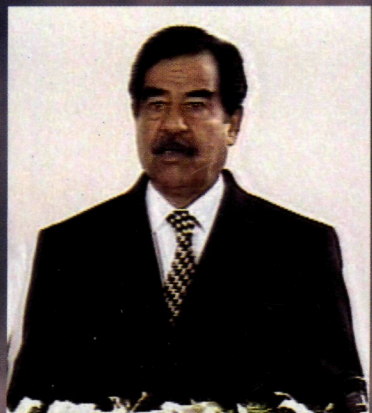


# MILESTONES



**Don Pearce**



# **MILESTONES TO THE KINGDOM**

***A Review of the  
World Events of  
2002 in the Light  
of Bible Prophecy***

**Don Pearce**

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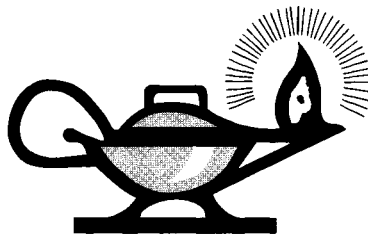
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**JANUARY 2003**

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## Preface

*“The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence”* (Gen. 6:13).

Some 25 years ago, an elderly brother drew attention to this passage during an exhibition of public violence. So shocked was he by that surprising burst of aggression, that he felt that it could be a sign of the times. And that if violence was such a feature of the society before the flood then we may well expect it to spread through the nations in the latter days. The elderly brother died in the closing hours of 2002, but he had witnessed a year in which fear was upon the lips of all the inhabitants of the earth. Fear and violence took on a new meaning in year 2002. The IRA may fight it out in Northern Ireland or some political faction may strive for the mastery in some dark corner of Africa but then that has been pretty well standard for 30 years. What is new is that since 11<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2001, violence has broken out in massive phenomena from one end of the earth to the other. The public and the authorities have not ceased to dwell upon the enormous potential for evil represented by al Qaeda and other terrorist groups and by irresponsible countries that would seem to have the technology to project nuclear devices thousands of kilometres beyond their borders.

“Men’s hearts do fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth”!

What the whole world is gradually coming to realise is that the religion of Islam is not about love, joy, and peace among men but rather about a militant territorial advancement until—with the blessing of Allah—the whole world lies under its golden crescent. The matters of sin, forgiveness, and salvation are almost without comment in the Koran; but death and hell for the infidel (i.e. all, other than Muslims) is the theme from beginning to end. This is what Mohammed taught and what he wrote in the Koran. So bin Laden and his team are not some outlandish fringe within the company of Islam, but in fact more genuine disciples of what the ‘prophet’ actually taught in those heady days of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century. This is why the violence is breaking out all over the world. Whether it is in the island of Bali in Indonesia, or Mindanao of the Philippines or Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia or Dhaka of Bangladesh or Kashmir or Afghanistan or London or Chechnya or Manhattan’s Twin Towers or Mombassa; all are seen as legitimate targets for the conquest of Islam. Since this is *Jihad* (holy war) then there is no reversal, no retreat. In fact, temporary reversal is seen as opportunity for increased determination and death in the cause—then the immediate entry to a ‘heaven’ where lust and riches await the faithful terrorist.

What about Israel and Jerusalem? They remain the **central focus** of Islam. The followers of Islam will never give up on their determination to conquer the land of Israel and remove the Star of David from towers of Jerusalem. Despite every enticement, Mr Arafat has never settled for partial control of

either. Their five-year-old children are taught this from day one in their Palestinian schools. They will endure their poverty and live with their hatred for the doctrine remains the same.

What do we conclude from these things? The Most High has signalled to the entire world that **the controversy of Zion** is about to be settled. The nations wish to know nothing about it. They want their business, sport, and entertainment—so have no concern for Jerusalem and generally find the Jews to be a troublesome people, while many are blatantly anti-Semitic and see no reason whatsoever to stand up for Israel. Generally speaking, the people want peace to pursue their pleasures. But the God of Israel has said,

“For it is the day of Yahweh’s vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion” (Isa. 34:8).

No-one can escape it. Violence and terror in the most unlikely places has awoken the world to fear of the future. They ask why? The answer is:

- that the controversy of Zion must be settled,
- that the promises given to Abraham and to David must be fulfilled,
- that God’s Son must be established upon His holy hill of Zion, and
- that Christ Jesus will be King over **all** the earth!

Blessed indeed are the eyes that see these things. Can we hold on until the Lord Jesus is in the earth again? Can we preserve the Brotherhood in the truth, yielding neither to factionalism or profanity? Are we retaining our children, in homes of faith and happiness, and training them to uphold the way of Christ? Grandparents, do we lean over for our grandchildren to ensure that their little feet are found in the path of truth?

*Milestones 2002* is a moving summary of the continuing fulfilment of the words of the prophets. We have no need to change our course. Behold Europe binding together, another 10 members to be admitted in 2004! Behold Israel, losing her friends and yet there in the land. Behold the alliance of the English-speaking world! Behold the intrigue of the harlot of Rome! There is **no** need to change our course.

But just time to prepare for our beloved Master.

Brian Luke,

January 2003.

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#### **Sources of Information (\* = via Internet)**

*Catholic Herald* weekly; *Daily Telegraph*; *Debka* daily -free\*/ weekly -subscription\* (Israeli Intelligence web site); *Economist*, weekly; *The European Journal*. (Phone 020 7930 7319; Fax 9706) *European Journal's Intelligence Digest* (fortnightly\*); *Israel Line* 5x's a week, free\*; *Jerusalem Post International* edition, weekly; *L'Osservatore Romano* the official Vatican paper, weekly; *Newsweek*; *Sunday Telegraph*; *Sunday Times*; *The Reformer* bimonthly. (Tel/fax. 01525 712348); *The Times*; *Time*.



## Internet News

Much of my news is gleaned off the Internet—for an up-to-date list of the web sources go to [www.MilestonesUK.org](http://www.MilestonesUK.org) It details *Milestones Snippets*—interesting articles gleaned off the web and e-mailed several times a month. It also details books, including books on creation v evolution.

Many books referred to are available from *Milestones* - request booklist

## Abbreviations used

[ ] Author's notes. EU European Union. Was the EEC, then EC, now EU

**m** = million; **bn** = billion; **GDP** = Gross Domestic Product – total market value of the final goods and services produced by a nation's economy during a specific period of time (usually a year) 1€ = £0.62 = \$1.03

\$1 million = £660,000, \$1 billion = £660,000,000 approx. \$ always US\$.

## Author's notes

I would like to thank my family and Bro. Kevin Allison for their helpful advice and comments on the draft. It is all written in 3 weeks, so please bear with its imperfections.

I am very grateful for items sent in, even if not acknowledged! The sources above indicate the publications that I see, so if an item appears in another magazine please let me see it, ensuring the date and source are indicated.

Conventional religious terminology is used, occasionally put within “ ”, but often not. Readers will appreciate my understanding on the falseness of many of these terms. Conventional names are used: e.g. West Bank. Original spellings retained. Dates on weekly publications are when published - can be 7-10 days after event - where range, latest date is used.

## Acknowledgements and permissions arranged

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## **Chapter 1:**

# **A BRIEF REVIEW**

## **Brief overview of Milestones 2002**

What a year 2002 proved to be! The eyes of Bible Students were drawn to Israel and the Middle East. The situation for Israel has grown steadily worse through the year. Yasser Arafat has shown that he is not interested in peace—his aim is the elimination of the State of Israel. Al Qaeda continued to bring carnage. It was the turn of Australians to find themselves on the receiving end of terrorism, with around 90 dead (and 100 of other nationalities dead) in the holiday paradise of Bali. Then it was Israel's turn to feel the long reach of this network. Casualties were thankfully small; potentially there could have been hundreds dead.

It opened Israel's eyes to the fact that the enemy was much greater than just Palestinian or Hizballah terrorists. They now have to face the reality of Israeli interests being threatened around the globe. New elections were in the offing for Israel, as they faced an increasingly threatened future. She contemplated using secret weapons if she continued to be attacked and hinted that she would retake lost territory.

Meanwhile the US, supported by Britain and Australia, built up their military preparations for a war against Iraq. It has divided Europe—only Britain among the EU countries supported this action. Her fellow politicians showed their support for Saddam. Britain and the rest of Europe had different agendas!

2002 was the year when Tarshish and the young lions established themselves even more strongly as a military power in the Sheba – Dedan region! Meanwhile the city of London was actively promoting herself as the Maritime centre of the world!

Oil has been influencing political decisions ever since it was used as a fuel. Europe continued to look to Russia for a steady supply of energy. Russia meanwhile was planning to break the Saudi grip on the Asian oil market by shipping to the Far East via Israel! Russia exacted a high price for co-operation in a Gulf War, as she faced the prospect of her economy being crippled if America won control of Iraq's oil fields and flooded the market with cheap oil!

The building of a political union of European States was pushed along as the euro became the currency for Europe. Work on the draft of a constitution for Europe continued throughout the year. The proposed thrust of this and the growing centralisation of power continued to alarm Britain. The Franco-German axis, which had been faltering, revived during the year and Blair found himself out-manoeuvred by his continental allies. Hints

were again made of Britain being pushed to the fringes rather than being at the core. Clearly political union was the end game. With the timetable being set for a “big-bang” expansion of the EU right up to Russia’s borders, the final phase of the European beast of Revelation 17 was well underway!

In 2002 Russia was brought into Nato and into the G7 to make it G8. Russia’s absorption into Western Europe continued. Largely as a result of backing Bush’s war in Afghanistan, Russia’s world standing increased greatly. Her economy too, showed improvements following the several years of reforms. Her partnership with Europe steadily progressed—the West needed the fuel; Russia needed the cash—so it made economic sense. 2002 ended with the exciting news of the call to rehabilitate the Romanovs!

The Pope continued to travel and to promote his vision of a United Europe. He constantly campaigned for help this past year to put spiritual values back in the heart of Europe. We know from Revelation 17 that indeed this will be the case. The Harlot system will be found riding the European beast. His promotion of Mary and of making money-spinning “saints” continued. The support that the Vatican gave to the Palestinians highlighted just what resources the Pope’s armies could muster. Links between the IRA and the Palestinians came to light.

If the US leads an attack on Saddam in 2003, we could quickly see the face of the Middle East being changed—in Israel’s favour and to her enemy’s shame. As 2002 closed, we may indeed be nearer the situation that must come about prior to the manifestation of Christ and the saints, of Israel a) dwelling in the **midst** of the land b) at a time of **peace**, than seemed possible at the start of the year. The situation that arouses the wrath of a united Europe against Israel may indeed soon be here.

Can we take for granted our freedom to worship? Our brethren and sisters of earlier ages would be amazed at our easy situation. Religious persecution is on the increase again. Ironically when the call is for freedom of expression, it translates into restrictions on the righteous! For the godless, they can promote their wayward life-style with impunity, but dare to protest against it and it brings down wrath. Reports from Russia, Europe, America spoke of a curtailment of religious freedoms, of hindrance or active persecution of minority religious groups. Coupled with it was an upsurge in anti-Semitism around the globe.

So the thrust of Milestones is as always, that the coming of the Lord must indeed be near. The Truth must be a force in our lives to prepare us and to change us. There is only one thing we will carry to the Judgement Seat. It won’t be our cars or our houses or our bank balances. It will be our minds. As far as we know, our brains are the most complex things that our Father has created. What have we made of our characters? The Lord Jesus will be looking to see how we have attuned our minds to the word of God. Our achievement in the things of this world will be of no value in that day. Now is our time of preparation for the glorious Kingdom Age.

## Chapter 2:

# PROPHECIES RELEVANT FOR TODAY

*Every year we take a closer look at prophecies that are relevant to our situation at the time of the end. What we review in the pages of Milestones often cannot be tied directly to a certain prophecy. As we piece together the many, many prophecies that cover our days, we build up a picture of the expected sequence of events. We can't be dogmatic; it is only in hindsight that we can be certain. Nevertheless, our Heavenly Father has revealed to His servants things that must shortly come to pass in order that we may be warned and encouraged by the certainty of the nearness of our Lord's return. Before looking at particular prophecies, let's review what our expectations are, so we can better appreciate how the present situation shows that the scriptures are indeed speaking of things that are being fulfilled in our generation.*

### Our prophetic expectations

As Bible students we have to be watchers. We can't predict the steps that will lead to the end result. We do however have the benefit of an understanding of the broad brush of Bible prophecy: -

- The return of the Master to his household.
- Peace in the land.
- The invasion of the land and Egypt by the Gogian forces.
- The fall of Jerusalem and the death of 2/3rds in the land.<sup>1</sup>
- The deliverance of Jerusalem by the Lord Jesus and the saints and the establishment of the nucleus of the Kingdom.
- The Kingdom then extending to cover all the earth in spite of the opposition of many nations.

Within this broad outline we have many details. For example: -

- The naming of the many nations that form part of the Gogian confederacy in Ez 38:1-6
- The opposition to the Gogian forces described in Ez 38:13.
- The role of Moab in the latter-days as a covert to the fleeing Jews in their time of trouble. Is 16:4

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<sup>1</sup> An interesting echo of the time of Ezekiel when he divided his cut-off hair into 3 piles – 2 parts of which were destroyed, only a third to survive and that through ordeal. Ez. ch 5

- The focus of the world upon Jerusalem and it being a burdensome stone. Zech. 12
- The threshing of the nations on the **mountains** of Israel. Joel 3:12-16—linking with Rev 16:16
- The change in Israel's heart as they recognise their Messiah. Zech.12:10-14
- The Kingdom established in nucleus in Israel, Jesus their King
- The re-grouping of the nations and their continued opposition to what is happening in Israel—to be destroyed by Christ and the saints. Dan 7:9-14; Rev ch's 17-19
- The restoration of scattered Israel back to their homeland
- The eventual establishment of the Kingdom worldwide. Peace at last and glory to Israel's God and homage to the Lord Jesus as the King.

Many prophecies overlap, each adding a few details. Once we have the basic outline then it becomes easier to slot items together. In humility we have to admit we don't know all the answers. It often is only in hindsight that we can see the fullest picture. Events happen in such unexpected ways. Who would have foretold a September 11<sup>th</sup> attack? Yet we can see that it has led step by step to a whole sequence of matters that are still unfolding and will continue to do so until the coming of the Master—and beyond. Sept 11<sup>th</sup> itself was a phase in a long running struggle between bin Laden and the West.

Although we can't be dogmatic about the detail, the general overview has stood the test of time. Our early pioneers, who did not have the benefit of seeing Israel established in the land, nevertheless were able to see a remarkable picture from their Bible studies. They knew that, while Gog and his confederacy (which includes three Islamic countries) would be the final destructive enemy, the great enemy of Israel was and always has been the system that has corrupted the Truth, whose roots were in Babel; climaxing in Babylon; migrating to Rome and finally developing in the Papacy. This is the real enemy that we must be watching.

### **From Babylon to Rome**

Babel and Babylon are the same word in Hebrew. The city of Babylon was built on the site of Babel. The characteristic of the city of Babel that Nimrod built was its city walls and its tower—this was a combination of political and religious power. Here men banded together to establish their rule in the earth. Nimrod promoted his corrupted version of the truth. Following the destruction of the city and the confusion of tongues, these false ideas were spread as the nations populated the earth. Hislop in his book *The Two Babylons*, and Sadler in *Babylon, Mystery the Great* trace these false ideas and show that many were adopted into church teachings.

It was not just pagan ideas that were to be mixed with truth, there was to be a large element based upon the Mosaic Law. It is Zechariah in his 6<sup>th</sup> vision of chapter 5, who shows that this would be the case.

### **Zechariah's vision of the roll and the ephah**

The vision of the flying roll that measured 20 cubits by 10, points back to the Holy Place of the Tabernacle, which was this size. This is where the priests ministered to the God of Israel. But this scroll was covered in writing, judging those who swore and stole. This is what Israel did, they stole the honour that was God's and swore falsely in His name. As a result the house of Israel was to be utterly consumed. (v4) Zechariah was busy rebuilding God's house, but many centuries later, the Roman armies were to obliterate all traces. The corrupt priesthood was swept out of the land, many killed, and many dispersed as slaves around the Roman Empire.

The second part of the vision is of two women—Judah and Israel—lifting up a large container containing a woman symbolising wickedness (v7,8) and removing it to a new base, where a new house would be built, in the land of Shinar. Now Shinar was where Babel was built. (Gen 11:2) Was it then to return to its roots? No. Israel had been taken to Babylon—Shinar—prior to the return in Zechariah's day, but in this scattering from AD 70 it was to Rome that it was to be taken. The word Shinar is built from two Hebrew words: *shin*, a tooth and *tsar* an enemy. So it was to be taken to the land of “the enemy's tooth.” Highly descriptive of Rome, the mouth of the enemy of the Truth. Daniel had described “the great iron teeth” of the 4<sup>th</sup> beast (7:7)

If we should wonder at the connection between apostate things of Israel and the Roman church, then consider how much is based upon the Law of Moses. The feast days, the rich robes, the incense, the priesthood, the tithes and constant sacrifices. Mix these with pagan ideas such as the cross, the rosary, the worship of mother and child, images, Christmas and we have a false system of worship that deludes many around the world, and—when and where it had power—persecuted God's people, Jew and saint. It is significant that this was Zechariah's 6<sup>th</sup> vision—the number of man. (Adam was created on the 6<sup>th</sup> day).

### **Daniel shows the enemy is Roman**

- Ch 2. The image stands on **iron**/clay feet when it is destroyed. (v34)
- Ch. 4. The Babylonish tree is preserved with **iron**/brass bands (v15), to flourish at the end of 7 times.
- Ch. 7. The 4<sup>th</sup> beast, Rome, with its **iron** teeth (v19), continues as a persecuting power until it is destroyed at the time of the establishment of the Kingdom. (v11)

- Ch. 8. The Little horn of the goat power – Rome—is still there at the time of the end. (v23-25)
- Ch. 11. The king who exalts himself (v36)—the military power of Rome—is to be found at the time of the end. (v40-45), to be broken by Michael—Christ and the saints (12:1)

The image of Daniel stands upon two feet—just as the power of Rome was divided into an Eastern and a Western Empire, so in the latter days we are seeing the emergence of two powers. Western Europe and Eastern Europe led by Russia. The boundaries are being blurred. Former Soviet block countries are being invited to join Western Europe. Instead of an iron curtain dividing the two, there is a marked level of co-operation. We might not associate Russia with the Eastern Roman Empire—in Constantine’s day it was a wild and barbarous place! However Bible students have long anticipated the move of Russia southward into Turkey to take Constantinople, the former centre of the Eastern Roman Empire. Then will be seen the standing up of the image for a brief period of time before its downfall at the hands of “the little stone” power.

With Constantine’s move eastward, Constantinople became the military centre of the Roman Empire and Rome the spiritual. In both halves, church and state worked together—the Holy Roman Empire in the West and the Byzantine in the East. The working of church and state is clear in Russia—the Russian Orthodox leader Patriarch Alexis II is often to be found at Mr Putin’s side on state occasions. In the West we see a separation of the church from the state. Reference to God and religion were dropped from the initial draft of the new European Constitution. However we shall see, in chapter 13, the Pope’s drive to bring Europe back to its “historic roots”.

The true enemy of Israel will be found in this revival of the Roman Empire with politician and priest building power and control over the hearts and minds of men. We shall see some examples of this when we look at the pressures from politicians and priests being placed on countries like Poland to conform to the ways of the EU!

The spirit of Babylon is alive today! Nebuchadnezzar and his successors despised the God of Israel, destroyed His Temple, slew His people and took the remnant captive—true it was at the wish of God for Israel’s punishment. Nebuchadnezzar was brought to realise that the Most High rules in the Kingdom of Men. The Latter-day Babylon will likewise invade God’s land, slay His people and carry away a remnant into captivity. Yet the latter-day Babylon will fall at the hands of the one prefigured by Cyrus, even the Lord Jesus, Israel’s Messiah.

### **Babylon the Great**

Revelation chapters 17 - 19 speaks of this final development of Babylon as a harlot woman who *sits upon many waters* (17:1) and rides upon the *scarlet coloured beast*, (v3) which ascends out of the *bottomless pit*. (v8)

She is described as a *great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth*. (v18). In John's day that was the power of Rome. She is also described as *sitting upon seven mountains*, (v9) again linking us to Rome.

The Beast is described as having 7 heads. It represents the many phases of Europe under Rome's control. The final manifestation is described as *an eighth head* but it is of a similar type to the previous heads as it is described as, *of the seven* (v11) previous heads. It points us to a re-emergence of a "Holy Roman Empire" in Europe, which is to continue only for a *short space*. (v10)

Previous beasts had emerged from **the sea**—centred militarily and spiritually on Rome and the Mediterranean; or **the earth**—the Holy Roman Empire—centred militarily in Vienna and spiritually in Rome. (13:1,11) This one emerges from the *bottomless pit* (v8). The Greek word here is *abussos* a depth that cannot be measured, a fitting term for the new centre of Europe which centres around Brussels and Strasbourg, and the German's would like it to be centred in Berlin. In John's day Berlin would be in wild, uncharted territory, while Brussels and Strasbourg would have been on the northern edge of the Roman world. What we are witnessing is the uniting of Europe, larger and deeper than ever before since the fall of the Roman Empire.

Do we see the woman riding the beast? The rider controls an animal, directing it to move under the rider's guidance. We see in the emerging Europe a coming together of mainly Roman Catholic countries. Although we do not yet see the direct involvement of the church in the state—they are kept very much apart—this will not always be the case. What has been so interesting this year has been the drive by the Pope for Europe to acknowledge their roots. Of course, behind the scenes the church is still powerful, in its control of the individual members. Many in high positions and in influential jobs are Roman Catholic. The majority of the present leaders have been through Jesuit hands. The founding fathers of Europe are on the high track to being made "saints"!!

So although we cannot say that at the present *the woman rides the beast*, we know that this will be the case. Revelation ch 17 is painting the picture **after** the Gogian destruction, when the military might of Russia is broken on the mountains of Israel and Europe rallies around the church to fight the one they will dub "antichrist". How sad it is that as part of the churches' efforts to deflect attention away from themselves they teach that Antichrist is to be one who claims to be King of Israel, who establishes his kingdom in Israel, builds a temple, etc. These are the very things that we know the Lord Jesus will do. It is understandable that Europe resists Christ's calls to submission. Rallied by Israel's true enemy, their opposition will only be ended with the total destruction of the woman-beast system.



*And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together 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 had 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.*

*And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. Rev 19:19-21*

In Russia, church/state relations are more open. We shall be examining in ch 13 the moves to make this the case in Europe as well as the developing cooperation between the Beast system (Western Europe) and the Dragon system (Russia).

### **Receiving power as kings**

One further point from this chapter.

*And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power (exousia) as kings one hour with the beast.*

*These have one mind, and shall give their power (dunamis) and strength (exousia) unto the beast. Rev. 17:12,13*

*Exousia* signifies “privilege, freedom, delegated authority” - Strong. “*The power of rule or government* (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed, [generally translated *authority*]) - Thayer

The *kings* represent the nations that collectively form the power of the beast. They are willing to submit their own powers to a collective investment of power in the beast, whilst retaining their national identity, and receiving in return considerable power—*exousia*—to which the people must submit.

Those living under the E.U. appreciate the power of these phrases. Rules and regulations flood out and are blindly implemented to the great detriment of its citizens, because this is what is willed from those in power!

### **Joel's picture of the coming contest**

The final prophecies that we want to touch on are contained in Joel. In chapters two and three he is shown that the down treading of Israel would not cease with the imminent destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

In chapter 2 under the type of a locust invasion, he describes the darkening of the sun, moon and stars. (v10) There is a call for repentance and the promise that God will save them, and that they will never again be made a reproach. (v19) Joel continues:

*But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things. [mg. hath magnified to do]. 2:20*

This belongs to the future, to the final time when Israel will be defeated. The army is described as being from the north, linking with Ezekiel 38:6,15 and Daniel's King of the North of chapter 11. The place of destruction and the putrefaction agrees with Ezekiel 39:11-21—a great slaughter. The pride of the northern host is indicated in Joel 2:20; - *hath magnified to do* AV mg; *he was doing great things* Interlinear Bible. It is the same Hebrew word used in Daniel 8:8,9,10, (AV great), 25 (AV magnify)

*Dan 8:23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.*

*24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.*

*25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.*

Joel then describes the blessings of the Kingdom Age, and the outpouring of the rains in their season. (v23) with their wonderful spiritual significance as elaborated in v28-29, and spoken of by Peter on the day of Pentecost.

The closing three verses of this chapter set the scene for chapter 3.

*And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.*

*The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.*

*And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call. 2:30-32*

This is the theme of the mount Olivet prophecy. Israel's sun moon and stars were darkened and removed in AD 70 and have been that way for many centuries. We see today Israel as a nation again, but her current sun, moon and stars are destined to be swept away, *before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come*. My literal Interlinear Bible translates as: *before the coming of the great and awesome day of Yahweh*. The word *before* can have the meaning of before in time, but normally and as used in

Joel has the idea of *in front of, in the face of*. This is what the great and awesome day of Yahweh is going to do. Replace Israel's luminaries, as well as the other nations', and replace them with a sun, moon and stars wherein dwelleth righteousness—Christ and the saints. This salvation is revealed at Jerusalem. This is where the great battle will be fought and won!

Chapter three gives important details.

1. Israel is to be scattered again before this day .v2,3,6 (Links with Zech 14)
2. The enemy possesses the land. v2
3. God is going to intervene to save them. v7,8,12,16,17
4. The enemy are gathered by God to the Valley of Jehoshaphat .v2,12
5. There they are threshed like corn, and pressed like grapes. v13,14
6. Described as *the valley of decision*. v14 *Decision = threshing sledge* –a wooden sledge with sharp stones stuck into the bottom of it would be drawn over the corn, cutting the stalks and loosening the grains from the ears.
7. Yahweh is victorious and from Jerusalem His voice roars forth shaking the nations, but to the salvation of His people. v16
8. A fountain of water flows from Jerusalem to the Jordan valley. v18
9. Judah and Jerusalem dwell for ever, and are cleansed. *And I will cleanse their blood that I cleansed not*. Interlinear Bible. v21

### What picture can we draw?

If we pull together some of the points raised in the prophecies we have so briefly looked at we can see why Bible students see a confirmation of their long held belief as they see a Europe that is binding together in the West. Against all normal expectations individual nations are giving up control of their own affairs and are entrusting them to a central authority, and in return receiving from the central authority binding political ties they are unable to overturn.

We look to a drawing closer of the two halves of Europe—the Dragon and the Beast and to see them, with the False Prophet, working to gather *the kings of the earth and of the whole world... to the battle of that great day of God Almighty*. (Rev. 16:14)

We see a terrible time ahead for Israel. From prophecies we examined in earlier years, there will be a time—how long or short it will be we are not told—when Israel is dwelling at peace and in safety. Although it is difficult

to see such a period with the present situation, we will look at this matter in chapter 6. That peace is shattered by

1. the Gogian invasion - Ez. 38
2. the standing up of Daniel's image - Dan 2
3. the gathering of the nations against Jerusalem - Zech 12-14.

These are three aspects of the same event. By this time Christ will have returned and the saints will be at the Judgement Seat being prepared for their new role.

Joel ch. 3 has indicated that many in Israel are scattered yet once more. With the enemy in possession of the land, the time to show Yahweh's strong arm will have come. The time to favour Zion. *The day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.* Isa. 34:8. The nations gathered around Jerusalem will be threshed and soundly defeated. Joel 3:12-16; Ez. 39; Rev 16:17.

The nucleus of the kingdom having been established with a repentant Israel; the battle moves into Europe. Rev 16:17-21; 17:14; ch's 18, 19.

Finally the situation will come about spoken of by so many of the prophets, when the rule of God goes out to the ends of the earth. Blessings flow out to a world that will have experienced the fierce anger of God for their godlessness—a world much reduced in population through man's stubbornness and the deep-rooted apostasy that pervades the nations. Now bathed in blessings, nations dwell peacefully, willing to worship the great Creator, the Father of the King who reigns in righteousness. For the immortalised saints, it is the attainment of the time that they have longed for. Redeemed through the blood of the Lamb, they do his will and pleasure, and delight themselves in the things of truth and righteousness.

### Some helpful books

**Basic expositions:** *Eureka, Elpis Israel* by Bro. Thomas; *Apocalypse and History* by Bre. Barker & Boulton. [From Christadelphian Office]

**More recent works:** *Ezekiel* by Bro. J. Allfree; *Hear What the Spirit Saith unto the Ecclesias* by Bro. Knowles; *Israel's Defeat: by Gog or the Arabs?* Bro. D. Styles [CSSS]. *Rome and Jerusalem; How will Christ Come?; Revelation—which interpretation?; The True Gospel—Defended and Explained!* By Bro. G. Pearce. [From CSSS or Milestones]; *Christadelphian Expositor—Revelation*, by Bro. Mansfield [Logos]

*The Bible Magazine* contains Milestones updates, and many articles on prophecy. See Vol. 14#3 for article on *Who is the False Prophet?* by Bro. J. Ramsden. They also carry a range of booklets such as *Rome, Jerusalem and the Bible*, *United Europe—from the Atlantic to the Urals*; *Bible Prophecy and the Middle East*. *The Cry of the Prophets*, by Bro. P. Billington, has several chapters on the identity of Tarshish. They have also produced many videos on Bible prophecy; several can be viewed on line at [www.biblemagazine.com](http://www.biblemagazine.com) [From CSSS or The Bible Magazine].

Chapter 3:

ISRAEL’S EXISTENCE THREATENED

*It has been an increasingly difficult year for Israel. It has become very clear that dreams of a negotiated peace are extremely unlikely under Yasser Arafat—he does not want peace. It became even clearer that Arafat’s aim is the elimination of the State of Israel. Endless years of negotiations have proved fruitless, and the majority of the Israelis would like to see him removed and a more amenable Palestinian in charge.*

*The terrorist attacks have been relentless, and with the attack in Mombassa in November, came the realisation that as well as Palestinian, Hizbollah and Fatah terrorists, they were battling with Al Qaeda terrorists as well. We sketch the developing picture of despair for Israel during the year.*

The reality of the problem

Israel is a relatively small country. In area (21,000 sq km) it is the size of Wales, with a population of about 6 million—a tenth that of Britain. In terms of Australia it is less than a third the size of Tasmania, and a population almost a third of the whole of Australia. Compared with

Israelis killed per year	
The 15 years before Oslo talks	17 av.
The 7 years up to Sept 2000	43 av.
The Jewish year to Sept 2001	138
The Jewish year to Sept 2002	481

America, it is similar in size and population to the state of Massachusetts.

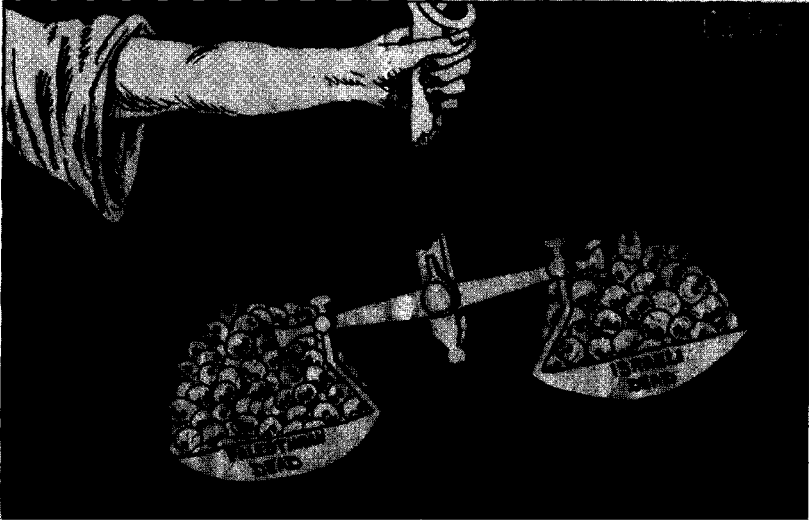
Now look at the table and see the scale of the deaths from terrorist attacks over the past 25 years or so. In the last Jewish year 481 people were killed. If we

scale up to Britain’s population that’s nearly 5,000 people being killed in one year! For Australia it would be the equivalent of 6 Bali’s and for the US 20,000 dead, or 7 Twin Towers!

This is a great burden for Israel psychologically and financially. They have tried talking and giving away land, but the troubles only grow. As Bible students we can draw the parallels of Israel’s troubles under the Judges. When the nation walked without faith, God brought trouble upon them until in their extremity they cried to God. A few in Israel do indeed cry to their God, but the vast majority do not even acknowledge the existence of God. A recent poll showed that only just over 50% believed in God.

So the nation seeks its own solutions, but is despairing of living at peace. There can only be true and lasting peace for Israel when they acknowledge the true foundation of Jerusalem—Jesus their Messiah.

**“Come let us cut them off from being a nation”**



A Jerusalem Jew being interviewed on the radio in April spoke of his reluctance to go to any public place. All his family have cell phones, and several times a day they check up on each other's whereabouts and safety. This is a far cry from dwelling in peace and safety as described in Ezekiel 38:11.

We are reminded of the words of the angel to Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian slave girl, concerning her yet-to-be-born son Ishmael.

*And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.* Gen. 16:12

We note too, the words of Isaac to Esau when Jacob had received the blessing that his father had intended to bestow upon his firstborn son Esau.

*And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.* Gen. 27:40

The blessing bestowed on Jacob by Isaac was:

*Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.* Gen. 27:29

We know that in the fullness of time this blessing will come upon a repentant and believing Israel. Until that time, we witness the millennia-old conflict there has been between the children of Abraham.

The paragraph heading is taken from Psalm 83, which was one of the Psalms that were read to seek God's help in the midst of Israel's troubles. A press release from the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, 12-03-02, detailed this call to fasting and prayer.

Prompted by concerns over the continuing violence and loss of life in the Land of Israel, Jewish religious authorities both here and abroad have declared this Wednesday, 13 March 2002, a public fast day for the entire Jewish community throughout the world. The staff of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is joining in this time of prayer and fasting, and we strongly encourage Christians worldwide to do so as well.

The fasting period for those in Israel has been set from sun-up to sun-down on Wednesday. You are encouraged to maintain a similar fast in your location.

There will be a special prayer service held at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. . . Following Jewish tradition in times of great distress and need, Psalms 83, 104, 130, and 142 will be recited.

Please pass this message on to all of your family, friends and colleagues so more people can join together in this appeal to Heaven for help in time of need. Shalom from Jerusalem!

Most Israelis thought that there could be an exchange of "land for peace". That if they gave up part of their territory, the Arabs would be content to lie peaceably side-by-side.

Israel conducted the political process with the Palestinians from a perspective that regards the essence of the conflict as essentially political, and that the conflict can therefore be resolved by creating the conditions for coexistence, mainly through mutual recognition and economic growth. Yet this perspective ignores the Palestinian perception of the essence of the struggle against Zionism, and ignores the nature of the Palestinians' historic objectives, the achievement of which seems to the Palestinians to be nearer now than ever before. *Jerusalem Viewpoints* 1-10-02

Arafat's agenda is different. In another *Jerusalem Viewpoint* article (29-10-02) the writer had this to say:

### **Arafat's perception of "peace"**

The year 2003 could be the most important in Israel's history in terms of relations with the Palestinians. Israel and the Palestinians are now locked in a confrontation, largely because Yasser Arafat's perception of "peace" is totally different from the peace Israel has already achieved with Jordan and Egypt.

Arafat's position is based on four demands: a return to the 1967 borders, an Arab capital in Jerusalem, a Palestinian right of return, and control of

the mosques. Arafat considers himself the most important Palestinian, Muslim, and Arab leader in the world, and this is why it is so important to him to keep control over the mosques. He similarly insists upon the right of return, in his positions as leader of the PLO, leader of Fatah (the ruling party of the PLO), and chairman of the Palestinian Authority (a position that actually expired two years ago).

Within any peace agreement, Arafat is determined to force Israel to absorb the 300,000 Palestinians now living in Lebanon. These Palestinians, living under the influence of Syria and Iran, are very bitter and they remind Arafat daily of his obligation to solve the problems of *all* Palestinians. So Arafat wants Israel, suicidally, to grant all of these Palestinians (whose families originally hailed from the Galilee/Haifa area) full Israeli citizenship, including full voting rights in elections for the Knesset.

Arafat is further determined that the independent Palestinian state should have the full right to absorb more than half a million overseas Palestinians into the Palestinian territories. Arafat mentally adds these to the 2 million Palestinians in the West Bank, the 1.2 million in Gaza, and the 3.2 million in Jordan, and hopes to create an overwhelming Palestinian majority between the Mediterranean Sea and the Iraqi desert.

This is Arafat's dream, if not his obsession. The Camp David talks failed mainly because Arafat simply cannot give up his dream. He is determined that, in 30 to 50 years, there will be one sweeping pan-Palestinian state in place of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, with Israel losing its Jewish majority. Within that timeframe, the demographic factor becomes crucial. Today Arafat may be losing power locally, but, because of his dedication to the Palestinian cause, he is still an influential national and supra-national leader.

### **The Karina A affair**

In January 2002, the Israelis intercepted a vessel carrying a cargo of rice. It had been under surveillance as it journeyed from Iran and up the Red Sea towards the Suez. Beneath the rice lay \$15 million worth of weapons!

The haul included Katyusha rockets, which, with a range of 20 kilometres (12 miles), can hit Israeli cities and destroy tanks.

There was also 1,500 kilograms of high explosives, anti-tank missiles, mortars, sniper rifles and mines packed into crates, sealed in watertight plastic, Israeli officials said. *BBC News* 10-01-02

The plan was to drop the weapons off the coast of the Gaza Strip. If they had fallen into Arafat's hands it would have posed a grave threat to Israel.

The boat had been purchased by the Palestinians as well as the arms – funded by money given to the Palestinians mainly by Europe and diverted by Arafat to buy arms. The EU angrily denied that this was the case, yet



money given to the Palestinians can not be properly traced – the Israelis have convincing evidence that much disappears into Arafat's pocket.

Israel gave the rice to UNRWA, who in turn gave it to the Palestinians!

Arafat's blatant two-faced attitude, talking of peace, yet arming for war, helped to convince the US, Jordan and Egypt that Arafat was a lost cause. As we shall see in a later chapter, it marked a turning point in the finding of a solution to the conflict.

## **Jenin**

The "massacre" in the Palestinian town of Jenin filled the news for many weeks. The Israeli government took the decision that no areas were off-limits in their hunt for terrorists. The Palestinian towns and refugee camps had been the breeding ground for many of the attacks in Israel. Although Israel had handed over control of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip several years ago, they decided that, when necessary, they would go back in.

When the Israeli troops entered Jenin, they found it cleverly booby-trapped, and suffered considerable casualties. Tanks were called in to demolish the booby-trapped buildings. There was considerable loss of civilians lives, which the media, very critical of Israeli tactics, quickly turned into a massacre with at least 500 dead. When later UN observers entered to investigate, no evidence could be found. Israel cameramen filmed remarkable scenes of the alleged bodies being taken away from the scene, only to jump off the stretchers when a safe distance away!

The mud stuck however and Israel was roundly condemned for her actions. From Israel's viewpoint they successfully detained many suspects and seized much incriminating documentation. It also sent a signal to the Arab world that Israel could enter Palestinian territory—and leave—at their will.

This took place during early April. While this was going on, Israel came under the spotlight again during the siege in Bethlehem of the Church of the Nativity. This touched a closer nerve as far as Europe was concerned—this was a Christian site!

## **Bethlehem**

More than 100 Palestinian gunmen broke into the church, correctly surmising that the Israelis would refrain from pursuing them into the buildings. Many were wanted by Israel as "senior" terrorists. Europe and the Vatican were loud in their calls for Israel to stop the siege—it was interesting to see the great efforts that went into bringing it to an end. According to the Debka report 7<sup>th</sup> May:

None of the parties to the Church of Nativity settlement in Bethlehem has reason to be proud of the text cooked up by four intelligence agencies—the American CIA, the British MI6, the Vatican's Opus Dei and the Israeli Shin Beit. It was designed to end Israel's 36-day siege of the shrine, extricate the terrorists harbored there and remove Israeli

forces from Bethlehem after they quit the other six Palestinian cities entered for Operation Defensive Shield.

The four agencies were directed by their masters to clear up the operation's last loose end before Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon began his meeting Tuesday night with President George W. Bush, so as to free the agenda for other issues.

As a result, 123 individuals were to have left the church, including 39 murderous terrorists directly responsible for hundreds of Israeli deaths and injuries. Thirteen were to be flown to Egypt and wait there for the US administration to talk to Italy, or some other government, round to granting them asylum; 26 to the Gaza Strip and the rest go free. At the eleventh hour, however, the Italians stalled, bitter about the "patronizing Anglo-American" who made their arrangements without bothering to consult with Rome or even discuss the details. Italy was not the only country to hold out against being made an asylum for Palestinian terrorists. At this time, no other government has been found to host the 13 Palestinian terrorists.

For three days, the Palestinians announced repeatedly that the deal was in the bag. Each time it sprang a fresh hole—typical of the handiwork of intelligence operatives who never have a complete picture to work with. They drove forward nonetheless, certain that in the final reckoning, the parties would have to sign.

According to other reports Italy had indeed been consulted, but had then got cold feet. It had all the hallmarks of a clever negotiating ploy. Let your opposite number think the deal is in the bag, create a problem, and extract more concessions, as the other party is anxious to close the deal. Whatever, the 13 most-wanted terrorists are now dispersed around Europe. The EU's deep involvement in this issue was significant as was the involvement of the Vatican's Opus Dei—the Vatican's equivalent of the CIA.

### **Isolating Arafat**

Israel has taken many steps to curtail Yasser Arafat's power. Most of the year he was kept a virtual prisoner, often surrounded by Israeli tanks. In April, in May and again in September, the Israelis demolished more and more of his buildings. He is now confined to four rooms in what was once a sprawling complex of buildings in Ramallah.

The Israeli government has a problem. If he were killed he would be regarded as a martyr. If he is exiled he would continue his campaign against Israel from a distance, and again be seen as a hero. The US does not want to inflame the Palestinian situation ahead of a possible war upon Iraq. So Israel is reduced to a policy of containment, reducing Arafat's travel at home and abroad.

Many of his followers are disenchanted. Their living standards have steadily fallen. They can see the corruption within his administration and

many are wishing for a change. The US has bold plans for isolating Arafat's influence. It wants to use Jordan and Egypt to oversee the running of the Palestine Authority, under general US supervision. We examine these plans when we look at "The prospects for peace".

## **Mombassa**

The carefully co-ordinated attack upon Israelis in Mombasa on the Kenyan coast in November could have been a dreadful massacre. Al Qaeda admitted carrying out the attacks. Mombassa is a popular holiday destination for Israelis. Two anti-aircraft missiles were fired as the plane that had brought in the latest load of holidaymakers returned back to Israel with 260 people on board. It was regarded as "amazing" that both rockets missed, as normally they "lock-on" to the heat of the exhausts from the engines. It was later said that the pilot took evasive action. Meanwhile a vehicle filled with explosives, whose occupants were wearing suicide belts of explosives, raced to the hotel where the Israeli holidaymakers had just arrived and detonated their explosives. The building was also attacked from the air with incendiary devices. The whole complex was quickly reduced to a charred heap. Remarkably there were only 13 killed, the majority being a Kenyan dance team who had just arrived to welcome their guests.

It took several days before Al Qaeda admitted responsibility for the attack.

"This is the second time we strike from Kenya – after the US embassies bombings – but this time we hit the Jews in revenge for Israeli actions in Palestinian territories. Your women for ours, your old for ours, your children for ours. You have cast a siege of hunger around the Palestinians, we shall cast a siege of fear over you." "In the face of international persecution, we are able to carry out operations against the Jewish-Crusader [America] Front." *Debka* 3-12-02

## **Al Qaeda, Palestinians Prepare Mega-terror for Israel**

This *Debka* article concluded that Israel was facing an acute situation. Under the above headline it stated:

This penultimate stage for the year 2002 is viewed by our experts as the prelude to a mega-terror offensive already in the works. External and Palestinian terrorists are expected to combine for an escalating cycle of attacks to culminate in one such mega-strike staged by al Qaeda or Hizbollah terrorist cells.

The head of Israel's Mossad, Efraim Havely spoke of:

...the mega-terror menace hanging over Israel as essentially one of "genocide" with the aim of destroying Israel to its very foundations. "To meet a threat on this scale," he said, "Israel possesses a broad and diverse array of capabilities, some of them not yet revealed." Inherent in Israel's national security balance, he explained, is the ability to countervail menaces of this kind. Should the danger come to pass, that

ability will take the conflict to a new plane which, Halevy was sure, would be understood and accepted by world opinion.

### The Vatican and Israel

We have commented before on the remarkable number of visits that Arafat has made to the Pope, especially bearing in mind that he is a Moslem although his wife who “converted” from Roman Catholicism in order to marry him, still regards herself as a Roman Catholic. An interesting item on the web site of a Russian Orthodox believer in Israel disclosed her assessment of Arafat.

“This week might have been Jan. 7th for the rest of the world but for Orthodox Christians in the Holy Land it was Dec. 25th according to the old Julian Calendar and we have just celebrated the Birth of Christ.

...This was the first year I did not see Arafat at the Orthodox Christmas service. He usually attends the service with Michel Sabah, the Latin Patriarch, and thirteen days later the service with the Jerusalem Greek Patriarch. **It is very significant that Arafat selects to attend these services because it indicates the co-operation and unity among Muslims and Christians in a Palestinian State.** If we are to maintain a Christian presence in the Holy Land **it helps when the government [i.e. the PA] validates our existence** although we are falling below 2% of the three million Palestinian population.” [My emphasis]

Michel Sabbah is the first Palestinian Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem <sup>1</sup>. It is understandable that his leanings are towards the Palestinian cause. Yasser Arafat has his own website and reported on Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>:

“Mr. President receives Patriarch Sabah

Ramallah. H. E. President Arafat received the Jerusalem Latin Patriarch Michel Sabah and briefed him on the latest developments in the Palestinian territories in view of the mounting Israeli military pressures against our people.

The meeting also tackled the situations in the Jerusalem City and the attempts of Judaizing its Islamic and Christian sites.”

To understand the last paragraph we have to appreciate that Moslems attempt to deny that there ever was a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem! Indeed they claim Jerusalem has always been an Arab city!

An Italian paper on 12<sup>th</sup> April published an article entitled *European Anti-Semitism* by Oriana Fallaci. It was reproduced by the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council of Australia, whose website ([www.aijac.org.au](http://www.aijac.org.au))

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<sup>1</sup> An honorary title. The Latin Patriarch is the bishop of those Middle Eastern Catholics who follow the Western Catholic liturgy.” [www.hcef.org](http://www.hcef.org)

puts out interesting collections of articles from around the world. Amongst the many things she wrote were these words:

"I find it shameful that the Catholic Church should permit a bishop, one with lodgings in the Vatican no less, a saintly man who was found in Jerusalem with an arsenal of arms and explosives hidden in the secret compartments of his sacred Mercedes, to participate in that procession and plant himself in front of a microphone to thank in the name of God the suicide bombers who massacre the Jews in pizzerias and supermarkets. To call them 'martyrs who go to their deaths as to a party'."

The use of priests to smuggle arms is nothing new.

### **IRA links to Palestinians**

The *Daily Telegraph* carried a report on the 10<sup>th</sup> March of an earlier attack when 10 Israeli soldiers were ambushed and killed. It had all the hallmarks of an IRA killing. So much so that the *Daily Telegraph* reported that Mossad had asked the British MI5 to investigate whether there were any IRA terrorists who had gone abroad in recent weeks. The IRA was known to have links with the PLO and other Middle Eastern groups. Many were trained in camps in the Middle East and North Africa.

In April there was an attack on a Jewish settlement west of Hebron. A witness testified that the attacker disguised in Israeli military fatigues, was light skinned and of non-Arab appearance. *Debka* 27-04-02 carried an article headed **What Non-Palestinian Hand Carried out Adora Attack?**

Then the *Sunday Telegraph* 30<sup>th</sup> April gave an account of the amazement of a British ex-bomb disposal expert who was working for the Red Cross investigating the Israeli siege of Jenin, on finding that the devices he had found were identical in every detail to those he had encountered in Northern Ireland. The article was headed **IRA is teaching Palestinians how to blow up Israeli soldiers in West Bank.**

"He told The Telegraph that he had discovered more than 200 explosive devices while working in the camp. . . He said that he was convinced that the bombs were either supplied by the IRA or made under their supervision. He said:

"When I saw the bombs it was like a flashback to Northern Ireland. The pipe bombs I found in Jenin are exact replicas of those in Northern Ireland. The size of bomb, the way they put the nail in, the way of igniting it with a light-bulb filament, where they drilled the holes through, the use of a command wire and the means of initiating the bomb; these are all the same.

"They have all the hallmarks of originating from Ireland. When you put two and two together then it seems that they could well have been trained by the IRA."

Mr Collinson said that the booby-trap bombs used in Jenin and Northern Ireland were made from the same ingredients—nitrogen-based fertiliser, diesel and sugar. He also suggested that the tactics used by Palestinian militants in the battle for Jenin mirrored those of IRA attacks on British soldiers.”

Although the Vatican would deny any responsibility for the IRA, yet in their hey-day many priests acted to provide safe havens, to smuggle arms and generally assist the activities of the IRA. The late Avro Manhattan, himself a Roman Catholic, bore ample testimony to his church's involvement, in his books such as *Catholic Terror Today* and *Religious Terror in Ireland*. [Now out of print.] Indeed the earlier report of a bishop in Jerusalem smuggling arms shows that things haven't changed. Many tactics used by the Palestinians mirror those used in the past by the IRA.

### A dividing wall

In an effort to combat terrorist attacks, Israel commenced in June the construction of a fence around Jenin to separate Jew from Arab. Construction of the first 75mile/120km section will take a year at an estimated cost of £68m. It largely follows the “Green Line” border between them. In places it will consist of 10ft/3m high wire fence with patrol roads either side flanked with ditches and barbed wire entanglements. In other places subject to sniper fire, it consists of a 26ft/8m high concrete wall.

### Anti-Semitism

Even before Sept 11<sup>th</sup> there had been a growing number of reports that anti-Semitism was on the increase. One of the areas was from “Christians”. An article in the *Spectator* 12-2-02, written by a “British” Jew was entitled **Christians who hate the Jews**. The author puts it down to the re-emergence of ‘replacement theology’. Christianity has replaced Judaism, and “the ancient hatred of the Jews rooted deep in Christian theology and now [is] on widespread display again”. “The hostility to Israel within the Church is rooted in a dislike of the Jews”. She added “Church newspaper editors say that they are intimidated by the overwhelming hostility to Israel and the Jews from influential Christian figures”. In another article a Jewish author spoke of the worsening situation:

Manifestations of anti-Semitism have grown more extreme and more severe. Expressions of hatred for Jews that were considered taboo are returning. Today, speaking against Jews is almost a bon mot. People speak freely about international Jewish schemes and about Israel as the source of all the troubles in the world. *Yediot Ahronot* 28-12-01

We see the pent-up anti-Semitism, the release of a millennium-old urge that powerfully infected and shaped European history. *Economist* 4-5-02

Anti-Jewish vandalism has been especially bad in France. It is also on the increase in Germany and Belgium. A German Rabbi advised his brethren in Germany not to display signs of their faith for fear of being beaten up.

## Chapter summary

Far from Israel *dwelling safely* during 2002 it has been a time of great trouble and even despair. With growing anti-Semitism it is not difficult to see the nations coming against her. Israel is trusting in her own salvation, and that has to change. They have to be humbled. Prior to that humbling process she will achieve a state of peace and prosperity. We will look in chapter 6 at how this could possibly happen, in spite of the present gloomy picture. In our next two sections we look at Israel's relations with neighbouring countries and her economy during the year.

## Chapter 4:

# ISRAEL AND HER NEIGHBOURS

### *Who is my neighbour?*

*Israel's borders touch Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. Jesus spoke the parable of the Good Samaritan, in answer to the question Who is my neighbour? At the end of the parable the Lord Jesus asked*

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. Lu 10:36, 37

*Israel also has countries that are friendly to her and provide support and trade such as Turkey and India. Others despise her and do not seek her welfare. In this chapter we briefly review Israel's relations with her neighbours over the past year.*

### **Moab, Ammon and Edom**

Modern-day Jordan covers the territory of Moab, Ammon and Edom of Bible times. These countries feature in many prophecies, some of which we can give an application to our times. Prophecies like Jeremiah ch. 48 show that the Biblical nation was to be destroyed, but many passages speak of the fate of a latter-day Moab, which we assume apply to the peoples that occupy the territory of Moab in the time of the end.

Isaiah speaks of the time when the ensign will be shown and the scattered Jews return to their King, that in that day

*they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. Isa 11:14*

In a later chapter Isaiah speaks of the destruction of Moab in the last days

*For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. Isa 25:10*

Yet not utterly destroyed.

*Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD. Jer 48:47*

Balaam foresaw the day when:

*I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth [tumult]. Num 24:17*



Interestingly Moab here is spoken of as not being totally destroyed, but smitten in the corners or borders.

Moab traditionally acted as a place of refuge for troubled Israelites. In the time of Nebuchadnezzar: Jer 40:11; Jesus exhorted those in Jerusalem in AD70 to *flee to the mountains*. Eusebius (4<sup>th</sup> Century AD) records that they fled to Pella. Moab is destined for this role again when the Gogian “King of the North” sweeps down into Egypt and back up into Israel:

*Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land.* Isa 16:4

In the Kingdom, Jordan’s territory will form part of Israel’s inheritance.

*But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.* Isa 11:14

The inhabitants will presumably, if they submit to the King, be moved to have their inheritance eastward. Moab and Ammon were of course Lot’s children. Isaiah paints a delightful picture of Arab peoples, descendants of Abraham, whose offerings are accepted on God’s altar. They evidently accept the God of Israel. Midian, Ephah, Sheba, Kedar, and Nabaioth are mentioned in ch 60:6,7.

## **Jordan**

Israel has signed peace accords with the Egyptians, the Palestinians and the Jordanians. It is only the latter that bears fruit. The Israelis and the Jordanians work closely together sharing intelligence information in an effort to combat Iraqi and Iranian sponsored terrorism. Jordan is Israel’s biggest Arab trading partner. King Abdullah is determined to build Jordan’s economy and is willing to trade with the West. In fact he signed a free-trade agreement with the US in Sept 2001— a status previously only enjoyed by Canada, Mexico and Israel. Imports and exports between the two countries are free of any duties.

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Johannesburg in early September, Jordan and Israel presented a plan to channel water from the Red Sea at Eilat, north to the Dead Sea.

The level of the Dead Sea has dropped 15 meters in recent years, and is now 410 meters below sea level. Lower flow rates in the Jordan River, the main source for the Dead Sea, have caused the drop in water level.

The channel will consist of a series of tunnels, canals and shafts and will be almost entirely in Jordan. Expected costs will be US\$1 billion, however, an additional US\$3-4 billion will be needed to construct desalination plants, which will siphon off some 850 million liters of water for use in Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

Other than creating much needed drinking water for the area, the project will also help to reestablish the delicate equilibrium of the Dead Sea ecosystems as well as creating employment in Jordan.

Construction will start within 18 months and is expected to take five years to complete. *ICEJ News* – 02-09-02

## **Egypt**

Egypt features at the time of the end. Its treasures are taken by the King of the North. Dan 11:42,43. The nation exists in the Kingdom age, being mentioned in Zec 14:18. It also features in Isaiah 11:15,16:

*And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod.*

*And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.*

In fact a highway will link north and south together:

*In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.* Isa 19:23

Although the peace accord with Egypt was signed 25 years ago in 1977, it has not brought the co-operation that Israel had hoped for.

Business contacts are virtually non-existent, with Israeli exports to Egypt amounting to just \$10m last year. By contrast Israeli exports to Jordan, reached \$66m in 2001.

The government-controlled Egyptian press is replete with anti-Semitic imagery and anti-Israel incitement, the current showing of a 41-part television series based on the infamous Protocols of the Elders of Zion is the latest example. *Jerusalem Post* 29-11-02

However Egypt is co-operating with America in order to bring a measure of stability to the region—a matter we will look at in chapter 6.

Egypt has big reserves of oil and gas—British Gas is one of the principal developers. Much is being discovered—30 finds in 30 months!

The Egyptian minister of oil Sameh Fahmi added that natural gas reserves jumped from 36 trillion cubic meters to 58.5 trillion cubic meters which makes it enough for 60 years for both consumption and exportation.

He continued that oil reserves will be enough for 14 years. *Arabic News* 28-11-02

Egypt signed an agreement with Israel for providing Israel with 1.7 billion cubic meters of Egyptian gas, although this has not yet come on stream and there are doubts over it.

## **Lebanon**

Since Israel withdrew her forces from Lebanon, the border area has remained volatile. Rockets are still launched into Israel, and Syria has moved a considerable volume of arms into the Beqaa Valley.

The Syrian president has also recently delivered to the Hizballah 300 Syrian-made 220 mm rockets. If only two score a direct hit on a small Israeli town with 20,000 inhabitants, like the northern Galilee town of Kiryat Shemona, half of its homes will be razed. *Debka* 25-11-02

*Debka* 30-12-02 carried news of a huge explosion in the Beqaa Valley, heard over a 20km area, with many casualties as one of these rockets presumably detonated prematurely. Was Israel to have been its target destination? Saddam is anxious that the Syrians open up another front and attack Israel to cause a diversion of America's efforts against him.

*Debka* 25-11-02 highlighted another problem for Israel—the extraction of water from the Wazzani, a feeder river to the Jordan and which supplies 15 percent of Israel's fresh water needs. With Syrian backing it is being diverted to Lebanese villages that are not short of water—Israel however is very dependant upon every drop of water.

## **Syria**

It had been hoped that Bashar Assad would have been more amenable to the West—he was educated in the West and his wife is British. However he seems as hard-line as his father. On his visit to London in December, Mr Blair was unable to get his commitment to end terrorism against Israel. Terrorists and money flows through Syria to the Palestinians, and Assad himself funds terrorist groups. It is suspected that Saddam has moved some of his weaponry into Syria to escape the eyes of the weapons inspectors. *Debka* 29-12-02 reported that President Assad travelled from London to Iraq to deliver President Bush's final ultimatum, delivered into his hands by Mr Blair.

Israel fears that Assad is building up his defences to open a new front against her and so Israel is building up her defences in anticipation of an imminent attack.

## **Turkey**

Israel has enjoyed good relations with Turkey for many years—the two countries signed a military cooperation agreement in 1996. Although a Moslem country, Turkey has seen the benefit of trade and defence co-operation against extremist countries like Iraq. Israel shares air bases in Turkey, which give her air force much more space for flying practice and enables her to spy upon Iraq.

Israel is negotiating to buy water from Turkey in exchange for arms.

Israel and Turkey on Tuesday finalized a unique deal that contributes to deepening their alliance for a long future. The deal stated to exchange Israeli weapons for Turkish water for the next 20 years, at amounts estimated at 50 million cubic meters of water annually. *Arabic News* 7-8-02

The water is to be drawn from the Managfat River in the south of Turkey near Antalia. The method of transportation is still being worked out, and no shipments have yet taken place.

Israel has also signed a deal in August worth \$76 million to supply 54 new Israeli pilot-less reconnaissance planes. This followed a deal valued at \$110 million to upgrade up to 300 Turkish military helicopters.

## India

We have noted in previous *Milestones* the growing ties between Israel and India. They have continued to grow not only economically but also militarily. India as the eastern Tarshish has been working closely with Israel. Earlier in the year there had been a standoff between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, which threatened to develop into a nuclear contest. Israel gave India much help and equipment. Israel supplied pilot-less drones, which can transmit “real-time” information without risking a pilot’s life. They instructed the air force, army and navy in tactical use of their weaponry. Advanced arms are so sophisticated that it is difficulty for countries to use them effectively. Israel has not only helped to develop many of these weapons but has had practical experience on the battlefield.

The *MENL* (18-12-02) announced that:

India and Israel have expanded their defense relationship by agreeing to jointly market military systems and platforms.

Officials said the effort is part of plans by both countries to expand their defense markets. India has launched a drive to become a major weapons exporter in the Persian Gulf region.

India said its state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., or HAL, signed an agreement with the state-owned Israel Aircraft Industries for the joint marketing of Indian light helicopters. The helicopter is meant to be used by both the civilian and military market.

Another area of co-operation is the mounting of joint submarine patrols in the area of the Gulf. We shall look at this in chapter 7.

## Chapter summary

Israel continues to suffer through the reluctance of many Arab countries to trade with her. She has some friends in the Arab world, and with these she has made strategic alliance in her efforts to combat terrorism. We now turn to the economic situation in Israel.

## Chapter 5:

# ISRAEL'S ECONOMY

### *In spite of everything*

*Life still goes on for the average Israeli, though few families remain untouched by the violence and the fear that it brings. Visitor numbers to Israel have plummeted, affecting many areas of the economy. In the first 10 months of 2002 they were down 38% on the previous year. Many soldiers are reservists—with the high numbers of soldiers needed to combat terrorism, this has an effect on the availability of the work force. Inflation is increasing—now running at 8% and unemployment has reached 10% and 40% of Israelis are living below the minimum income line.*

*What a change from 2 years ago when tourists were flocking to Israel, exports were booming and Israel seemed to have the ability to absorb any amount of returning Jews. It is not all gloom however, taking a longer-term perspective Israel Line 19-11-02 reported:*

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's figures on the Israeli economy, Israel's GDP per capita is \$17,900, highest among the world's 43 emerging markets that have extensive commercial and investment relations with OECD-member countries, GLOBES reported. Israel's GDP per capita is 88 percent of the OECD average of \$20,300, and increased by over 50 percent in the 1990s. 80% of Israel's GDP per capita growth in this period came from foreign trade and the rapid development of Israel's high-tech industries.

### **Oil and gas**

Israel seems to be surrounded by countries able to extract oil and gas from their territory. Egypt to the south has, as we saw, vast supplies of oil and gas. Syria to the north has an oil industry. Even the Palestinians have oil off the Gaza strip. Earlier in the year, the *Jerusalem Post* (22-2-02) announced that British Gas had discovered substantial gas reserves off the coast of Gaza. They are big enough to supply the whole of Israel's needs for at least 15 years! It is estimated that 80% of this gas field is in Gaza's waters, only 20% in Israel's. *Arabic News* (21-5-02) reported that Israel has agreed to purchase this gas. Israel had previously made arrangements with Egypt to purchase Egyptian gas, but this seems to have fallen through, at least for the present.

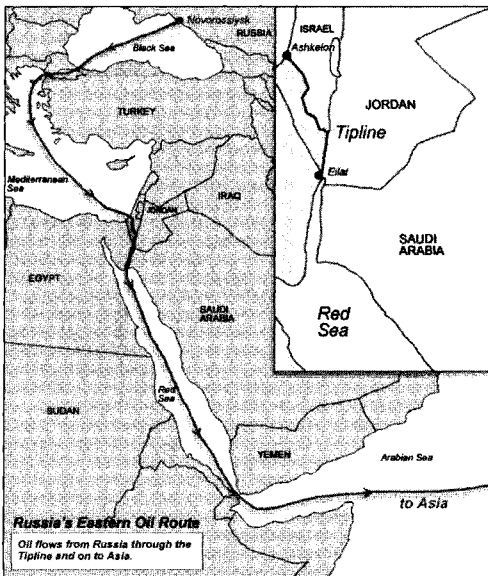
Israel so far has found only small quantities of gas and oil but continues to explore.

### **Russia's plan to ship oil through Israel**

The *Stratfor Intelligence* 2-11-02 carried an interesting item on a matter that has the potential to greatly profit Israel. In the Soviet days there was

little cooperation between the two countries but with the big influx of Russian Jews—now comprising some 15% of Israel's population—there have been increasing links between Russia and Israel. There are many direct flights between the two countries. Another “common cause” is having to deal with terrorist Muslim opposition. They also both regard Saudi Arabia as an enemy, not an ally.

Now a new deal between the Russian and Israeli governments is likely to inject a combination of economics and security into their growing relationship. The proposed plan focuses on an Israeli oil-transit pipeline known as Tipline. Built in 1968, Tipline was part of an Iranian-Israeli effort to bypass the Suez Canal, but with the Shah's overthrow in 1979, it fell into relative disuse—rarely pumping more than a fraction of its 900,000 barrel-per-day design capacity.



If the developing Israeli-Russian deal is finalized, the northward-flowing Tipline will be reversed. Tankers bearing Russian crude from the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk would unload at Israel's Mediterranean port of Ashkelon. After that, the oil would traverse the Tipline to Israel's Red Sea port of Eilat, where it would be reloaded onto tankers for shipment to Asia. The Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline Co. estimates the pipeline will be ready for Russian crude in mid-2003.

The deal offers financial benefits to both players. Israel already imports more than 99 percent of its 278,000 barrels of daily consumption. Since nearly all of Russia's waterborne exports travel through the Mediterranean, supplying a portion of the Israeli market is a relatively simple matter for Moscow.

For Israel, cultivating a non-Arab oil source is always important. Furthermore, with the Israeli budget in chronic deficit, the transit income is a welcome injection of cash into both the economy and state budget.

But in the case of Russia and Israel, the logic of the plan goes beyond a simple pipeline deal. Moscow's real interest is what lies on the other side of Israel: Asia.

The existing trans-Sinai transit pipelines, particularly Egypt's Sumed line, flow from the south to the north, sending Middle Eastern oil to the Mediterranean. Egypt also restricts oil tankers' ability to traverse the Suez Canal for safety and environmental reasons. Reversing the Tipline will allow up to 1 million barrels of Russian and Central Asian crude a day to slip into Asia.

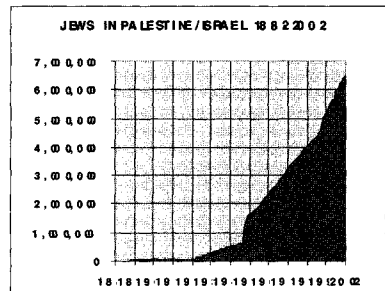
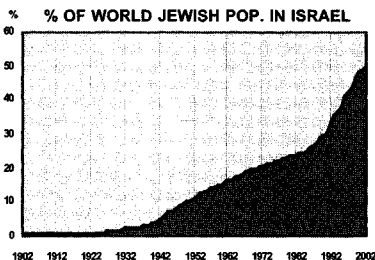
The use of Tipline will allow Russia to ship oil reliably to Asia, a market on which Saudi Arabia and the states of the Persian Gulf have long held a monopoly. Saudi control of this market is so sure that Asian consumers have been forced to pay an "Asian premium" that often tops \$3 a barrel. The emergence of Russian oil in Asia is sure to both soften the surcharge and weaken the Saudi grip on the market.

Israel's interest in the deal is similarly complex. Once Russian crude begins transiting Tipline, Israel will become responsible for the security of Russian oil on its territory. Since Arab shippers as a general rule tend to boycott Israeli ports, it is almost certain that the Jewish state will become involved in the shipping of Russian crude through the Red Sea. That would add economic rationale to Israel's already growing naval presence and justify the Israel Defense Force's power-projection capability throughout the Red Sea, the Bab el Mandab and into the Arabian Sea.

Although we know that Russia is part of the enemy that invades Israel, we should not be surprised to find her working with Israel prior to this. Ezekiel 38:10 would suggest that, as this invasion is *an evil thought*, Russia had been working with Israel prior to the invasion.

## Jewish Immigration and Population

Immigration has proceeded steadily for the whole of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The events of WWII gave it a tremendous impetus, so that now half the world's population of Jews lives in Israel. The world Jewish population has shown little growth over the past 50 years, as intermarriage causes families' Jewishness to be lost. The recent economic troubles in Argentina have caused many Jews there to make aliyah.



Israel is the only country in the world where the Jewish community is growing, according to The Jewish

Agency's Institute for Jewish People Policy Planning's new study, Israel is also home to most of the world's Jewish children under the age of 15. There are now some 12.9 million Jews in the world. Earlier this year, estimates put the number at 13.2 million. The main reason for the decline appears in the data from the census of Jewish communities in the U.S., which shows a decline of 300,000 in the American Jewish population, from 5.5 million in 1990 to 5.2 million in 2002. Experts say that some 300,000 Jews emigrated to the U.S. during the 1990s, but nonetheless, the community lost some 50,000 Jews a year, mostly to natural attrition.

The French Jewish community has declined from 535,000 in 1980 to some 500,000 now, while the number of Jews in the former Soviet Union has fallen from 1.45 million in 1989, to some 437,000 now. Most of those Jews moved to Israel during the 1990s. Summary of *Ha'aretz* report 3-12-02

## **Water**

We saw in the previous chapter the measures that Israel is taking to find new supplies of water. Israel has pioneered desalination of brackish water to make it fit to drink or at least be used by industry. *Israel Line* 12-8-02 announced that a new plant is to be constructed at Caesarea at an estimated \$150-180 million, to provide 100 million cubic meters of water annually.

The Sea of Galilee has for several years remained well below its "safe" limit. Farmers have had to stop growing crops that need a lot of water. There are worries too that with Palestinian control over where many aquifers are, they will dig illegal wells and deplete the already scarce water sources. There are fears too of sources becoming polluted, as they no longer have close Israeli oversight.

## **Elections**

Prime minister Ariel Sharon called for fresh elections, which are planned for Jan 28<sup>th</sup> 2003. His Likud party formed a coalition government with Labour and many of the smaller parties. It only had a narrow majority, and with several parties departing over his stance on dealing with the Palestinians, that majority evaporated, and so elections were called. Benjamin Netanyahu stood against him for the Likud party candidate, but was soundly defeated. The people indicated that in spite of all their troubles they wanted this elderly general to continue to lead their party. It is thought that he will be re-elected by a comfortable margin, but much can happen, and all depends on God's will.

## **Chapter summary**

A difficult year, but we believe all things are in the Father's Hands. Can there be a solution to their problems? We know that the only true solution lies when they recognise their Messiah. We now turn to what could be a short-term solution.



## Chapter 6:

# WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE?

*Having seen the difficult conditions that Israel is under makes it difficult to perceive how they could ever dwell in peace and safety! With lukewarm friends to the south, friends to the east, enemies to the north and sharing the land with a people whose wish is to see them driven into the sea, things don't seem to bode well.*

*Yet we can't ignore the clear prophecy in Ezekiel:*

Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy [Gog's] mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought:

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,

To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land. *Eze 38:10-12*

*Let's examine this prophecy and others like it in the light of today's events.*

## **Israel to dwell in peace**

God revealed through Ezekiel that a time prior to the invasion would be a time when Israel dwelt:

*• in a land of unwall'd villages • at rest • safely • without walls • without bars or gates • having gotten cattle and goods • dwelling in the midst of the land.*

The Hebrew words are straightforward.

*unwall'd villages* = open region, hamlets. Jerusalem in the future is so described in Zec. 2:4. The same word is also used in Est. 9:19

*at rest* = in peace and security. Used in Joshua and Judges and elsewhere to describe the land dwelling at rest after a period of strife. e.g. Judg 8:28. It occurs in Judg 18:7,27 "quiet". It is used to describe Israel at rest in the Kingdom, e.g. Jer 46:27

*safely* = securely, confidently. Found in many passages and again used to describe Israel dwelling safely in the Kingdom in Zec 14:11

*without walls*. Straightforward word for walls. Contrast in the laws of redemption in the jubilee, between towns with walls and unwall'd villages Lev. 25:31.

*without bars and gates* = bolts, locks and doors. Towns had their protective wall with doors that could be secured. Villages did not have this protection.

*having gotten cattle and goods*. v13 adds to this silver and gold. Straightforward acquiring of livestock and possessions.

*in the midst of the land*. This is an interesting phrase, it only occurs here and Jud 9:37. Strong defines midst as “from an unused root meaning to pile up; properly, accumulated; i.e. (by implication) a summit”. Brown-Driver as “those dwelling upon the navel of the earth, i.e. upon the mountainous country of Israel, central and prominent in the earth”.

It would be tempting to say that this is a picture of Israel dwelling in the Kingdom, for this **is** how they will dwell then. But the context makes it clear that this is not the time-period under consideration. The invasion takes place **before** the setting up of the Kingdom. When Jesus is King in Jerusalem, the battle of Armageddon will have taken place.

There is however one passage that makes it clear that this is referring to a time period **before** they accept their Messiah.

So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;

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. Eze 39:22,25,26.

*Trespasses* = unfaithful, treacherous acts. Often used of idolatry; e.g. Ez 14:13; 15:8; 18:24; 20:27. In Ez 17:20 it is used of trusting in Egypt to defend Israel. Whatever form the unfaithfulness takes at this time, it is evident that they are not trusting in their God to defend them. It is clear that today they very much trust in their weapons of war and in the leagues that they have made. The terrible time of the invasion is God's punishment for their unfaithfulness. We must also see another strand to the unfolding drama. There is to be a remnant who are purged through the fiery trials. This will be the third part of Zec 13:9 and the remnant described in Malachi ch 3. It is Malachi ch 4 that speaks of the sending of Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord. So out of a period of unfaithfulness when the nation trusts in the arm of flesh and is defeated, there will emerge a remnant who will form the nucleus of the Kingdom.

So the sequence must be:

- Jews return to Israel—as our generation has witnessed

- At some time they dwell safely, etc. described as a time when they trespass against God
- They are invaded and many scattered out of the land (as we saw in ch 2)
- The enemy in the land destroyed
- A Jewish remnant survive who then recognise their Saviour—Zech 12:10
- Jews brought back—the “bringing again (for the final time) of the captivity of Jacob and Israel.

Ezekiel continues:

*When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations;*

*Then shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.*

*Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD. Ez 39:27-29*

So is anything happening that could lead to Israel dwelling safely and securely? We will look at the plans that America has for the Middle East and see the possibilities for peace.

### **The US plans for the M.E.**

Mr Bush looks at the Middle East with a Biblical background. He has a religious belief in the role of the Jews in the purpose of God. He has shown his belief in the right for Israel to exist as a State in the practical help he has given to Israel so far. He has a vision of the Middle East at peace and the nations there working together in prosperity. He sees that there can be no solution to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians until the “fuel” that fires the conflict is cut off.

When Mr Bush declared the “axis of evil” – Iraq, Iran and N. Korea, it was because he saw that these countries were the primary source of the conflict in Israel—and elsewhere. A steady flow of money, arms and terrorists travels from Iran through Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and into the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The flow is augmented by Saddam Hussein, whose payments to the families of the suicide bombers, ensures their relative prosperity for a long time to come.

And so Mr Bush is determined to tackle the Palestinian problem from two sides. Dealing with Iraq will stem the flow of aid and terrorists; and by dealing with Mr Arafat and the Palestinian Authority and replacing it with a friendlier group of leaders he hopes that it will bring the carnage in Israel to a halt, and begin to build up peace in the region..

He addressed Congress in June stating that

For the sake of all humanity, things must change in the Middle East. As we move toward a peaceful solution, Arab states will be expected to build closer ties of diplomacy and commerce with Israel, leading to full normalization of relations between Israel and the entire Arab world.

In July, *Time* magazine carried the results of poll showing 36% of those Americans polled support Israel because they believe in Biblical prophecies that Jews must control Israel before Christ will come again! This indicates a substantial portion of Americans back Israel; the Jewish lobby is powerful in Congress.

Because of the misuse of funds by the Palestinian Authority, Mr Bush is working towards all aid being channelled through USAID, an American aid agency. They have operated for many years in the area, indeed they used to be the channel for aid until Yasser Arafat moved to the area and insisted that aid was channelled through him.

Without waiting for Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Europe or Saudi Arabia, the Bush administration is forging forward alone with a grand scheme for overhauling the Palestinian Authority politically, economically, militarily and administratively, a scheme so broad that the term “reforms” does not begin to do it justice.

Washington sources reveal that the White House has entrusted the international development agency, USAID, with the task of rebuilding Palestinian Authority institutions from scratch.

The Bush administration has assigned USAID a leading role in five of its regular spheres, all essential components of the new Palestinian government:

***Water, electricity, transport and infrastructure***

***Democracy:*** The creation of elected national and local authority.

***Public health:*** Setting up medical and social welfare services.

***Education:*** Creating a new school system whose curricula is not impregnated with nationalist and religious incitement. This will be America’s first experiment in creating for a Muslim-dominated society an educational system free of the taint of fostering terrorism – suicidal terrorism, in the Palestinian case.

***Community Services:*** To be made the main instrument for creating *a judiciary*.

***Security*** has been added to USAID’s regular spheres of control. Our sources report that the United States has begun recruiting Palestinians for the two new systems it regards as pivotal: the judiciary and security. *Debka* 20-07-02

It is reported that many Palestinian’s would welcome these plans; they are tired of the blatant corruption in their officials. They long for better living standards. Arafat has however taken steps against those wishing to

collaborate with the Americans. Indeed a member of the aid agency was assassinated in Jordan, by the hands of Arafat's men according to the *Debka* reports.

### **Jordan and Egypt's role**

Bush's plans involve the use of Jordan and Egypt to take over the running of the Palestinian authority—Jordan to look after the West Bank and Egypt the Gaza Strip.

The *Globalist* 4-3-02 ran an article under the eye-catching title **Palestine: A Royal Solution:**

“Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was an Arab leader with a history of making peace with Israel? Better yet, this leader would have a proven track record of leading Palestinians toward democracy. Lastly, this person would also have a strong relationship with the United States.”

“Does such a leader exist? Yes, he does. And he is remarkably close at hand—King Abdullah of Jordan”.

Already a group of Jordanian security forces have been sent to control an area to the south of Jerusalem.

In a pivotal though unannounced development last week, 300 troops of the Jordanian Army's Palestinian Al Bader Brigade crossed the Allenby Bridge into the West Bank as the harbingers of the US program for displacing the Palestinian Authority's terror-tainted security force operated by Yasser Arafat. According to *DEBKAfile's* military and Palestinian sources, within 24 hours of its arrival, the vanguard Jordanian force took charge of security in the Bethlehem-Beit Jala-Beit Sahur area abutting south Jerusalem, deferring directly to the new Palestinian interior minister Gen. Abdel Razzek Yahya and collaborating with US CIA and Israeli liaison officers.

Our sources report that they crossed over in civilian dress bearing Jordanian passports. In Bethlehem, they were outfitted with Palestinian police uniforms, weapons and communications equipment. The new arrivals came with their commanders, Jordanian crown officers of the al Bader Brigade, known also as the Palestinian Liberation Army. Their immediate mission was to take the place of Israeli military units in preventing cells of Arafat's Force 17, Tanzim and Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades from carrying out terrorist attacks against Israeli targets. They are also there to impede the infiltration of Palestinian terrorist cells from the West Bank into the Kingdom of Jordan and keep the peace in the Palestinian areas under their control. *Debka* 2-9-02

From a worldly viewpoint this is a commendable plan. If it is God's Will that peace and stability come to the region by this means, then it will prosper. If not *then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place.* Est. 4:14

## Bush's "post Saddam" plans

The build-up of forces in the Gulf is aimed to topple Saddam Hussein. With him out of the way, Bush sees a new future for the Middle East. He wants to see regimes there prepared to recognize and work with Israel, rather than aim to exterminate her. Many regard this as an arrogant plan by America, seeking to re-establish her power in the world, but it might, just might, radically change things for Israel.

A U.S.-led war against Iraq, if it actually occurs, will create dramatic changes throughout the region because Saddam is a major symbol for tyrants like Arafat and others. If Saddam collapses, this would create a positive "earthquake" in the Middle East that could lead to an unparalleled opportunity to change things in the region, especially with regard to the use of terror as a strategic tool. Saddam is now at his weakest point. He has lost part of his power, his regime is corrupt, and he is hated by most Iraqis. If his regime collapses, this could lead to new initiatives to change the entire situation in the region. But to take advantage of this opportunity, the Palestinians must be willing to adopt practices that reject terror and corruption. *Jer. Issue Brief* 29-10-02

One of the criticisms of the war in Afghanistan was that insufficient attention was paid to what would happen after the war. America is determined this won't happen again.

Several reports have detailed Mr Bush's plans for Iraq "post-Saddam".

They amount to the most ambitious exercise in redrawing the boundary of nations in the Middle East in more than 80 years. The world has not been offered such a radical change in the political landscape of the Middle East since Iraq and Jordan were created by then British Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill. He did it by "a stroke of the pen" — as he liked to say — at the Cairo Conference in 1921. *The Globalist* 12-09-02

Mr Bush appears keen to bring the area under the control of Jordan. Iraq used to be part of the Hashemite kingdom — relatives of the Jordanian kings ruled Iraq until 1958 when overthrown in a military coup. The late King Hussein had trained his brother Prince Hassan to take over as ruler of Jordan, but shortly before his death he changed his mind and chose Abdullah his son instead. President Bush's advisors are thinking of Prince Hassan as a possible ruler for Iraq. *Arabic News* 07-09-02 explained:

The correspondent [of the Israeli Yediot Ahronot for military affairs] indicates Jordan will play a main role, according to the plans discussed by the Pentagon, noting that these plans point the end of the story of the Iraqi Baathist regime under the leadership of Saddam Hussein and the foundation of a democratic Iraq to be an integral part of the Hashemite Kingdom. The correspondent added it was not a mere coincidence that the Americans invited Prince Hassan from Jordan to two meetings with the Iraqi opposition residents in London. The correspondent added

"Inviting prince Hassan to London reminds us of the Afghani experience: toppling the regime and bringing in the old and good King."

### **Second Yom Kippur War Afoot?**

Israel is fearful that a US-led attack on Saddam would be a signal for other Arab states to launch an attack on her. Under the above heading, *Debka* 20-12-02 outlined the dangers faced by Israel.

The threat of a multi-Arab assault on Israel, bolstered by al Qaeda, the Hizballah and Palestinian terrorists, being launched in the course of the US campaign against Iraq, has raised its head.

A possible scenario to this effect was painted disturbingly by Israel's new defense minister, Shaul Mofaz, when he made the rounds of Washington this week.

DEBKA-Net-Weekly reports from its Washington sources that Mofaz brought word to US officials that more than one Arab government – not just Iraq – may be contemplating going to war against Israel. This would be in addition to predicted attacks by the Hizballah, with Iranian and Syrian support, the Palestinians and al Qaeda. Intelligence sources, he revealed, had named Egypt, with whom Israel signed a peace pact, and Saudi Arabia, as potential aggressors. In the light of this information, Israel is building up military strength along its southern border with Egypt's Sinai desert and around its Israeli Red Sea resort of Eilat to face a possible joint Egyptian-Saudi strike.

The Israeli defense minister assessed this combined threat, if it materialized, as the gravest Israel has faced in its 53 years of statehood, far in excess of the previous four assaults by combined Arab armies. Whereas previous actions centered on Israel's borders, this time, its population centers would be targeted—both by external forces and inland terror.

Israel has hinted that she will be prepared to take territory if attacked, and if necessary unleash secret weapons that have not been used before.

### **Israel's threat of regaining territory**

*The Middle East News Line* reported 2-12-02

Israel's military is preparing for an offensive war against its Arab adversaries that would involve the capture of territory to ensure victory in any future regional conflict.

Israeli military planners have been discussing and drafting strategies in response for a regional war that could take place in 2003. They said such a war is likely to begin with a Hizbullah rocket barrage from southern Lebanon in an attack supported by Syria.

Such a war, military officials said, would be fought differently from the more than two-year-old campaign against Palestinian insurgents in the

West Bank and Gaza Strip. They said Israeli aircraft, armor and troops would move rapidly to establish the battlefield outside of the Jewish state and capture territory required to achieve victory.

"In the next war, we will be required to be decisive in a way that will include the capture of territory," Maj. Gen. Yiftah Ron-Tal, head of the Ground Forces Command, said. "So, we must preserve our offensive capability in the Israeli Defense Forces. Our manoeuvres must take place outside the border of Israel and the ingredients of a decisive victory will be the ground forces. The burden will be placed on them."

### **The Syrian threat**

Israel is aware of the Syrian military build up to the north and is said to be manufacturing tanks specifically designed for Syrian terrain. The *Debka* report on the visit of the Israeli defence minister to America continued:

The Hizballah, aided by Iranian Guardsmen and Syrian officers, have secured their vast missile structure by means of three lines of defense running the full width of southern Lebanon, from the Mediterranean in the West to the Syrian Hermon Mts. in the east.

In the early stage of the assault, Israel will not attempt to breach these defense lines. The Israeli command would rather not send Israeli Chariot-3 and Chariot-4 tanks into the anti-tank missile trap the Iranians and Syrians have set up at strategic points. Its war planners have chosen instead to eradicate the entire Hizballah-Iranian-Syrian military edifice by means of a combined aerial-missile-helicopter-missile boat assault of major proportions.

A senior Israeli security source told DEBKA-Net-Weekly: "The Israeli counteroffensive will be mightier and more extensive than any US aerial action in the last decade against Iraq and America's Afghan War bombing campaign. Its objective will be to destroy every last military unit and source of potential aggression in the zone."

Our military sources add that Mofaz told his American hosts that Israel will run its counteroffensive in two waves, the first, to cut down Hizballah-Syrian-Iranian firepower in the initial stage of their missile offensive; the second, to silence the missile barrage totally in the space of 32-36 hours.

America has promised to give practical support to Israel's efforts to bring a solution to her current problems.

### **Sharon's continuing dialogue with Arafat**

At the year-end came news that Sharon was still in talks with Arafat. When he launched the election campaign on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> he had cryptically declared

"I believe peace with the Palestinians is nearer than we thought." He went on to promise "I won't let any opportunities get away."



*Debka* 27-12-02 continued with a report that within the framework of Bush dealing with Saddam, Sharon was preparing to offer Arafat a reduced area on the West Bank—control over areas A and B under the Oslo talks. Areas C and the settlements and the Jordan Valley would remain in Israeli control. Israel would effectively have control of just under 50% of the West Bank. Tunnelled roads would give Palestinians continuity with their areas of territory. The Peace Plan to be implemented over 10 years and is contingent on the cessation and disbanding of terrorist activity. Jerusalem is non-negotiable and will continue to be Israel's undivided capital.

It revealed that Sharon was communicating with Arafat through Arafat's unofficial deputy, Mahmoud Abu Mazen—a skilled diplomat who has never been part of their terror machine and has publicly denounced the Intifada as a gross blunder.

### **A test of our faith**

In spite of seeing possibilities of how the situation for Israel can change, it would be fair to say that today the picture of Israel dwelling securely seems an almost impossible situation. Surely this then is a test of our faith. God says it will happen, and so we believe it. For our brethren and sisters of 150 years ago, the picture of Israel returning to their land and being a nation again would seem equally impossible. But they believed and preached that this would happen, as indeed it has.

### **Chapter summary—could this lead to peace?**

We have to confess there are so many imponderables, that we can only speculate on what the outcome would be if the war on Iraq goes ahead. There could be drastic changes, if Iraq has a friendly-to-Israel ruler, and Israel has broken the military might of the surrounding nations.

If the surrounding nations are defeated yet again, there would be strong pressure for them to make their peace with Israel and trade with her, thus building up the wealth of Israel

Under American—and British—protection, Israel could dwell safely and securely. They could reoccupy the “midst of the land”. Israel would like to see the Palestinians moved to Jordan—this was to be their homeland as originally envisioned under the British Mandate

It would be a peace, brought about through trusting in their own might—and not pleasing to God—a *trespass*.

To break Israel's faithlessness would involve the need for Israel to suffer defeat—as foretold by the prophets, when Israel faces the might of the latter-day *King of the North* working with might of Europe. An overwhelming power that *comes as a cloud to cover the land*. Ez. 38:9,16

## Chapter 7:

# US & BRITAIN—TARSHISH & YOUNG LIONS

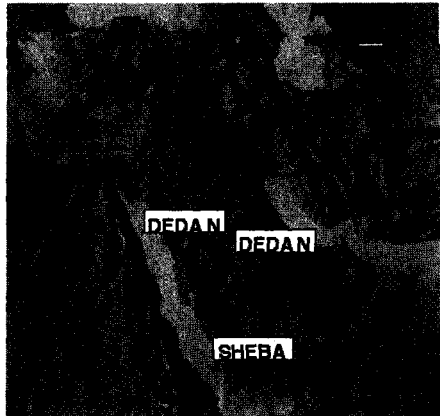
*In Milestones 2001 we looked at the modern-day role for Britain as the successor of the Tarshish power, and America, Australia, and Canada as fulfilling the role of the young lions described by Ezekiel as being in opposition to the great invasion of Israel*

Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil? *Eze 38:13*

*We also looked last year in chapter 12 at the role of India as the eastern Tarshish power. We see in this chapter how remarkably these countries are not only friendly to Israel but are operating and cooperating in this region.*

## Sheba and Dedan

Biblically there are two Shebas and two Dedans. One pair was descended from Ham (Gen. 10:7); the other pair descended from Abraham through Keturah (Gen. 25:3). The main Sheba we associate with the spice kingdom of the Queen of Sheba. Archaeology and history points to its location in the south of the Arabian Peninsula – the Yemen of today. Dedan is associated with the area around Medina in northern Saudi Arabia. This was



the western Dedan. There seems to have been an eastern Dedan associated with the area around the Persian Gulf—the hub of trade from India. Ezekiel 27 twice mentions Dedan as traders in the fairs of Tyre, trading in ivory, ebony v15 and precious cloths for chariots v20. Sheba and Dedan seem to point to the Arabian Peninsula.

## Tarshish and the young lions

In the same chapter, Ezekiel speaks of the trade from Tarshish as being in all sorts of things including specific metals—silver, iron, tin and lead. v12. It is not our purpose here to show the strong links with Britain. We would refer the reader to other sources for the convincing evidence.<sup>1</sup> Certainly Britain is an outstanding trading nation in today's world, dealing with virtually every nation of the earth, and amongst her centres of trade the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Cry of the Prophets* by Bro. Paul Billington



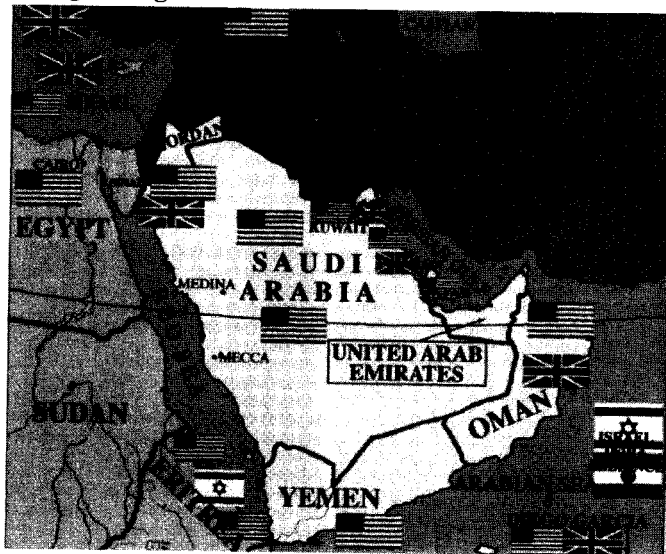
Promoting London as the world's premier maritime centre

members of the Baltic Exchange in London handle at some stage two thirds of all the world's open market bulk cargo. London is the premier maritime centre. The intriguing thing is that this Tarshish power is associated with *young lions*. A matter which makes little sense to Bible translators – hence their sometime use of the word *villages* which is almost identical in the original—but doesn't make much sense either. Yet the picture of young lions— independent of the mother, yet prepared to help in time of need, is beautifully summed up in the well-known 1st WW poster. Younger countries formally associated with Britain, but now independent such as America, Canada, Australia, and India are the very countries that we now find working together to provide a solution to “global terror”. Furthermore the centre of attention focuses upon the Middle East and the Arabian Peninsula in particular.



British stamp

### The growing number of bases



It is an interesting exercise to mark on a map the British and American bases in the Middle East. From the big bases in Crete and Cyprus and Turkey, one sweeps across through Jordan,

Israel, Egypt, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia, across to Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Yemen. The map is covered by an impressive number of sites. Several countries having several bases.

America and Britain have been busy building new bases and enlarging old ones in the area. According to a report in *Debka* the US is making Egypt a centre for the possible war against Saddam Hussein:

DEBKA-Net-Weekly's military sources confirm that US war preparations are in their final stages. Massive consignments of military hardware—including tanks, missiles, heavy artillery and radar stations—as well as nuclear, biological and chemical warfare units, field hospitals and heavy engineering equipment are landing at Egypt's Cairo West air base.

The air and sea lifts, ordered after the White House and Pentagon decided to make Cairo West its main supply and logistics base for the US military offensive against Iraq, are proceeding round the clock.

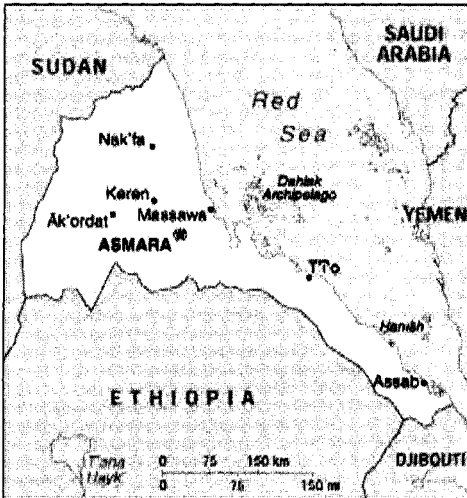
By using Cairo West, General Tommy Franks' Florida-based US Central Command, which is running the global war against terrorism, can turn Qatar's al-Udeid air base into its main regional headquarters. 13-09-02

### Operating in the Red Sea – Israel

To the south of Egypt lies Sudan and further south still, Eritrea—an area of longstanding conflict. However on an island in the Red Sea belonging to Eritrea, the Israelis have submarine facilities and an air base.

On June 7, 2002, DEBKA-Net-Weekly again reported that Israeli Dolphin-class submarines, like other naval and air units, were

permanently using the big air and naval base on Eritrea's Red Sea Dahlak Archipelago, near the confluence of the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. *Debka* 15-06-02



From here Israeli submarines patrol around the Arabian Peninsula... Another secret military co-operation agreement provides for a joint Indian-Israeli naval presence in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean approaches to the Persian Gulf. *Debka* 8-6-02

### Operating in the Red Sea—the US

Recently America has constructed her own massive airbase on one of these Eritrean islands.

America has secretly built a new central command center for its Iraq offensive in the Eritrean port of Assab. The new facility also houses jumping off bases for the US air force and navy... Assab has the great advantage of being positioned strategically near the Bab el Mandeb Straits linking the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the mouth of Persian

Gulf... Just to the north of Assab, the Americans have whipped a small local airport into the largest air base in the Horn of Africa, partly compensating for the sophisticated Prince Sultan air force base denied them in Saudi Arabia. Its new, wide runways can cater to heavy bombers, transports and fighter-bombers taking off for missions against any target in southern Iraq or the Baghdad area with the help of in-air fuel feeds.

Still further to the north, another cluster of US air and naval bases has risen on the Dalak archipelago on the western side of the Red Sea, across from Saudi Arabia's Farasan Islands. The US presence on Dalak gives it control of the full length of the Red Sea and the eastern approaches to the Suez Canal and the Sinai Peninsula, linking up with the American base at Sharm el Sheikh. From Dalak, the US air force reach extends to any point in Iraq—from Baghdad to the northern oil cities of Kirkuk and Mosul. Northern Iraq, including its oil cities, will be under the purview of US bases in southern Turkey and Tbilisi, Georgia. The new Red Sea bases, along with American aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean, will round off US coverage of all Iraqi airspace. *Debka* 13-7-02

This is all in the region of the old Kingdom of Sheba and the western Dedan. Britain and the US have also been building new bases in Jordan, which has long borders with Iraq and Syria; in Kuwait and Qatar. The American Command HQ has been moved from Florida to Qatar in preparation for war.

### **US and Britain working with Jordan**

In 2001, the US signed a free trade agreement with Jordan, enabling trade between the countries to be free of duties. Jordan is only the 4<sup>th</sup> country to have such an agreement – the others being Canada, Mexico and Israel. In return for help given against Al Qaeda terrorists, America has greatly increased financial aid to Jordan. In preparation for an attack on Iraq, both the US and Britain have built more bases here, and Jordanian and US troops held several joint exercises during the year. Britain has donated 114 Challenger tanks to Jordan, free-of-charge. These are old models, surplus to Britain's requirements. British firms are negotiating with Amman to upgrade them.

### **Other young lions**

Other *young lions* are closely involved in the Middle East. India's submarines jointly patrol the ocean around the Arabian Peninsula with the Israeli submarines. Australia has offered America troops and aeroplanes. The British and Americans were impressed with the performance of the Australian SAS forces in Afghanistan. Australian naval vessels are actively involved in the Multinational Interception Force (MIF) that operates in the Persian Gulf, stopping, boarding and searching Iraqi vessels to prevent

sanctions busting. They are credited with a big reduction in goods being smuggled in and out.

### **Yemen re-aligning**

Yemen is the modern kingdom that occupies the territory of the ancient kingdom of Sheba. South Yemen – Aden was under British control until 1967. In recent years North and South Yemen have united and moved away from being opposed to the West, to steadily coming closer to an alignment with them. The events of Sept 11<sup>th</sup> have accelerated that movement. Yemen is the haunt of many Al Qaeda terrorists. In Oct 2002 they struck at a laden French oil supertanker.

America has been working with Yemen to make it safe for US ships to return to the port of Aden. American bases here would be of great strategic value.

Yemen and the United States have launched discussions on naval cooperation.

The talks took place last month between Yemeni military leaders and a visiting U.S. naval delegation. Yemeni sources said the discussions focused on U.S. help for the formation of a Yemeni coast guard and the return of the U.S. Navy to Yemen. The navy had used the Yemeni port of Aden until the October 2000 suicide attack by Al Qaeda on the USS Cole. The United States has agreed to train Yemeni naval officers and help supply equipment for a coastal force. Yemen has already sent the first officers for training in the United States.

The sources said the two countries are discussing Yemeni procurement of U.S. platforms and combat systems. They said this could include the delivery of surplus U.S. fast attack craft, electronic surveillance systems and radar. *Middle East News Line* 9-9-02

The US is very dependant upon Middle East oil for her energy, and so is keen to have friendly relation with the states in this area.

### **Chapter summary**

We have seen how deeply Britain and America and the *young lion* countries are involved in the area of Sheba and Dedan, with prospects of even deeper involvement in the event of a Gulf War. Saudi Arabia is afraid that if America is successful against Iraq, she will want to root out the many terrorists that are harboured in Saudi.

If we add to this the involvement of America and Britain with Israel and Jordan, then we can see how God is drawing these countries into position so that at the time of the Gogian invasion, these countries will be there to speak out against the invader.

## Chapter 8:

# THE GULF WAR PROSPECTS

*As we write Milestones this year, massive preparations are being made for war against Iraq. The prospects for a peaceful settlement seem remote. The likely scenario is that either there will be an internal uprising to overthrow Saddam Hussein, or America and Britain will attack to eliminate him. Although the outcome is unknown at this time, we can comment on the tensions that the prospect of war is having on the nations.*

*Unlike the previous war in 1991, when many nations worked with America to liberate Kuwait, this time most nations are unwilling to commit themselves in what would be a pre-emptive strike against an Arab country, to avoid the possibility of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) being used in the near future. In 1991 the matter was much more clear-cut—a country had been invaded. Now it is a question of pre-empting a possible situation.*

*The Arab nations unwillingness to go to war has left the matter in the hands of America and Britain and their allies, although secretly many would be quite happy to see Saddam go. On America's side are Jordan and many of the Gulf States. Ranged against them are Syria, Europe and the Vatican. Although there was a unanimous vote in the U.N. that Saddam should declare his WMD's and that the weapons inspectors should go back in, there is little support for actual war.*

### **The build-up to war**

As 2002 ends the build up of troops in the region continues. It is estimated that America has 50,000 soldiers are in the area with another 50,000 to be despatched in the New Year. There are many aircraft and ships stationed around the Middle East awaiting the call for battle.

Britain's contribution is a much more modest 20,000 troops and 6 ships including the aircraft carrier the *Ark Royal*.

In December about 1,000 American and British military specialists staged a joint war game exercise in the tiny oil kingdom of Qatar to test sophisticated electronic equipment in the newly erected battle headquarters. It is designed to link forces throughout the region and the exercise tested the compatibility of their equipment. Sheikh Hamad, Qatar's Sandhurst trained ruler is staunchly pro-American, and runs the most stable state in the region. Qatar has the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest gas reserves in the region. He paid for a £600m airbase to be built to encourage the American's to strengthen their presence here.

### **The battle has already started**

Earlier in the year America and Britain stepped up their flights over the Northern and Southern Iraqi no-fly zones. At the same time they quietly began to strike at some of Saddam's key communications centres. *Stratfor*

*Intelligence* lists over 60 strikes in the first 10 months alone. As well as launching missiles attacks, they also dropped leaflets, encouraging the people to turn against Saddam.

Meanwhile on the ground American special service troops infiltrated into the northern and southern zones. British, Israeli and Jordanian Special Force were involved as well. Their task was to meet up with opposition parties, and to monitor Saddam's missile sites.

Iraq is made up of many different tribal groups, many of whom are only too pleased at the prospect of bringing Saddam's murderous regime to an end. Helped by American, British and Turkish air support, several key areas were taken in the north, though their progress was not as fast as hoped as Saddam despatched his crack troops to defend these areas.

### **The secret weapons inspectors**

In late November the UN weapons inspectors returned to Iraq after an absence of several years. Lead by Hans Blix, they swooped around the country. The *Debka Intelligence* (6-12-02) reported that there was another team operating in secret.

DEBKA-Net-Weekly's intelligence sources have discovered that a special multinational task force, made up of special elite units and armed with combat helicopters and aircraft, spy-planes and satellites, is in fact on top of the mission. Unlike the UN team which is based in Baghdad, the concealed team of investigators has fanned out across the country. One well-placed source disclosed: "Our men in the field know where 90 percent of Saddam's missiles and unconventional weapons systems are located, even the mobile ones that are moved from place to place every hour. We are keeping them under tight observation because when the war begins and Saddam orders his men to activate them, we want to be there before they hit the triggers."

According to our sources, this highly sensitive, elaborate and secret inspection project has been going for more than three months. Its success could pre-determine the course of the war before it begins. Its members are drawn from five nations: the United States, Britain, Israel, Jordan and Turkey. They operate under the Special Forces command at Al Udeid in Qatar and its sub-command in the Jordanian base of Mafraq. For the purpose of the search, Iraq has been divided into 16 squares, each the province of an elite unit for a set period. The Talil air base complex in north Iraq, for instance, with its air fields, missile bases and air defense batteries, was assigned for the first three weeks of December to US special forces, while the H-2 air base complex is under the purview of an Israeli unit for the same period of time.

When these units end their tour of duty, they return to base and are replaced.



All the units on this mission are briefed down to the last detail on the unconventional weapons in their zone, their precise locations and the names of the Iraqi officers and men assigned to the site. They keep watch around the clock over the comings and goings inside those sites and are on the ready at all times to move in and seize the facility if ordered to do so.

It appears that the recent air strikes against Iraqi targets are linked to this work on the ground.

### **Israel prepares her defences**

America is anxious not to let Israel get embroiled in the war against Iraq. They know that many Arab nations would turn to help Saddam in any attempt to hurt Israel badly. The war prospects are complex enough as it is, without having a “Jewish” element involved. More Patriot anti-missile launchers have been moved to Israel to strengthen Israel’s own Arrow systems. Fearing chemical and germ attacks, Israel is inoculating many of her population against smallpox – one of the germ weapons that Saddam may use. Gas masks have been issued to all and a detailed booklet issued to all families detailing what to do in an emergency, including the construction of sealed rooms. Israeli troops are at high alert. American ships in the Mediterranean are monitoring the skies for early warning of missile attacks on Israel.

### **Why is America so interested in Iraq?**

Saddam is one of the main sources of funding for the Palestinian terrorists. He is estimated to have given \$25 million to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers, in addition to grants of up to \$25,000 to those whose houses have been demolished by Israeli troops. He also channels aid to the Palestine Liberation Front, which is active against Israel. Bush is keen to be able to cut off this supply of aid to Israel’s enemies. America is also interested in having a friendly government installed in Iraq because of the

#### **World’s oil & gas reserves**

OIL Bn barrels		GAS Trillion cu ft	
Saudi Ar	262	Russia	1,700
Iraq	113	Iran	812
UAE	98	Qatar	393
Kuwait	97	Saudi Ar	214
Iran	90	UAE	212
(Russia 7 <sup>th</sup> )	(54)	(Iraq 9 <sup>th</sup> )	(110)

big reserves of oil and gas in Iraq. As our chart shows, Iraq has the world’s 2<sup>nd</sup> largest reserves of oil, and the 9<sup>th</sup> largest gas reserves. At the moment, because of sanctions, Iraq is only able to market a small proportion of the potential supplies. If the sanctions were lifted—due to a regime change—then the amount of oil from Iraq could seriously undermine

OPEC’s and especially Saudi Arabia’s dominant position. A friendly regime in Iraq would prevent the world being held to ransom over oil supplies. It would also bring down the price of oil, which would be a great

boost to the Asian economies who are charged an Asian premium of up to \$3 a barrel. America's economy like that of many other countries has been hit by the bursting of the Asian economic bubble.

### **Bringing Russia onboard**

Herein lies a potential problem for Russia. Russia's growth has been greatly enhanced by the higher oil prices of the past year or two. If prices were to drop, Russia's economy would be badly affected. Mr Bush has had to trade off support from Russia in his war against Iraq with secret promises of not allowing prices to substantially drop if Russia lends her backing.

There is also a further problem for Russia. Iraq has been a good customer of theirs for many years. Russia recently signed several large deals—one worth \$26bn. Obviously these would be lost if America was successful against Saddam. However, Bush has promised Russia a lucrative share in the rebuilding of Iraq, which potentially would be worth much more. Interestingly in December Saddam cancelled this \$26bn contract in retaliation against Putin's support of Bush!

### **A divided Europe**

Tony Blair faces isolation in Europe for his stand with America over Iraq. France and Germany are very much opposed to such a war and are doing their best to prevent it. Under the headline **War in Iraq: What's at stake for Europe?** *Stratfor Intelligence* report (4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2002) pointed out that for the EU, war in Iraq could seriously harm Europe's economy, security and international influence.

Europe's ultimate goal is to become a superpower; an objective that is as natural as the United States' drive to prevent the emergence of any other superpowers. Diplomatic niceties aside, this struggle has shaped U.S.-European relations since the end of the Cold War.

This long-term strategic contest is not likely to become a military conflict; it will be fought through diplomacy and economic competition. ...Europe's resistance to Washington's plans for Iraq should be considered in the context of this struggle for global influence.

...European leaders fear that a war against Iraq would deal a blow to both the euro and the European economy, which already is suffering. The German economy, the engine of European growth and integration, barely grew in the third quarter of 2002, and GDP growth likely will be only 0.2 percent this year, according to Bloomberg.

Like many others, European countries fear the negative effects a war in Iraq would have upon oil prices. The European economy is much more dependent upon Middle Eastern oil than is the United States. The chief fear of Brussels and other governments is that war would both disrupt the flow

of oil and sharply increase oil prices whilst a war was on, hitting Europe's economy much harder than that of the United States.

Middle Eastern states—such as Saudi Arabia, Syria and Iran—also fear being targeted by the United States because their policies do not suit Washington. They would view a U.S. victory in Iraq as their loss, afraid that Washington might try to capitalize on the momentum and turn its military victory into additional political gains, by turning the main thrust of its political and military pressure against Iran, Saudi Arabia and Syria. European leaders also suspect that Israel would use an Iraq war as a chance to drive the Palestinians out of the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

The consequences of war, including the potential redrawing of the Middle East map, could undermine Europe's influence in that region and other parts of the world. Some Middle Eastern regimes, perceiving that Europe is unable to prevent a U.S. attack against Iraq, might change their pro-European orientation to pro-American, while the others might be radicalized against the United States but still distance themselves from what they perceive as a weak Europe. European allies such as Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Yemen might experience redoubled pressure and possibly threats from Washington and with U.S. forces stationed in Iraq, the strategic heart of the region, European states could do little to help these allies or even to remain relevant in the Middle East.

Officials fear that European energy majors such as France's TotalFinaElf—which, like Russian oil companies, are treated favorably by the current regime in Baghdad - could expect little in a post-war Iraq. Those favored by Washington as potential replacements for Saddam Hussein, such as the Iraqi National Congress, have stated publicly that U.S. energy majors would receive preferential treatment.

U.S. control of the oil industry in Iraq or other Middle Eastern states would impede Europe's drive toward superpower status.

We can see that Britain's support for America is putting her at odds with her European partners. Many European firms are keen to do business with Saddam. They have been pressing for the American led UN sanctions to be lifted so that they can go in and help rebuild Iraqi oilfields. In an attempt to split Europe and America, Saddam's huge dossier on Iraq's weapons disclosed that many European countries had been supplying materials to Iraq, in spite of the sanctions!

More than 80 German companies have been named in a report released to the United Nations on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, German paper *Tageszeitung* reports. Several of the companies were still active in Iraq last year, in violation of the U.N. weapons embargo imposed in 1990. The information in the report may cause deeper stress in relations between Berlin and Washington, a relationship already strained by

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's public criticism of possible war on Iraq. *Stratfor* 18-12-02

### **Vatican's opposition to war**

The Vatican too has long been pressing for the lifting of sanctions. The Vatican maintains strong links with Saddam's regime. The Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz is himself a practising Chaldean Catholic—a church in union with Rome. The *Daily Telegraph* carried a headline **Iraq's Catholics strike a bargain with Saddam.** (2-5-02).

Beside a row of 13 portraits of bearded archbishops...hangs a large, colourful tapestry of Saddam Hussein...a vivid demonstration of the implicit bargain between Iraqi Christians and their president

In return for allowing worshippers to fill Baghdad's Catholic Cathedral of our Lady of the Deliverance, Saddam expects the Church to defend his regime robustly. By extending freedom of worship to Iraq's million Christians, two thirds of whom are Catholics, he tries to guarantee their loyalty.

At the Roman Catholic Bishop's autumn meeting in Britain, a statement was issued opposing war against Saddam. "Military action can only be taken as a last resort". Church of England leaders backed by the Archbishop of Canterbury likewise have spoken out against war, presenting a 3,000-signature petition to Downing Street in August.

### **Chapter summary**

Looking at the situation at the year-end is a bit like watching a juggler who has tossed all his balls in the air, will they fall, will they be caught?

We have seen the potential for dramatic changes in the Middle East. The unfolding events of 2003 may lead to the situation where Europe united with Russia, comes down into the Middle East to change again the situation that will then be prevailing in Israel and the Middle East.

We have to wait and see, confident that events are not left to chance, but God's Will will indeed be accomplished in the Kingdom of men. Perhaps we will be called by the angels before much eventuatues.

## Chapter 9:

# EUROPE'S HOME TO BE EXTENDED

*How the face of Europe has changed over the past 50 years! From shattered economies picking up the pieces after WWII, to now with a well established power-block, with a central government rapidly taking over the control of its citizen's lives. Little escapes the control of the bureaucrats in Brussels. National governments are left to implement an un-ending stream of regulations, some of which are quite fundamental, but over which they have no control. The documentation that countries aspiring to join the EU have to wade through amounts to some 80,000 pages of rules and regulations.*

*To the British this is especially irksome, because they have traditionally been very obliging in ensuring that the law is obeyed. Many crippling matters are imposed by the very zealous UK civil servants; matters which are often shrugged off and shelved by our continental neighbours. France heads the list of EU rule breakers!*

*Possibly the most important development for the EU this year following the successful launch of the euro as the everyday currency for 300 million people, was the setting of a firm date for the next wave of countries to be admitted to the EU. It has also been the year when the stuttering Franco-German partnership burst into life, leaving Britain isolated and at the fringe—once again!*

## Monetary union

With great fanfares the euro became a practical reality in Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2002. For the 11 of the 15 members who had signed up to monetary union, the great day had arrived! Prior to this the euro was only a currency for business, one could write euro cheques and have euro accounts but there was no actual currency. The launch did go very smoothly. It was a massive task introducing notes and coins to so many people. Within a few months the old currencies had been withdrawn and the euro became the day-to-day currency.

There were a few problems. The coinage contains more nickel than is recommended under EU guidelines! Some people with sensitive skins develop an eczema rash from handling it. Each country has its own design on one side of the coinage and the notes, the other side being common to all. This caused confusion as it all began to become mixed as visitors brought their own coins and notes with them. For tossers of coins—shout heads—as it is asymmetrical! The biggest grumble was that many traders and suppliers used the opportunity to increase prices.

Hitler's finance ministry planned a common currency for Europe in 1942. The founding fathers of the EEC-EC-EU saw monetary union as being an

essential step towards their ultimate goal of political union. Being able to travel seamlessly from one country to another—border controls were removed a long time ago—and now to be able to use the same currency certainly breaks down the barriers.

The introduction of 14.5 billion euro notes and 50 billion coins also represents the biggest leap towards integration since the European Coal and Steel Community was formed in 1951. *The Times* 1-1-02

Many eminent European leaders do indeed believe that the euro is not merely a symbol of European unity but also the potential instrument to drive a new round of political integration. Joschka Fisher, Germany's foreign minister argued in a speech last year that the creation of the euro was a profoundly political act. *Economist* 5-1-02

However insignificant in strictly monetary terms, the successful launch of the euro has, for the first time, put a visible symbol of European integration in to the pockets of 300 million people...It dramatically marks the subordination of individual states to a collective power. *Financial Times* 14-1-02

The picture that scripture presents is of a Europe united together at the time of the end, after the pattern of the former developments of the Beast, and this is what we see developing before our eyes.

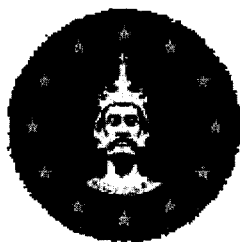
### **And the winner this year is . . the euro!**

Those politicians driving along European integration look to Charlemagne as their great inspiration.

Aachen, the 'Rome of the North', was the favourite city and seat of Charlemagne (742-814), first of the Western emperors. It was in this delightful little city, with its hot springs and Roman remains, that he set about his titanic task of bringing back order to the Europe that had fallen apart with the fall of the Roman Empire itself. He did not hesitate to use the awesome name of Rome for his purpose: he was himself a patrician of Rome: on Christmas Day, 800, in St Peter's basilica in Rome, he had been crowned—Imperator Romanorum.

But it was not the Roman Empire he was reviving. Far from being the last of the Roman emperors, he was the first of the Europeans, laying down a blueprint for the future which, in mind-boggling detail, covered everything from an orphan's dowry to the creation of a European army: from a common agricultural policy (with the introduction of the three field rotation) to a system of universal education.

He was a thousand years too early. His own empire fell apart with his death and Europe plunged into its millennium-long fragmented anarchy. But the Carolingian empire left the memory of a Golden Age, the possibility of a way of life that transcended nationalism and its concomitant, war.



Karlspreis logo

On Christmas Day, 1949, [the citizens of Aachen] issued a Proclamation:

“Having suffered dreadful experiences, our citizens are ready to urge European Unity (and) have agreed upon establishing an INTERNATIONAL PRIZE OF THE CITY OF AACHEN. In memory of the great founder of Western civilisation, this prize shall be called the Charlemagne Prize (Karlspreis), awarded annually to personages of merit who have promoted their idea of Western unity.” *History Today*



The list of recipients is a who's-who of Europe, but this year they decided not to award it to a person but to the euro. Wm Duisenburg received it on behalf of the European Central Bank. His acceptance speech was very interesting—here are two extracts:

We know that such a bold step as the single currency was conceived as part of a wider process of uniting Europe not only economically but also politically. Today, a new path is being explored: the Convention on the Future of Europe has been established. Its task is to make proposals on furthering the construction of a united Europe as well as on streamlining and democratising the structure of the Union.

If it succeeds in this task, the Convention will help to complement the existing economic constitution with effective and transparent political structures and processes. In the same way that the economic constitution, because it is based on sound principles, is capable of meeting the challenges of the future, so will Europe as a whole be better equipped to meet its citizens' expectations. So will Europe as a whole be better able to meet the challenges it faces, be they from within or from without, and to assume the international responsibilities commensurate with its size and its importance. *European Central Bank*

Aachen or Aix-la-Chapelle is considered by many Germans as the heart of Europe. The annual date chosen to award the prize is Ascension Day—the day when, in the church's eyes, Jesus went to his Kingdom!

### Continuing drive toward political union

With the euro having been safely delivered, the pressure is now on to take Europe a further and significant step forward—political union. The EU looks to the USA for its example—a large country, made up of many states, but having a political centre and a president, able to speak with one voice. The EU although centralising many matters does not have a political head who can speak for all. International committees are normally made up

from members of individual countries. There is no EU seat for example in the United Nations. Britain is obviously opposed to any moves to take away her rights to represent her interests in these forums. The core to transforming Europe from a collection of individual countries to one “United States of Europe” is based upon having a constitution. Most countries have one—Britain is an exception.

### **The Convention on the Future of Europe**

At the Laeken summit meeting in Dec 2001, there was set up a 102-member committee, to oversee the establishment of “a fully federal Europe by the end of the decade”. It is chaired by Giscard d’Estaing, the former French president. Part of its task is to draw up a “Constitution for Europe”. The chairman presented the first draft of their report in October. It made quite a stir because—without stating a preference—they suggested “the union could be called the European Community, The European Union, United Europe or the United States of Europe”. The idea of an European Union or worse still a United States of Europe is anathema to British euro sceptics.

...Two things are evident. The federalist intent is clear from the very first “article”, which records that the “decision” to give whatever [name] it is to be called....an explicit legal personality. Secondly, far from providing legally solid safeguards against otiose [not needed] meddling by Brussels, the proposed constitution could weaken those that now exist. *The Times* 29-10-02

Giscard d’Estaing told the convention:

“We need a constitutional treaty to mark the beginning of a renewed Europe as we accept new member states into our midst, a Europe in which all citizens should recognise themselves as Europeans”.

He also suggested that the new constitution should include a charter of fundamental rights and that people living in the EU should have dual citizenship of the union and of their own country. It is hoped to have the final document ready for the December 2003 summit meeting.

In December, on the occasion of the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the European Communities Studies, Romano Prodi, the president of the European Commission presented a 22-page policy document under the heading “A wider Europe—a proximity policy as the key to stability”. Its sub-heading “Peace, Security and Stability, International Dialogue and the Role of the EU”. His covering speech stated that they must “become a real global player”. He warned on the need for Europe to define herself—one could not endlessly add members and dilute the original aims. He foresaw that there would be countries who whilst not members were able to share some of the benefits.

“I want to see a “**ring of friends**” surrounding the Union and its closest European neighbours, from Morocco to Russia and the Black Sea.”



**“We have to offer more than partnership and less than membership, without precluding the latter”.**

“A European-Russian High Level Group is exploring the possible building blocks of such a Common Economic Space: standards, customs, financial services, transport, industry and telecommunications are just a few”. [Emphasis in the original.]

We remind ourselves of the words of Rev 17:12,13, which surely reflect the growing aspirations of modern Europe.

*And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.*

*These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.*

It also points to the scenario of there being a Dragon (Russia), Beast (Europe) and a False Prophet (Papacy), (Rev. 16:13) separate entities, but cooperating together.

### **Threat to Britain—expulsion?**

Mr Prodi caused a stir by producing on the same day a much fuller document running to 145 pages drawn up in complete secret by a 5-man cell under the chairmanship of Francois Lamoureux, the former deputy chief of staff of Jacques Delors. It was billed as the “Constitution of the European Union” and proposed a fully-fledged European superstate with a strong president elected by MEP’s rather than appointed by the EU leaders.

Britain could be expelled from the European Union if it refuses to accept a fully-fledged European government with powers to launch military or police actions on British soil, according to a draft constitution unveiled by Brussels yesterday.

...proposes abolishing the national veto in every area of policy including foreign policy, the setting of “European taxes”, and future constitutional amendments.

...The Charter of Fundamental Rights, viewed by the Government as a serious threat to Britain’s legal system, should be fully incorporated as a legally-binding text under the jurisdiction of a new “Supreme Court”.

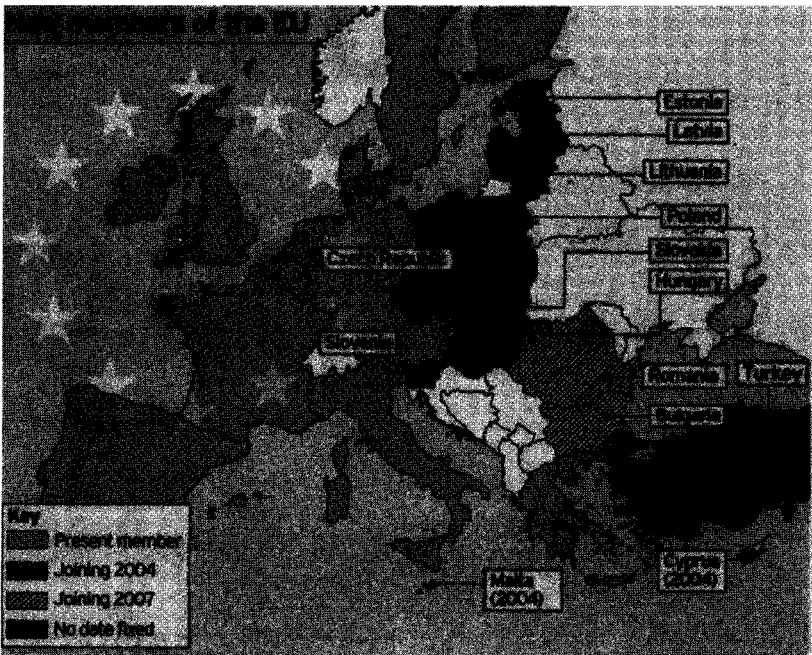
...EU diplomats suspected that a hard-core of federalists around Mr Prodi was trying to force the pace. While they are unlikely to win many of their key demands, there are signs that the Convention is moving much further in the federalist direction than Britain had originally predicted. *Daily Telegraph* 6-12-02

Mr Prodi had earlier upset the British by arguing that as Britain was not a member of the euro, she should be excluded from any economic or monetary decisions. He also wants the European Commission to sit as the representative of Europe at meetings of the IMF and the G7 (= Group of 7

leading industrialised nations). Britain of course has her own seat at these which would be lost under Prodi's proposals.

### Eastward enlargement—"an historic day"

Every six months the presidency of the European Union changes; the head of another country takes over. This year it was the turn of Spain, followed by Denmark. At the end of each spell a summit meeting of the 15 heads of government is held in the host's country. For 2003 it will fall to Greece, followed by Italy. At the Summit at Laeken in Dec. 2001, there was agreement to admit 10 new members to the EU in 2004. The finer detail was left to be worked out for a final agreement at the Dec. 2002 meeting in Copenhagen.



*The Independent* 10-11-02 marked the significance of this enlargement with the headline: **A moment for celebration and a historic day for Europe—**

The European Union yesterday took an historic step towards the ultimate goal it set itself in the Treaty of Rome of 1957 of "an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe". The original six will by 2004 become 25, stretching from Portugal to Estonia.

Even figures as visionary as Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman, pioneers of the European adventure 50 years ago, cannot have imagined that one

day their project would be enthusiastically joined not just by former Communist states in the east but by former republics of the USSR itself.

This progressive reunification of Europe is a time for celebration. It is a testament to the power of the European dream. Of course, these mostly poorer economies want to join the rich man's club to share in its prosperity, as did we, after much hesitation, in 1973. But, having lived under Communism or occupation, they also yearn to be anchored in a body with democratic values at its core. For all its flaws, the EU provides that security.

The European Commissioners had agreed that there should be a mass admission of new members. The cost and scale of this proposed enlargement is enormous. The EU at present has a population of 450 million. If all 10 states do join that number will be swelled by 73 million. From an economic point of view these are the poor relations of Europe. The present GDP of the EU is \$22,675, whilst the majority of the applicants are down at \$3-4,000! It will open up a much larger market, but not of big spenders. Already jobs are being lost in Britain as firms transfer production to these much cheaper markets.

Romani Prodi, the commission's president, said enlargement was Europe's "political masterpiece", a bold move that would prevent the Continent ever falling back into fratricidal conflicts.

"Thirteen years ago, Berlin was still divided by a wall of shame. The wall has fallen and we have rediscovered a historic unity between all our peoples," he said. *Daily Telegraph* 10-10-02

The venture is fraught with many dangers. The *Independent* ran a second article.

This will be a big bang, which in terms of its scale and political ambition and danger dwarfs the three previous enlargements of the EU. If it succeeds, the European Union will have fulfilled its self-appointed mission to bring together the peoples of Europe.

If it fails, as it might, the achievements of the existing EU—including the single market—could be destroyed.

At the Copenhagen summit in December the leaders of 10 countries were given a firm date for joining of May 2004. Romania and Bulgaria were given a joining date of 2007.

## Turkey can't join the 'club' yet

Turkey was the earliest eastern country to apply to join the EU, some 40 years ago. She has seen later applicants invited in, whilst she remains in the cold. The problem is that Turkey is a Moslem country; the other applicants are "Christian"! In spite of extensive reforms, Turkey's application has been put off many times. The US exerted pressure on the EU and was snubbed for her interference and told it was a European matter. Mr Blair too urged that Turkey should be allowed to join. France's former president, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, argued that Turkey's Muslim heritage had no place in the EU and that to admit them would be the "end of the European Union"—publicly echoing what many others thought in private. After much debate it was agreed that talks about Turkey's admission could begin in Dec. 2004, without any promises about their outcome. Turkey felt she was being rejected again and threatened that she would seek access to the North American Free Trade Agreement.

We would expect Turkey not to be part of Europe—she is to be swallowed up by Russia—the final stage in the *drying up of the river Euphrates*. Rev 16:12

## Morality, lying and the European Union

One vital matter that had to be completed before other countries could be invited to join was Ireland's ratification of the Nice Treaty. Of all the EU countries only Ireland had promised that the acceptance or otherwise would be by a referendum. This was duly held and the people of Ireland rejected it. True the turnout was very low and campaign was fairly low profile as the government had assumed that as Ireland was one of the great beneficiaries of EU largess, her citizens would not seek to bite the hand that fed her! The fact that she did, brought consternation, as it would prevent enlargement. The EU skilfully overcame their problem. Repeat the exercise, throw a lot of money at it, enlist the aid of the Roman Church, move polling day to a Saturday, muddy the water by changing the wording to ask two questions and hope for a better outcome. Even the *Catholic Herald* protested. Under the above headline on its Comment page, the writer Richard Mullen declared:

Last week's Irish Referendum is surely, the latest example of the pervasive immorality that underpins the entire "European project". How in the name of conscience—of a non-EU conscience—can one have a second referendum after the "final decision" of the first referendum? Could this have happened in the real world outside the EU?

There has not been such an immoral and cynical base to a political structure since the collapse of the Soviet Empire. From the British point of view, the only one that matters to me as a British subject, the whole European dream has been based on half-truths, deceptions and downright lies since we entered what we were told was an economic market. Fear has been the weapon held over our heads: if we don't do

this or accept that we shall be “left behind”, excluded or marginalized. We may be a great nation outside the EU but inside: never. 25-10-02

### **The Franco-German axis ‘back on track’**

France and Germany have been the two driving forces behind the development of the EU. France is anxious to contain the aggression of her neighbour, and Germany to be accepted after the tragedies of the two World Wars. It was a mutually beneficial partnership, but a stormy relationship, because of their different goals. France wants to be the leader of Europe. Germany equally desires that role. The last few years have been a rough patch for the Franco-German partnership. 2002 was election year for both countries, so with the burden of treading carefully before an election out the way, it was time for Chirac and Schroeder to resume their scheming.

As we have seen they out-manoeuvred Mr Blair on CAP reform.

The deal, which revived memories of decades of Franco-German domination of European summits, cast into doubt the success of Mr Blair's recent efforts to court the Germans and create a new Berlin-London axis to rival or replace the Franco German one.

Noelle Lenoir, the French minister for European affairs claimed that Europe's most important relationship had enjoyed a renaissance. . . . “Everything suddenly fell back into place at the summit at Brussels. It is a historic watershed”. *Daily Telegraph* 31-10-02

Together they worked out the deal on the date of Dec. 2004 for the Turkish talks, as late as they could postpone them. As we shall see in the next section, they pushed Mr Blair to one side over the call for a full European security and defence union.

### **The Euro Army**

Tony Blair was one of the main driving forces in 1998 behind the setting up of the European Rapid Reaction Force; known almost universally as the Euro army. It was conceived—at least in British eyes—as being a mobile force, which could rapidly be sent where required, ahead of more conventional forces. A humanitarian role for it was also envisaged. The other main country behind the establishment of the ERRF was France. The US regarded her motives with suspicion, suspecting that what was being planned was a rival to the Nato forces. In spite of the denials this is indeed what is unfolding. France and Germany perceive Nato as representing the military might of America,



“The US is not amused by our redundant military gestures”

France and Germany perceive Nato as representing the military might of America,

their dream is of a Europe that does not need American help. We reproduce the cartoon that appeared in *Milestones* 1999.

At the Barcelona summit in March, Tony Blair was determined to make the European leaders agree that America must give prior agreement before the ERRF could be sent into action in case the US wanted to send in Nato troops instead. The Prime Minister had earlier given his pledge to Nato that this European Force would not undermine their role. Not surprisingly France was bitterly opposed to this and—as usual—Britain had to cave in.

Another remit of the European Convention committee is to look at defence. The drift of the defence sub committee's thinking was revealed in October by the *Daily Telegraph* 27-10-20. Under the headline: **More power for Europe's army puts future of Nato at risk**, it revealed that the plan was to form a mutual defence pact, separate from Nato, and that they would guarantee to defend one another if attacked. Michel Barnier the Belgian chairman of the defence sub-committee said that without a fully-fledged mutual defence pact the EU would be “reduced to a large supermarket.”

“My ambition is to call into being a new defence initiative. The hour of truth is coming for Europe: do we want to be only an economic and financial community or do we want to become an independent political power?”

In November, France and Germany—as part of their reviving of the Berlin-Paris axis—gave their support for a full European security and defence union with an “integrated command capability” and a “European Armaments Agency”.

The ideas are being portrayed in Paris and Bonn as the product of frustration at Britain's tendency to be the mouthpiece of America on foreign policy issues, rather than looking to Europe.

The Earl of Stockton, a Tory MEP and a member of the convention's defence working group, said that the Government was losing control of the European military project, which it launched with the French at St Malo in 1998. “If this goes ahead, it will effectively bypass the joint EU-Nato command and open the way for a total separation from Nato, which is what the French have always wanted, of course,” he said. *Daily Telegraph* 27-11-02

## Europol

As well as an army, Europe is busy developing a European police force. This year it enlarged its scope to include an intelligence arm “a sort of joint FBI/CIA wrapped together” at Europol headquarters in The Hague. It is funded directly by the 15 states so that its spending does not appear in the EU budget.

Having begun as a tiny clearing house for drugs in 1990, the agency is fast acquiring a mandate for everything from car theft to murder,

corruption, and even racism and xenophobia, a new EU-wide criminal offence covering “public incitement to discrimination” against religious, national, or ethnic groups; public denial of genocide; and taking part in activities which “involve religious hatred”.

Lode Van Outrive, the European Parliament's former rapporteur on Europol, said its structure made it a growing threat to civil liberties.

“The more power it acquires, the more dangerous it becomes...The European Parliament has no democratic oversight, and the national parliaments don't know what's going on either. It's like a satellite orbiting out of all control,” he said. *Daily Telegraph* 27-4-02

Further powers were given at the Seville summit in June, to establish an EU border police force to patrol shores, ports and crossing points.

The dramatic attempt to strengthen “fortress Europe” could mean foreign guards wearing an EU uniform patrolling in Britain.

The Prime Minister suffered a double defeat as his own rival plan to counter illegal immigration—withdrawing aid from some Third World countries—was thrown out.

In contrast, the move towards a common border force, to be called the European Union Corps of Border Guards, was given an enthusiastic welcome. The summit agreed to launch a series of working groups to hone proposals made by Italy for the new force; which would have its own uniform and badge and be drawn from all 15 member states. It could be in place by 2007. *Daily Telegraph* 23-6-02

The UK parliament in its next session will be debating the new “European Arrest Warrant”, which gives the power of arrest for extradition by “a constable or appropriate person.” It forms the centrepiece of an Extraction Bill, which simplifies the procedures and extradition of British citizens to other EU countries. The critics are alarmed at such open-ended powers being given. They fear this is part of the extension of powers to the Europol. One of the crimes that is not an offence in Britain, but would be under this new legislation is the crime of xenophobia—“hatred or fear of foreigners or strangers or of their politics or culture”. Anti-Semitism is a form of xenophobia.

Earlier this year, Lord Scott, a law lord said the definition of a xenophobic offence “would almost certainly cover Biggles [stories for boys of fighting Germans in WWI] and probably the Old Testament”.

One can see the basis for this regulation, and the comment might have been a little tongue in cheek, but the fear is that, as so often happens, these laws are used to stultify any debate. Certainly the newspapers unwillingness to publish controversial lecture titles is already a fact. *Milestones* could find itself banned!

## Nato—an historic year

2002 was a milestone year for Nato. It was set up by America in 1949 to confront the then Soviet Union with the threat of retaliation, nuclear if necessary, in the event of an attack on any of the signatory states. For 40 years it has been regarded as the primary instrument for keeping the peace in Europe until the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989. Now in May 2002, Russia was joining Nato as a junior partner.

“We have come a long way from confrontation to dialogue and from confrontation to co-operation. The significance of this meeting is difficult to overestimate. A few years ago such a role for Russia would have been simply unthinkable,” said Mr Putin.

The new arrangement does not make Russia an equal member of the alliance but it allows Moscow to join in the decision-making process. Described as a “security operation forum”, the 20-nation council will give Nato and Russia an equal voice on fighting terrorism; non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; tactical missile defense; peacekeeping operations; civil defense; military co-operation and search and rescue missions at sea. Unlike the Nato members, Russia will have no power of veto nor will Nato’s Article 5, stipulating that an attack on one member is an attack on Nato, be applied to it. *Daily Telegraph* 29-5-02

The Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov summing up Russia's foreign policy record, called the alliance between the former Cold War foes “the most noteworthy and unusual event of 2002”. *Russian Journal* 20-12-02



Nato also took another significant step. In Sept., seven new members were welcomed from Eastern Europe, bringing the borders of Nato right up to Russia's borders. New member Latvia doesn't have an air force, but its radar systems, when linked into Nato's will cover much of western Russia. Mr Putin has dropped his opposition to this eastward expansion. Russia now is a partner and



he approves of the new thrust of Nato—a force to combat terrorism.

President Bush, determined to counter the threat that the new Euro army was presenting to Nato, set about modernising its forces to be a direct rival to Europe. It involves setting up small, mobile, multinational forces, which could rapidly be sent on missions around the world. Bush is planning that Europe's unwillingness to spend much money on its own forces, especially in the field of transport and heavy gear, will leave them unable to respond, so leaving the field open to the American-led Nato forces. At the Nato summit held in Prague in the Czech Republic in November this plan to set up a rapid reaction force consisting of 21,000 men, was given the go ahead.

### **Religious freedom—not for some!**

As Europe reaches out eastward, the question of freedom to worship raises its head. Russia is intolerant of many religious groups, as are many of Russia's neighbours where Orthodoxy is the main religion. Belarus which will border the EU when Poland joins, brought in this year a highly restrictive new religion law, imposing severe limitations on the activities of "unregistered" religious groups, censorship of religious literature, and a virtual ban on religious meetings in private homes.

Religious freedom problems are particularly acute in some of the former communist countries; but they should be set in the context of increasing constraints on religious liberty in some Western European countries too. The US State Department report criticises Belgium, France and Germany for restrictions on groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses. Since the early 1990s Western governments have been increasingly concerned at the activities of what they call 'cults' or 'sects'. In May 2001 the French government adopted the 'About-Picard' law which not only allows the authorities to shut down a religious group if two of its members are convicted of various named offences but also bans that religious group from re-forming itself under a different name. *BBC World Service* 8-10-02

### **Chapter summary—what a year!**

We can look back on 2002 as being a year when so many things fell into place. A year to strengthen our faith that the angels are busy working behind the scenes to bring about God's predetermined Will. A glance back at *Milestones* 1992, when I first assisted my father, confirmed what a long, long way we have come in 10 years down the road of a federal Europe. There is still a way to go before we have the situation of *a woman sitting on a scarlet coloured beast*, but the groundwork for the Beast is firmly in hand. Before we look at "the Woman" aspect, we will look at the "Dragon"—firstly in its relation to the European Beast, and then to events in Russia.

## Chapter 10:

# EUROPE & RUSSIA MOVING EVER CLOSER

*Europe and Russia form the two feet of Daniel's image. Both Roman in origin, they will shortly move together to destroy the nation of Israel, to scatter her people and to take possession of her land; only to be broken by the little stone power. With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the pathway was opened for a rapprochement with Europe. Again we are staggered by the speed at which this re-alignment has taken and continues to take place.*

### Working to a plan

The EU and Russia have a joint web site.<sup>1</sup> On their home page it sets out the growing relationship between the two areas. It opens with a quote from European Commission President Romano Prodi:

“We want to help fully integrate Russia into our community of values. We want to identify the most appropriate means of cooperation, not only on the economy, the environment and energy but also on defence, security and safeguarding democratic rights.”

### Concrete cooperation lasting more than 12 years.

Following President Gorbachev's nomination as President of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall, the EU was among the first partners to initiate a new dialogue with the USSR and to set the foundations for increased trade relations between the two sides. In 1989 the European Community signed the first agreement with the USSR on Trade and Commercial and Economic Cooperation.

The massive political and economic changes, which have occurred during and since 1991, have given further impetus to the relationship between the two parties.

It lists the various agreements that have been made—the last major one being in 1997—the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. I have abbreviated the rather dry text! My emphasis in *italics*.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement is based on core principles shared by the parties ranging from the promotion of international peace and security, to the support for a democratic society based upon political and economic freedoms. *It creates a spirit of equality and partnership aimed at strengthening political, commercial, economic and cultural ties ...*Through this document, the EU and Russia also granted each other Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status...

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<sup>1</sup> [www.eur.ru/eng/](http://www.eur.ru/eng/)

### **A new political dialogue**

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement expanded the scope of previous relations enormously. One of the major innovations was the establishment of an institutional framework for a new *political* dialogue between the European Union and Russia.

Under the Agreement, the two sides made a commitment to hold summits twice a year, one in Moscow and one in the capital of the EU member state holding the rotating Presidency of the European Union. Other high level bilateral meetings take place annually.

In June 1999, in Cologne, the European Union adopted a “Common Strategy” towards a third country for the first time. *Russia was selected as the first partner...* With the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the “Common Strategy” on Russia is the *political* basis for EU-Russia relations. [It] identifies two clear goals:

A stable, open and pluralistic democracy in Russia, governed by the rule of law and underpinned by a prosperous market economy benefiting alike all the people of Russia and of the European Union;

Maintaining European stability, promoting global security and responding to the common challenges of the *continent through intensified cooperation with Russia.*

Based on the Common Strategy, the European Union intends to work together with Russia...to meet the following principal objectives:

Consolidate democracy; integrate *Russia into a Common European economic and social space*; cooperate to strengthen stability and security in Europe and beyond...

### **Russia's Strategy towards the European Union up to 2010**

In October 1999, Russia demonstrated the key importance of its relationship with the European Union by adopting *its own Strategy* towards the European Union *covering the period until 2010.*

...It is a consistent evolution of the general foreign *policy concept of Russia in the European area* and it stems from the objective need to establish *a multipolar world...* It is also directly coordinated with the concept of economic security of Russia.”

*It provides for... a united Europe without dividing lines.*

“I consider it necessary today to once again firmly state our priorities in the European direction. Clearly in evidence here is our consistent position and *the many specific steps to integrate with Europe.* We shall continue *the vigorous work* with the European Union aimed at *forming a single economic space.*” President Vladimir Putin in his annual message to the Federal Assembly, 18 April 2002

Over many pages one can read the 10-year blueprint for the integration of Russia with Europe. What we see taking place step by step has been planned out in advance! These are man's plans and God revealed His plans several millennia ago!

In a public opinion poll over half the Russians said they would like Russia to be a member of the EU. *Strana* 22-5-02

**“This is our star in political and economic co-operation”**

At the 9<sup>th</sup> EU-Russian summit held in Moscow in May, the EU fielded its highest-level team yet – it was to be an important meeting. One of the main topics was agreeing a deal on energy, the other bringing Russia within the embrace of Europe.

Energy issues have proved themselves a driving force of discussions in Moscow since Monday, and seem destined to be a main element of partnership between Russia and the currently 15-nation bloc.

"Facilitating of investment projects in the Russian energy sector would help to progress the achievement of the strategic goal of an energy partnership - enhancing the energy security of the European continent," the authors said.

Long-term contracts for natural gas were of central importance, and the electricity sector needed "reciprocity in market access and environmental and nuclear standards."

*But the really-prized goal in EU sights was to embrace Russia in the concept known as the European Common Economic Space, commission President Prodi announced this evening.*

It would need about five years for Russia to align systems and procedures with those in the wider European community for "a colossal and important project" of integration.

"This is our star in political and economic co-operation," Prodi said. *Strana* 29-5-02

## **Energy partnership**

As we saw in *Milestones 2001* (ch. 5), Russia has huge energy reserves. Europe is very dependant upon the Middle East for her energy and so this energy partnership makes mutual sense. Russia lacks the investment capital but has the fuel; Europe has the capital but lacks the fuel.

Fuel and energy are poised to become the main magnet for foreign investment over the next few years. Until now this sector has received about \$1 billion in investment a year, mainly from Russian companies. But Energy Minister Igor Yusupov has said that fuel and energy projects can expect to receive \$30 billion to \$40 billion in foreign investment by the year 2005.

"This will be used for the development of transport infrastructure for the fuel and energy complex, oil-deposit development and the electrical energy and coal industries," he said recently. *Russian Journal* 25-6-02

Vast pipelines are being constructed to connect Russia's far-flung deposits to their European customers. Belarus is on schedule to complete its stretch of the massive Yamal-Europe gas pipeline network by the end of the year, increasing Russian gas transits to Western Europe:

Belarus' 560-km stretch is a small but key part of Gazprom's Yamal-Europe project, which when fully realized will carry supplies of Russian gas from the Yamal peninsula in the Arctic to Germany and beyond.

"We are now pumping about 50 million cubic meters of gas a day. After the [entire] stretch is launched, we will be able to increase transit to 68 million from January 2003." *Russian Journal* 19-7-02

Russia is expected to provide half of the 60,000-70,000 megawatts of additional electricity capacity needed across a vast swathe of Europe in the next 10 years, Finland's energy federation said on Friday. *Russian Journal* 23-8-02

## Russia and Germany

Both these countries have leaders who have not experienced the terrible slaughter of WWII when both countries lost millions of their young men. One in every seven Soviet citizens died in this war. They are determined that such a happening will not occur again and are pursuing a path of peace.

"One of the biggest changes that has occurred in recent years is a historical reconciliation between the countries and people," the [Russian] ambassador [to Germany] said. "No one has forgotten about the past; this would not be possible, and people should not forget about the past. But the past should not brake progress in the future." *Moscow Times* 5-4-02

Germany is of particular interest to Bible students because of Ezekiel's description of Gog as being *of the land of Magog*. In *Milestones 2000* we looked at this aspect in chapters 2 and 5. We can trace Magog to the area that Germany now occupies. We saw how that the young "heir" to the Romanovs has a German father, as well as the fact that the Romanovs originally emigrated from Germany to Russia in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

It has therefore been fascinating to see how these former foes are forging such close links. In addition to the EU-Russian regular meetings, Germany has regular meetings with Russia. The two leaders are on very intimate terms, spending holidays together—Putin speaks fluent German.

In April, Putin visited Weimar in Germany for the 5<sup>th</sup> round of Russo-German consultations. This was their 10<sup>th</sup> official meeting since June 2000!

Mr Putin met the German press and before answering their questions, gave this summary:

For us, Germany is one of our main partners in the world and our first partner in Europe, and I think that Russia is an important partner for Germany as well. It is sufficient to look at the energy balance of Germany... But there are many more areas of cooperation, and security in the world and on the European continent are not the least of them.

All this makes up the basis of what we will talk about in Weimar. And I very much expect this meeting, like the previous ones, to give a good impetus for promoting bilateral relations between Russia and Germany and create a favorable climate for cooperation in Europe as a whole.

In answer to a question he stressed that, “rapprochement with the West is not Putin's policy. It is Russia's policy”. *Strana* 10-4-02

One of the matters negotiated was a deal to reduce Russia's debt to Germany. The Soviet ran up large debts to East Germany, now absorbed into Germany—and Russia is honouring those debts. Vladimir Putin described the debt as “a debt one non-existent state, the USSR, owes to another non-existent state, the GDR,” stressing that they had nothing in common with Russia's debts. The problem is that they were denominated in “transferable rubles”, a now defunct currency

Germany wanted them repaid at the value of the transferable ruble at the time—around \$1. Putin insisted that the 95% devaluation of the ruble since then should be taken into account. A compromise sum was agreed, in value much to Russia's advantage—\$6.4 billion shrank to just under \$.5 bn. However 2/3rds was payable at the end of 2002—a bonanza for the struggling German economy. Bound by an economic straightjacket of its own making when setting up the rules and regulations for the euro, this cash injection couldn't have come at a better time.

Putin was able to help his friend further. Schröder, faced with appalling damage in the floods in August and losing ground in the run-up to the elections, asked for Putin to bring forward the repayment date.

Germany is struggling to recover from torrential floods that have caused 15 billion euros (\$14.75 billion) in damage, according to Irish Times estimates. Russia's agreement to pay back the debt early is a lifeline both to the country as a whole and to the besieged Schröder. *Stratfor* 4-9-02

## **Kaliningrad**

At the November EU-Russian summit held in Brussels, agreement was at last reached on the vexed question of Kaliningrad. This small enclave of Russia is due to be surrounded by EU members when Poland and Lithuania join the EU in 2004. Because of the border policy of the EU, citizens of Kaliningrad wishing to travel to Russia would need passports to pass across EU territory. At the moment they can travel freely to Russia and back.

Kaliningrad became a test case for the EU's relations with Russia. Putin insisted that the spread of the EU should not be detrimental to this area.



The parties acknowledge the unique situation of the Kaliningrad Region as part of the Russian Federation but separated from the rest of the Federation by other states. With the aim of further developing the strategic partnership between EU and Russia, the parties therefore agree to make a special

effort to accommodate the concerns on both sides related to the future transit of persons and goods between the Kaliningrad Region and other parts of Russia, and to intensify their cooperation to promote the social and economic development of the region as a whole. [www.eur.ru](http://www.eur.ru)

The compromise was that special travel documents would be issued to allow a trouble-free transit through Lithuania. Germany is particularly keen to see the area developed, as it was part of the Prussian Empire.

### Another historic day for Russia

The world's leading industrial nations meet regularly around the world. This year, in June, they met in Kananaskis in Canada. Normally it is called the G7<sup>1</sup> group. This year it was called the G8 in recognition of Russia's right to sit round the table with the other countries. True Russia has some way to go, and these events were somewhat symbolic, yet it was "an event, which without exaggeration may be regarded as historic". *Strana* 28-6-02

Germany agreed that the 2006 summit that was scheduled to be held in Germany should instead be held in Russia. This was a considerable boost for Russia. The other members agreed to make \$20 bn available to help pay for Russia's destruction of her weapons of mass destruction.

### Chapter summary

The uniting of Europe is something we have been looking for for many years. For the *Dragon* and the *Beast* to be working together, separate entities, but eventually one in mind and action. This picture is no longer a dream, but an ever-growing reality. How privileged we are to live in such times!

We now look at Russia and some interesting developments concerning her desire to restore the imperial power that was hers under the Tsars!

1 Group of Seven (G-7) The G-7 consists of the world's seven largest industrial market economies: the United States, Japan, Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Canada.

## Chapter 11:

# RUSSIA'S GROWING POWER

*From being a mighty power in the days of the Soviet, to the bankrupt nation in the years that followed, Russia is steadily growing again as an economic power. She still has a long way to go—her birth rate is falling sharply, AIDS and poverty mean that the life expectancy is still falling. The words of Ezekiel concerning Gog paint a picture of a nation being turned again—a regaining of her former power. (Eke. 38:4) This is what we observe. In the previous chapter we saw the many historic milestones for Russia in 2002. Following our more extensive look at Russia in Milestones 2001, we just take a brief look at some other Russian matters.*

### **Putin's strategic strength**

By aligning himself with the West, Putin is now in quite a powerful position. He is able to demand “rewards” for helping America over Afghanistan and now Iraq. Europe needs his resources, and as the oil and gas pipelines link the two areas together, Europe's dependence on Russia grows. Potentially Russia could be a very rich country—the prospective value of the mineral wealth on her territory is immense. What Russia has lacked in the past is a clear-headed leader. This they now have, just at a time when God's final role for this nation is about to unfold!

### **Russia's improving economy**

Mr Putin has now been in power for 3 years. What a transformation he has overseen. Russia's GDP is still way behind that of the poorest of the EU countries, but it is steadily improving.

Things turned out better than hoped in the economy. Putin came to power not even a year after the 1998 financial crisis, at a time when no one expected any recovery. The average wage in dollar terms had dropped from \$150 to \$60 a month, the average pension was below the living minimum and attempts to avoid devaluing the ruble had ruined the banking system, cost people their savings and led to increased government borrowing, with more than \$50 billion being added to the Soviet foreign debt of \$150 billion. With foreign-debt payments hitting a peak in 2003, no solution was in sight.

But 1999 and 2000 turned out to be the best years economically in the last three decades. GDP increased by almost 9 percent in 2000 after 20 years of stagnation or decrease. Investment rose after a 10-year fall. Russia was able to contemplate grain exports in 2001 for the first time since 1963. The average wage rose to \$120, and the average pension increased to the living minimum. Perhaps the biggest success was that Russia met all its foreign-debt payments and brought the debt down.



Gold reserves, meanwhile, topped \$42 billion—a record for the country. *Russian Journal* 10-8-02

Agriculture Minister Alexei Gordeyev said he expected the country to improve its export logistics system and boost exports further, including to Egypt, where the country planned to export at least one million tonnes of wheat in 2003. "The pace of growth is two and a half times higher than in 2001," Gordeyev told reporters *Russian Journal* 28-12-02

In the first 11 months of 2002, Russia's oil output rose 7% and natural gas 2.5%. Rising oil prices ensured that this was even more profitable.

### **Rebuilding her military**

Putin is working to rebuild the military to be a power in the world again. The defence procurement budget was greatly increased by nearly 40% for 2002, with the emphasis on conventional weaponry rather than nuclear. A further 26% increase is budgeted for 2003. The economic benefits of the streamlining of Russia's defence industry are now being felt.

**Arms exports.** Russia is the world's top arms dealer, passing the United States for the first time in 2001, according to a new report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Russia exported \$4.97 billion worth of arms in 2001, with the US delivering \$4.56 billion worth, SIPRI said in its "Yearbook 2002: Armaments, Disarmament & International Security".

France was third, exporting \$1.28 billion worth of arms last year, while Britain was fourth with \$1.12 billion. Germany was fifth with \$670 million and Ukraine sixth with \$430 million. *Moscow Times* 14-6-02

This was a statistical quirk; in reality Russia is No 3 or 4 in dollar terms, nevertheless these exports enable her to develop improved arms.

Putin was impressed at the power of the US forces in Afghanistan. He saw what a well-trained and well-equipped army could achieve.

By 2010, Defense Minister Sergey Ivanov aims to recreate the Russian Army as a wholly professional force with a slimmed-down career-officer corps and a fully volunteer rank and file—not to mention modern equipment, decent salaries and housing—and a war readiness that modern Russia has never seen. *Newsweek* 1-2-02

"The transition to professional service will have three stages. The initial, preparatory stage will last until 2004, the executive stage until 2011 and the final stage until 2020," said deputy defense minister, Lt. Gen Vasily Smirnov. *Periscope News* 21-10-02

### **Fit for a Tsar**

Work is proceeding on the renovation of St Petersburg, preparatory for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding. Putin diverted \$250m of public funds in

2002 from Moscow to St Petersburg. Firms are being pressurised to undertake private sponsorship of individual restoration projects.

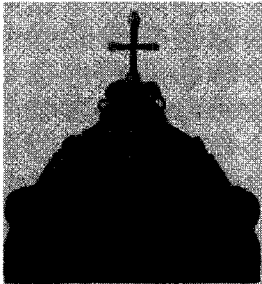
No one has done more to restore glory to the Tsarist-era palaces and pastel coloured facades of St Petersburg than President Putin, who seems to have made it his personal mission to rescue the city from decay. *The Times* 25-5-02

He proudly conducted president Bush around its glories on the occasion of his visit in May. Work is now well underway on the £117m restoration of the Konstantinovsky Palace, a 1000-roomed building that has suffered years of neglect, built by Peter the Great to rival Versailles.

...About 2,000 workers are employed at the site 24 hours a day to ensure that it is ready for the city's 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June 2003.

The west wing will house Putin and his family, complete with a restaurant, a wine cellar and dining hall for up to 50. There will also be a museum, a five-star hotel, a sports club and a yacht club.

It has added speculation that the president plans to follow Peter the Great and move the capital to his hometown. State visits are increasingly divided between Moscow and St Petersburg. *Sunday Telegraph* 2-6-02.



To mark Putin's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, Russia's Academy of Jewellery Art presented him with a £32,000 copy of the Cap of Monomakh crown. This was the 13<sup>th</sup> century crown that was used at the coronation of Grand Princes and Tsars. A copy of it was made in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, which was worn by Peter the Great. Putin's copy is said to be insured for £6m.

### **Church Bells Will Peal for Tsar Putin**

Patriarch Alexy II on Thursday blessed two giant church bells made to replace a pair that were torn down from a tower at one of the country's holiest sites and destroyed 72 years ago under Soviet dictator Stalin.

The bells—each with President Vladimir Putin's name cast on its side in relief—are to be hoisted up next month into the bell tower outside the Cathedral of the Assumption at Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery in Sergiyev Posad, about 55 kilometers northeast of Moscow.

In addition to Putin, the bells bear the names of Alexy, the abbot of the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery, and its financial manager in old Russian-style lettering along the base.

Putin was mentioned because they were cast under his rule—a tradition ...when the name of the ruling tsar was engraved on church bells.

Yakov also said it was done to thank Putin for creating a "favorable atmosphere" for religion and the church. *Russian Journal* 19-7-02

### **Russia prepares to restore Romanovs!**

At the end of a significant year for Russia, came this exciting news!

Russia may reclaim its tsarist history next year by declaring null and void the crimes for which its last monarch, Tsar Nicholas II, was executed in 1917 at the height of the Bolshevik revolution.

In keeping with the Kremlin's heartfelt nostalgia for the former monarchy, a presidential commission will in January ask Vladimir Putin to grant the request of one of Nicholas II's last surviving relatives, to rehabilitate the Romanovs.

Grand Duchess Leonida Romanova, wife of Grand Duke Vladimir, the son of the last tsar's cousin, has appealed to the presidential commission on the rehabilitation of victims of political repression to declare null and void the "crimes" for which the tsarist monarchy was convicted and executed by a Soviet committee 85 years ago.

The commission will recommend to its founder, President Putin, that the tsar's family is rehabilitated after their investigations finish in January, the source said. The move will represent a significant final step in Russia's journey to embrace its tsarist history.

President Putin models himself on Peter the Great, whose reign is reminiscent of a Russian imperial greatness which the Kremlin is keen to promote.

"The moral element of the rehabilitation of the tsarist family began with the burial of their remains five years ago in the imperial mausoleum in St Petersburg," the source at the commission said. "The canonisation by the Russian orthodox church was another important step. The juridical [rehabilitation] is a necessary and last step." *The Guardian* 20-12-02

### **Religion returns to Russian schools**

In Russia we have a well-established working relationship between church and state. Political leaders openly speak of their faith. Even when abroad, Mr Putin finds time to attend where there is a Russian Orthodox Church. Under the communism revolution of 1917, religion was banned from schools.

Russia is to introduce Orthodox religious education for the first time since the Tsars.

Under a controversial proposal by the education ministry head teachers will be able to schedule courses in a subject called orthodox Culture.

Among the topics will be the traditions of Orthodoxy, asceticism, the liturgy, and the Bible as well as religious art and literature. *Daily Telegraph* Dec 2002

## Chapter 12:

# BRITAIN—TRIUMPHS AND TROUBLES

*It is now 30 years since Britain joined the EEC—now the EU. Bible students were disappointed at this action, as a role independent of Europe had long been foreseen—a role working with “the young lions” rather than “the Beast”. A role that sees her as being one of the nations who submit to Christ’s rule and help in the work of bringing the Jews home; rather than a part of Europe who opposes Christ as king to the bitter end. Were our expectations wrong? No! If Britain had joined then something surely would happen to push Britain out. For many years Britain seemed firmly entrenched in Europe. She had joined what she believed was a common market, and expanding markets were what she thrived on. With the passage of time one can see that Britain does not fit in with Europe. Her way of life has a different background, built up over years of independence and a protestant work ethic. Her decision not to join the euro can now be seen to have been a wise move. Europe is desperately struggling with her self-imposed financial straightjacket. Britain is free to adjust interest rates to suit her needs. Mr Blair’s outlook matches that of America, not Europe, over Israel and Iraq. For Bible students the question is when will she leave rather than needing to re-interpret scripture.*

### The Queen’s jubilee

2002 was the Queen’s Golden Jubilee of her accession to the throne. Recent years have been difficult ones for her; family problems have left their mark. The death of the Queen’s mother in March was also a sad blow, following so closely the death of her sister, Margaret.

There was much speculation that the country would not be interested in the planned Jubilee celebrations; that the monarchy was an out-dated institution. This proved totally wrong. Wherever the royal couple went on their tour of the country, large crowds made them welcome. It reinforced the Queen’s untiring dedication to the task. She regards it as her God-given task, and is determined to remain Queen as long as she possibly can.

For Bible students who have expected a Queen to be on the throne to hand over control of Britain to the new King in Jerusalem, these matters bring comfort, that their hopes may soon be fulfilled. The previous Queen—Victoria—expressed the hope that it would be her privilege to submit her throne to Christ; but the time had not yet come.

*And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour. Ps 45:12*

The celebrations began on Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>—the day when visiting Kenya 50 years earlier, she had been informed of her father’s death. As well as a tour around Britain, the Queen visited Jamaica, New Zealand, Australia and

Canada. In Australia she attended the biennial summit of the Commonwealth Nations. This meeting was originally scheduled for Oct. 2001, but was postponed because of the events of Sept 11<sup>th</sup>. This year's theme was "The Commonwealth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Continuity and Renewal". It places Britain at the head of a wide range of nations throughout the world, who feel the need for this association together. The Queen greatly enjoys these biennial meetings, renewing friendships from around the world.

### **Blair looks east and west**

Following the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, when Bush and Blair stood side-by-side, and together launched a successful war against bin Laden and his al Qaeda forces in Afghanistan, that "special relationship" has continued. With Afghanistan "out the way" the focus of attention has been the Middle East and Saddam Hussein in particular. Both men share a vision of Israel being able to dwell in peace in their land. They both see Iraq as the stumbling block to this happening. The evidence against Saddam has built up so that as we write these words at the end of the year, war seems inevitable.

Blair's alignment with Bush has put him on a collision course with his EU colleagues. Although there was a universal vote by the UN to send back the weapons inspectors, this does not mean that the European leaders favour war. The central theme of the Pope's Christmas message was for them to back down from war. Although British—and American—firms have been implicated in supplying—probably innocently—parts for Saddam's armaments, it was German firms that were the most involved. The French too want to continue to deal with Iraq and be involved with the Germans in many building schemes if only sanctions were lifted.

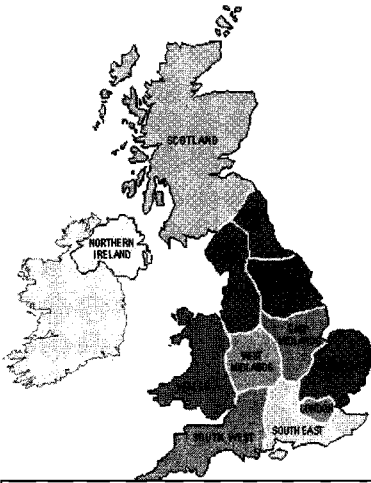
As we saw earlier, few nations are prepared to support America's war efforts. In fact Germany has openly refused to finance it. Britain, Australia, Canada and India are willing to help. As Europe rapidly turns inward-looking, Britain's role there must surely be limited. It is with America she feels at ease. If Turkey carried out her threat to link herself to America with the NAFTA, it could be the impetus for Britain to move that way.

Unlike the rest of Europe whose trade is mainly among themselves, Britain is a world-trading nation. She looks to markets around the world. India and the Middle East are natural areas for her operations.

### **Regionalization**

Divide and rule, was one of Caesar's mottos as he expanded the Roman Empire. Divide an area into smaller parts, break down the central command and replace with petty chieftains. In a similar way the hidden hand of the EU is breaking up Britain. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland now have their own regional assemblies, looking after their own affairs. Now subtly England is being slit up into 8 regions plus London, each it is envisaged,

will have its own elected regional government. Back in the early 90's, Britain was told that in order to avail herself of the EU largess that was available, it had to be applied for by regional bodies, to which the money would be channelled. In 1994 "government offices" were set up in each of these regions. At the moment they have non-elected assemblies. Under legislation that has still to be put to Parliament for approval, these regional areas will be considerably enhanced and replaced with elected assemblies who would take over the existing county council structure. The first of these regional assemblies is anticipated being in place in 2005.



Where has England gone?  
Map from web site of European  
Commission Representation in the UK

The purpose of these regions—this regionalization process is taking place all over the EU—is to bypass central government, diminishing its power

and purpose. Under the "30-year rule", documents have just recently been made public to show that the splitting of England was secretly drawn up by Paul Romus, a senior French official in 1971—it is remarkably close to that unveiled in May 2002 by John Prescott! Even earlier Hitler in 1937 had developed the idea of establishing regions of Europe as a means of destroying national identities, according to *The House that Hitler Built* by Stephen Roberts.

### Northern Ireland

We have not reported on the complex situation in Northern Ireland for several years. As part of the drive, which we now learn, came from Europe, a Northern Ireland regional government was set up in 1998. Among its representatives were officials who were strong supporters of the armed violence.

Although the open conflict has largely died down, the individual squabbles, and far worse, knee-cappings, intimidation and arson—still continues. One of the key issues is whether the IRA is prepared to give up its weapons. The cover to the smooth words was blown several times in 2002. In the previous year there had been the arrest of 3 IRA suspects in Columbia, where they are accused of aiding the terrorist network there (FARC), making it clear that the struggle was still continuing.

Then came the several accounts of IRA involvement with the Palestinian struggle that we have already looked at. One of the IRA training grounds in the 70's and 80's was Libya, where Arafat had his headquarters and

another was in Syria where at both the IRA trained alongside PLO terrorists.

In March there was a break-in at the Special Branch HQ at Castlereagh, where very sensitive material is held about police informers as well as government intelligence on the IRA. The loss of such a quantity of sensitive information was a blow to the government. It was suspected that there must have been more than one mole within the staff to have made the break-in possible.

Then in November came a police raid on Stormont—the N. Ireland government buildings. The police seized much documentation. It emerged that Stormont had been deeply penetrated by IRA spies and much of the confidential material that flowed to and fro had been transmitted to the Sinn Féin party, giving them valuable information in their struggle to gain political advantage. They also had access to transcripts of confidential telephone conversations on secure lines between Mr Bush and Mr Blair. They also had obtained material unconnected with N.I., intelligence data and encrypted messages concerning preparations for the Afghan war, the campaign against Iraq and on the global war on terror. These items were taken for sale to other terrorist organisations. As a result of the raid a CIA team was sent to London to assess the damage. Britain and America also sought out recipients of this sensitive information in Cyprus and Lebanon. The *Debka* report (15-11-02) that revealed this information added that the information that was quietly being gathered for at least 18 months was forwarded to Belfast “by means of ring members that included British civil servants and Irish Catholic politicians”!

As a result the power-sharing agreement at Stormont has been suspended, and London has taken over direct rule again.

It made a mockery of Mr Blair’s efforts to negotiate with Sinn Féin—the political wing of the IRA. In fact among the many thousands of incriminating documents that were seized, were documents that referred to Mr Blair by the IRA code name “Naïve Idiot”.

Then came news of a Roman Catholic priest’s involvement in some of the atrocities in the 70’s. Now long dead, evidence built up against him that he used his priestly offices to shelter terrorists, and that he was the Provisional IRA commander of a bombing raid that killed nine people in 1972.

### **Joining the euro?**

Tony Blair is still keen on joining the euro; in spite of the buffetings he gets from his European partners, he still see himself as a “good European”. His Chancellor, Gordon Brown, who theoretically will be the one to make the decision to join or not, is increasingly euro-sceptic.

Alan Greenspan, chairman of the United States Federal Reserve and the world’s most influential central banker, joined forces with Gordon

Brown yesterday to deliver a powerful hint that Britain should stay outside the euro.

Mr Greenspan said the City was thriving and was a “sterling place” to do business. “London has stayed on top despite the emergence of the euro,” he said. Although there were signs of increased activity in Frankfurt, it was still a much less important financial centre than London. *Daily Telegraph* 26-9-02

The pro-euro lobby expected that once the euro began to circulate in Europe, the British would take to this shiny new currency. This wasn’t the case. With Britain being the only major EU country whose economy was not badly faltering, few people can point to the benefits of being a member of a system that imposes such a straightjacket on its members. The euro has reduced Germany, Italy and even France, to such dismal economic figures.

### **Thatcher: “Britain must start to quit EU”**

That was the front-page headline in *The Times* 18-3-02. Mrs Thatcher has written a book entitled *Statecraft* where she advocates that the time has come for Britain to walk away from the EU. Mrs Thatcher’s arguments were, that Britain should have no part in this drive to political union. Our interests lie with America. We pay heavily to support the inefficient CAP, and our fish stocks have been plundered. She advocates giving notice that Britain wants to renegotiate, to leave the CAP scheme, to repossess her fishing grounds and link with America via NAFTA. The rest of Europe would protest, but Britain holds strong cards. The others export more to us, than Britain exports to them, so they will not want to upset that market.

That such an unnecessary and irrational project as building a European superstate was ever embarked upon will seem in future years to be perhaps the greatest folly of the modern era. And that Britain, with her traditional strengths and global destiny, should ever have been part of it will appear a political error of historic magnitude. There is, though, still time to choose a different, and a better, course. *Statecraft*

To mark the 30 years since Britain joined the EEC, the *Daily Telegraph* 1-1-03 carried a critical review, parts of which we quote:

Most people, if pushed for an opinion, see Britain’s membership of the EU as a trade-off between politics and economics. They tend to dislike the loss of sovereignty, but believe that it must be set against a gain in prosperity. Thirty years to the day since we became members, it is useful to assess whether this impression is justified.

There have been three recent cost-benefit analyses of EU membership. Two of them—by the Institute of Directors and the Institute of Economic Affairs—concluded that Britain would be better off outside. The third, by the US Senate, considered the consequences of Britain joining Nafta, either by leaving the EU or by negotiating some form of



dispensation. It found that the economic impact would be slight either way.

Perhaps more surprising is that the Treasury, too, has traditionally come down against membership. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, a series of Treasury papers argued that the loss of developing markets, the inflationary consequences of higher food prices and the increased regulation of our economy would outweigh the advantage of preferential import penetration into the Continent.

Our argument is not that leaving the EU would make everyone richer. The economic consequences of withdrawal, although on balance positive, are likely to be marginal. What is absurd, though, is for ministers to answer any criticism of closer integration by claiming Britain has no future outside the EU. Swiss, Icelandic and Norwegian citizens all enjoy far higher standards of living than their EU counterparts.

Over the past 30 years, Britain has run an average trade deficit with the other member states of £30 million *per day*. We have the muscle, should we choose to exercise it, to negotiate a looser and more congenial relationship with the other members. By insisting that the only choice is between full integration, euro and all, and outright secession, the Government risks pushing the country inescapably towards secession.

### **Britain's economy**

Britain has suffered from the general turndown in her traditional markets: US, Asia and Germany. However year-end figures published by the *Economist* show the British economy, measured in GDP to be 4<sup>th</sup> in the world—the US has a big lead, then Japan, Germany, followed by Britain. If taken on GDP per head then Britain is 3<sup>rd</sup> to the US and Japan. Outside the euro zone, Britain has been able to adjust her Bank Rate to suit her needs. Britain continues to be the biggest overseas investor in the world—the latest figures available show over a trillion dollars invested overseas.

### **Defence**

Britain is second only to America for troop deployments abroad. She endeavours to keep the peace in many parts of the world. The Chancellor increased the defence budget by the biggest amount for 20 years. While Germany is cutting her defence spending, Britain was following America's lead. Two huge aircraft carriers have been ordered each costing \$1.5bn together with aircraft to go on them in a £13bn deal. However, these are not expected to be ready before 2012!

### **Chapter summary**

We can remain firm to our understanding that, at the time of the end, Britain will be found—not with Europe—but with *the young lions*, carrying out a work with the Lord Jesus, not in opposition to him.

## Chapter 13:

# THE VATICAN AND EUROPE

*As we saw in chapter 2, in the final picture of the Beast system it is ridden by the Harlot Woman, who is linked to Babylon. The consistent exposition of the book of Revelation shows that this is a representation of the Roman Catholic Church. Just as in former manifestations of the Beast, she has had an influential hand; church and state exercised their rule for many centuries throughout the Dark Ages of Europe. Although the papacy lost its power in the 1800's, as described by the outpouring of the vials in Rev. 16, we have witnessed her steadily growing power over the past 120 years.*

*Respect for the church is at its highest level, in spite of the scandals that continue to rock her. Centuries of honing media "spin" to overcome her problems has ensured that the rulers of the world still beat a path to Rome to pay their respects to the Pope. We look at some of the interesting developments during the year.*

## Putting Christianity at the heart of Europe

"We cannot simply conceive of Europe as a market of economic exchanges or a place for the free circulation of ideas but, above all, it must be a genuine community of nations, which want to unite their future and live like brothers, respecting the cultures and spiritual traditions, which cannot be on the margin of the common project or in opposition to it". *Pope Jn Paul II* 2000

These remarks about the EU were addressed in a letter to Cardinal Miloslav Vlk, Archbishop of Prague who was president of the Council of European Episcopal Conferences. The Pope has been pressing for Europe to recognise its spiritual roots. Under the headline **Pope challenges EU over text**, the *Catholic Herald* 5-7-02, declared:

The new Constitution of the European Union must recognise the Christian heritage of Europe, the Pope has said.

"In the process towards a new institutional organisation, Europe will not be able to ignore its Christian patrimony," John Paul II said in a message to a congress on the European Constitution in Rome. "It is necessary to be inspired by creative fidelity in those Christian roots that have marked European history. This is demanded by historical memory and, especially, by Europe's mission which is still today called to be a teacher of true progress, and to promote globalisation in solidarity."

A senior Italian politician, who accused the EU of marginalizing Christianity, echoed the Pope's comments later. Marcelo Pera, president of the Italian Senate, said:

“I think that, contrary to what has happened up until now, in the European Union we should be aware, conscious and proud of Europe’s Christian roots, which are not the only ones, but are absolutely important.”

As part of the wider consultation on the new constitution of Europe, the secretariat of the Commission of the Bishop’s Conferences of the European Community (COMECE) submitted a paper to the drafting committee. They stressed that “European integration is more than just an economic and political option, it is a synonym for sustainable peace—both inner peace resulting from new forms of social and political cooperation and an external peace through the EU’s contribution to global development and resolving conflict”. It asks for the inclusion of “an invocation of God” thus “facilitating citizens’ identification with the values of the European Union, acknowledge that public power is not absolute, and guarantee the freedom of the human person”. Its concluding paragraph read:

The Catholic Church has accompanied and supported the process of European integration since its inception, for the purpose of the European Union is first and foremost to serve the common good of all in order to guarantee justice and harmony” (Pope John Paul II in a speech to a group of European parliamentarians, 10 November 1983). The values and principles that have guided the integration process, such as human dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity, are recognised and promoted by the social teaching of the Church. *L’Osservatore Romano* 28-8-02

The Pope held a meeting with the former French president Valéry Giscard d’Estaing who is overseeing the writing of the constitution, and also the Belgian ambassador to the Vatican, during October to “reiterate his view that a united Europe had a responsibility to recognise its Christian roots.”

The Pope told the new Belgian ambassador to the Holy See, Benoit Cardon de Lichtbuer, that the new Europe must be founded on common values and Christian roots.

“The decisive role of Christianity and of the Christian vision of man to the history and culture of different countries is part of a common treasure and therefore, it appears logical that it be written into the project of the European Convention,” the Pope said. *Catholic Herald* 8-11-02.

The Bishop of Middlesbrough in celebration of “Europe Day”, May 9<sup>th</sup>, called upon “Christians to take ‘as active and engaged role’ as possible in ‘the affairs of our Continent’”. He went on to say:

“The EU is increasingly playing a role on the world stage. As a formidable regional power, it acquires both commercial interests which it can pursue for good or ill, and the capacity to assist in conflict mediation well beyond its own borders. The Church itself, both local and universal, is well placed to keep our eyes on this broader picture.” *Catholic Herald* 10-5-02

## **Papal politics**

We have to remember that the Roman Catholic Church acts both in a religious and a political role. She claims the “souls” of some 1 billion followers. She also, as the Holy See, rules the tiny piece of territory left to her as a sovereign ruler. Her ambassadors can be found in over 170 countries.

As Guy Emery Shipler states very well in his commentaries on the politics of the Vatican in the world:

“No political event or circumstances can be evaluated without the knowledge of the Vatican’s part in it. And no significant world political situation exists in which the Vatican does not play an important implicit-explicit part.”

## **Pope being used to urge Eastern Europe to join up**

The Pope was called upon to assist in the encouragement of the East European states to persist in their pursuit of membership of the EU. Many are apprehensive as they consider the tough terms under which they are to be admitted. Poland was a case where the Polish government is keen to join, but enthusiasm amongst the Poles is waning. So the government is turning to the Roman Church for help.

The prime minister, Leszek Miller, was a member of Poland’s last communist Politburo, and is instinctively anti-clerical. But he has studiously avoided criticising the church, has asked senior churchmen to sit on EU-related committees, and has secretly promised not to touch the question of abortion or any social issue vexing for the church until after next year’s referendum on membership. In return, he hopes the church can win over to Brussels those voters, maybe 30% of the total, who follow its advice in matters of ethics.

Will it work? Pope John Paul is certainly game: Poland’s agnostic president, Aleksander Kwasniewski, confirmed as much at a recent audience with his countryman in the Vatican. A majority of Poland’s 120 bishops now favour joining the EU, albeit with reservations on abortion and concern for Polish farmers, prominent among their flock. Cardinal Jozef Glemp, the country’s top churchman, calls EU membership a “historical necessity”. Yet many of the flock are Eurosceptics.

The pope, for his part, thinks it’s Poland’s duty to restore Christian values in Western Europe. Perhaps it is doing so already; Polish seminaries are full, and the average age of Polish priests is 45, and 65 for priests inside the EU. Already a thousand priests prop up the church in Germany and many more are sure to follow. *The Economist* 26-3-02

The government was disappointed that the Pope avoided reference to the matter during his visit.

In the end, the government got what it wanted. As he was boarding the jet back to Rome, the pope expressed the hope that the Polish nation would “find its due place in the structures of the European Union, and will not lose its identity but enrich the continent”. Joining the EU, he said, would be a “positive aspiration” and a “courageous undertaking”. *The Economist* 24-8-02

### **Pope calls for EU expansion**

Pope John Paul II has appealed to European Union leaders to welcome former communist countries into the EU.

The Pope said he was praying for the leaders as they met on December 12-13 to discuss the timetable for the accession of new countries to the EU.

“I would like to invite you now to support with prayer the political leaders who will meet in Copenhagen in the coming days,” he told pilgrims gathered in St Peter’s Square on Sunday.

The Pontiff said that if the new countries were admitted Europe would “be enriched with the contribution of the cultural and religious traditions of nations that, throughout the centuries, have left a precious common legacy of civilisation”.

“May God enlighten all Europeans so that they will unite and also offer confidence and hope to other nations,” the Pope added. *Catholic Herald* 13-12-02

According to the *European Digest* 12-12-02, *Le Monde* was more blunt:

The Commission of Bishops’ Conferences of the European Union published a declaration designed to—in *Le Monde*’s words—“break the last resistance of Catholics in certain candidate countries like Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Malta.” The text says that enlargement is a “historic opportunity”...bishops should confront the scepticism towards the EU which is common in rural, conservative and Catholic areas.

### **Slovakia—now and then**

The Pope addressed the President of the Slovak Republic, Rudolf Schuster, in October on the occasion of his visit to the Pope.

With their robust Christian identity, the Slovak People look confidently to Europe, to which Slovakia belongs by geographical location, history and culture. I am certain that the upcoming entry of your country into the European Union, besides the benefit it will bring to you, will contribute to the well-being and stability of the entire continent. Ten years after Independence, it is only right to point out the long journey travelled and the goals achieved, despite the complex problems that in this period had to be faced. *L'Osservatore Romano* 6-11-02

It is perhaps timely to recall that Hitler set up the Slovak Republic in 1939, overthrowing the existing government, which was strongly opposed to his dictatorship.

On 14<sup>th</sup> March 1939, Hitler created the so-called republic of Slovakia. Mgr.<sup>1</sup> Tiso, whose dream it was to combine Catholicism with Nazism, was placed at its head.

“Catholicism and nazism”, declared Mgr. Tiso, “have much in common, and they work hand in hand to reform the world”.

The period of the Tiso regime, in Slovakia, was particularly distressing for the country's Protestant Church, which comprises only one-fifth of the population. Mgr. Tiso was seeing to reduce the Protestant influence to a minimum and even eliminate it...influential members of the Protestant Church were sent to concentration camps.

The prelate-dictator attacked not only Protestants. He earned another glorious title; that of being the first to deport the Jews.

The ‘impartial’ Vatican behaved towards Mgr. Tiso in a manner which corresponds to its political tendencies. In June 1940, Radio Vatican announced: “The declaration of Mgr. Tiso, chief of the Slovak State, asserting his intention to set up Slovakia according to a Christian plan, is greatly appreciated by the Holy See”.

In 1941 at Auschwitz, the first contingent of Jews arrived from Slovakia and High Silesia and those who were not capable of working were immediately sent to the gas chamber in one of the rooms of the building which housed the crematorial ovens. *The Vatican Against Europe* Edmond Paris.

At the Prague Tribunal in 1946, this Roman Catholic prelate, Mgr. Tiso, was hanged for his crimes.

The Vatican and Hitler's attempts at a united Europe through war, failed. Since then, through peace the Vatican is realising its dreams.

### **“Italy be proud of your Christian Roots”**

The Pope made history in November by visiting the Italian Parliament. The lower house meets in what were, before 1870, the Vatican's administrative offices.

For the first time, the Pope has addressed the Italian Parliament. Some 800 assembled members of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate, President Carlo Ciampi and Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi gave the Pope a 10-minute standing ovation as he entered and walked unaided, leaning on a cane, to a white throne on the speaker's dais. The Pope

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<sup>1</sup> Monsignor – from French “My Lord”. This title of honour is accorded to all archbishops and bishops. *The Church Visible*

urged the State to work to overcome “poverty, deprivation and marginalisation”—whether the victims were native-born Italians or newcomers from Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

“The genuinely human nature of society is shown especially in the attention which it is able to show towards its weakest members”, the Pope said in his address on 14 November.

Good, frog-like words! (Rev 16:13) He also appealed for Italian help in re-introducing religion into the heart of Europe. The *L'Osservatore Romano* 20-11-02, put this part of the speech to parliament under the heading **Europe and Christian patrimony**

A self-confident and internally cohesive Italy can be a great enrichment for the other nations of Europe and the world. I wish to share this conviction with you at this time, when *the institutional shape of the European Union* is being defined and its expansion to include many countries of Central and Eastern Europe appears imminent, as it were sealing the end of an unnatural division. It is my hope that, thanks also to Italy's support, the new foundations of the European “common house” will not lack the “cement” of that extraordinary religious, cultural and civil patrimony which has given Europe its greatness down the centuries.

There is a need to guard against a vision of the Continent which would only take into account its economic and political aspects, or which would uncritically yield to lifestyles inspired by a consumerism indifferent to spiritual values. If lasting stability is to be given to the new unity of Europe, there must be a commitment to ensuring that it is supported on those ethical foundations which were once its basis, while at the same time making room for the richness and diversity of the cultures and traditions which characterize individual nations. In this noble Assembly I would like to renew the appeal which in recent years I have made to the various peoples of the Continent: “*Europe, at the beginning of the new millennium, open once again your doors to Christ!*”

The Pope has taken every opportunity to urge visiting ambassadors and leaders from countries in the EU or aspiring to join, to use their efforts to promote the role of the Church within Europe. In my files are a dozen such accounts from the *L'Osservatore Romano*. We have seen the call to the Slovaks. This is what he had to say to the French Ambassador:

On this solemn occasion, there are many subjects I would like to discuss, given the centuries-old history of relations between France and the Holy See and the new prospects that open before us for the future. I would be happy today to emphasize that France, which from now on you will be representing, has played an essential role in the creation of the European Community and in the gradual unification of the continent, which has recently been symbolized by the adoption of a single currency by 12

countries. As you know, the Holy See is delighted with the creation of this European space which many countries are eager to join and which has favoured the emergence of new living conditions. They should allow a better social development and improve each country's wealth. In this way it will also contribute significantly to fostering peace and understanding among peoples throughout the continent.

Because of its history and specific situation, France is called to play a forceful role in the construction of the European identity and in Europe's enlargement, to make shine out across the world the ideals of "fraternité, égalité et liberté" (brotherhood, equality and freedom), to which your fellow citizens are also legitimately attached... At the beginning of the work of the commission mandated to reflect on the appropriateness of a Constitution for the Union, it seems fundamental that the aims of the construction of Europe and the values that must support it should be made more explicit. How can I fail to mention the crucial contribution of the values of Christianity, which has contributed and still contributes to shaping the culture and humanism of which Europe is legitimately proud and without which it is impossible to understand its deepest identity?  
*L'Osservatore Romano* 3-7-02

Interestingly the Russian Orthodox Church also submitted a long paper to the European Convention, following its request for contributions, asking that the EU recognise the part that the "church" plays and has played, in its history. The eastward expansion will take in more Orthodox believers.

### **Papal visits**

2002 saw three papal visits. In May he made his 96<sup>th</sup> trip, visiting first Azerbaijan and then on to Bulgaria. Both these countries were under Soviet control. Azerbaijan is a nominally Muslim country, with only a tiny handful—120—of Catholics out of a population of 7 to 8 million. Why did he come here? He has promoted ties to Moslem countries for many years, and he has visited several Moslem countries recently in a quest to encourage those ties. Remember the Moslems hold **Mary** in high regard—a common bond between them. His visit to Bulgaria was part of his drive to bring unity with the Russian Orthodox Church. Bulgaria has fewer than 60,000 Catholics, but is considered the cradle of Slavic Christianity. It was from here that "Saints" Cyril and Methodius—now "patron saints of Europe"—departed on their mission to convert Eastern Europe to Christianity. They translated the Bible into the Slavonic language. He cleared the Bulgarian government of any involvement in the assassination plot that nearly killed him in 1981. Bulgaria is scheduled to join the EU in 2007. He wishes to see, in a favourite phrase of his, "Europe breathing with its two lungs". He is striving to reunite Eastern Europe with the West "on the basis of shared Christian values".

He dreams of visiting Moscow, with his recent travels on the fringes of Russian sphere of influence—Ukraine, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and now



Azerbaijan and Bulgaria—marking stages along the way. *The Times* 25-5-02

In May he was off on a long trip to Canada, Guatemala and Mexico. Here he was among friends—the latter two are catholic countries, and Canada claims around 46% of the population as Roman Catholic.

His last trip of the year was to Poland, his ninth pilgrimage to his homeland.

### **Saints & mammon**

One of the objects of this visit was to dedicate a new shrine to “Sister Sanncja Szymkowiak”, a nun who helped prisoners during WWII. She claims to have been told by Christ: “Secretary of my most profound mystery, know that your task is to write down everything that I make known to you about my mercy...” These writings were banned by the Vatican. She also painted a picture of Christ, which she claimed was done under his guidance. She died in 1942. It was the smuggling of a copy of this picture to the States that gave rise to “Divine Mercy Shrine” in Massachusetts. Shortly before becoming Pope, he had her diaries retranslated to make them acceptable, but they were still suppressed. Upon, unexpectedly, becoming Pope, and following the fall of communism in Poland, he started the long process of making her a saint. The diaries were again re-written to make them acceptable, and the cult of the Divine Mercy began to take off. This trip to Poland was to “beautify” her and 3 other Poles—this is the final step before “sainthood”. A £13m shrine has been built to her and it is hoped that it will be a substantial tourist attraction in this poor country. The Pope’s promotion of Fatima helped to put Portugal on the map and the elevation of Padre Pio earlier this year is bringing in the crowds to the impoverished south of Italy. The new underground Marian shrine in Rome is also bringing in the tourists and their sought after cash.

John Paul is no stranger to controversy. He has pushed through in record time the making of the founder of Opus Dei (God’s Work) a “saint”, only 27 years after his death. This feared, reviled and controversial organisation claims a membership double that of the Jesuits, and wields tremendous power. Previous Popes distanced themselves from it, but this Pope embraced it in preference to the Jesuits. He granted them the status of “personal prelate” in 1982, this meant that its members were responsible to the organisation, rather than to their local bishop. According to *The Economist* 12-10-02:

Via beatification in 1992, it has taken the new saint only 21 years, and a couple of miracles, duly found, to reach sainthood. And a little money. Opus Dei does not overflow with news about its members—another causes for criticism—but it admits it spent €480,000 getting its founder there.

It has immense wealth—its 17 storey headquarters in Manhattan was estimated to have cost \$43m and its annual income is estimated at around £120m. It was members of the Opus Dei who were involved in the negotiations during the siege at Bethlehem—see chapter 3. It is alleged to have extreme right wing and pro-Nazi connections in Europe.

Pedro Pio's road to sainthood has been rocky, but the newly made "saint" is bringing great wealth to his hometown.

Tucked beneath a pine forest 40 km from the Adriatic coast, all of San Giovanni Rotondo (pop. 26,000) is a shrine to Pio. A 15-by-12-m silkscreen hanging from the basilica dominates the town, but his image can also be found on statues of all sizes, refrigerator magnets, key chains and cigarette lighters—Elvis Presley's Graceland meets Bethlehem.

Gino Cipriano, who worked for years as a waiter, now owns the brand-new Vifia San Pietro hotel, one of 71 hostels opened since 1999, tripling the accommodation for the 7 million pilgrims who flock here every year. These and other followers are funding the town's 5,100-sq-m church, designed by renowned architect Renzo Piano, which is nearly completed.

The pilgrims go straight to the source—touching, stroking, hugging Pio's statues, the glass cases containing his robe and sandals, and anything else they think might pass along his powers. One elderly man spent five minutes feverishly rubbing various just-purchased Pio trinkets on the hand wounds of one of the monk's many statues. It's what the Church calls "popular piety," rising from local beliefs—and sometimes bordering on superstition—rather than being handed down through liturgical dictates from Rome.

Revelation ch. 18 describes "Babylon the Great" in terms of a system which had great riches, making money from many things including "the bodies and souls of men". This Pope has created 468 "saints" and 976 "blesseds". Behind it all lies money and power. Yet the nations have drunk of her cup and fail to see what lies behind these "mysteries".

### **Relations with Greek Orthodox**

Since the Pope's encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* in 1995, which has been described as "the boldest papal offer" to Orthodoxy and Protestantism, there has been a considerable rapprochement between Rome and Constantinople. This year was seen as a breakthrough in relationships with the declaration by Bartholomew I of Constantinople that he wanted closer relationships between them.

"Europe is becoming united and this will bring [us] closer together". He added that he hoped to end centuries of animosity since the Great Schism of 1054. *Catholic Herald* 21-6-02

The Vatican spokesman responded, “the news is positive: two sister churches wish to arrive at full unity”.

We would expect that the rift will be healed, and the Pope to be recognised as their head.

### Relations with Russian Orthodox

These have been very strained this year. It did appear that talks were opening up a dialogue, but Rome’s decision in February to create four new dioceses in Russia, created a wave of opposition to what was seen as Rome’s crude methods of proselytising in this Orthodox heartland. Alexis II blocked plans for the Pope to visit Moscow. Several Roman Catholic priests were expelled or prevented from re-entering Russia.

However at the end of the year in what was hailed as ‘a breakthrough’, the Russian Patriarch Alexis II sent a Christmas message to the Pope. He included a call “to renew our brotherly fellowship”. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Moscow said:

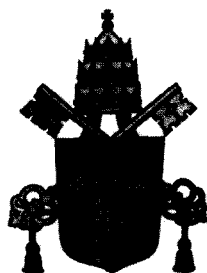
For the first time during my 11 years in my position here in Moscow, the Patriarch Alexiy II said it was time to restore relations between us and for the first time, at this time of the year, that he would pray for the Pope”. *The Times* 27-12-02

Again we would expect in the final conflict that Christendom, east and west, will be united, perhaps with two eyes, but speaking with one mouth in the head of gold that directs the acts of the nations forming Nebuchadnezzar’s image in the latter days. Dan 2:32; 7:8,20,25

### Mary—mother of the church

Sales of Rosary beads are expected to increase worldwide after a papal declaration last week of five new mysteries of the rosary.

The Holy Father marked the 25<sup>th</sup> year of his pontificate with the publication of an apostolic letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* (The Rosary of the Virgin Mary)... The pope has proclaimed a year of the Rosary until October 2003. *Catholic Herald* 25-10-02



The present pope is a great promoter of the worship of Mary. He added the letter M to the papal herald to signify his devotion. He attributes his escape from the assassination attempt in 1981 to her intervention, and seeks out Marian shrines to worship at in the countries he visits. The Rosary is dedicated to her—the 15 sets of its 10 “Hail Mary’s” are described by the Pope “as the most substantial element in the Rosary and also the one

that makes it a Marian prayer *par excellence*. To further show his devotion to her he has adopted the motto *Totvs Tvvs* “all yours”. As the picture shows, she is the “mother of the ecclesia”. Because she is the mother of



Jesus, who is “God”, she becomes the “Mother of God”. As mother of God she becomes the “mother of the Church”. The one to whom the faithful are directed to pray to rather than Christ, because she will intercede on their behalf.

“Show yourself our mother/ He [Jesus] will hear your pleading/ whom your womb has sheltered/ and whose hand brings healing.”  
*Hymn Ave Maris Stella.*

Interestingly the new C. of E. Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, is an avid devotee of Mary. He has written a book *Ponder these things: Praying with the Icons of Mary*. He is a frequent visitor to Downside Abbey and is said to have seriously considered joining the Benedictines. With the Queen allowing the R. C. Archbishop of Westminster to preach at the morning service at Sandringham in Jan 2002, the Church of England is truly showing herself as one of the daughters of the “mother” church.

### **Mary Co-redeemer**

For the third year running there has been organised a weeklong symposium on Marian Co-redemption. This one had the main heading *Maria Mater Unitatis*—Mary Mother of us all. Its main purpose was to discuss that Mary should be regarded officially with the work that she is unofficially attributed with, that of being a co-redeemer with Christ. A blasphemous doctrine, which totally misunderstands God’s work of redemption. But this is the Harlot system, and a very attractive doctrine it makes, especially to the mothers, over whom the church tends to have a stronger hold. The Pope supports the concept, but is not yet ready to openly promote it.

### **Chapter summary**

Enlightened by the understanding that Jesus’ words give us in the book of Revelation, our eyes are opened to the real truth about the Catholic Church. The Pope’s challenges to the politicians we know will bear fruit. The situation is moving steadily to that situation when the *harlot Woman sits on the Beast!* Carried by it but in control of it. History teaches us that when this happens, religious freedom rapidly evaporates. May we be called away to the judgment Seat before this becomes a reality. Truly our Master is at the door—let us watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation.

## Chapter 14:

# AN EXHORTATION

*We bring our Milestones 2002 review to a close by reproducing the exhortation that my father wrote to close the first edition of Milestones at the end of 1977, 25 years ago!*

## Exhortation

Jacob declared in his last words: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." (Gen. 49:18). David said of the covenant promises concerning the reign of Messiah: "This is all my salvation and all my desire." (2 Sam. 23:5). Isaiah cried, after seeing Messiah's glory in vision: "Lord how long?" (Isaiah 6:11). Daniel waiting for the restoration of Judah to their land, set his face unto the Lord God—"to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes." (Daniel 9:3). Habakkuk opened his prophecy with the words: "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and Thou wilt not hear! even cry unto Thee of violence, and Thou wilt not save!" and he concludes his prophecy with the words of faith, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines... Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." John in exile in Patmos for the testimony of Jesus Christ, after seeing the visions of what must take place before the day of the Kingdom, responds to the Master's "Surely I come quickly" with the cry, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." In these phrases from the great men of God, we have the spirit of all Zion's watchmen who figuratively stand on the walls of Jerusalem. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day or night ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." (Isa. 62:6,7).

## Indifferent?

Are we so engrossed in the business of this life—the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches—that we have become indifferent to the many signs the Master has given us of the nearness of his return? Not for us the "seeing afar off" and embracing by faith? We are privileged to live on the threshold of the mighty events by which "the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ." The Master's exhortation to his disciples may be applied to us: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping," Mark 13:35,36.

— G. Pearce

# Milestones 2002

**2002** saw actions on many fronts. Following the events of Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, America, Britain and Australia, completed the war in Afghanistan and turned their attention to the Middle East, and to Saddam Hussein in particular. Mr Bush and Mr Blair have a vision of peace in the Middle East, enabling Israel to live prosperously with her neighbours. They believe that this necessitates the removal of Saddam. In their drive against Iraq, America and Britain are positioning their forces in the territory of Sheba and Dedan! Meanwhile Israel has suffered her worst year at the hands of the terrorist bombers.

At the year-end came news that Russia's move to bringing back the Tsar is taking a step closer!

***Milestones 2002*** brings together these many strands and builds a powerful picture of Bible prophecies coming together at the time of the return of the Master and heralding a time of even greater trouble for Israel and the whole world.

***Milestones 2002 examines:***

- **Several time-of-the-end prophecies**
- **Events in Israel, the Middle East, Europe and Russia**
- **Can Israel dwell at peace before the Gogian invasion?**
- **Britain's growing isolation in Europe**
- **The Vatican's drive for Europe to recognise its roots**

We witnessed Europe moving towards political union at an amazing speed. The dramatic dawn of the euro rising out of the European "Sea" brought that goal much closer.

