

# THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

*A Magazine for the Exposition and Defense  
of The Holy Scriptures*



Vol. 16

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter – 2006

No. 2



## PROPHETIC CONSIDERATIONS

The **Sanctuary-Keeper** is published on a quarterly basis. The doctrinal position of this magazine is founded exclusively on the principles of Bible Truth as outlined and defined in the **Birmingham Unamended Statement of Faith**

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Chart:

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## EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

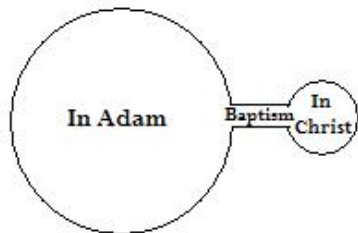
We apologize for the late appearance of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of the S.K. Yahweh willing we hope to get back on schedule with the remaining two issues of the year.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter *Truth Gleaner* has a very thorough consideration of “*Israel, The Jews and the development of the Anglo-Tarshish powers as Protectorate of the Holy Land*”. The consideration helps put latter day developments in proper context.

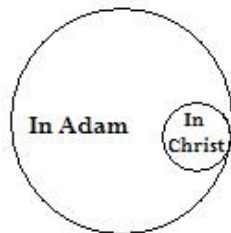
It is our understanding that the NASU committee has officially disbanded. Though this is a positive development after the rejection of the

NASU by many Unamended ecclesias, it has come to our attention that over the summer that there are still a few Unamended ecclesias that have continued efforts to pursue “unity” with a select group of Amended ecclesias upon the faulty NASU basis.

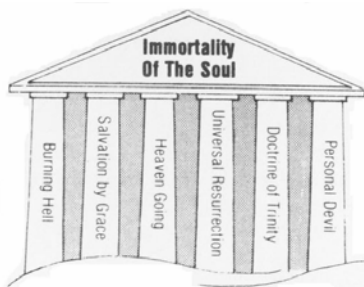
Whether their intentions come to fruition is still a matter of question. There are still Amended as well as those of us on the Unamended side that are resolutely opposed to the NASU and perceive the critical problems it would create for fellowship. This matter is still not a finished question and it will be important for us not to become complacent, but to be aware that the NASU (for some) is not yet exhausted.



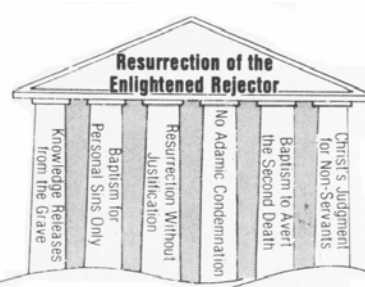
Federal Relationship  
Unamended Teaching  
**EITHER in Adam OR in Christ**



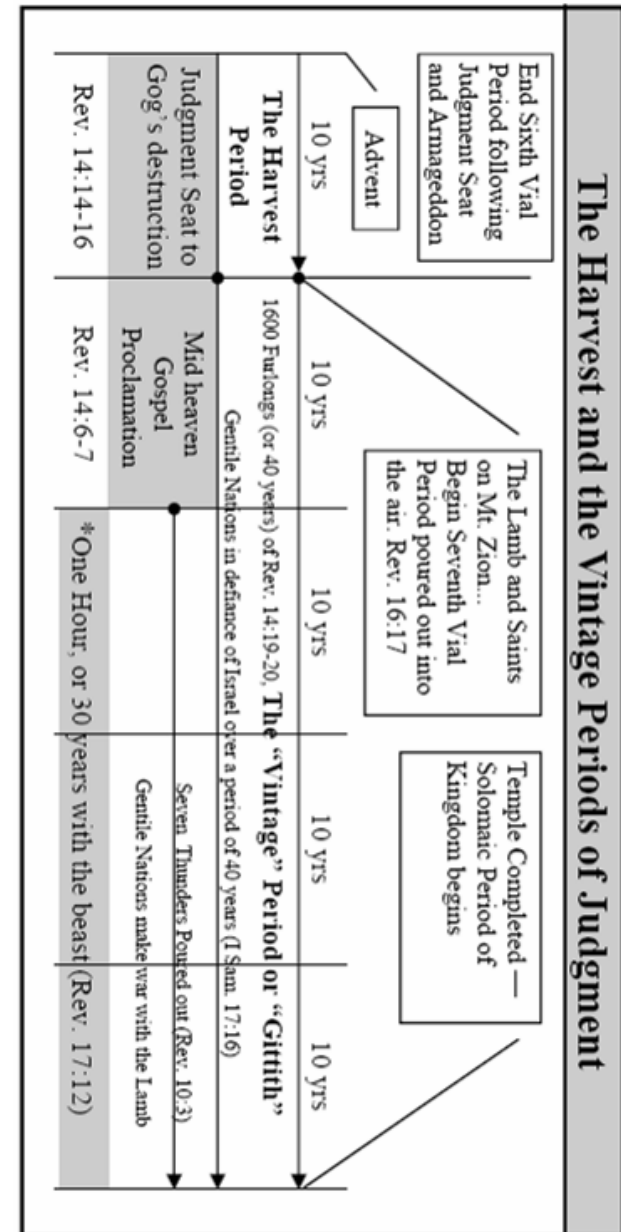
Federal Relationship  
Amended Teaching  
**In Adam WHILE in Christ**



**Orthodox Christendom  
With Supporting Theories**



**Teaching of the Amended  
With Supporting Theories**



Courtesy of A.B. Bryan

# THE SANCTUARY – KEEPER

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*“Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar”*

*Num. 18:5*

*“Ye are...an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices.”*

*I Peter 2:5*

*“Thou hast kept My Word and hast not denied My Name”- Rev. 3:8*

VOLUME 16

2<sup>nd</sup> QUARTER, 2006

NUMBER 2

## WHEN THEY SHALL SAY “PEACE AND SAFETY”

Living in the last days as we do, our eyes should be open for signs of the times, as these things tend to bolster our faith in the long anticipated coming of our Lord and Savior. Recent months have witnessed natural disasters the magnitude of which we have never seen. Earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, volcanoes, etc. and what's more, the scientific community seems to be in agreement that over the next few years things will wax worse and worse. Global warming, changing ocean currents, melting of the polar ice caps, mega- tsunamis, mega volcanoes; all tend to make us anxious and fearful.

These things tend to remind us of Luke 21:25 which speaks of conditions that will exist prior to the Lord's second coming - *“and there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken, and then shall they see the son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory”*.

The primary application of this verse, however, is to be seen in the governmental sun, moon, and stars, as the latter day nations strive one with another in warlike postures. The sea and waves roaring, speaks of peoples, nations, and tongues, all

perplexed, distressed and fearful of another world war, and it is during this time (a period of national upheavals) that the son of man comes in power and great glory.

Another discernable indicator that we live in the end times is the lack of morality among men, and the increase of godlessness. Our Lord spoke of the days of Noah and Sodom, in Matt. 24 and John 17, and compared them to the end times. In the days of Noah when an adulterous union was made between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent, there arose (from that union) a calamity the likes of which the earth had yet to behold. It was a godless self-worshipping generation that rejected morality and yielded to their instincts in whatever manner was convenient and delightful.

This kind of rationale corresponds to what we understand to be Humanism in these end times, where anything goes, for the mind of man has as its focal point its inordinate desires, the gratification of self and a rejection of a supreme increate power.

Yet another area we associate with the era of Christ's coming, and rightly so, is 1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 5:1-3. The context speaks of Christ's coming as a thief in the night, but that that day should not come upon the true believer as a thief because the truth has enlightened that servant of God, and the sign the believers look for is a time *“when they shall say peace and safety for then shall sudden destruction come upon them as travail upon a woman with child and they shall not escape”*.

What then, precisely, should the believer be looking for? Should we look for a time when mankind would have worked out its own problems and finally achieved that which has not existed since before the fall of man in Eden?

Our opinion is that if we look for a time when the world will feel secure in thinking they have achieved world peace and security that we shall be looking in vain. Our thought is that “peace and safety” is man's desire and in the midst of these desires and attempted peace accords and treaties destruction shall fall upon them with great calamity.

Note that in the passage in question, Paul does not say they shall have “peace and safety”, only that they shall say “peace and safety”. The prophet Isaiah says: *“There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked”*. Isaiah 48:22. Isaiah 57:20 says: *“The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt”*. Vs 21 *“There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked”*.

If the 57<sup>th</sup> chapter be read as a whole, we see in the latter verses that God will *“create the fruit of the lips, and peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near and I (God) will heal him.”*

God is He who will create peace and that peace and healing is used in contrast to the “mire and dirt” being cast up by the wicked. As long as the two great antagonistic powers of good and evil exist on earth, peace cannot be achieved. God placed enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, that enmity, hostility or hatred must continue until the cause of sin has been eradicated as it was in Christ when

he was bestowed upon with immortality. Gen.3:15, Eph.2:15, 1 Cor. 15:24-26, Rev. 20:14.

There are a number of other passages that concern this subject and we think it needful to examine a few of them. First, we should note that Paul in 1Thess. 5 did not mention the nation of Israel or the Middle East, but we recognize that that area of the world is a hot bed of hostility and hatred, and that Jerusalem has always been the most hotly contested city on earth, and as Zechariah said it is a "burdensome stone".

Ezekiel 38:11 is a verse sometimes seen as providing evidence of a period of time, prior to Messiah's second advent, that should witness a period of "peace and safety" on Israel's part. *"And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates"*. Looking at the word "safely" we find it comes from the Hebrew noun, "betach", meaning: a place of refuge, the feeling of security, boldly, secure, careless.

Ezekiel 30:9 speaks of the *"careless Ethiopians"* being *"afraid and great pain shall come upon them"*. The word *"careless"* here is from the same word as *"safely"*, that is *"betach"*. The word is also used in Ezekiel 39:6, *"I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the Isles"*.

Ezekiel 39:26 says, *"after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid"*. It seems obvious, at least in this context, that the word *"betach"* should be *"confidently"*, as *"none made them afraid"*. There is a difference between dwelling safely, and not being afraid of anyone.

Isaiah 36:15 uses the verb form of the word *"betach"* which is *"batach"*, and is here translated *"trust"*; *"Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, the Lord will surely deliver us, this city shall not be delivered into the hands of the King of Assyria"*. In this verse the King of Assyria blasphemously tells the Jews not to seek confidence or trust in Yahweh. Further The King of Assyria paid dearly for this blasphemy against Yahweh.

Several other verses from Jeremiah, Judges, Zephaniah, Isaiah, etc. all draw us to the same conclusion, that the word *"betach"* or *"batach"*, most predominately is used of, confidence and security and sometimes being over confident can create a carelessness. This is how the word *"careless"* is used in conjunction with confidence.

So overall the phrase *"dwelling safely"* suggests a place of refuge that provides security and confidence. Now, let us put the latter day nation of Israel in this equation. In a magazine entitled *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, a work that concerns itself with global security, news, and analysis - there is a somewhat lengthy article from, May/June 2000, the opening sentence says, "Israel crossed the nuclear - weapons threshold more than three decades ago, but the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, has never discussed the substance of nuclear policy in an open session". On page three of

that same article it says, "A strong country like Israel, confident in its own power, is capable of drawing for itself the line beyond which it will not go".

On Feb.1<sup>st</sup>, 2006 in the House of Commons debates, Prime Minister Tony Blair, discussing the issue of peace, said: "The most important thing is to say to Hamas that we respect its mandate and the fact that it won the elections. However the only basis for progress in the Middle East is a two state solution - a secure and confident Israel and a viable Palestinian state. We will not be able to take the process forward if one of the partners has in its constitution the desire to get rid of the other - that is the state of Israel. This is why Hamas faces a very fundamental choice. If it chooses democracy and peace, and to work side by side with Israel, then of course we stand ready to take the process forward. However we cannot do that if Hamas' fundamental position is inconsistent with the outcome that we all want".

Some remarks from a meeting between Secretary of defense William S. Cohen and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak. Jerusalem, Nov. 22, 2000 - "Prime Minister Barak: We are delighted to have you, Secretary Cohen, with us for a visit to the whole region. We highly appreciate the contribution of secretary Cohen to the relationship between the defense establishment of Israel and the United States, for his long term support of the calls of stability and peace in the middle east, through taking a strong and self - confident Israel that can stand here -- and as a result of being strong enough - - to be able to be restrained at the same time". Secretary Cohen, in the same meeting, says "I think all concerned want to see a secure and lasting peace for the Middle East".

*World Net Daily*, May 31, 2006 - Headline: "Israel's new confidence in an attack on Iran's nukes". "Israeli military planners have more confidence in the success of an attack on Iran's nuclear weapons facilities and have already begun sending signals to Tehran that it will not be permitted to threaten the Jewish state with annihilation".

So it appears obvious to this writer, Israel is *"dwelling safely"*- that is- *"confidently"* just as Ezekiel predicts, prior to the sudden destruction by Gog, who shall come out of the north parts with many people, a great company and a mighty army, they shall come against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land." (Ezekiel 38:14-16)

Compelled by the foregoing evidence we conclude that now is the period designated as a time when *"they shall say peace and safety"* which of necessity suggests that the next great and momentous event that we should look for is, as Paul said, *"then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape"*.

All this should serve as an exhortation to believers that we must not be in darkness, for we are children of the light, and with the nearness of our Lord's return it is of utmost importance that we maintain a constant vigil, knowing these are indeed the last days.

Tommy Azbill

# THE SONGS OF ASAPH – Part I

## A Declaration from Yahweh's Sanctuary

*With special emphasis on the scriptural exposition of the  
83<sup>rd</sup> Psalm*

1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 16:1-25

*"<sup>1</sup>So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God. <sup>2</sup>And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. <sup>3</sup>And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. <sup>4</sup>And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel: <sup>5</sup>Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obedom: and Jeiel with psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals; <sup>6</sup>Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God."*

*"<sup>7</sup>Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the LORD into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. <sup>8</sup>Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. <sup>9</sup>Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works. <sup>10</sup>Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD. <sup>11</sup>Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually. <sup>12</sup>Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth; <sup>13</sup>O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones. <sup>14</sup>He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth. <sup>15</sup>Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; <sup>16</sup>Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; <sup>17</sup>And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, <sup>18</sup>Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; <sup>19</sup>When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it. <sup>20</sup>And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people; <sup>21</sup>He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, <sup>22</sup>Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. <sup>23</sup>Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; show forth from day to day his salvation. <sup>24</sup>Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations. <sup>25</sup>For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods."*

### Introduction

It was King David who first appointed members of the tribe of Levi to oversee the composition of music and songs as a part of the formal worship of Yahweh in the Temple soon to be constructed by his son Solomon. Yet centuries earlier, songs were employed as a form of praise to Yahweh for His abundant mercy in saving Israel from her enemies, and for His wondrous works. We might recall, for example, the Song of Moses that was led by Miriam in Exodus 15:20-21, who *"took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances."* <sup>21</sup>And Miriam answered them, **Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea**", thus celebrating deliverance from Egypt and victory over Pharaoh.

Likewise, the Song of Deborah celebrates Barak's victory over the Midianite princes, as recorded in Judges 5:3-5: *"Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel. LORD, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water. The mountains melted from before the LORD, even that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel"*

Each of these songs, while commemorating an historic event, also speaks prophetically of the end time judgments of Yahweh when He delivers Israel for the final time. This will commence the long anticipated day of trouble like none other, when Christ and the Saints march forth from Sinai (c.p. Isa. 63) as a great cloud and storm to defeat the Gogian host, to reinstate the throne of David upon Mt. Zion, and to overthrow the Papal Lucifer and his entire entourage as a millstone cast into the sea. For then the redeemed also will sing the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb:

*"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest"* (Rev. 15:1-4).

In this article we will consider the Psalms of Asaph, another group of songs which harmonize with the Song of Moses and of the Lamb. In particular we will focus upon the 83<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, which is the culmination of a series of eleven Psalms ascribed to Asaph that reveals something about Yahweh's purpose with man. In order to get to the root of what this Psalm is all about, it is first needful to understand the context in which it was written. This is not an easy task given the depth of the riches to be found in these Levitical Psalms. Our goal, therefore, will be to provide the reader a basic outline that will reveal a greater appreciation for these works as well as the Psalms as a whole. To grasp the full meaning and to gain the most benefit, the reader is

encouraged to use this effort as a starting point for what should be a far greater depth of personal study.

As we have read, Asaph was a singer appointed by David to organize and formalize music and songs as a part of the temple service to Yahweh. Asaph was the chief in this regard:

*“<sup>10</sup>Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was finished: and Solomon brought in all the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God... <sup>11</sup>And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course: <sup>12</sup>Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:)<sup>13</sup>It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; <sup>14</sup>So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.”* (2 Chron. 5:10-14).

It is significant that these singers were first appointed by David, then continued into Solomon's reign before the Temple. This prefigures the work of the Saints in both phases of Messiah's career as Lion of the Tribe of Judah; first as warrior and conqueror, and then as wise ruler, administering the affairs of the earth. This scene in particular before Yahweh's Temple prefigures another event yet to occur in the near future that has a great deal to do with the psalms of Asaph that we are considering. The singers were appointed for leading the people in praise and instruction before the throne of Yahweh. Likewise, this will be the function of the King-priest Saints of the Kingdom Age once the judgments of the seven last plagues, or seven vials, are expended. Continuing from our previous quote in Revelation 15:

*“<sup>5</sup>And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: <sup>6</sup>And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. <sup>7</sup>And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. <sup>8</sup>And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.”*

It is to this glorious end that the Psalms of Asaph as a whole are directed. Let us now take a closer look at the component parts of this message from Yahweh and glean what we are able in our feeble frame to comprehend the Divine majesty and glory He has intended for us to see.

### Who wrote The Levitical Book of The Psalms?

It is generally accepted that the Psalms as a whole are organized into five books corresponding to the five books of Moses. Certain of the Psalms recorded by Asaph and his descendants are contained within the third or Levitical book of the Psalms, which encompass Psalm 73 to Psalm 89.

Psalms Book	Psalms No.	Comments Relative to the Pentateuch
1	1-41	<b>The Book of Genesis</b> – Concerning man and his relationship with God. All blessing is bound up in obedience.
2	42-72	<b>The Book of Exodus</b> – Concerning Israel as a nation. The counsels of God concerning Israel's ruin, redeemer, and redemption.
3	73-89	<b>The Book of Leviticus</b> – Concerning God's sanctuary.
4	90-106	<b>The Book of Numbers</b> – Concerning Israel in relation to the nations.
5	107-150	<b>The Book of Deuteronomy</b> – Concerning God and His Word.

This group of Psalms, having been written by those singers closest to Yahweh's sanctuary, can offer us a prized spiritual food like none other, giving us a glimpse into the future when the faithful will fill the office of the priest (Rev. 5:9-10) and will likewise be singers in the Age to come. We saw in Revelation 15 those redeemed ones who, with flesh covered by divine Spirit, and nature and character refined as finest gold, were singers before the Temple of Yahweh. The scene is repeated in Revelation 14:1-3 with the added detail of the Lamb before them:

*“And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living ones, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.”*

This detail underscores the connection between these immortal “singers” and the Christ Lamb when enthroned in Jerusalem, and should cause us to look at these Psalms composed by singers of old as telling us something about singers in the future.



As one might expect from a song book dedicated to Yahweh's Sanctuary, the third book of the Psalms was written primarily by four members of the Tribe of Levi: Asaph (73-83), Korah (84-85), Heman (88), and Ethan (89). There is one exception and that is Psalm 86, which was written by King David, but that is quite fitting nonetheless, as David prefigures the High Priest himself, Jesus the Christ – the minister of the Sanctuary and “Chief Singer”. Commentators suggest that this third Book of the Psalms may be subdivided into two parts. Part One encompasses the first eleven Psalms written by Asaph (73-83) entitled “*The Sanctuary in relation to Man*” and Part Two encompasses the last six Psalms (84-89) entitled “*The Sanctuary in relation to Yahweh*”.

Let us now consider a little more closely the writers of this third (Levitical) book to see how this encompasses the overall message.

**PSALMS 73-83: ASAPH**, (Strong's, H623) means *collector of the people*, from *asaph* (H622) to *gather* (in, together), to *receive, recover, take away, assemble, bring, consume, destroy*. Several usages are as follows:

Isaiah 11:12 – “...and shall *assemble* (asaph) the outcasts of Israel”

Zechariah 14:2 – “For I will *gather* (asaph) all nations against Jerusalem...”

This two-fold aspect of Asaph's name has a parallel with Jezreel, meaning *God will gather*, and *God will sow*. Asaph was a Levite and leader of David's singers who founded a school of musical composers. In later generations Asaph's descendants who continued the work are referred to as “*the sons of Asaph*”. This title was initially applied to direct descendants of Asaph, but in time may have referred to those members of the Singers who were specialists in the composition of music. Asaph and his contemporaries were also particularly assigned to the percussion instruments (I Chron. 15:19; 16:5). This detail may be significant as cymbals were not only used in temple worship, but according to Bible commentators, were also used to marshal troops for warfare. This plays into the overall context of the message of this group of Psalms.

**PSALMS 84-85, 87: KORAH**, (H7141) *Qorach* is from the Hebrew root *qarach* (Strong's, H7139) meaning *to make (self) bald*. Ezekiel 27:31 states, “*And they shall make themselves utterly bald*” (*qorach*). Baldness was often a sign of leprosy (Lev. 13:42-43), thus being indicative of sin nature, as well as lamentation for sin (Jer. 48:37). Consistent with this theme, Korah was one of the descendants of the infamous group of Korah, Dathan and Abiram who rebelled against Moses (Number 16 and 26:9-11). Despite this unfortunate lineage, Korah's faithful descendants became an important branch of the singers (2 Chron. 20:19). Nevertheless, the taint of Korah's disastrous rebellion was forever stamped upon this family of Levites by virtue of his name. Does this not remind us of our own sin-laden relationship to Adam?

**PSALM 86: DAVID**, (Strong's, H1732) *daviyd*, meaning *beloved*, or *loving*, is from the Hebrew root *dode* (Strong's, H1730). Song of Solomon 5:2 identifies “...the

*voice of my beloved*” (*daviyd*) as the Messiah, the king and the bridegroom who waits for his bride to be. Isaiah likewise identifies Messiah saying, “*Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard*” (Isa. 5:1). Contrawise, Jeremiah 11:15 identifies the bride-to-be as the beloved, saying, “*What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many...*”. In David, then, we have the whole of Israel; the King and his bride, the beloved of Yahweh.

**PSALM 88: HEMAN**, (Strong's, H1968) *heyman*, means *faithful*, from (Strong's, H539) *aman*, to *build up* or *support*. In both Numbers 11:12 and Isaiah 49:23 this word is used in the sense of a “*nursing father...*” Heman was the grandson of Samuel the prophet, also a Kohathite, the first of three Levites to whom was committed the vocal and instrumental music of the temple service in the reign of David (I Chron. 15:16-22). The Kohathites had charge of the vessels (furniture) in the tabernacle. We see in Heman a token of the current responsibilities as well as the eternal inheritance of the Household: those who faithfully keep their bodily vessels as vessels unto honor, undefiled from the world, will be given charge in the service of Yahweh's Temple of the future, to teach the nations, to continue the work in “building up” the spiritual Temple of the LORD.

**PSALM 89: ETHAN**, (H387) *eythan*, from (H386), *ethan*, to *continue*, a *chieftain*, *hard*, *mighty*, *rough*, *strength*, *strong*. Genesis 49:24 states, “But his bow abode in *strength*” (*ethan*), and Psalm 74:15 uses the word to describe “...*mighty rivers*” (*ethan*). Ethan was a Merarite Levite and one of the singers with Heman and Asaph appointed to sound with cymbals (I Chron 15:17). Also, one of Asaph's descendants was named Ethan (I Chron. 6:42). The Merarites had charge of the tabernacle boards, bars, pillars, sockets, pins, cords, etc. of the tabernacle, and courtyard. Those who continue to abide in the light of the Word will be strengthened with immortality, and Yahweh will make them a component part of His temple, even a pillar of the Deity (Rev. 3:12).

In summary, we see a close relationship of these Levite singers (with the addition of the king) with the operation of the sanctuary, or Yahweh's Temple. Together the meaning of their names may enlighten us as to the meaning and purpose of these Levitical psalms.

- ◆ **Asaph** (Levi): Yahweh has been both a gatherer and a consumer (scatterer) of His people.
- ◆ **Korah** (Levi): Israel has been made bald as the leper for their transgression.
- ◆ **David** (Judah): Yet, Israel is Yahweh's beloved people
- ◆ **Heman** (Levi): Thus, Yahweh will build up and save those who are faithful.
- ◆ **Ethan** (Levi): Yahweh will forever establish them in His strength.

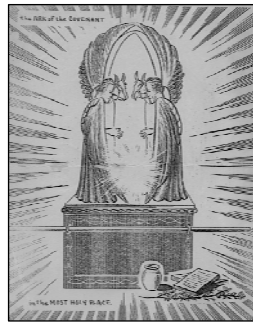
### Yahweh's Sanctuary

It might be prudent to say something at this point as to what we mean when we say "Yahweh's Sanctuary". Is this the Tabernacle in the wilderness, or the Temple of Solomon? In a figure, these structures were a *temporary* sanctuary but they pointed to the future, for "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing : which was a figure (Gr. *parabole*, i.e. a parable) for the time present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices..." (Heb. 9:8-9).

There are two Hebrew words for "sanctuary". The first is *migdash* (Strong's, H4720), from the root word *gadash* (6942) meaning to *pronounce clean, proclaim, purify, sanctify*. The second word is *godesh* (Strong's, H6944) meaning, *a sacred place, most holy place or portion*. These two words are both related to the Tabernacle in the wilderness times (Exod. 25:8 – *migdash*, and Exod. 26:33 & 30:31 – *godesh*).

The Greek form of the word is *naos*, from which the Anglican "nave" is derived. This is the temple of Hebrews 8:1-2 into which Christ alone has entered as the high priest and remains as minister or overseer of all things currently transpiring in the political heavens: "Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an *High Priest*, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A **Minister of the Sanctuary**, and of the true tabernacle, which the LORD pitched, and not man." This is also the temple of Revelation 15:5-6 wherein the seven angels having the seven golden vials are standing, and the cubical temple of Revelation 21:16 after a fashion of the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle (10x10x10 cubits). These together represent the redeemed in their future (immortalized) state apocalypted in the earth upon Mt. Zion. What do we learn from the application of these words?

We believe that the Sanctuary is revealed to be a place where Yahweh dwells, as well as encompassing those "**who**" are worthy to dwell innermost with Yahweh (the one body clothed and girded with the Seven Spirits of the Deity). In other words, the Sanctuary in its final form will consist of Yahweh manifested in Christ and the redeemed of all ages. They will be one even as the mercy seat over the Ark of the Covenant was one single piece of work. The Sanctuary also encompasses a "**what**", that is, the heavenly constitution of things, the eternal purpose of the Father that is hidden behind the curtains, as it were, from mankind in general but is revealed unto His servants. Christ and the angels are presently in this place and state by virtue of their nature and constitution being at one with the Deity. Others wait prospectively at the veil by adoption into the house of David having passed through the laver (via baptism into Christ's death) and so also have their lives hid with Christ and are therefore constituted "hidden ones" (Psa. 83:3) beneath the Christ Altar (Rev. 6:9). Paul in his letter to the Colossians writes concerning the riches of Godly understanding that they (and we) might understand the "*Acknowledgement of the mystery of God*,



and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge". It is through the attainment of this "hidden" knowledge, through which faith and obedience are derived, that we are enabled to set our "*affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory* (Col. 3:2-4). Let us further elaborate upon this point.

As servants of the Deity working in the Ecclesia, or Yahweh's Holy Place in a typical sense, we have access by our mediator to the holiest of all, described in the apocalypse as the "Nave of the Deity" (Rev. 11:19). As such we work and wait patiently for that time when, LORD willing, we may also enter into the Sanctuary, or

Most Holy Place, where Yahweh, Christ, and the angels now reside. Jesus said, "*In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am [the nave of the Deity], there ye may be also*" (John 14:2-3).



The invitation to life is then an invitation to dwell or tabernacle with Yahweh in spirit nature like unto His. He is in the Sanctuary, in the innermost chamber where no man can approach (I Tim. 6:16). His dwelling and purpose is hidden without the perspective of Biblical knowledge, belief, faith, courage, and obedience to the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. We are not in the inner sanctuary now but are related to it by virtue of Christ's sacrifice, whose blood in a typical sense was ceremonially taken by the High Priest in Mosaic times from the Altar into the Most Holy place and sprinkled upon the mercy seat. This innermost and unseen place and state of being was further represented by the contents of the Ark of the Covenant. Therein was the *hidden* manna that would not corrupt, the tables of stone upon which were *written* the unchangeable law of Yahweh, and Aaron's rod representing divine selection of those that will be raised to life everlasting (Heb. 9:3-5). The Christ-manna is described in Revelation 2:17 as *hidden* because it was concealed from the understanding of unenlightened men after a fashion of the wilderness-manna hidden in a golden vessel and placed beneath the blood sprinkled mercy seat out of sight. Moreover, the Mosaic Ark of the Covenant as a whole was hidden behind the veil where no one, save the high priest once a year could enter on the Day of Atonement, but not without blood. (Heb. 9:7). These things are parables then of a thing yet to be revealed in the earth concerning those who are sons of Yahweh through the blood sprinkled mercy seat, or Yahshua the Messiah. Indeed the entire wilderness tabernacle and Solomaic Temple, when considered in detail, prefigure the way of God manifestation from the gate of the outer court to the Most Holy Place, from the pillars of Jachin and Boaz to bursting the bounds of the earth as seen in the wings of Solomon's giant Cherubim.



This is the place, the Sanctuary of which the Psalms of Asaph speak. But they speak not only of its hidden state, but of its revelation before the nations when Yahweh begins to release the Judgments of the seven last plagues, or seven vials upon the Papal sea, culminating with a great sacrifice of the nations at large (Rev. 15:5-8; Rev. 19:17-18; Ezek. 39:17-20). This process has been in effect now upwards of two centuries, since the Seventh Angel sounded the Seventh Trumpet and the great earthquake that we call the “French Revolution” brought the tenth part of the Babylonian City, or France, into ruin (Rev. 10:13). Since that time the release of the frog-like spirits of democracy have been at work among the nations to gather them together for the last and final Day of the LORD (Rev. 16:12-16). On this day in 2006 as the “sun of righteousness” draws nearer to the dawn, and the evaporating power of the sixth vial has nearly exhausted with Turkey’s demise and Israel’s pre-adventual colonization, we stand on the edge of the last and seventh vial. When it is poured out into the aerial, it will forever change the political constitution of the earth (Rev. 16:17). We affirm that the conclusion of these things is revealed in the Psalms of Asaph. (*Next installment: Structure and Explanation of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Psalm*).

A.B. Bryan

### The Truth Supreme

“The truth ought to be supreme among those who believe it; it ought to amount to a passion; not an irrational impulse, but a calm, deep, deliberate, logical, unquenchable preference for the cause of the truth in all its aspects, as against everything else that is followed as a hobby in the world.”

“The truth calls them out of the world in every sense but that of submission to the ordinances which the world socially and politically constituted, may impose; we have nothing to do with the world’s schemes, or the world’s remedies. We are a separate people, consecrated to principles and duties which leave no time nor energy for the hobbies upon which the world expends its effervescence. It is only where the flesh predominates that this is not realized. A babe in Christ is liable to be deceived into participation in the world’s reformatory contrivances, under the specious idea that everything currently considered “good” has a claim on his countenance. On the supposition that such a babe progresses to a healthy growth, by subsisting on the “milk of the word” imbibed in daily study, experience will teach him that time occupied in this way is time thrown away – that nothing really good is to be achieved in fellowship with the world – that the world can do no good in the real sense – that evil may be suffered by himself in such fellowship, and done to others by his example, in having the truth dimmed and made a secondary thing by alliance with worldly people, in the bond of other ideas for which the natural mind has a more instinctive affinity, and which, therefore, have a wonderful power of gaining the ascendancy, to the extinction of the little flame kindled by the Spirit.”

*The Ambassador of the Coming Age, October 1867*

## THE GOGIAN INVASION

In keeping with the objectives of other articles in this edition of the Sanctuary Keeper magazine, we wish to examine the Scriptural evidence of a prophetic subject in which many in the Brotherhood have different opinions about. The differing opinions within the Brotherhood regarding this subject of the Gogian invasion include:

- The identification of the northern invader who will bring the modern day Israeli nation to their knees
- The identification of the nations that will accompany this latter day destroying power
- The timing and extent of the invasion

There may be other differences among the Brotherhood, but these are the only ones that this author is aware of. Within this article, we wish to examine the third issue noted above. We wish to examine specific verses in Ezekiel 38-39 regarding the timing and extent of the Gogian invasion. One of the most critical points in understanding this timing is the concept of Israel dwelling safely at the time of the invasion of the northern hordes. In another article in this edition of the SK, one of our writers examines this concept of the nation of Israel dwelling safely in the latter days prior to this invasion from Gog of the northern parts. As the subject of “peace and safety” was adequately and scripturally covered by our brother, we wish to examine other verses and passages in Ezekiel 38-39, Joel and Zechariah that would provide evidence of the timing and extent of the events that will humble God’s chosen nation and bring them to the point in their history when they will finally recognize their elder Brother in the flesh, their Messiah and the Savior from the destructive armies that have invaded their borders in the latter days.

Although many in the Body of Christ still believe that the nation of Russia and her allies will fulfill her divinely appointed role as the King of the North, Gog of the land of Magog, and the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, the primary difference in the beliefs among our brothers appears to be if this invasion will take place pre- or post-entry of Christ and the saints into the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

This article will present and examine verses that support the concept that this invasion into the Middle East territories, including the land of Israel, occurs prior to the time when Christ and the saints enter the Promised Land from the east of Jordan to relieve the Jewish nation from the hands of the oppressor. For those in the brotherhood that disagrees with this belief, the author would appreciate any correspondence that could be presented against the specific logic of the verses selected and examined below.

The first place in Scriptures that we wish to examine is the great earthquake that is presented in God's Holy Word by the prophet Zechariah. It is the belief of this author that this particular event **MUST** be considered in any prophetic discussion of the latter day events that prepares the world, and specifically God's chosen nation, for the tremendous events that will take place in the early stages of the establishment of the everlasting Kingdom of God upon this planet. This is the event that will prepare the land for the establishment of the magnificent and beautiful structure that will become the House of Prayer for all nations and will be the place that God selected in His Holy Wisdom, where he will dwell with His Son and the rest of His immortalized family for the eternity. How can we not consider this great event and the connection that this event has on other prophecies of latter day import?

Zechariah 14 provides the student of prophecy some very specific descriptions of the events that will occur at the same time as the mighty earthquake that the prophet Ezekiel introduces into the prophetic picture. Notice the comparisons between the two prophets of Ezekiel and Zechariah.

<b>Zechariah 14</b>	<b>Ezekiel 38</b>
<u>Verse 1</u> – The spoil of Jerusalem will be divided in their midst.	<u>Verse 12</u> – Gog's purpose is to take a spoil of the land of Israel
<u>Verse 2</u> – All nations will be gathered against Jerusalem and the city will go into captivity	<u>Verse 5 &amp; 6</u> – Describes the multitude of the nations of Europe and the Middle East that will accompany Gog in her purpose
<u>Verse 3</u> – The LORD will go forth against those nations	<u>Verse 18 and 22</u> – The going forth of the fury of the LORD against the invader
<u>Verse 4 and 5</u> – Description of earthquake	<u>Verse 19 and 20</u> – Description of the earthquake that will destroy Gog and her hordes

To those who do not believe that these events are describing the exact same time period, then we ask that you consider the following logic presented.

Although some Christadelphians believe that the power that brings Israel to her knees prior to the deliverance from Christ is a coalition of Arab/Moslem nations that will invade Israel, these verses in Zechariah and Ezekiel are clear that the "great earthquake" occurs when Gog and her allies are in the land. The Scriptures do not indicate any other grouping of nations, other than this Gogian confederacy, that will be inside the borders of latter day Israel when this great earthquake occurs. Do the Scriptures teach anywhere other than Ezekiel's description of the Gogian invader from

the north that the spoil of Jerusalem will be divided in the midst of an invading army in the latter days? Therefore, it appears to this writer, that these two chapters are describing the one and same event that will occur when Christ and the Saints first enters into the land of Israel from their triumphant march from Sinai to Egypt to the Holy Land. If one believes that the invader of the land at the time when Christ enters into the land of Israel is not the Gogian host, then they would have to relegate the time when Christ stands on the Mount of Olives and the triggering of the great earthquake to some later point in the establishment of the Kingdom. This is not keeping with Zechariah's description of the latter day events. The earthquake **will** occur when the LORD goes forth to fight against those nations that come against Israel in the latter days.

In Zechariah 14:3, the prophet makes this statement "Then shall the LORD go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle." Zechariah compares this deliverance from the confederacy of nations that have invaded latter day Israel, as described in verses one and two, to an event in Israel's past where He fought in the day of battle. It appears that the prophet is describing a particular battle that would be well known by the people of the nation of Israel. He is telling us about "The" day of battle, not "a" day of battle. This author believes the prophet is referencing the events that are described in Joshua 10:11-14. <sup>11</sup>"And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died; there were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword. <sup>12</sup>Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. <sup>13</sup>And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, Until the People had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is this not written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. <sup>14</sup>And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man, for the LORD fought for Israel." Again the scriptures tell us that the Lord fought for Israel, the exact same words that are used in Zechariah 14:3. We ask our readers to note the similarity of the usages of the staying of the sun in Joshua 10:12-13 and the terminology in Zechariah 14:6-7. Joshua declares that the Sun did not go down for a full day and Zechariah, in speaking of the antitypical day of the return of the Lord and the destruction of the invading forces of Zechariah 14:1-2, tells us that the Darkness would not overtake the light of the day. We know that the antitypical Sun of righteousness is the Lord Jesus Christ. Is Zechariah teaching us that after the deliverance of Israel from the invading multitude, the remnant of the Jewish people remaining after the horrendous destruction described in Zechariah 14:2 will finally walk in the light of the Sun of Righteousness, no more enticed by the darkness of the world? If this is the prophet's message, then we are reminded of Ezekiel's statement in Ezekiel 39:22 – "So the House of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward." They will know the LORD in the spiritual aspect and will walk in the path that is illuminated by the Sun of

Righteousness. Additional comments on Ezekiel 39:22 are provided later in this article. Also, notice the similarity between the usages of hail stones as part of the destructive power that both Joshua and Ezekiel tells us in Joshua 10:11 and Ezekiel 38:22. When we compare the verses in Joshua 10, Ezekiel 38 and 39 and Zechariah 14, we should see that Joshua 10 is the type of the latter day fulfillments of the invasion of the Gogian confederacy. These descriptions should give us ample proof that the events of Zechariah 14 and those recorded by Ezekiel in the 38<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> chapters are describing the very same event that will occur immediately when the multitudinous Christ first enters into the Promised Land to provide deliverance to the children of Israel who will be in a position of mourning for their Savior, due to the extreme oppression of the latter day northern invader.

Another interesting verse in Ezekiel 39 that tells us when the northern invader comes into the land can be found in Ezekiel 39:22. Notice the terminology of the verse. The nation of Israel of the current age and of the future age just prior to the return of Christ, will not know the LORD their God until after the day of the destruction of the latter day oppressor. We should understand this day is probably not a literal day of 24 hours, but a small time period that constitutes the entire time frame of the destruction of Gog and her host of armies that have joined with her. When we consider the worldly position of the current day nation of Israel, we have to ask ourselves how will the nation “know” the LORD their God until they have been brought to their knees because of the judgments of God after He has sent His Son, Christ, for their deliverance? Therefore, logic dictates that the Gogian invasion must come prior to the arrival of Christ and not at some undetermined time after He comes into the land. Some have objected to this logic with the argument that the house of Israel refers to the dispersed Jews who have not yet been re-gathered into the land of Israel and the destruction of the Gogian forces will present these Jews in the Diaspora a visible picture that their Messiah is in the land. Ezekiel 39:12 should refute this argument. In that verse, the prophet identifies the House of Israel with those Jews in the land who will be involved with the actual burying of the slain of Gog. Therefore, this singular verse of Ezekiel 39:22 should be ample proof that Gog is in the land prior to the entry of Christ into the Promised Land.

Another verse in Ezekiel 39 provides us an additional clue as to the timing of the Gogian invasion. Ezekiel 39:26 reads – “After they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against Me, when they dwelt safely in their land and none made them afraid.” This verse tells us that when the nation of Israel dwells safely in the latter days, they will be existing in a shameful condition because of their trespasses. If this time of dwelling safely is only applicable to the time of the reign of Christ as some believe, than with Christ as their ruler, how can the nation of Israel be living in a state of shame because of their trespasses? The time of dwelling safely that Ezekiel 39:22 describes **must** occur when Israel is in a state of shame and **must** be applicable to the time immediately before the invasion of Gog. Isn’t it this condition of the nation that causes the punishments of the Almighty to be poured out on the Jewish nation? We should compare this verse in Ezekiel with the

message from Joel 2:26-27. “<sup>26</sup>And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, That dealeth wondrously with you; and My people shall never be ashamed. <sup>27</sup>And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and My people shall never be ashamed.” This second chapter of Joel is referencing the latter day invasion and defeat of the “northern army” – see verse 20. Note that Joel states that when Christ is in the land and Israel starts to receive the blessings of the Father, that they will never be ashamed. This is in direct contrast with the conditions described in Ezekiel 39:26, where Israel is living in a state of shame during their days of perceived “safety”. Therefore this perceived ‘safety’ of Ezekiel 38 and 39 **must** occur prior to the entry of the multitudinous Christ into the land of Israel.

We have yet still another clue in the prophetic vision provided by Ezekiel in chapter 39, verse 10. This verse speaks of the reversal of the spoiling of the nation from the Gogian invader that is brought to the reader’s attention in chapter 38, verses 10-12. Some students of prophecy may believe that these verses in Ezekiel 38:10-12 are only referring to the intents and thoughts of the northern invader, and that there will be no actual mass destruction delivered by the hand of God. However verse 10 of chapter 39 tells us most assuredly that at the time of the defeat of Gog, the nation of Israel will spoil those who **have** spoiled her. This verse definitely tells us that the land of Israel will be spoiled by the invading army. We ask our readers to consider this little bit of logic. If Christ is in the land of Israel prior to the invasion of Gog and her allies, how will Gog be allowed to spoil and destroy the latter day Israelites if Christ has already established Himself as Lord of Lords and King of Kings?

As we consider this concept of taking a spoil in the arena of war of nation against nation, there is an interesting principle found in the writings of Luke. Luke 11:21-22 reads: “<sup>21</sup>When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; <sup>22</sup>But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.” Brethren, let us reason together and apply this verse to the prophetic message of Ezekiel 38 and 39. This verse should be specifically applicable to our understanding of the “peace and safety” condition that is experienced by the latter day Israelites. Isn’t this “peace and safety” condition a feeling of security and confidence by the nation of Israel from any defeat from the hand of her latter day enemies? Doesn’t verse 21 of this chapter in Luke perfectly describe the picture of Israel’s confident security that we find in the headlines of today? Israel has placed their entire trust in their superior armaments and not in the hand of the God of their fathers. Their God is the god of this world, power, riches, greed, pride, and politics, just like any other worldly nation. They believe that because of their strong military power (a strong man armed – per Luke), they can defend and protect their country and their people (keepeth his palace – per Luke) and because of this perceived strength, they are living in a perceived condition of confident security (his goods are in peace – per Luke). However, they should be aware. A stronger than he (Luke 11:22) is in waiting and will be sent by God (Ezekiel 38:4, 17) to humble this people so full of pride of their own accomplishments. This strong man will overcome

and defeat the prideful man of verse 21. This nation stronger than the “he” of verse 21 will take the armaments and divide his spoils. Isn’t this a concise description of the invasion of the Gogian hordes? We again must ask our readers – how can this be if Christ is already in the land of Israel prior to the invasion of the northern armies of the latter days? These verses provide the student some very interesting thoughts and principles to consider as we try to understand the message of Ezekiel 38 and 39.

Much more could be written about these chapters of Ezekiel 38 and 39. The writer would ask our readers to consider these three points of logic in their studies of these later day events.

1. The earthquake of Ezekiel 38 and Zechariah 14 that destroys the Gogian invasion occurs at the time when Christ first comes into the Land of Promise. Therefore, the Gogian host must already be in the land.
2. The nation of Israel will not “know” the LORD their God until after the destruction of Gog in the land of Israel. Therefore, Gog must be in the land prior to the return of the deliverer.
3. Prior to the invasion of the northern invader, Israel is living in a perceived state of safety and confidence in their own might which causes them to exist in a state of shame and trespasses. This sinful condition is what causes the nation to be subject to the mighty judgments of LORD when He draws Gog and her allies into the land of Israel. The destructive power of the invading forces will bring Israel to the point where they will be crying for their Savior and for the deliverance that only can be provided by the Father. Christ will appear in the land of Israel after the Gogian invasion and will deliver the remnant of God’s chosen nation. Israel with Christ as their eternal ruler will live in a state described by the prophet Joel as “never ashamed” any more. At that time they will know their Lord in the truest spiritual sense and will again become the favored nation of God and will become the first dominion of the worldwide Kingdom of God.

In conclusion, this writer would like to state that I believe the primary difference of thoughts on the subject of the Gogian invasion is the timing of the event. Does the invasion occur pre or post entry of Christ and the saints into Jerusalem? I do not believe this is a fellowship issue. However, all must agree that there can be only one correct answer to these questions. Hopefully, we may obtain a place in God’s coming Kingdom, so that we can obtain answers to these questions relating to the different interpretations of prophecy that exist within the Brotherhood. Until that time, each of us should handle the discussions about these issues in the most Christ like manner. Because of our human nature; everyone who has studied out these matters, as we all should, will tend to think that their interpretation is correct. I do not think we are exhibiting a wrongful attitude because an individual stands up for what he/she believes. There have been some in the brotherhood that take the approach that if someone interprets the timing of an event differently than they do, the other individual

is a fool. This is definitely a wrong attitude, which might keep us out of the Kingdom, if we display this type of attitude. There are definitely some extreme prophetic views that have been put forth to the Body of Christ over the ages that would require some serious discussions and possible ramifications to those who hold such positions. One example would be the belief that Israel is the harlot of Revelation. The timing of the Gogian invasion should not fall into this category.

Although this writer doesn’t believe the issue of the timing of the Gogian Invasion is a fellowship issue, we have to ask ourselves is there any danger to the Brotherhood in having and teaching differences in prophetic understanding of key prophecies? The answer to this is yes. A multitude of interpretations will only lead to confusion among the Brotherhood and frustration to the babes in Christ. These differences in interpretations of latter day prophecies may lead to a lack of interest in certain latter day events if we are looking in other areas and at other nations for fulfillments of certain prophecies.

May these days be soon upon us and may all of the Household be ready and prepared for these momentous days that lie ahead for spiritual and natural Israel. Even so come Lord Jesus.

*B. Henderson*

## RUSSIA AND THE JEWS

‘Tis thou who hast a part to glory,  
In these last times of Gentile day,  
A spoil and prey to take.  
O’er Israel’s land thy hosts will pass,  
On to thy doom, for them at last  
From Christ to meet thy fate.

Within that land in safety dwell,  
A people, whom the LORD loves well,  
A peaceful, prosperous band.  
‘Tis Israel, now grown rich by toil,  
Whom thou wilt seek to make a spoil,  
In God’s beloved land.

But hark! From Edom comes the sound,  
Of one who treads thee to the ground,  
For Israel’s life he cries.  
That they may serve him without fear,  
He saves them whom he loves most dear,  
His name he magnifies.

Down from the north, then move your bands  
Into the glory of all lands,  
The Land of Promise still.  
Upon its mountains thou shalt fall,  
God to His people then will call,  
His promise to fulfill.

*R.D. Crenshaw – October, 1891 Advocate*

## IDENTIFYING THE FALSE PROPHET

In Revelation 16:13, under the Apocalyptic symbol of the poring out of the 6<sup>th</sup> Vial we have the Apostle John's vision of "three unclean spirits". Regarding these three unclean spirits it is stated, "*And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*"

Believing that we are very near to Christ's return and to that prophesied "*battle of that great day of God Almighty*" (identified as *Armageddon* in verse 16 – i.e., "*heap of sheaves in the valley of judgment*"), the symbols found in this passage are of current relevance to us as we look with extreme attention at the signs we see in the political heavens that indicate to us the nearness of our Master's return and the poring out of Divine and unfettered judgments upon the nations of the earth. In this verse 16 we have reference made to three primary political players that are responsible for influencing the nations in preparation for this great Battle against the will of Deity – the *dragon*, the *beast* and the *false prophet*.

### Frog Spirits, The Dragon, & The Beast

It is not our intention to deal in depth with the frog like spirits or with the identity of the Dragon or the Beast – our primary focus is on the identification of the False Prophet. But to briefly review:

- **Frog Spirits** - It has long been held within the Christadelphian community that the three frog spirits, symbols which originally represented the French people, came to characterize the democratic/socialistic influences that arose out of the French Revolution. The cry of *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity* is a doctrine that changed not only France but changed the face of Europe both **politically** and **ecclesiastically** and is a powerful, humanistic and "unclean" influence that is stronger than ever.
- **The "dragon"** - was an historical and prophetic symbol of the Roman power and eventually of the military or eastern division of the Roman Empire with its headquarters in Constantinople. It is understood that Russia (with a domineering presence over eastern/southeastern Europe and parts of Asia) will play the latter day role of the "dragon", with a controlling influence and probable occupation of Constantinople/Istanbul previous to its invasion of the Land of Israel.

- **The "beast"** – There are two "beasts" mentioned in the Apocalypse (chapter 13) – one being the "beast of the sea" the other "the beast of the earth". Based upon verse 10 the context is of the Beast of the Earth which in the past related to the Holy Roman Empire and for the present day relates to those nations of central/western Europe.

### "The False Prophet"

Christadelphians have long believed that the symbol of the False Prophet was an identification of the Papal System. But in recent years there has been a drastic rise in the influence of what is termed as "Militant Islam" on world affairs, which has led some to conclude that the symbol of the False Prophet should be applied to the Islamic element. But at the same time there has also been a dramatic rise in the power and influence of the Papacy, with both Islamic and Papal influences struggling for control over the matter of Jerusalem and the "Holy Land". This may create difficulty as we attempt to come to a conclusion as to the identity of the third frog like influence. It is this writer's conviction that the symbol of "false prophet" as used in the Apocalypse is to be identified with the Catholic influence, but we also understand what may move others to view an Islamic identity – which necessitates this consideration of the subject for review and comparison of the two varying applications.

The scriptures say very little regarding the "False Prophet", though the identification of the plural form "false prophets" is used several times in the Old and New Testament, which helps us to better understand how it is applied in the Apocalypse. The "false prophet" symbol is used three times with all of them in the closing chapters of Revelation (16:13; 19:20; 20:10). But in the context of Revelation it is important to note that as a book of signs and symbols it is a book that reveals events down through the ages since 96 A.D. that are of relevance to the believers. The believers are warned of and shown the development, fortunes and misfortunes and eventual destruction of the Apostate System that would arise out of the true Ecclesia and became the primary antagonist of the True Believers. In contrast to this the believer is given a wonderful view of the Divine manifestation to come and the reward reserved to them "who overcometh" - those who remain true to the One Hope. These are the overriding themes of the Apocalyptic message and provide the foundation as to how we understand the subject at hand. Other critical prophetic matters, for example that of national Israel's scattering and return, find detailed and lengthy explanation in other portions of the Scriptures.

### The role of a prophet and of a false prophet

In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 14:3 we read, "*he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.*" A prophet is not necessarily one who foretells the future but can apply to one who speaks of Truth in general as a teacher for the *edification, exhortation* and *comfort* of the believers.

In contrast to a good prophet the Apostle Peter warned the believers, "*there were false prophets among the people (Israel), even there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought*

them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (2<sup>nd</sup> Pet. 2:1). Peter, along with Paul and John, spoke of a false religious system that would arise out the true Ecclesia itself. The Spirit through Paul referred to this “falling away” as the “*mystery of iniquity*” (2<sup>nd</sup> Thess. 2) that was already beginning to develop during the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Paul also foresaw that “*the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*” (2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 4:3) 1st John 4:1 warns the believers to not be naïve but to “*try the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*” Before the work of the apostles began Christ himself warned of such influences – “*For there shall arise false Christ’s, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if possible they shall deceive the very elect.*” And in Matt. 7:15 – “*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.*” It is important to realize that such “false prophets” that they were being warned of were those who originated from out of the Ecclesia – pretending to be harmless but in fact just the opposite. Christ and the Apostles warned of the need for great spiritual discernment in order to see the more deceitful influences that would arise from out of the Household.

In the history of Israel the false prophets arising from the people played a devastating role on the spiritual understanding and health of the nation eventually leading both Israel and Judah astray. It was the advice of the false prophets (“a lying spirit”, 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 22:22) that influenced Ahab to go up against the king of Syria - to his own death and utter defeat of the Israeli armies. Hananiah is another example of the influence of the false prophets (Jer. 28), who influenced the court of Zedekiah and opposed the truths that Jeremiah spoke. As Jeremiah stated to Hananiah – “*The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makes this people to trust in a lie.*” Such false prophets claimed to speak the word of God but did nothing more than speak to the people what they wanted to hear. As God proclaimed – “*The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and My People love to have it so...*” (Jer. 5:31).

Before we move on it is important to emphasize that the influences of false prophets on both national Israel and the early Ecclesia were ones that originated out of the Body of Believers, pretending to be the voice of God when in fact they were nothing more than peddlers of deceit. It is with this in mind that we need to look closely as to where this line of falsehood led and what developed from the early Ecclesia.

### Development of the False Prophet

In his grave warning of the apostasy to come in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2, the apostle Paul referred to the revealing of “that man of sin”, “the son of perdition”. It is interesting to note that the word “perdition” (Greek – *apoleia*) is defined by Strong’s Concordance, “From a presumed derivative of G622; *ruin or loss* (physical, spiritual, eternal)”. Webster’s Dictionary (1828 Edition) defines the word as “*entire loss or ruin*”. In referring to the development of apostasy from the Truth it was recognized

that as a *son of perdition* this *man of sin* would be a system of belief that would be a corrupted and destroyed version of the One True Faith.

This corruption of the Ecclesia, as brought about by the false teachings of her professed friends, is well documented throughout history and more importantly in the prophetic writings of Scripture. We read in Acts 11:26 that the disciples “*were called Christians first in Antioch*”, but due to the corrupt form that Christianity would take on true believers are extremely hesitant to fully identify themselves as “Christian” due to the false meaning and identification it now has. The name has been completely corrupted from its original implications.

The books of Daniel and the Apocalypse give us the most detailed documentation of the rise of this Apostate system of worship; a mixed, illegitimate system that arose out of the early Ecclesia, and with great irony melded into and took on the political, military, and even many pagan religious aspects of the Roman System it once was at enmity with. With the rise and victory of Constantine in the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D, an already severely compromised form of Christianity once persecuted by Roman authority was thrust into a position of unrestricted acceptance and influence (Rev. 12). This we know came known to be the Catholic (or “universal”) Church.

The rise of Catholicism and the Papacy did not stop with mere acceptance. Around 550 A.D. the Emperor Justinian issued the “Pragmatic Sanction” giving the Bishop of Rome (or Pope) control of Municipal and Provincial Governments and in 606 A.D. the Emperor Phocas made an official decree establishing the Bishop of Rome as the “Universal Bishop” of the Catholic

religion. The Pope would oversee not only a religious empire but one of material and political might. A period of 1,260 years was prophesied regarding this power’s ability to persecute the saints during its time of absolute religious and political domination over “Christian” territories. (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 13:5). When the time period came to a close in the 1860’s the Pope had been stripped of all temporal power and basically became a prisoner within the walls of the Vatican. But this was not the end of the Papacy and we have seen a strong and remarkable rise in its religious and political influence in the last few decades.

### False Teaching/Prophecy

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| • 124  | Immortality of the Soul  |
| • 325  | The Trinity  |
| • 375  | Veneration of angels and dead Saints                               |
| • 431  | The worship of Mary  |
| • 593  | Doctrine of Purgatory  |
| • 600  | Prayer directed to Mary  |
| • 788  | Worship of relics  |
| • 1079 | Celibacy of the priesthood   |
| • 1215 | Dogma of Transubstantiation  |
| • 1229 | Bible forbidden to laymen  |
| • 1585 | Jesuit Francisco Ribera promotes “Futurism” view of the Apocalypse |
| • 1834 | Immaculate Conception  |
| • 1870 | Dogma of Papal infallibility                                       |
| • 1950 | Assumption of Mary to heaven.                                      |
| • 1996 | Pope endorses Evolution  |



### A New Period

The Scriptures identify the rise and continuance of the Catholic/Papal system through history with various symbols and detail given. In Daniel 7 it is introduced coming out of the 4<sup>th</sup> Beast (Roman) of Daniel's vision as a "little horn" having eyes and a mouth speaking blasphemous things concerning God. Revelation 12 refers to the work of Constantine and the transfer of the dragon symbol from Pagan Rome to the new religious power that would take on the Roman characteristics. Revelation 13 refers to the "beast of the sea" that would develop out of the Roman Empire, with connection to the four beast elements found in Daniel 7, as well as the blasphemous characteristics of the "little horn" with eyes and a mouth. Revelation 13 also makes reference to the "beast of the earth" which represented the formation of the Holy Roman Empire as a protectorate and enforcer of the "Image of the Beast" or the Papal system.

Though temporal power has been taken away and the Holy Roman Empire has collapsed, the Papal system still stands (as it always has) as a teacher of great deception and falsehood – in other words a false prophet or teacher. Not only deceiving its followers but the world and its "Christian" daughters as well. Though claiming to be "Christian" in nature, scriptural Truth witnesses just the opposite. It is therefore most fitting, especially since 1870, that this blasphemous system would be symbolized in Biblical terms as **the False Prophet**. The Papacy no longer has power over temporal dominions (except for a few acres inside Rome, known as the Vatican City) but continues to act as a mouthpiece or voice of abominations that deceive while claiming to be God's representative ("Vicar of Christ) on earth. It is interesting to note that when a new Pope is coronated these words are spoken when the crown is placed on his head – "*Receive this tiara adorned with three crowns; know that thou art the father of princes and kings, victor of the whole world under the earth, the vicar of our Lord, Jesus Christ*".

Even though the Papacy no longer has the same level of power, it teaches and influences with a self appointed authority that makes the world stop and listen. In 1870 when Papal dominion was coming to an end, out of prideful indignation Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of Papal Infallibility. Considering the long list of falsehood that has been introduced into Christianity by this system and its popes such is obviously an incredible claim. But such is only further confirmation of its identification as the False Prophet System. With real dominion all but stripped away from the Papal system the term False Prophet is a most fitting description of it in this current age as it continues to influence and deceive the nations – even having an official position in the United Nations.

As a voice piece for the frog like spirits, during this time period of human history the Papacy has also had to change with the times to stay relevant to current world attitudes. During its 1,260 year period as the "Beast of the Earth" and the "Image of the Beast" (Rev. 13) it had no concern for the frog like concepts of *Liberty, Equality* and *Fraternity* and did everything possible to oppress any thoughts or actions that

were opposed to the Church's beliefs and interests. In a major turnabout to stay relevant with the times, in recent decades (especially under the work of Pope John Paul II) the Catholic Church took on the mantle as a champion for human rights. *Spiegel Online* (March 15, 2005) made the interesting observation – "*The Vatican -- once a resolute foe of human rights, but nowadays all too willing to become involved in European politics*". And as was observed by a report from the Catholic Bishops conference of England and Wales (1998) "*human rights have become central to the Church's mission in the world*." The same report goes on to give a list of specific rights including (and we are only providing a small sample) – "**freedom to investigate the truth, and freedom of speech and publication; freedom to pursue a choice of career; the right to receive a good general education; the right not only to be given the opportunity to work but also to enjoy the exercise of personal initiative in that work; the right to a just wage; the right to the private ownership of property including that of productive goods; the right to meet together with others and to form associations; the right to freedom of movement; and the right to take an active part in public life, and to make a contribution to the common welfare.**" (emphasis added)



John Paul II, a champion for human rights.

Fundamentally, little has changed regarding the religious views and self-centeredness of the Catholic system but this new facade has allowed "The Church" (as it calls itself) to be perceived as more in tune and sympathetic with the needs of the people in these modern times, which feeds the humanistic tendencies of present world attitudes. As we learn from the scriptural examples of false prophets, the False Prophet is willing to tell the people what they want to hear in order to preserve a place of acceptance and continued influence, while at the same time claiming Divine authority to speak and teach what it does.

### What about Islam?

The main thrust of argument that we have seen that promotes the belief of an Islamic identification of the False Prophet centers around the fact that Mahomet is referred to as "The Prophet" by his followers. Knowing that he certainly was not a true prophet of God, and considering the apparent impact that Islam is having on the world scene, especially in relation to a united hatred for Israel, some make a direct link between Islam and the False Prophet symbol. There is a certain degree of logic and plausibility on the surface, but when the nature of the False Prophet religious system is considered in its entire scriptural context then there is no real Biblical basis for such a conclusion.

There is no question that the Islamic religion is playing a high profile role in world events as we speak and truly it is a false religion, but it is not the only false world religion either. Mahomet established Islam in 622 A.D. and with this in mind it is extremely important to realize that Islam did not originate out of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Ecclesia and therefore was not a "false prophet" element that would arise out of the

Ecclesia and lead people astray; **it did not have a hand in distorting and apostatizing the One True Faith.** Catholicism came out of the True Ecclesia, and in fact claims to be the one original “Christian” church based on Peter as its foundation. (This lends to it as also being identified as a “Harlot” in Revelation 17 – yet another appropriate symbol to identify and give further detail and perspective to the “mystery of iniquity”.)

In considering further whether or not Islam is the “False Prophet”, if we turn over to Revelation 19:20 we are given more detail to help us understand his identity. There we read of his destruction - *“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worship his image.”* This is a direct reference to Revelation 13 where the development of the Apostate (Catholic) system and her tell-tale characteristics of identification are given. Connecting Rev. 19:20 with Revelation 13 shows that there is **a clear and unmistakable connection** of the False Prophet to the Apostasy (Catholic System). Linking Revelation 16:13 to the passage here in 19:20, we do not see any possible connection with Islam to the False prophet symbol. (And as a side note, no religious system has wrought fraudulent “miracles” on the scale that Catholicism has claimed and still claims in its attempts to deceive the masses.)

The impact of the rise of Islam and its militant characteristics does find a place in the Prophetic word. In Revelation 9 we see it spoken of as used by God as a punishing and destroying element on both the Eastern and Western portions of the Apostasy.



Islam came to be a counter balance and a painful thorn in the side of Catholicism and the Holy Roman Empire for centuries, having a profound effect on the course of history. But though still being a false system it was a system that was violently opposed to Trinitarian doctrine, Mary worship, and the idolatry that characterized the Catholic system – a hatred that continues today.

By no means can we or do we wish to minimize the role of the Islamic religion, or the role that some of the Arab/Islamic nations are playing in current events and will play at Christ’s return. But that does not mean that we can force an interpretation on the symbol of the False Prophet that just does not fit the clues and evidence that the Scriptures themselves give us. It cannot be forgotten that the Catholic System is specially targeted in the Apocalypse for its blasphemy against God, its adulteration of true Christianity, and its supreme hatred and persecution on Spiritual Israel as well as against the natural Jews. It also cannot be taken for granted that the Catholic system has a remarkable degree of influence over the religious and political world as we speak. The sins of the Catholic Church against the Believers and Jewish people over the centuries are utterly profound, and its crafty political and religious maneuverings and influence against current Jewish interests cannot be ignored; its anti-Israel and humanistic policies (unclean spirits), along with the “dragon” and “beast”, are bringing the world ever closer to the Armageddon that is promised in Revelation 16.

**Catholicism is the False Prophet** indeed and we have to be careful not to lose sight of the Scriptural, historical and present day facts that support such an understanding.

It is true that Islamic countries such as Iran and Syria as well as the “Palestinian” people continue to promulgate a savage hatred against Zion and act as “pricking brier” (Ezek. 28:24). There is no question as believers that we are to have a natural and spiritual inclination towards the Israeli/Jewish plight in her struggles with all of her enemies. We are to look with longing expectation when, *“ten men shall take a hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew”*. We can have no doubt that Yahweh through Christ and the immortalized saints will appropriately deal with such nations that “curse” the natural seed of Abraham. Such matters are dealt with in other portions of scriptures, including the destruction of nations such as Iran (Persia) and other “Islamic” nations that will be confederate with the Gogian Host. (Ezek. 38)

The Arab/Islamic neighbors of Israel have had over 50 years to “drive Israel into the sea”. They talk about, and they have attempted it several times, but they have not been able to accomplish it. The time is coming for larger and even more arrogant world players to “think an evil thought” in the attempt to fulfill their desires on the “burdensome stone” that is Jerusalem, and to take care of the Middle Eastern question once and for all – but to their own destruction.

### False Prophesying

Attempting to identify Islam as the False Prophet is nothing new. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica – *“When Islam was founded in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century as a new, higher religion; it considered the revelation received by the Prophet Muhammad to be superior to the former levels of Old and New Testament revelation. Christianity fought Islam as a Christian heresy...this new threat was seen as the fulfillment of the Apocalypse concerning the coming of the False prophet.”* (Emphasis added)

It was the Apostasy who first identified Islam as the “False Prophet”, which is not surprising that they would be very quick to identify the symbol with someone else rather than themselves. **Serious consideration needs to be taken to the fact that identifying Islam as the False Prophet began as a Catholic diversion.**

False prophecy (in reference to prophetic interpretation) has been a long practice within the Apostasy. Early “church fathers” such as Hippolytus (170-236), Irenaeus (120-202), and Cyprian (200-258) taught of a “Futuristic” view of the Apocalypse, pushing the majority of its interpretation to the time around Christ’s return, and taught of a literal interpretation of symbolic time periods – denying the “day for a year principal” as well as promoting the idea of the rise of “The Antichrist” at the time of the end.

The Apostasy continued the practice of clouding or falsifying prophetic interpretation, since so much of it was in fact in reference to them. This was dramatically seen in the formation of the Jesuit sect during the Reformation to defend the honor of the Papacy and to divert attention from the accusations of the rising

Protestant movement who were **loudly** and **correctly** pointing the finger at the Catholic Church as the “False Prophet”, “Harlot”, “Man of Sin”, “antichrist system” etc. Efforts by Jesuits such as Ribera, Alcazar, Bellarmine and Lacunza were used to promote teachings that would divert attention away from the Catholic Church. It is interesting to consider that Ribera (who promoted “Futurism” – the view that the majority of the book of Revelation applies to a latter day 3½ time period) and Alcazar (who promoted “Preterism” – the view that the majority of the book of Revelation was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.) both taught two opposing interpretations of the Apocalypse at about the same time, but since they were both intended to divert attention away from negative application of the Catholic system in the Apocalypse both interpretations were allowed promotion. What confusion; truly the “The Great Catholic Diversion”!

The “Futurism” teachings of the Jesuit Francisco Ribera (1537-1591) were translated and promoted in 1825 by the Scottish Presbyterian Edward Irving (1792-1834) who was the forerunner of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, and has profoundly influenced the prophetic interpretations of the Protestant/Evangelical movement today. While the more “liberal” branches of Protestantism adopted “Preterism”, it is the conservative elements of the Evangelical movement who have adopted “Futurism”. The views as found in the “Christian” world regarding the rise of “The Antichrist” who will establish rule in Jerusalem and conquer the world during a 3 ½ year period of “tribulation” can be traced to Ribera’s work. Not only has Catholicism influenced and deceived the “Christian” world regarding doctrine but they have deceived the world on the “*sure word of prophecy*” as well. Catholicism is truly a False Prophet in all aspects of teaching!



Ribera

### The End of the False Prophet

Leading up to the great crisis at the End Time - the Dragon (Russia), the Beast (Europe), and the False Prophet (Catholicism) will be working very closely in their influence to turn the world on Israel. The Dragon and her allies (Ezekiel 38:1-6) – some of which will be Islamic in nature - will be soundly defeated and destroyed “upon the mountains of Israel”. We have already referred to it but we are told later that God’s judgment will then be turned on the “beast and false prophet”: “*And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered to make war against Him That sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*” (Rev. 19:20,21). And in 20:10 we have further emphasis that both the beast and false prophet as being held in this “lake of fire” “*shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever*” – indicating utter and eternal destruction and death.

The Milestones 2005 yearly update (by Don Pierce, published by the *Christadelphian Scriptures Study Service*) makes the interesting observation as to the subtleties in interpreting the destruction of the “Harlot” as found in the Revelation 18 and the destruction of the “false prophet” in Revelation 19: “We must therefore see a subtle difference between the harlot woman and the false prophet. The Roman Catholic Church has a worldwide network of archbishops, with bishops and priests under them. When Babylon falls as described in ch 18, this will be the destruction of the harlot rider – the Vatican, the Pope and the physical buildings associated with “the Holy Sea”. Although the heart is taken out, the world-wide network of priests will continue to resist, and may have to be rooted out step by step. The “false prophet” will then have come to its end.”

When one considers the horrendous evils that have been committed by the False Prophet for his corruption of the Truth and the horrific injustices he has committed in the name of “Christianity”; as the great enemy of Christ and His ecclesia as well as the enemy of the Jewish people it can be of no mystery as to why this system, with the use of various symbols and detail, is described with such utter disdain by the Spirit Word.

We look forward to that great end when all enemies of Divine Truth are utterly destroyed and the remnant of the world that remains is brought under complete subjection of Christ and the saints. “*He which testifieth these things saith, “Surely I come quickly.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*”

A. Thomas

### WHO IS THE FALSE PROPHET?

*“Protestant and papal scribes are in the habit of applying the epithet “false prophet” to Mohammed, and therefore do not perceive its applicability to the Roman bishop. But neither Mohammed, nor his successors, are termed the “false prophet” in the Apocalypse. The Arabian was false enough doubtless; but he was a far more respectable character than any pope that has ever reigned; and were I to choose between the two superstitions, I would rather be a Moslem than a papist. It was the glory of Mohammed to destroy idolatry; it is the infamy of the popes to be the high priests of the “queen of heaven”...The epithet “false prophet” is singularly applicable to the Roman bishop. It is a part of his function to preach or prophesy; that is, to “speak unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” From him these blessings are supposed to flow to all “his children.” Aaron was given to Moses to be his prophet because he could speak well. As Aaron then, was speaker, mouth, or prophet, to Moses; so the pope is now mouth, or prophet, or speaker, of the papacy, and no more. He is virtually stripped of his dominions; he can prophesy, but his rule is a thing of name, and not a fact. A false prophet is he; truthless as Satan; sporting himself with his own deceivings, and thereby provoking a speedy fate, which is “capture and destruction.”*

-John Thomas, *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, Volume 1, pp. 73,74  
Also see *Elpis Israel*, pp.388, 389 (Logos Edition)

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## THE BIBLE NOT TRUE?

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The following article appeared in *The London Times* for October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005 by a Ruth Gledhill. We provide a few excerpts as an interesting addition to the previous comments regarding the False Prophet.

### -CATHOLIC CHURCH NO LONGER SWEARS BY TRUTH OF THE BIBLE-

The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church has published a teaching document instructing the faithful that some parts of the Bible are not actually true.

The Catholic bishops of England, Wales and Scotland are warning their five million worshippers, as well as any others drawn to the study of scripture, that they should not expect "total accuracy" from the Bible.

"We should not expect to find in Scripture full scientific accuracy or complete historical precision," they say in *The Gift of Scripture*.

The document is timely, coming as it does amid the rise of the religious Right, in particular in the US.

Some Christians want a literal interpretation of the story of creation, as told in Genesis, taught alongside Darwin's theory of evolution in schools, believing "intelligent design" to be an equally plausible theory of how the world began.

But the first 11 chapters of Genesis, in which two different and at times conflicting stories of creation are told, are among those that this country's Catholic bishops insist cannot be "historical". At most, they say, they may contain "historical traces."

In the document, the bishops acknowledge their debt to biblical scholars. They say the Bible must be approached in the knowledge that it is "God's word expressed in human language" and that proper acknowledgment should be given both to the word of God and its human dimensions.

They say the Church must offer the gospel in ways "appropriate to changing times, intelligible and attractive to our contemporaries.

The Bible is true in passages relating to human salvation, they say, but continue: "We should not expect total accuracy from the Bible in other, secular matters."

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Comment: The article also provides a list of examples as to what this group of bishops deem as "Untrue" and "True passages". One of those passages to be deemed "untrue" is Revelation 19:20 regarding the destruction of the beast and the false prophet. Is it any wonder that this passage would be singled out as "untrue"?

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## IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT ECCLESIA

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*A Sunday  
Morning*

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS: - In our lesson this morning we have the letters written by the Spirit to the seven churches, and these show us that even in apostolic times there were faults to be found. However, nature is the same in all ages, and therefore its faults do not belong to any age in particular. In this there is, in a sense, a consolation for us. When we examine ourselves ecclesially and find that things are not as they ought to be we are not to despair as if our case and the experience of all ecclesias in this day were an exception.

Infidelity attacks the Bible because of the imperfections of some of the characters exhibited therein; but this is really a proof that the Bible is divine. It hides not the faults of human imperfection, but exposes them sufficiently to justly and mercifully rebuke them and make them a warning for others. If in the Bible only a eulogy of the characters that go to make up its history were given, such, for instance, as in vogue in our day, of men after they are dead, we should not find it the book that it is, one that comes close to our own experience and touches our real heart-throbbing. We should be led to regard it as a book written for another and more perfect race than that of the Adamic, holding out ideals and possibilities far beyond anything we may hope to realize; a book written for angels, not for mortal men. But as it is it is true to life, and we are not overwhelmed when a comparison is made between characters of Bible times and those of our own times.

In these letters to the churches there was much to condemn; and we may be sure that if letters came to the churches of our day, we should not be exempt from rebukes and corrections. It is not necessary that such letters should be repeated; they are as good for us as they were for those to whom they were directly addressed, and therefore let us look about and find the things to be repented of, repent and press on for the better.

A fact worthy of our attention is, that the ecclesias addressed are held responsible for the evils among them. The strength of a chain is equal to the weakest link in its composition. While this would be rather too mathematical to apply to an ecclesia, it is evident that perverse members affect the standing and status of the entire body. "I have a few things against thee," said the Spirit to the church in Pergamos, "because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel." The fact that the body is held responsible for the inconsistencies of its members illustrate a principle that runs through the entire scriptures, exhibited more particularly in the history of Israel. The lesson for us to learn from this is that we cannot be individually independent; we have

obligations to each other that we must not ignore. In ecclesial matters and in all matters affecting the welfare of the Truth my business is yours and yours is mine. We are brought together in mutual compact under the same name – a name whose honor and reputation are made dependent upon our conduct. Here, brethren, we must face the fact that great responsibilities devolve upon us, commensurate with the great privileges and high honor to which the Truth has brought us into relation. Let us then consider one another, the strong bearing the infirmities of the weak, and the weak striving to become strong.

While in these letters there is rebuke and condemnation, commendation is also extended with a free hand. How pleasing it must have been to the recipients directly concerned. May we not enjoy the pleasure of receiving the same? We may if we imitate the examples commended, and thereby we may even take sips of sweet consolation, these sharpening our appetites for the deep draft that will be poured out in the words, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

To those who overcome will be given a crown of life. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” is what the Spirit says to the church at Smyrna. The crown is not a diadem, but a Stephan. A *Diadem* is an inherited crown, and in the world it often falls upon ugly heads, where they remind us of what Solomon says about jewels of gold out of place. A *Stephanos* was the coronal wreath that adorned the brow of the victor in the Grecian games. It was a reward of merit. When this crown is placed upon the heads of the victors in the race for life it will be put there by the unerring hand of the righteous judge, and while the possibility of its possession is due to what He had done for us in opening the way for our race, the fact of its possession will indicate that we have done our part – done the best we could and reached the winning post. That this might be our lot, “let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

*Thomas Williams – March, 1896*

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## “WATCH, THEREFORE”!

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*A View of the  
World Scene*

The last few weeks have certainly provided a great deal of excitement for the Household in relation to Israel. Even as we send this issue of the S.K. out the situation on the ground continues to develop on an almost hourly basis as Israel has taken on the terrorist organization of Hamas in the Gaza strip, and of even greater attention – Hezbollah to the north in Lebanon. Whether or not the conflict will spread into Syria or even Iran at this time is the current question. Are we about ready to witness the destruction of Damascus as is prophesied in Isaiah 17:1? Only time will tell, but we

can already predict the overwhelming fury that would be directed towards Israel if such a thing were to occur. The death of U.N. observers at the hand of Israeli air attacks has already created quite the storm. As of this writing it is apparent that even Israel’s allies are becoming impatient with the situation and there has been some talk of positioning a NATO force of “peace-keepers” on Lebanon’s southern borders to enforce a possible cease fire.

As we have seen over the past few years and what is especially brought to the forefront during this current “crisis” is the continued development in God’s plan as He prepares the nations for His final judgments. We see a persistent progression of latter day alliances and mutual interests against Israel as they are indicated to us in the prophetic word. Countries such as Russia, France (participants in the Gogian confederacy – Ezek. 38) and most of the other Western European (Beast) nations, The Vatican (False Prophet, Harlot – Rev. 16,17) and the United Nations in general continue to show their true opinions of Israel and have made clear their opposition to what they characterize as a powerful and overly aggressive Israel. Iran (Persia – also part of the Gogian confederacy) itself has been at the center of attention in recent months in its efforts towards nuclear capability and a continuance of obscene expressions of hatred, threats and taunts towards Israel without consequence. Iran is the founder of Hezbollah and along with Syria they continue to supply arms to the effort, and are both acknowledged as to be the real root of the current problem – not only in Lebanon but in Iraq as well, but again without consequence.

On the other hand up to this point the United States has overwhelmingly supported Israel in this current crisis in unprecedented fashion as it is seen as part of the overall “War On Terrorism” and as a check against the growing Iranian threat. And to a certain degree Great Britain, as well as Canada have expressed Israel’s right to defend herself and have done very little to try to stop Israel in her attempts to crush the terrorist threat. We have seen a continued development of the latter day “Tarshish/young lion” power by the increasing cooperation and agreement that these nations have (including Australia and India) in relation to Israel and the geopolitical scene in general. And interestingly enough - Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia and the Arab League have admitted that it is these terrorist groups – most notably Hezbollah – that are to blame for starting the current conflict and causing general unrest. This is certainly no indication of support for Israel, but an admission of the problems that are brewing between the Arab nations. According to news reports they continue to pressure Syria to withdraw its support of Hezbollah. This is no small matter and it needs to be noted that Saudi Arabia answers to the “Sheba and Dedan” of Ezekiel 38 that will stand in objection – though unsuccessful – with “Tarshish” and the “young lions” against the Gogian invasion of Israel.

Also, Israel has been able to flex her military muscle to an extent not seen in years. It is important to note that both Israel and the world (including the Arab world) recognize the military superiority that she enjoys against her Arab neighbors. On the public relations and political front this is proving to be working against Israel as she is

now being perceived as nothing more than a “bully” in the Middle East. The great irony is that it is impossible for Israel to win the public relations war in weakness or strength. Even if Israel is able to improve her current strategic situation in the short term by the military means she is now using (and it is coming with more difficulty than anticipated), the world at large will not be pleased with the result.

We cannot be certain of the short term outcome of this present crisis but we are able to see pieces of the latter day prophetic picture continue to fall into place with the expectations that are provided us by the Spirit Word. But it is during such times of crisis that our awareness of God’s workings through the nations and His witness Israel in particular are at their highest. It is easier during such times as this to have our center of attention focused on Spiritual matters and the expectation of our Master’s eminent return when Israel is the leading and dominating news story everyday in the media. But how have we handled ourselves and what is the focus of our attention when things appear to be calm or routine on the world scene or in Israel?

### Watching

In the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew in what is known as the Olivet Prophecy, after providing the signs that dealt with the end of the Jewish Commonwealth in 70 A.D., Christ then lead into the events surrounding his return. In the 30<sup>th</sup> verse he comments on the time we anxiously await when “*all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they (the nations) shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven (Christ and the immortalized saints) with power and great glory.*”

Regarding the period of waiting for when Christ will return to set such glorious events in motion – when “*all these things be fulfilled*” (vs. 34) - he informs his brethren, “*but of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only, but as the day of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.*” (verse 35). Though we are not told the “day or hour” of Christ’s return to the Household, the scriptures do give us plenty of information through the revealing of both broad and specific time periods (e.g., Daniel and the Apocalypse), the ongoing fulfillment of various prophecies that lead up to Christ’s return, as well as the moral depravity and the blind pursuit of life’s pleasures that indicate to us where we stand in relation to the Divine Timeline. (It was through Daniel’s 70 weeks prophecy that Jewish expectations were high for the arrival of the Messiah during Christ’s first appearance.) In addition to these things, what has been of special and thrilling interest to us has been the budding of the fig tree (Matt. 24:32-34) – the regathering and national revival of the Jewish nation; a herald and blatant witness of the certainty and nearness of Christ’s return. With the many sign posts provided us, though not being able to predict the “day and hour” we should be of full assurance that we stand in the very last days of Gentile times.

But even with the subtle and some times not so subtle “signs of the times” that we are given the flesh is weak, and longing expectation and excitement in anticipation of the Master’s return can quickly be dulled to complacency and a compromised sense of urgency and diligence. Christ makes reference to the “days of Noah”. No doubt this is

indication of the great wickedness that exists prior to Christ’s return but there is also reference to the continuance of life’s routine right up to his return – “*For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark...so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be.*” If we are hoping to live our lives in the pursuit of the pleasures of this world expecting that some overwhelming and unmistakable sign or jolt will be provided us so that we can then “get our act together” right before Christ returns – then we are sadly mistaken. There can be no question that if the “day and hour” were clearly revealed to us that human nature would wait for the last possible minute to pursue the proper course of action. The signs are there and have been available for our view for quite some time, **IF** we have taken the appropriate effort to see and appreciate them. The signs in the political heavens, the witness of the nation of Israel, the moral depravity of the world around us, as well as the quickly deteriorating strength and zeal of the Brotherhood – “Will I find (the) faith?” – are all powerful signs to behold if we choose to discern them.

It is with the keen understanding of the flesh condition that Christ provides the emphatic command – “***Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.***” It is this publication’s conviction that there are really no other major Biblically revealed events that need to transpire before Christ returns to the Household – to resurrect and gather those associated with the blood of the everlasting covenant and to judge their deeds “whether they be good or bad”. In a very real sense we are living on borrowed time. Are we watching and if so is such watching evidenced through the thoughts, affections, words and actions that we exhibit? It was during the few hours before Christ’s crucifixion that the weary apostles could not remain diligent and awake. “*What, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*” (Matt. 26:40,41) That we are standing in the last “hour” prior to our Master’s return should be at the forefront of our mind. What are we doing? What are we going to do? Do we choose to rest our eyes or will we remain diligent for just a little while longer?

“Watch therefore”!

S.K.

*Oh! Wake Thy slumbering virgins,  
Send forth the solemn cry!  
Let all thy saints repeat it:  
“The Bridegroom draweth nigh!”  
May all our lamps be burning,  
Our loins well girded be:  
Each longing heart preparing  
With joy to welcome Thee.*

