

You Americans and British! You smug, proud, stiff-necked complacent people! Many of you enjoy a prosperity God never lavished on any other people—you heedlessly permit yourselves to become soft and decadent, setting your foolish hearts on push-button prosperity and leisure, while others among you are poor and go hungry. You ignore that entire prophetic third of God's Word, warning you of impending disaster and offering you divine protection from it!

Will any one of you who now read this warning awaken to the stern reality?

God Almighty now reveals, in time to prevent it, that one third of all our people will die of starvation and disease—that our day of reckoning is upon us—that we are to be stripped of our wealth and prosperity on which we set our hearts—that a second third of our people—of your personal friends, relatives, acquaintances—will be killed by awesome nuclear forces—that the proud United States and Britain are now destined to be suddenly crushed in defeat—that the remaining third left alive are to be carried as captives, scattered as abject slaves—and that even millions of them shall then be tortured inhumanly in organized religious persecution, until their breath expires in martyrdom as traditional Christianity attempts to bring about

unity in a time of growing secularism and atheism.

Jesus Christ said, "Ye shall be hated of all nations . . . Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you."

Do you foolishly and carelessly assume he meant somebody else? Our book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* proves he meant us. We are the nations that are to be hated by other nations—or hadn't you realized that alarming fact?

Jesus Christ meant us—and his words are as certain and sure as the rising and setting of the sun!

Luke's inspired account of Jesus' words makes it even more specific: "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled"—that is, when the prophetic events of your Bible come to their climax, and all prophecies are suddenly and rapidly fulfilled at this end-time! "And they"—speaking of our nations, "shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations" (Luke 21:22, 24). This prophecy refers only typically to the Jewish captivity of A.D. 70. It refers primarily to our future.

Jeremiah was inspired by the Almighty to picture this invasion, defeat and captivity and to explain why it's coming!

Why We Shall be Punished

In the 30th chapter, God reveals to Jeremiah that the time of the prophecy is the time of world war, the most terrible time of trouble and war of all history (verses 3-4), the time of our national trouble (verse 5) climaxing in the coming exodus of both our peoples—descendants of the lost ten tribes of Israel—and the Jews—of the tribe of Judah and Levi—back to the Holy Land at the Second Coming of Christ.

We are to get into it—the most terrible national trouble ever to befall any nation—but God will deliver us out of it, and will finally break the yoke of slavery from off our necks (verses 5-6).

But why? Are we not Christian countries?

So we vainly assure ourselves—but the prophecies of Jesus and of Paul reveal that we are deceived

into a counterfeit Christianity—our lands filled with many false ministers, coming in the name of Christ, calling their religion “Christian.” Jesus warned that when we worship him by following traditions inherited from the pagans (such as Christmas, Easter, “faith without works,” etc.) that we worship him in vain!

Jeremiah gives the reason: “I have wounded thee,” says God, “with the wound of an enemy, . . . for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased.” And, “I will correct thee in measure” (by this famine, disease, war, captivity and slavery) “and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”

Why? Because God revealed to Adam that he had set laws in motion that produce happiness, joy, health and prosperity if we obey them; but which bring on us curses and separation from God and his blessings, if we transgress.

God made man a free moral agent, and commanded him to choose. Adam chose a way of living opposite to the way of God’s inexorable laws. God sent Jesus Christ to reveal the way of God, and to set us a living example in that way. But men crucified him, then later appropriated his name, began proclaiming his deity, exalting his person, while they deceived the world and kept it in darkness estranged from God by rejecting his gospel, and instead, adopting the pagan philosophies, beliefs, customs and ways that have characterized this (Satan’s) world from the beginning.

Today what is called organized “Christianity” appropriates the name of Christ—exalts his person—worships him—but continues to deny his message, and to rebel against God’s laws!

Can’t you see what this has brought upon humanity? Sickness and disease; fear and worry; inequality and injustice; war and fear of war; heartache, anguish, emptiness!

Man’s inhumanity to man!

It’s all the result of the ways of vanity, pride, selfishness, greed! Man’s horizons have shrivelled and shrunken and become centered on his self. Life becomes a bore, so he

Can a God of love stand idly by, and permit man not only to destroy his health and happiness, but now also to destroy all earthly life?

invents pleasures, amusements to pass the time away! He organizes for wars of conquest. He invents engines of destruction that soon would blast all life from off this planet, if God would not prevent it.

Would God show love to this world by permitting this tragic state of affairs to continue? God allotted 6,000 years for humans hostile to God and God’s laws, to write the lesson of the vain, self-centered, getting way of life—the way that appears so alluring and attractive to fallible human minds! But God does love this suffering world! God informed humans—he sent his prophets to reveal his ways—he sent his son—he has been sending his true ministers. God has pleaded with humanity for nearly 6,000 long years—with words! But man persists in rejecting preachings and warnings.

Annihilation of All Life?

And now, at last, man has arrived at a period where he is learning the secrets of the forces of the universe! Through science, technology and machine-industry, man is now harnessing the very forces and energies of nature! But he puts nuclear energy also to the work of mass destruction. He now works feverishly, fanatically, concentrating the world’s most scientific minds on developing hydrogen bombs, guided missiles, cobalt bombs, and other means of mass destruction.

At last man approaches not only a luxury, push-button, leisure age—but also the age of push-button mass destruction. World renowned scientists who know, warn us that it is now possible to annihilate human life from this planet!

Can a God of love stand idly by, and permit man not only to destroy his health and happiness, but now also to destroy all earthly life?

God forbid! God is a God of love, and also a God of wisdom and justice, who says he punishes every son he loves! (Heb. 12:6).

The punishment is to teach us the lessons of life. Man has written the lesson through nearly 6,000 unhappy years of emptiness, sickness, suffering and death—written it in human blood and anguish! But humans have never yet learned the lesson. Man still clings desperately to the notion that somehow he can yet solve all his problems and reach out and take happiness his own way!

Man refuses to learn the truth! He will not listen to God’s preaching! He would persist to the bitter end to the annihilation of all human life, if God did not step in and intervene!

There is only one language that rebellious mankind will heed—physical punishment, and being deprived of physical assets. Very few individuals ever came to God through Jesus Christ in unconditional surrender until God had punished them by physical adversity. Neither will our nations—and neither will the world as a whole come to God in any other way.

Terrifying—Yet Good News!

And so now God is about to punish! First, he will punish our nations—professing Christians—his own chosen people, chosen for a service they have refused to perform! Then, after we have learned our lesson and turned to our God, he will punish the nations he shall have used in punishing us.

God says, “The Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh . . .”—How? “He will give them that are wicked to the sword . . . evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind [of war] shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth” (Jer. 25:31-33).

Yes, paradoxical though it may seem, this terrifying news actually

is good news!—for this impending punishment is the only way a mankind of free choice can ever be brought to learn the lesson—to acknowledge that God's laws were set in motion for our good—to be brought voluntarily to choose the ways of God which at last will bring undreamed of Utopia!

Yes, the kingdom of GOD is now near at hand! And that is the best news since the first man drew the first breath!

There is one reason, and one only, for the never-equalled national calamity that is destined soon to strike the United States and Britain. In no other way will mankind ever really learn the lesson he has so tragically written in human blood and suffering. God has decreed that we, ourselves, must choose whether to accept his divine rule over us with his inexorable laws, or whether to reject God's Way, and follow the ways and customs that human nature devised and established in this Satan-swayed world. And God will not force humanity to walk his way. Man must first learn his lesson and then make his own right choice!

Time is running out on us, fast, and we're too sound asleep in deception to realize it!

Our peoples will continue some few more years in comparative economic prosperity. This very prosperity is our fatal curse!—because our people are setting their hearts on it, seeking ease and leisure, becoming soft and decadent and weak!

We're going the way of ancient Rome—to a greater fall, because we're bigger and more prosperous, and have farther to fall!

Then, suddenly, before we realize it, we'll find ourselves in the throes of famine, and uncontrollable epidemics of disease. Already we're in a famine we don't know—a famine of many important nutrients in our foods. Our peoples have ignored God's health and agricultural laws. Not all the land has been permitted to rest every seventh year. The land has been overworked. Today, in certain areas, the soil is worn out. And food factories, in the interest of larger profits, remove much of what minerals and vitamins remain—while a new

profit-making vitamin industry leads the people into believing they can obtain these precious elements from pills and capsules.

And all this state of affairs because man is in defiance of his Maker!

Along with the coming famine and disease epidemic will come an invasion of crop-destroying insects, plant-molds, and locusts (grasshoppers) on a scale never before to devastate a land. You'll read of this in the first chapter of Joel.

World War Resumed!

All this is now only some years off. When we are stricken with the greatest national tragedy ever to befall a nation—people dying in nearly every home—your loved ones—perhaps your children, or your parents, and scores of your close friends—perhaps even yourself dying in this calamity, and the nation's economic prosperity suddenly tail-spinning into its lowest ebb of depression, then the colossus that is the restored Roman Empire will strike its blows—and another third of our populations will be killed—our major cities and industrial centers destroyed.

Only one in three of your friends—of your loved ones—will remain alive—unless they heed the warning and come under God's divine protection according to his conditions!

And remember! Every individual will then stand on his own feet before God. You cannot secure the protection of your loved ones. Nor can the prayers, the godliness or righteousness of any friend or loved one save you. Each individual must come to real repentance, total and unconditional surrender to God's will, and his Word and its authority, through Christ as personal Savior, in order to have the proffered divine protection from these impending catastrophies. (See Ezek. 14:12-14 and Jer. 31:29-30.)

This is not pleasant to contemplate! It won't be believed by more than a few. Our proud and stiff-necked nations will heedlessly refuse to take warning! But these prophecies are as certain as tomorrow's sun—unless our nations do heed God's warnings, repent and turn

from their established ways and customs and return to Almighty God and his laws and ways!

And, knowing that such an unbelievable catastrophe is soon to strike, we have to warn you! You can read what God says to his messengers in Ezekiel 33:1-6.

Think of it! Unbelievable? Preposterous? No, it's real—very soon,—of this very present generation—of all people you know now—only one third of them will be left alive!

Americans, Britons Made Slaves

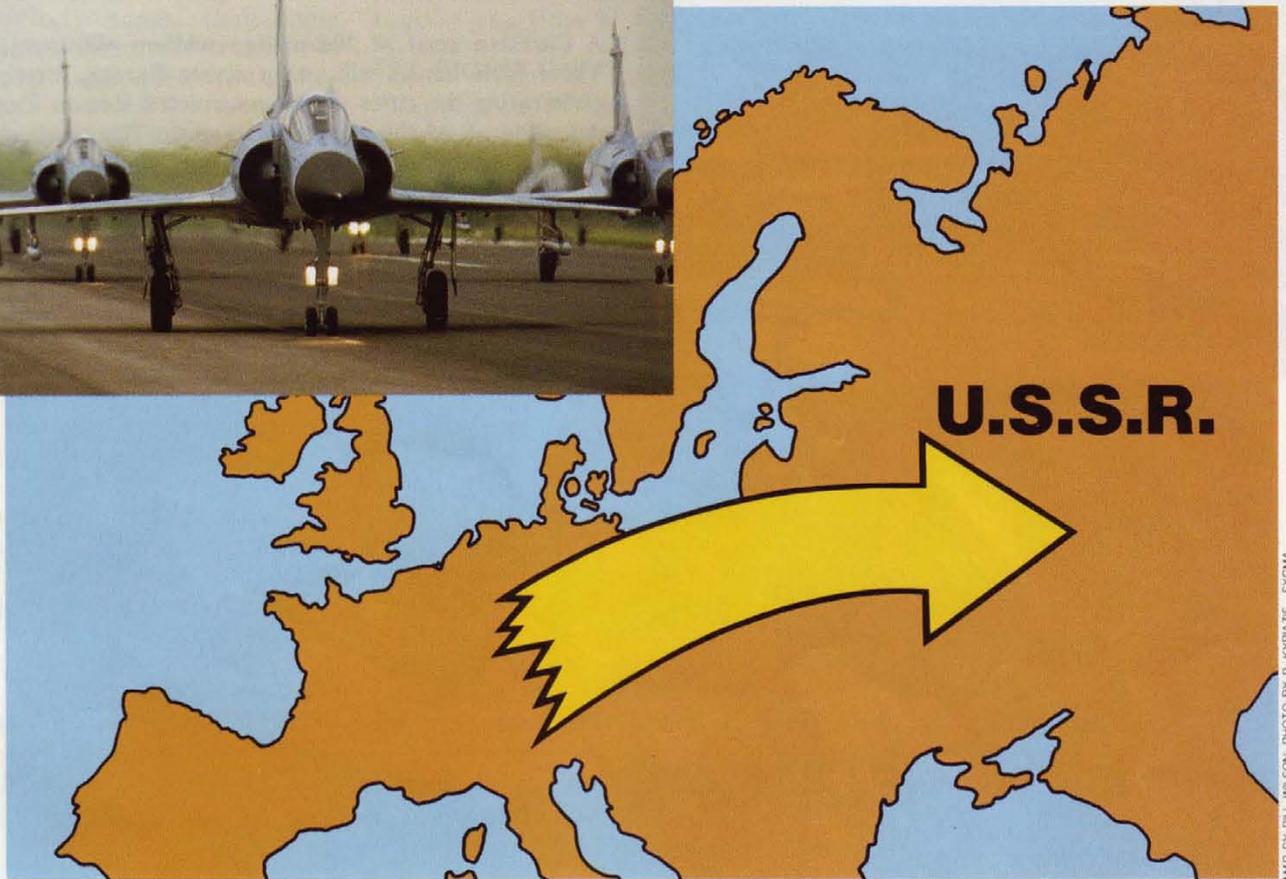
And that surviving third will be uprooted from their homes—transported abroad like cattle as slaves.

There they shall not only be forced under lashes of cruel taskmasters to do the work of slaves—but they will be forced to give up whatever belief they may have in real Bible Christianity! They will be literally forced to accept the idolatrous Pagan beliefs and customs that masquerade as Christianity, or state police will arrest them, and they will be tortured inhumanly until they either give in, or die in martyrdom!

Yes, millions of lukewarm inactive professing Christians will suffer martyrdom. You'll read of this martyrdom—the Great Tribulation—in Matthew 24:9-10, 21-22; Revelation 17:6; 6:9-11; 12:11, and in many other verses.

This coming Great Tribulation is not the wrath of God upon the world's wicked—it is the wrath of Satan the Devil upon Christians and upon the democratic, consumer-oriented nations that descend from the lost ten tribes of Israel (Rev. 12:12-13). Millions of repenting saints will be in it, and the very objects of it—because it is for their sake that God will intervene to cut short that hellish time of torture (Matt. 24:22). This is not the popular orthodox teaching of a "Christianity" that is a part of this world and has lost the purpose and the plan of God. But this is God's truth straight and direct to you!

This is the impending time of supreme trouble for Americans and Britons, and for all true Christians who are not watching, praying constantly and so yielded to God's



MAP BY BILL WILSON. PHOTO BY P. KYRAZIS—SYGMA

Described in Revelation 9:1-11 as the “first woe,” the armies of the beast—the revived Roman Empire, also known as modern Babylon—will attack their enemies to the east. Terrifying war machines (inset) and weapons of awesome power will deal death and destruction to millions. This attack will be one of the phases of World War III.

will that they shall be accounted worthy to escape it all (Luke 21:36; Rev. 12:14).

3½ Years—and Then

This fanatical, Satan-inspired fiendish Tribulation and martyrdom will continue only a very short time. Then it shall be suddenly cut short—by the divine, supernatural intervention of God!

If God did not act swiftly to cut short this diabolical inhumanity of man to man, under the satanic sway, no human flesh would be saved alive (Matt. 24:22).

If there were not some of God’s elect—those who can’t be deceived (verse 24)—those who cry out to God (Luke 18:7)—in this frightful tribulation, God would not intervene to save humanity.

But for the sake of those “elect” awaiting martyrdom, who had not been accounted worthy to escape this awful time, but who now, at last, do cry out to God for mercy

and deliverance, those days shall be supernaturally cut short!

During this hellish brief period, there will be no religious freedom. The entire Western world will be under the resurrected Roman Empire—Church and State united—the religion and all schools under a Religious Hierarchy, enforced by the civil police. The eastern world will be under atheistic Communism. Neither the Eastern or the Western world will permit any true gospel preaching whatsoever.

This is the time, following the famine of food, when there shall be a spiritual famine—a famine of hearing the true Word of God (Amos 8:11). Millions who now hear the true gospel on the *World Tomorrow* program worldwide, but who treat it lightly or spurn it, will wish then that they had heeded!

Sudden Divine Intervention

But at that juncture the God who rules the universe will suddenly

step in, and supernaturally intervene.

He will do this in two stages: first, by terrifying warning signs; finally, by actual plagues in physical punishment.

Yet, even then, God will first give warning! Once again, an all-merciful and loving God will give humans opportunity to repent—to turn from this world’s ways that have cursed mankind, and to receive divine protection from God-sent plagues.

Suddenly something terrifying in appearance will happen in the sky. Just how God will bring this about is not revealed. But, to human eyes, the sun suddenly will go dark; there will be no light from the moon: the only light will come in the form of thousands of stars—meteors—falling to the earth in such frightful display that men will faint or run screaming in stark terror. Astronomers will be caught offguard, baffled. Science will be



A Eurasian army of 200 million soldiers will counter-attack. These vast hordes will sweep across Europe, utterly obliterating the cities of the resurrected Roman Empire and defeating all of the armies in its path. The photo shows recently unearthed ruins near the site of ancient Babylon, whose fall long ago prefigured the end-time destruction to be visited upon modern Babylon.

MAPS BY BILL WILSON, AMBASSADOR COLLEGE PHOTO



unable to explain these happenings.

But this is only the beginning. Far more frightening, men will look up and suddenly see the sign of Christ's imminent personal return in the heavens (Matt. 24:29-30). This is explained (Rev. 6:12-16) as the heavens departing as a scroll being rolled together, and the awe-inspiring bright-as-the-sun face of God the Father, and also that of Christ at his right hand, becoming visible.

Men will be thrown into frantic terror—for no man can look upon God and live!

Frightened out of their wits, men shall try to hide in buildings, in caves in the mountains—they shall cry out in consternation for the rocks of mountains to fall on them, to hide them from the sun-bright countenance of the Creator!

In terrified panic, a God-ignoring, God-rejecting, pleasure-seeking mankind suddenly will become

very much aware that God is real—aware of his mighty power and closeness!

Our Work Bears Fruit!

At that mighty moment of earth's history, hundreds of thousands will remember the true message from God that they had heard going out freely to the world at this time, on the *World Tomorrow* program.

Yes, hundreds of thousands who take it lightly today, or put it out of mind because it's different from the teachings of their worldly churches, will then remember—and cry out to God for mercy!

And these hundreds of thousands shall learn that God's mercy, truly, is greater toward us than the heavens are high above the earth! For God will hear their repentant cries, and place them under his divine protection from the indescribable terrible plagues which are then yet to come! For these are the plagues that God shall send—

plagues sent in divine punishment on those that shall have yielded themselves as the chief political-religious agencies of Satan in his defiant war against God!

At this precise juncture—again for the elect's sake—God will hold back the punishing winds of war and of plagues (Rev. 7:1-3).

The actual physical punishment of this great and mighty Day of the Lord will not fall until God has sealed, with his protection, those who have now suffered through the Great Tribulation (Rev. 7:14), and have now at last learned their lesson, and turned repentantly to God.

There shall be an innumerable multitude out of all nations, who shall in total surrender cry out to God. These all shall have received God's Holy Spirit—and be then begotten as children of God.

They shall then, at last—having endured the Great Tribulation—having seen God's terrifying warn-

ing signs—repent and put their lives in God's hands, shall come under God's divine protection. No plague will touch them (Ps. 91:1-11).

But others, still the vast majority, will not repent. And all who will not repent at this time, after this final supernatural warning, will have so hardened their hearts in resentment and bitterness against God that they will not repent, even during the plagues that shall then immediately follow (Rev. 9:20; 16:9, 11).

Now after these mighty events will come the time of God's wrath against sinful men who have refused to depart from the ways that are cursing their own souls. Now God, at last, after every possible warning and pleading short of physical punishment, will let the divine punishment fall!

Now comes, in full divine fury, the period foretold in more than 30

prophecies as "The day of the Lord"—the time of God's wrath!

The Terrible Day of the Lord

"Vengeance is mine," says the Almighty God. Now he shall pour out the vials of his vengeance on those who have voluntarily chosen Satan.

Plagues, terrible beyond description, shall fall upon the restored Roman Empire. God will now take vengeance for their tortures of his peoples during the Great Tribulation.

The sixth of these punishing plagues will be a military invasion of Europe by the Communist forces from Eastern Europe and the Orient. By that time, the Red Armies and their allies will number two hundred million!

Think of it. A vast army of two hundred million soldiers! These vast hordes will then sweep across Europe, utterly destroying all this

resurrected Roman Empire, spoken of prophetically as the modern "Babylon"—the daughter of the ancient Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar. It is a "Babylon" led by the symbolic harlot "woman"—a great apostate paganized religion falsely calling herself "Christian."

Meanwhile, the leader of this restored Roman Empire (prophecy symbolizes him under the name "the beast"), together with the "false prophet"—religious leader associated with the military leader—will have moved their capital to the environs of Jerusalem, which they will have surrounded and occupied at the outset of World War III—the beginning of the Tribulation. They will, by the time of the invasion from the East, have large military forces in the Middle East, as well as on other fronts of the world war.

The Soviet Union, incidentally, shall not take over Palestine, nor

The nations will gather their armies at Megiddo in the Valley of Jezreel (inset). They will converge on Jerusalem to challenge Jesus Christ, who will have returned to this earth and who will at this time be in Jerusalem with his glorified saints. In the climactic battle of World War III Christ will utterly defeat the opposing armies.

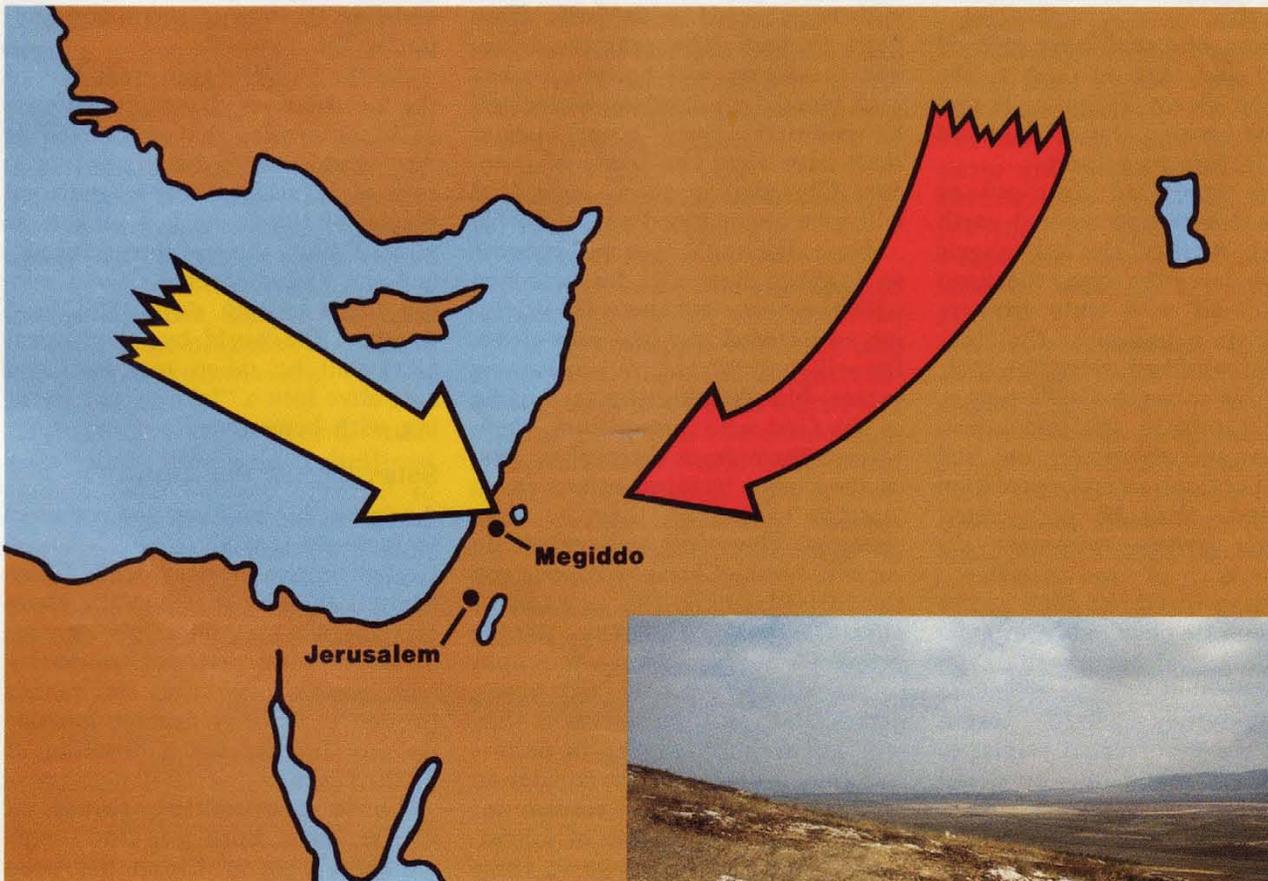


PHOTO BY F. GRANDALL

other southwestern Asiatic territory. These lands will fall, instead, into the hands of the forces of the resurrected Roman Empire. (See the last few verses of Daniel 11.)

Finally . . . The World Tomorrow!

Now we come to the climax.

At this precise juncture, Jesus Christ glorified, to whom has been given all power in heaven and in earth, who upholds the energies and forces of the entire universe by the Word of his Power—yes, the same Jesus Christ who trod this unhappy earth more than 1,900 years ago—will return in clouds to earth, visibly, personally, bodily!

This time he is coming in all his Power and Glory, to put down all opposition, to rule all the nations of earth with supernatural force and justice. He is coming not only as King of kings, but also as Lord of lords.

This time he is coming to restore the laws and the rule of God! He is coming to enforce those spiritual, inexorable laws—the very laws set in motion to bring humanity peace, happiness, joy, health, prosperity!

But those who shall have refused to repent and turn to God at the end of the Great Tribulation and during the ensuing Day of the Lord still will refuse to submit.

As the glorified omnipotent Christ is descending toward earth in a cloud—with all the holy angels of heaven escorting him, the dead in Christ—all who truly had repented, been begotten by the Holy Spirit, and who had overcome their own natures through God's power, who had grown in spiritual grace, knowledge and character, and had endured persecution and opposition to the end—shall be resurrected from their graves, immortal, divine, now born of God at last.

The living in Christ shall at the same instant be changed from mortal to immortal—from material flesh to spiritual—from human to divine. And they shall be caught up, with the resurrected saints, to meet the descending, glorified Christ in the air. Many have wondered why this meeting up in the air. These saints, born again at the resurrection, will rise from all parts of a round earth. They shall be

The supreme crisis of the ages is nearly upon us. Today we're in the lull before the real storm breaks in imagination-defying fury. Then, suddenly God will step in and take over.

taken through the air at the speed of lightning (Matt. 24:27).

They shall all descend together to the Mount of Olives, one-half mile east of Jerusalem, from which Jesus ascended over 1,950 years ago!

And now . . . Armageddon!

Simultaneously, at the very presence, or coming, of Christ and all the holy angels, the seven last plagues of God's terrible day of wrath shall be poured out on the remnants of this restored Roman Empire centered in Europe. They will be covered with boils from head to foot. The sea, the lakes, and the rivers will become as human blood—all drinking-water will be polluted. This "beast" power shall have shed the blood of innocent Christian martyrs—now God will give them blood to drink!

Next, the sun's rays will become so intense men will be scorched with the heat. But these God-defying embittered spiritual sons of Satan will only scream out agonizing curses, blaspheming the very name of the God who is punishing them to save them from themselves, just as they once tortured others in an attempt to convert them to their religion. They will still refuse to repent. Next, Christ will pour out the fifth plague on the very seat of this "beast" and the "false prophet" at Jerusalem—the light of the sun shall now be withdrawn, and in the resulting darkness they will gnaw their tongues in pain—but they will not yet surrender to God. Instead, they will scream out curses against the name of Christ.

It is at this very stage in these plagues that the demons, possessing these rebel leaders (Rev. 16:13-

14), will mobilize military forces of "all nations"—certainly a symbol of the United Nations—in the valley of Megiddo, 70 miles northeast of Jerusalem, to fight against the returning beings from outer space—Christ and his angels. They will yet try to overthrow the divine power and continue to rule the world themselves. They will resist to the end! But these human leaders shall be fighting supernatural power!

Their fate will be awful! Their flesh will consume away off their bones even while they yet stand on their feet!

Then the last of these plagues of divine judgment shall fall. There will be a bedlam of thunder accompanying unprecedented, frightening flashes of lightning. The most tremendous series of major earthquakes of all human history will climax. Then will fall out of heaven a devastating hailstorm, with huge hailstones weighing as much as a hundred pounds! But again these hardened men will blaspheme God because of this plague! They still will refuse to learn their lesson, and find the way to peace and happiness for all!

As the battle of this great Day of the Lord comes to its fateful end, with the armies that assembled at Armageddon destroyed in the environs of Jerusalem, and as the final plague of the seven last plagues is poured out, the military "beast" and the "false prophet" (who during these closing days shall have deceived the world by faked miracles) will be taken together, and cast alive into a "lake of fire burning with brimstone."

Satan Himself Put Away

And now, his military and religious legions destroyed, his devil-controlled human leaders dead, Satan himself shall be cast into the abyss or symbolic bottomless pit—a condition of total restraint, inactivity and negation—so that he cannot influence, sway or deceive humanity any further for a duration of 1,000 years.

Those overcoming saints of Christ, now born of God—now glorified, even as Christ has been glorified—form and constitute, under Christ, the kingdom of God. It

shall be at once the divine spirit-born family of God, and the government of God, which shall bear rule over all the earth!

And now what of the remainder of mankind?

With Satan removed, their political and religious leaders dead, their armies totally destroyed—no one to lead them any further into human ways against God's rule, all who remain alive after these catastrophic wars and plagues will at last, submit to the rule of Christ and the kingdom of God.

Only one religion will then be taught—that of the truth of the Creator God. Those who have been converted down through the ages, now made immortal in the kingdom of God, will rule over and teach those humans who remain alive. A fraction of today's population will still survive. Still human and mortal they will continue to live and reproduce, even as they now do. But they will be ruled over by the immortal saints, under Christ, with the rule of God.

For example, they will be required to observe God's annual holy days instead of the present world's pagan holidays, such as Christmas, New Year's, Easter, etc. Representative people of all nations will be required to come up to Jerusalem, then the world capital, to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall of the year. If nearby nations refuse, there will be no rain on their land thereafter. If they still refuse, Christ will send supernatural plagues to punish them into submission (Zech. 14:16-19).

Gradually, a stubborn, stiff-necked, hostile and rebellious mankind will become obedient to the ways and the laws of God. Soon they will begin to see that they have health instead of sickness; interesting, abundant, happy lives, instead of emptiness, boredom and

unhappiness; alert, comprehending minds, instead of dullness, inefficiency, stupidity; prosperity, instead of poverty; joy, instead of depression, fear and worry, heartache and frustration.

They will look back over the 6,000-year period of human experience during which God allowed mankind to decide the wrong way, and set up a man-built civilization contrary to the laws of God. They will compare.

Do you think anybody will then want to go back to the ways of our world today?

No! In those days (Mic. 4:1-3), the kingdom of God shall be established above all nations. The people finally will say: "Come, and let us go up to the kingdom of God; and Christ will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For God's law, which even most preachers and churches hate today, shall then go forth from God's glorious kingdom, and the Word of God from Jerusalem. The earth will at last be full of the knowledge of God—the truth! (Isa. 11:9). And Christ shall rule over and judge all nations, until they beat their swords into plowshares, their weapons of destruction into implements of peaceful production. We shall have world peace!

Yes, Utopia at last!

There are reasons for today's ills! What we sow, we reap!

When, at last, God takes over—puts down Satan, and the ways of Satan's world which have made the nations so unhappy—when, at last, mankind is ruled and taught religiously by God through Christ and through his saints made immortal, then the New World—the world tomorrow shall reap what it then sows—peace, happiness, prosperity, health, abundant, interesting living, overflowing joy!

It will be a Utopia beyond man's fondest or wildest dreams!

God Almighty created and set in motion the laws to produce just such a Utopia. When humanity yields to that divine rule, we shall have it!

And now, finally, a last word to you who read this warning message—this summary of the prophecies:

You have been warned!

Your immediate future is of your own choosing. You can take this lightly, let it slip from mind, allow yourself once again to be absorbed in the mechanics of today's complex society that you put this out of mind. If you do, you have now read your fate. On authority of God Almighty that it is absolutely sure!

Or, you may heed the warning, realize the truth—that there already have occurred in the world sufficient happenings to verify the reality of God's prophecies—and repent now before it is too late. If you do turn to God by forsaking your way and this world's ways through Jesus Christ as personal Savior—if you do then overcome, study the Bible continually to let it correct and reprove and instruct you—living by every word of God, rather than by the ways and customs of society—if you pray earnestly and continually, drawing closer and closer to God, and endure in this wonderful new life, you shall be accounted worthy to escape all these terrifying things soon to befall the world (Luke 21:36).

You may escape the Great Tribulation. And no succeeding plague will come near you.

And, finally, given the precious gift of eternal life, you shall be used in God's kingdom teaching and ruling those human beings made joyous in that peaceful world tomorrow!

The decision is now up to YOU! □

Where Are We NOW in Bible Prophecy?

Famines in Africa highlight where we now are in the sequence of prophesied events.

Jesus highlighted the sequence of events ending this age and introducing the world to-morrow.

"Take heed that no man deceive you," he warned in Matthew 24:4-6. "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet" (*Authorized Version*).

Not yet? Of course!

The World Just Now!

Never have so many different, confusing religious and political voices had an impact on the world as in this day of mass media.

And, beginning in 1917, the world also has faced an ongoing period of civil wars and revolutions one after another, not to mention two world wars.

"But the end is not yet," said Jesus. "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." That is, religious, political and economic conflicts will continue—for humans are not solving their problems, which are spiritual in origin. But Jesus did not stop here.

"And there will be *famines*, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (verse 7-8).

What has been the consequence of false religious, social and political ideas? Civil wars and revolution, nation fighting nation!

And what is the result of civil wars, revolution and terrorism, now beginning on a major scale? A solution to human problems? The creation of a better world? Not at all.

Instead, breakdowns of agricultural production have occurred in nations torn apart by civil strife, particularly in Africa and parts of Southeast Asia. Food often cannot be safely transported from where it is produced to where it is needed most. Or food may be seized from an already hungry countryside to feed urban populations to prevent yet more revolution. Changing weather patterns and droughts make matters even worse.

But this sequence of events Jesus described, and which Matthew, Mark and Luke record, has appeared before in history, beginning in the first century A.D. As with many Bible prophecies, the first fulfillment occurred slowly, over a period of many centuries, and climaxed in plagues and 1,260 years of religious persecutions in the Middle Ages (Revelation 12:6).

But in this closing period of modern civilization, these very same prophecies are being fulfilled again, in much

more rapid succession, climaxed in three and one-half years of persecution and world suffering (verse 14), at which point God will personally intervene in human affairs to bring us peace.

So where are we *now* in this second and final fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy? We have entered the period of "*famines . . . in various places*"! The situation is not reversible solely by human efforts.

Various writers of the 1960s thought the present situation would develop sooner. We did! So did the authors of the book *Famine—1975!*

In this book, published in 1967, authors William and Paul Paddock "forecast a specific date, 1975, when the new crisis will be upon us in all its awesome importance." William Paddock had special training in agronomy, plant pathology and tropical agriculture. But neither he nor we fully foresaw the delay of a whole decade because of twin events: the Green Revolution in agriculture and the impact of abortion worldwide.

Students of world population, even United Nations experts, did not expect it would take to about the year 1986 for the world's population to rise to five billion (five thousand million). But notice, now, how quickly the population is multiplying, even with abortion.

In 1830 world population for the first time reached one billion. In 1930, the figure was two billion. In 1960, only 30 years later, the figure was three billion. Fifteen years later, in 1975, four billion. In 1986, world population reached five billion, and it is predicted that by 1995 it will be about six billion.

The Green Revolution in agriculture and the explosion in numbers of abortions have combined to sustain

this geometric rate of population growth, but over a somewhat longer period of time. We are, however, at a critical period.

Revolutionary struggles are escalating, no new breakthrough in the Green Revolution is at hand, the poor nations that need food most cannot afford to buy it in sufficient quantities and the food-surplus nations in Europe and in the English-speaking nations worldwide are facing economic crises in agriculture as a result.

Hunger, famines and bankrupt farmers in the industrial world are now world-news headlines. There is no turning back this sequence of events unless there is complete repentance on an international scale and an end to selfishness and self-justification among nations.

What Next?

With the spread of hunger and death there will inevitably be increases in disease epidemics, both in lands where famine and drought occur and in countries to which refugees flee.

Great strides have been made in medical efforts to prevent the spread of diseases. This, too, is a kind of revolution that can postpone the year when epidemics become a worldwide danger. But the costs of medical breakthroughs are not cheap.

Who will pay for the growing medical needs of refugees? Are we going to face in medicine the same cost factor that farmers in the richer nations face? The people who need food and health care most—who need special educational instruction in sanitation and nutrition—can least afford it!

We are a critical moment in the sequence of events Jesus enumerated. Famines are here. Pestilences next! □

This world is about to be plunged into a holocaust more terrible than the eyes of man have ever seen!

This horrible period, the time when Satan's wrath reaches its peak just before the end of this age, was described by Jesus Christ in Matthew 24:21-22:

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

God will be forced to supernaturally intervene on this earth to prevent man's total annihilation. This intervention will be brought about by Jesus Christ, who will return in glory and power to re-establish God's government on earth and set up the kingdom of God.

But what will happen to God's Church during the Great Tribulation?

Will God protect his people wherever they are during the Great Tribulation, as some claim? Of course God can, but will he?

God could have miraculously protected Noah and his family for the more than one year they were in the ark, but he didn't choose to. Noah and his family had to go into the ark, their "place of safety."

God could have supernaturally protected Lot and his family in Sodom, but instead God sent angels to lead him out of that wicked city, so Lot and his family could go to their "place of safety."

It is not what God *could do*, but what he *will do*, that counts!

No "Place of Safety"

Just what does the Bible say about all this? Does the Bible say, "The Church is going to flee to a place of safety"?

No, it certainly does not! The statement is scripturally inaccurate on two counts: 1) The Bible nowhere says that the Church will "flee" in the end time and 2) the Bible nowhere uses the phrase "place of safety." Try to find it in a concordance if you think otherwise.

Is There Any Place of Safety?

Is the true Church going to flee to a place of safety from the coming Great Tribulation? Or will God just protect his people wherever we are?

In order to better understand this subject, we need to review four different but related events.

Early Church Migrated

The first event occurred as a result of Christ's warning in Luke 21:20-21 (compare Matt. 24:15-22):

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in . . . the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto."

This prophecy was fulfilled after events in Judea in the fall of A.D. 66. Jerusalem was surrounded and besieged by the Roman army under Cestius Gallus. After a few days, for no apparent reason, the siege was lifted and the Romans departed from the area.

Immediately after this, two and a half years before Gen. Vespasian and the Roman forces returned and besieged Jerusalem starting at the Passover in A.D. 69, the true Church did leave Jerusalem to the mountains of Judea for protection.

The Greek word in Luke 21:21 means "to escape or run away, to take flight" (not flying in the air).

The only ancient reference to this "escape" is found in the writing of Eusebius, who lived from about A.D. 260 to 340. Eusebius said the Church went to Pella—it

was in the end of winter in A.D. 69. Pella is northeast of Jerusalem beyond the Jordan River, south of the Sea of Galilee.

"But the members of the church in Jerusalem were instructed by a prophecy, revealed to the leaders, to abandon the city before the war and to take up residence in one of the cities of Perea which was named Pella. From Jerusalem the followers of Christ migrated to Pella" (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, III, 5).

In fact, shortly before the autumn of A.D. 66 a "sound" was heard in the Temple, of a great multitude saying, "Let us remove hence." This incident was reported by the Jewish historian Josephus, who said it occurred on a Pentecost (see Josephus, *Wars*, book VI, chapter 5, section 3 for the report on this and other unusual events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem).

That first move or migration of the Church was no emergency "flight" as described by Luke and Matthew, but it made protection possible for the Church during and after the fall of Jerusalem.

Those in Judea Flee

The second event we need to understand involves this same prophecy. There will be an end-time fulfillment of this text in an urgent, emergency escape.

“Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt. 24:16-21).

There are certain points we should notice here. This refers to people of God in Judea. Those people of God's Church who happen to be in this geographical area when the abomination of desolation, or surrounding of Jerusalem, comes to pass must literally flee for their lives! They will not even be able to go back into their homes to retrieve clothing, food, Bibles or family. Those left inside the homes will have to flee in the same manner as soon as they become aware of these events.

People in this circumstance will be in such danger that they must not call attention to the fact that they are fleeing, or they will be captured and unable to escape. They must flee, run away, escape (not fly in the sky by plane) to the mountains. Jerusalem is surrounded by hills or mountains; these mountains may not be the ultimate destination, but would have to be passed through to ultimate protection.

Church Fleed to the Wilderness

The third prophecy we must understand concerns God's Church from about A.D. 325 to about 1585. Notice Revelation 12:6: “And the woman fled into the wilderness,

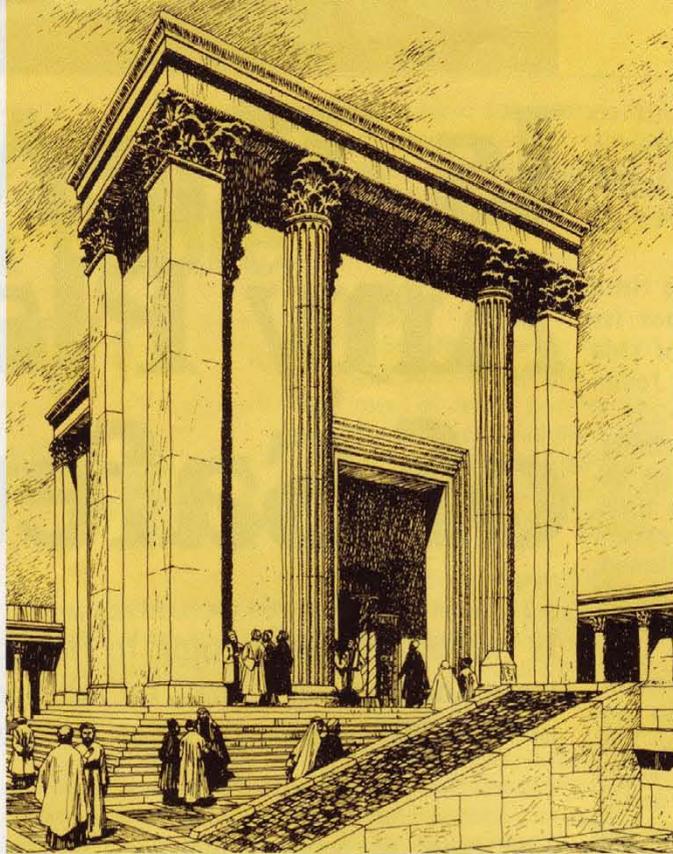


ILLUSTRATION BY J. VANCE

Shortly before the autumn of A.D. 66 a “sound” was heard in the Temple, of a great multitude saying, “let us remove hence.” This incident was reported by the Jewish historian Josephus, who said it occurred on a Pentecost.

where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.”

This scripture describes the Church after Christ's ascension to God's throne (verse 5) and before the end-time “war in heaven” (verse 7).

In this case the woman also “fled” (“fled” here comes from a Greek word related to the word translated “flight” in Matthew 24:20). The period mentioned is 1,260 days, which in this place prophetically refers to 1,260 years according to the “day for a year” principle found in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:5.

The Church in this text flees into the “wilderness,” a solitary, lonely, desert place.

Here is what happened historically:

The Church was severely persecuted during the reigns of both Emperor Diocletian and Emperor Galerius from A.D. 303 to 313, especially in the eastern provinces (see Revelation 2:10).

In A.D. 325 Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea. Catholicism became the state religion. In order for God's Church to fully obey God and put into practice their beliefs, they had to “flee” from the centers of influence and into the less-populated areas.

In the early period of this “exile” the true Christians were most numerous in what today is eastern Turkey, then Armenia. In later centuries they were found in scattered areas of the Alpine regions of Europe, especially in the mountains and small valleys, still away from major population centers.

Around 1585, which was 1,260 years after 325, the threat of foreign religious domination of the throne in England ended. This brought to a close the period when the Church had to carry on in the wilderness, or less populated, lonely areas of Europe and Asia Minor, instead of the greater population centers where Catholic and later even Protestant churches flourished.

The fourth related event we need to understand concerns the very end time, just three and a half years before Christ's return.

The fourth related event we need to understand concerns the very end time, just three and a half years before Christ's return.

The Church that Flies to Her Place

After the war in heaven pitting Michael and his angels against the devil and his angels (Rev. 12:7), Satan is cast to the earth and starts a new, vigorous persecution against the Church (verse 13).

After this we read: “And to the woman were given two wings of a

great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into *her place*, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent" (verse 14).

Note that the woman (the Church) is given two wings of a great eagle, that she might "fly." Here the Greek word literally means "fly" (as a bird or plane does), not flee or escape by other means. She flies to "her place," which could imply ownership. Here she is nourished (fed physically and spiritually) for three and a half years ("time, and times, and half a time").

Verse 17 shows that there are certain others in the Church who do not make this flight. They face not just persecution from Satan but *war* with him, and there is no indication of divine protection for them.

Are There Many Places?

The scripture says the Church will go to "her place" (verse 14). The word *place* is singular, not plural, so it must be just *one* place.

Where is that one place? It is said to be in "the wilderness." That indicates a solitary, sparsely populated area.

This place of God's protection may quite possibly be in the area anciently occupied by Edom, Moab and Ammon, since that area will escape the final invasion of the king of the north (Dan. 11:41). Other prophecies show that this same area will later be taken over by people from the east (Ezek. 25).

Several texts, including Isaiah 16:1-4, 33:13-17 and 42:11-12, indicate this wilderness area might be the place.

The area has been inhabited at

various times over past millennia and is noted for the many man-made caves cut out of its reddish rock.

If this is the place where God takes his people in the end time, it will be found to be very inhospitable. The temperatures in this desert area are extreme in both summer and winter, and even from night to day.

Truly a "Place of Safety"?

Wherever the place, will it be a *place of safety*? It will apparently be safe from Satan. But it will not yet be God's kingdom. Those who go will not yet have "endured to the end." They will not yet have it made. They will still be able to sin and fall away. To some the "place of safety" could prove to be a place of danger and the place where they finally lose out on salvation.

In this place it will be necessary to live together in peace and harmony 24 hours a day for about three and a half years.

How will the Church go to "her place"? Even though the scripture seems to indicate air transportation, that is not the only possible explanation. A similar statement is found in Exodus 19:4: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I *bare you on eagles' wings*, and brought you unto myself." The ancient Israelites never heard of modern air transportation. They walked out of Egypt!

Just who will go to this place, away "from the face of the serpent [Satan]"?

Who Will Be Taken?

Luke's gospel gives further information about who will escape "all these things":

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be *accounted worthy* to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

Who are these people "accounted worthy" to escape?

Those worthy will be watching. In plain language, they will be observing world, national and local events, especially as they relate to prophecy, so that they will not be caught unawares by the snare that will trap the rest of the world.

Those worthy will be praying always—each day—not neglecting this essential part of Christian life. Their prayers of intercession, prayers for help, prayers for forgiveness and prayers for God's kingdom to come will be continually going up to God.

These people will become worthy through Christ's sacrifice and forgiveness of sin, and not as a result of their own "worthiness."

Matthew adds other points that we should notice (Matt. 24:42-51). Those who are ready will be doing God's Work, giving "meat in due season." They will, in other words, be doing their part in preaching the gospel to the world as a witness.

They will be *giving* of themselves, not trying to *get* from others. Such people who are giving their lives in God's service will save their lives:

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Luke 9:24).

Those, who are trying desperately to save their own lives by going to a "place of safety" may find that such safety will not be provided for them. □