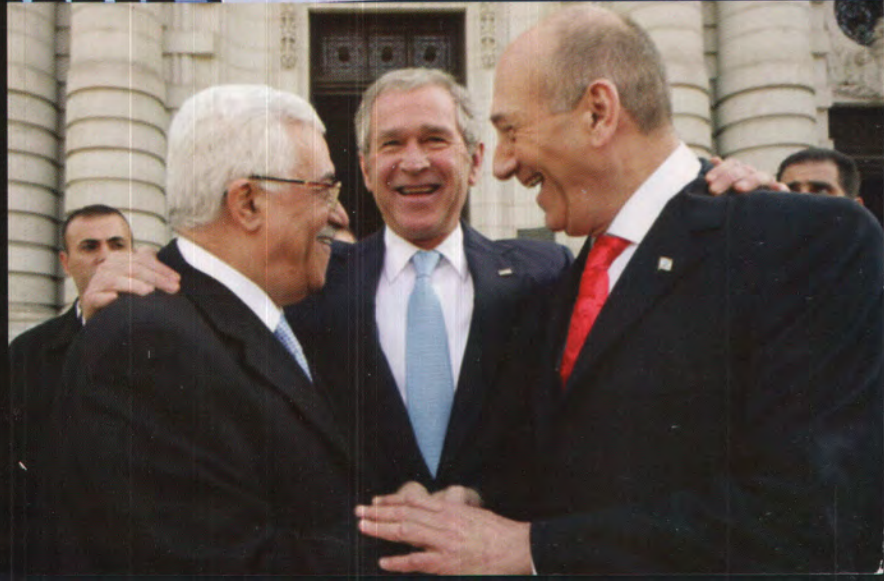
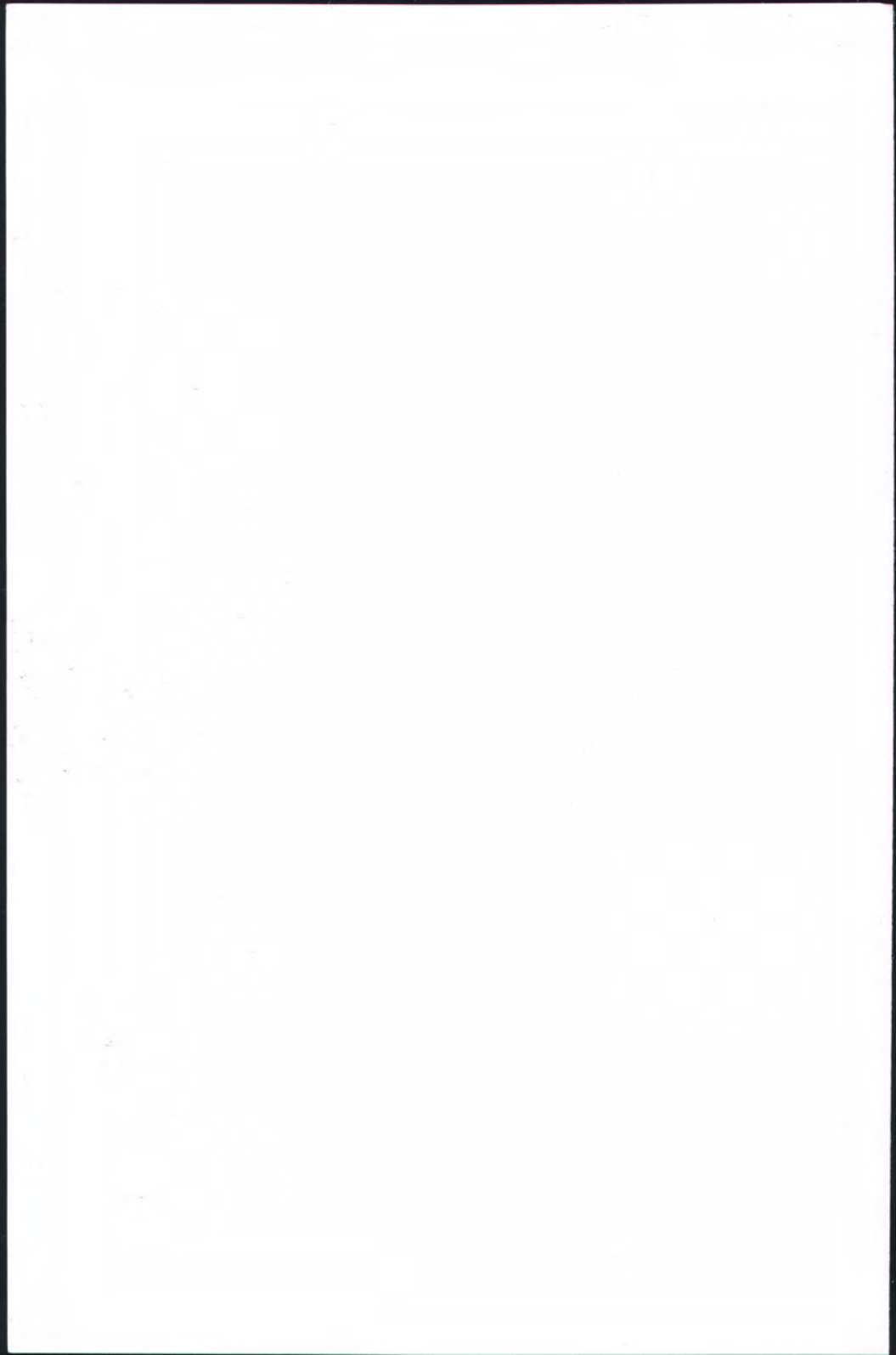


# MILESTONES 2007

Don  
Pearce





# **MILESTONES TO THE KINGDOM**

***A Review of the  
World Events of  
2007 in the Light  
of Bible Prophecy***

**Don Pearce**

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JANUARY 2008



## Preface

From the announcement of the Balfour Declaration in November 1917 till the Mandate of Palestine was finally give to Britain in July 1922 the most vehement opponent to the new proposal was the papal leader Benedict the 15<sup>th</sup>. His weakness was that he had no state: the Vatican City was given to him by Mussolini in 1929. So officially he had no voice among the League of Nations who was meeting to resolve the issue. Yet by every religious or political contrivance he could muster Pope Benedict the 15<sup>th</sup> sought to confound the meaning and intent of the Balfour Declaration. That Jews should have a national home in the Holy Land was repugnant to the Papacy. That Jews, unbelieving Jews, should have municipal influence over Jerusalem was utterly unthinkable. When Christian Britain first wrestled the Holy Land from the Muslim infidels there was great applause in Rome as in every other Christian country. But that there be a national home for Jews in the land given to Abraham, this was abhorrent to the Bishop of Rome. He argued that the Holy Places belonged to the jurisdiction of the Church, that the city of Jerusalem should be internationalised, under the control of a consortium of Christian countries, where the Church would have a presiding influence. It was as if he had never read the promises made to Abraham and David and had no knowledge that God was to restore Land and City to the natural seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!

Well, in Annapolis in the American state of Maryland in November 2007, some 48 nations were represented when the Prime Minister of Israel and the President of the Palestinian Authority, hosted by President George W Bush of the United States, sat down among this large assembly to consider the future of the Land and the City. Condoleezza Rice, the US Secretary of State had performed the impossible it seemed. There were representatives of all the nations friendly or especially related to Israel and Palestinian interests, all but Iran, that is! Mr Olmert and Mr Abbas made solemn comments on their sincere intention to reach agreement on a two-nation solution to overcome their differences, which affect so often the peace of the world. Russia was there, many Arab countries, representatives of every region of the world including the Vatican.

What are the **key issues**? - The ownership and division of the Holy Land and the city of Jerusalem. What a powerful persuasion upon little Israel, no larger than the smallest of America's 50 States and .11% of the world's population. In 1967 God "gave" them the whole of Palestine and the City of Jerusalem in the fabled Six Day War. Forty years later the world is forcing them to divide and distribute the Land and the City. There is only one country in the world that has a Divine title to their land and only one city of which the living God has declared rulership and ownership! Did not He swear to Abraham concerning the Land of Israel and did not He make covenant with David concerning Jerusalem? Did not He say "the Land is mine" and that Zion was "My Holy Hill"? (Lev 25:23; Psalms 2:6).

The arrogance of the nations is devoid of the covenants of God; and the other tragedy is that Israel has a prime minister who seems to have no savour for the special calling of his people.

What a blessed people we are to know the truths of God, for the true insight into the destiny of the Land and City and the people. In early Sunday School, in family daily readings our little ones grow up with the fundamentals of the gospel and know why Jesus came as the son of David and son of Abraham. Matt 1:1

Once again readers will be excited to see the greater detail of Yahweh's hand in our world. The resurgence of Putin's Russia is a great phenomenon—the 'hooks are in his jaws'! United Europe is making great strides forward. The Roman Bishop is more active than ever. The Orthodox Church is playing its role in further uniting European Christianity. Israel thrives economically despite a sea of militant Islam about it. The kings of north and south increasingly define themselves.

The United States is mesmerised by the plethora of untried light-weights who seek the presidency of this enormous country whilst its soldiers are bogged down in the morass of Iraq or the barren mountains of Afghanistan. Ahmadinejad maintains his policy to wipe Israel off the map and Russia helps it along with nuclear know-how! The developing nations demand the luxuries of the West, power gets more expensive and the air and seas of the world become increasingly defiled. "Men's hearts fail them for fear"!

And through it all we see the clear and reassuring Hand of God. All is as the prophets said it would be. God is there. Christ is near to come. The judgements of the Almighty are on the horizon.

Faith will be rewarded. So let us lift up our heads, work with joy and enthusiasm in our ecclesias throughout the world, preach the Word, mind the weak and lowly and secure the life of our families with our daily reading from the Word of life. May God help us in these things.

Again, we thank brother Don Pearce for an excellent review of the year that has passed.

Brian Luke

Secretary

January 2008



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#### Abbreviations used

EU European Union. Was the EEC, then EC, now EU

m = million; bn = billion; GDP = Gross Domestic Product

\$1= £0.51; €0.68; AS\$1.13; CA\$0.99; NZ\$1.29 at 4-1-08 rates.

\$1 million = £510,000, \$1 billion = £510,000,000 approx. \$ always US\$.

#### Author's notes

I would like to especially thank my family and Bre. Kevin Allison, Alan Clarke and the CSSS for their helpful comments on the draft. It is all put together in the last few weeks of the year, so please bear with its imperfections! *Milestones* quotes extensively from overseas sources, and as **I retain original spellings, etc., check whether it is a quote before blaming the proofreaders!** [ ] shows my comments.

Conventional religious terminology is used, sometimes 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. Dates are always day-month-year and are cover dates, so some items can have happened up to 10 days earlier.

I am very grateful for items sent in; ensure the date and source are indicated.

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## **Chapter 1:**

# **A BRIEF SYNOPSIS**

*2007—another incredible year!*

Who would have thought that we would see Israel sitting down with representatives of 44 nations, many being Arab States with no diplomatic links to Israel? Now this was but a first step on a process that may yet crumble into dust as so many previous attempts by America to solve the Israeli-Palestinian problems. Yet it indicates a trend. The prophets of God recorded that there should be a time of peace and prosperity prior to Israel's destruction by the Gogian armies. That state of affairs has seemed impossible—until now.

What is different? The Lebanon War of 2006 brought home to many of the Arab nations, Iran's aggressive stance. Iran is a non-Arab state—it shares the Moslem faith, but a different and more fiery brand. If well-armed Israel, with American backing, struggled against Iran's proxy Hezbollah army, what hope had they? Also Hamas' dramatic 6-day war that swept Fatah out of Gaza, reinforced the perception of Iran's military reach.

With their thrones in danger they realised the importance of Israel's defensive presence as a bulwark against Iran's aggression. Nations in the region began thinking not so much of the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict that Israel had managed to live with for 60 years, but the wider context of a Middle East where Israel is a strategic partner. Like it or not, America is vital to their defence and as part of the package comes America's closest ally in the region—Israel.

Iran's aggressiveness succeeded in uniting Europe to sanctions against her. France's new president, Nicolas Sarkozy, led the way in rallying Europe against Iran; but then that was not quite what we are expecting! Iran is one of Gog's companions, working with Europe and Russia. True, but remember the pendulum of history swings back and forth, but at the right time all will be exactly in the position that the Lord God intended!

Then, dramatically, at the start of December, the American intelligence service stated that Iran had suspended her nuclear development in 2003. In effect Iran's claim to be on the threshold of making nuclear material was a bluff. This sent a puzzling signal to all parties. Israel is convinced that Iran is still perusing nuclear weapons. Germany, however, who was the biggest supplier to Iran was greatly relieved at the prospect of not having to lose valuable revenue after all!

Angela Merkel pushed through a Berlin Declaration to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome that had brought six nations together into what would over the years grow into the European Union. Then at the end of her 6-monthly spell as EU president she succeeded in getting all 27 EU leaders to sign up to the Reform Treaty, or as it is now called, the Lisbon Treaty. To the disappointment of the Pope neither document affirmed the role of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe's history.

All has not been lost however as buried in the Treaty is Article 16C! This gives full weight to any agreements that have already been drawn up between church and state. So although not in the preamble to the Treaty, the effective binding of the Roman Church to Europe is sufficiently anchored to have the humanists protesting. They speak in alarm at the increasingly powerful influence wielded by the churches over Europe!

It has been a tough year for Britain. Tony Blair finally quit, handing over to his successor, Gordon Brown, a poisoned chalice in the shape of an agreed Reform Treaty. Many and increasingly strident are the calls for Britain to hold a referendum on this deeply unpopular Reform Treaty. During his initial honeymoon he confidently handled crisis after crisis—floods, foot-and-mouth, bluetongue, more floods, only then to sink in a morass of sleaze allegations that touched many members of his party. The whiter than white Prime Minister looked rather “Brown” at the year-end!

Russia under Putin has been able to exploit her vast windfall from the rocketing energy prices. Under his firm grip this money has been channelled towards making Russia great again. He is determined to avoid being treated as the under-dog and is using his KGB honed skills to weave his troublesome footsteps across America's pathway as much as possible!

The economies of the world have been shaken by America's sub-prime debacle. Banks found they had been lending money against assets of diminishing value. The long-threatened credit crunch had now arrived with billions of pounds of assets being written off. America's refusal to prop up the dollar brought howls of rage from businesses around the world. Yet America, far from being down and out, was enjoying a boom in her economy as belt tightening reduced imports and a weak dollar boosted exports!

“Long live Bhutto”. With these words on her lips Benazir Bhutto was felled by an assassin's bullet, plunging Pakistan into chaos and bringing doubts as to the stability of the region as 2007 ended. How tenuous is life.

Quite a year, as hopefully we shall unfold through the pages of *Milestones 2007*. Many of these matters greatly encourage us as to the nearness of our Master's Return and spur us to a diligent, daily, attendance to our calling.



## Chapter 2:

# 2007—A YEAR OF MANY ANNIVERSARIES

*God's plan with this earth does have a Divine timetable—there is a set time to favour Zion.*

Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. *Psa. 102:13-16*

*2007 was the anniversary year for many important milestones to the time of the Master's return, and the restoration of Zion. Here are a few of them.*

## 1847—Bro Thomas' statement of faith

In March 1847 Bro Thomas was re-immersed, having come to the conclusion that when he had been immersed some years earlier he had known little about the true gospel. He set out his faith in a short publication entitled "*Confession and Abjuration*" [retraction]. He began his outline of his understanding of what the Holy Scriptures teaches with this declaration.

First, then, they reveal that **the gospel was preached to Abraham.**

This is proved by what follows: 'The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed.'—(Gal. 3:8) Referring to this incident, Jesus said to the Jews, 'Your father, Abraham, rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.'—(John 8:56)

Upon this we may remark, that all nations have never yet been blessed in Abraham; secondly, that when all nations shall be blessed in Abraham, Messiah's day will have been revealed; and thirdly, that these events, not having been accomplished, their fulfilment is yet a matter of hope; hence Abraham rejoiced in the prospect of the future age, then far off, but now near, because it was, doubtless, then revealed to him that he should sit with his descendant, the Messiah, in the kingdom of God (Luke 13:28); for Abraham, when called, went out into a country where the kingdom is to be set up; which country '*he should after receive for an inheritance*' 'he sojourned in (this) the land of promise, as in a strange or foreign country; for he looked for a city or state which hath foundation, whose builder and maker (or founder and constitutor) is God'—(Heb. 11:8-10) These passages are a few of the beacon lights which display the kind of truth preached to Abraham as the gospel. They shew that he looked for a state, or kingdom, divinely established and constituted under his descendant in the land promised to him and to his seed, when all nations should own his sovereignty. This he looked for as Messiah's age; he saw

it by the eye of that 'faith' which is 'the assured expectation of things hoped for; the conviction of things unseen;' and without which 'it is impossible to please God;' 'he saw it, and was glad.' This was the ancient gospel, preached to Abraham, which is still a matter of hope to all of Abraham's seed. *Dr Thomas: His Life and His Work*. p208

The following year saw him touring Britain and he was persuaded not to return immediately to America but stay and write down his understanding of the scriptures. In the book *Elpis Israel*, which was published in 1849, he set out the distinctive beliefs of those who later became known as the Christadelphians. The return of the Jews and the return of their Messiah to save them in their time of distress formed a key element to those beliefs.

### 1897—First Zionist Congress

Theodore Herzl convened the First Zionist Congress. This was held in Basle in Switzerland on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August. It gave tangible expression to the yearning amongst the Jewish people for a homeland. Over the portals of the casino that Herzl had hired was erected a large sign ZIONISTEN KONGRESS. At one side hung a flag that his friend Wolffson had designed: a white field with two blue stripes and the Star of David. Delegates came from many countries and the Congress was widely covered by the world's press. The galleries were packed with Jews and Gentiles watching the proceedings.



When Herzl arose to address the delegates, the hall erupted in a 15 min burst of applause. Then Herzl uttered his opening words. "We are here to lay the foundation stone of the house that is to shelter the Jewish nation."

The 3-day Congress resulted in the Basle programme.

"Zionism seeks to secure for the Jewish people a publicly recognised, legally secured home (or homeland) in Palestine for the Jewish people."

The Congress envisages the following methods:

1. The programmatic encouragement of the settlement of Palestine with Jewish agricultural workers, labourers and artisans
2. The unification and organization of all Jewry into local and general groups in accordance with the laws of their respective countries;
3. The strengthening of Jewish self-awareness and national consciousness



4. The preparation of activity for the obtaining of the consent of the various governments, necessary for the fulfilment of the aim of Zionism. *Theodore Herzl. A biography.* Alex Bein. p239.

On his return to Vienna, Herzl made the following entry in his diary:

"If I were to sum up the Basle Congress in a single phrase—which I would not dare to make public—I would say: In Basle I created the Jewish State. Were I to say this aloud I would be greeted by universal laughter. But perhaps five years hence, in any case, certainly fifty years hence, everyone will perceive it." *Ibid* p 243.

### 1917—British and allies take Jerusalem, Balfour declaration

With the British conquest of Palestine, helped greatly by her "young lions", 400 years of Ottoman rule came to an end. On 9<sup>th</sup> December 1917, General Allenby and his men walked through the Jaffa Gate of Jerusalem and established Britain's protecting arm over the region. Included in Allenby's army were three battalions of the Jewish Legion, comprising thousands of Jewish volunteers.



The taking of Jerusalem was a significant event in the return of the Jews. The 9<sup>th</sup> of December that year corresponded to the 24<sup>th</sup> of Chisleu—the 9<sup>th</sup> month. It was on this day of this month, millennia earlier, that God had declared His blessings upon the returned exiles because they had recommenced the work of building God's house. Hag 2:10-23. Among God's words was this promise

*I will shake the heavens and the earth; And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in*

Foreign Office,  
November 2nd, 1917.

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country".

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

*Arthur Balfour*

*them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother* Hag 2:21, 22

Some 2,400 years later “on this day” the Turkish power was given a grievous blow and to a large degree was “dried up”. (Rev 16:12)

A month earlier as Britain and her allies were rolling back the Turks, the British government set out the famous Balfour Declaration.

“His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country”.

### 1947—UN resolution for Jewish State

Herzl's words “But perhaps 5 years hence, in any case, certainly 50 years hence, everyone will perceive it”, came eerily true when Britain, having despaired of the struggle to reconcile the conflicting demands of the Jewish and Arab communities in Palestine, asked the UN General Assembly to sort the matter out.

A special committee was constituted to prepare proposals concerning the country's future. The Assembly voted (29<sup>th</sup> November 1947) to adopt the committee's recommendation for the establishment of two states in the area west of the Jordan River, one Jewish and the other one Arab. The Jewish community accepted the partition plan; the Arabs rejected it. *Facts about Israel*. Israel Information Center. p33 (1992 ed)

The year following when the British Mandate came to an end on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed.

### 1957—Treaty of Rome signed

50 years ago the Treaty of Rome was signed on March 25,





1957 by 6 nations to form the European Economic Community that was later to grow into the EU. The signatory countries were France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. These countries in 1951 had signed the Treaty of Paris to form the European Coal and Steel Community—the first reawakening of Europe after the devastation of WWII.

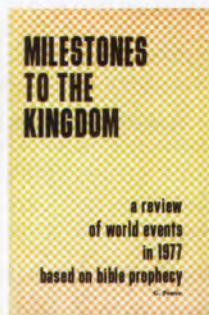
From a prophetic viewpoint it was the beginnings of the last phase of the Beast system that in earlier centuries had dominated Europe. We have watched how Europe has welded itself together in an increasingly political way, currently with 27 members. We shall examine in a later chapter how the harlot rider is preparing to ride this European Beast as depicted in Rev ch 17.

### **1967—Israelis take Jerusalem**

In this historic year, the Israeli army took control of Jerusalem as well as the whole of the land including Sinai, Gaza, the West Bank and the Golan. In six swift days the combined armies of Israel's neighbours had been routed and their air forces destroyed. For the first time Jews were able to pray at the Western Wall—the nearest accessible spot to the Temple site.

### **1977—First edition of Milestones**

I hesitate to put this in—it is not in the same category as the above, but never-the-less an important step for keeping our community aware of the hand of God in the affairs of men. The first issue of *Milestones* was published by Bro Graham Pearce, reviewing the year 1977. Year by year *Milestones* has logged the important events of the year, rounding up the world's news as it focuses upon the Divine plan.



### **1987—Hamis founded**

This was the year of the founding of Hamas, the Palestinian Sunni Muslim terrorist organisation devoted to the elimination of Israel. Now in control of the Gaza Strip, they daily bombard southern Israel with rockets and mortar shells. We will have more to say on this organisation in chapter 5.

### **2007—a busy year!**

This is a truly remarkable set of dates spanning 120 years from 1847 to 1967, and then another 40 years to our day. All progressive steps in God's preparatory work amongst the Jewish people to gather them to their land in anticipation of their Messiah's return and to prepare the stones from these last days for His living Temple, made without hands. The work of a people awaiting their Lord and Master has grown into a worldwide brotherhood. Despised in the world's eyes, but under the good hand of our God, waiting to serve our King when he is back, together with saints from earlier ages.

2007 has been a busy year, as the pages of this issue will show, revealing important progress towards the day we long for—the return of the Master. Angelic hands have been busy working to move God’s Plan forwards!

### **Walking in the light of life**

*Then spake Jesus... saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. John 8:12*

Recently when we were in Israel we witnessed the amazing light that oil lamps can radiate in a dark room. Not comparable to the light bulbs of today’s world, but within the house they gave light for everyday life. The 7-branched menorah in the tabernacle enabled the priests to minister in that lightless structure. How much more when we crush and bruise and cut the hard olive berries and through great pressure extract the golden oil, and light our lives with the precious and powerful light of God’s word. However bright man’s lights may shine—and they are nothing compared to God’s great light that shines each day—they will reveal not one wit of God’s unfolding purpose with this earth. The Holy word of life enables us to discern between right and wrong. It shows us God’s standards, it illuminates God’s path upon the nations.

It is God’s pleasure to speak to all generations though His servants the prophets. Within its many pages are contained innumerable prophetic utterances whose contents are “sure” or firm. (2 Pet 1:19) They are true and trustworthy; they provide us with firm grounds for conviction. This has been our wonderful heritage as sound expositions of the prophetic word have given confidence to our community. Into the darkness of the political heavens, the word of prophecy has shone, showing remarkable things to come, long before they have become visible to the world.

### **Our plan for Milestones 2007**

With 2007 being the anniversary of so many matters concerning Israel, this will be our main topic—we spend 3 chapters on **Israel** and a further one on the **Middle East** situation. Our second main topic this year is the development of the Papacy. It is the great enemy of the Truth and of God’s people. We trace the remarkable strides in Rome’s development. Again we spend 3 chapters on the **Roman Church** and a further two on **Europe** as she moves towards the latter-day Beast system of Revelation 17. Finally we look at **Russia then Britain and her young lions**; concluding as always with a short **exhortation**. The chapters have a mix of exposition of prophecies and the events of the year.

The point of our yearly review is not just that we can be acquainted with the many things that are happening around the world, which often do not appear in the daily newspapers or news programmes, but that we might be **prepared**. Our walk to the Kingdom is the most precious thing in our lives. We watch in order to be awake and alert when our Master comes.

*We start our first section by looking at some relevant prophecies on Israel.*



## Chapter 3:

# CHANGING ISRAEL'S HEART

*Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.*

*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*

*And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

*And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. Ezek 36:25-28*

## What a transformation!

In *Milestones 2006* we devoted the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter to looking at how Israel will be saved. This year we want to concentrate on a particular aspect of that work, namely the changing of Israel's heart.

It is sometimes difficult to grasp what a transformation lies ahead for the Jewish nation. The picture we have just quoted from Ezekiel is in marked contrast to Israel of the past and present! Let's trace how this transformation is achieved.

For millennia they have been scattered around the globe, facing uncertainty and often hatred. The Divine sentence upon them was: -

*And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:*

*And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:*

*In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. Deut 28:65-67*

## Israel's troubled past

Sir Martin Gilbert the great historian of Jewish matters bears testimony to the truth of this sentence when he records in the Preface to his *Atlas of Jewish History*

My original concern was to avoid undue emphasis upon the many horrific aspects of Jewish history. I wished to portray with equal force the construction, achievements and normalities of Jewish life through

almost four thousand years. In part I believe that I have succeeded; for there are many maps of traders, philosophers, financiers, settlers and sages. But as my research into Jewish history progressed, I was surprised, depressed, and to some extent overwhelmed by the perpetual and irrational violence which pursued the Jews in every century and to almost every corner of the globe. If, therefore, persecution, expulsion, torture, humiliation, and mass murder haunt these pages, it is because they also haunt the Jewish story.

This dislike of the Jews didn't end in the Holocaust. There is a growing level of anti-Semitism especially in Europe and Russia.

### **Shaping Israel's conscience**

2,500 years of being cast off has shaped the national conscience. It has made them determined to stand up for themselves against their enemies. Interestingly the event that triggered Herzl to become a Zionist was watching the trial of a fellow Jew who had been accused of betraying French secrets to the Germans. Herzl was a newspaper reporter at the trial.

The prisoner, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, was a French Officer. Although he was universally regarded as guilty, Herzl's close observation of him convinced him otherwise. At the end of a travesty of a trial he was condemned, stripped of his rank and deported for life. The crowds howled for his death and not only his but also his fellow Jews! *A mort! A mort les juifs!* (To death! To death the Jews!)

The ghastly spectacle of that winter morning must have shaken him to the depths of his being. It was as if the ground had been cut away from under his feet. In that sense Herzl could say later that the Dreyfus affair had made him a Zionist. *Theodore Herzl. A biography.* A. Bein. p116.

The dream of a homeland where they could defend themselves became a reality after WWI and in growing numbers Jews returned to Palestine as farmers, rebuilding the fertility of that long desolate land through much physical work. Some did go because of their love of the Scriptures. This was God's promised land and they awaited the Messiah, but the majority went in unbelief, just as Bro Thomas had seen from the Scriptures.

The pre-adventual colonization of Palestine will be on purely political principles; and the Jewish colonists will return in unbelief of the Messiahship of Jesus, and of the truth as it is in him. They will emigrate thither as agriculturists and traders, in the hope of ultimately establishing their commonwealth, but more immediately of getting rich in silver and gold by commerce with India, and in cattle and goods by their industry at home under the efficient protection of the British power. *Elpis Israel*

### **Israel's move from secularism**

Interestingly there been a decrease in the number of Israelis classing themselves as secular.



The percentage of Jews describing themselves as secular has dropped sharply over the past 30 years, while the religious and traditional proportions have risen. The annual survey finds that the secular public comprises only 20% of the Israeli population—compared to 41%, more than twice as much, in 1974.

47% of the population describes itself as traditional, while the Hareidi-religious and religious-Zionist together comprise 33% of the public.

39% of those under age 40 are religious - more than those in their 40's and 50's (32%), and much more than those aged 60 and over (20%).

It can be inferred that Israel is a traditional society, and that it will become even more so as the years go by. *A7 News 23-11-07*

However it is evident that Israel is a long way from being a nation that walks in the faith of their fathers and awaits their Messiah. There are some fervent Jews keenly waiting that time. We recently visited the Temple Institute in Jerusalem. At vast expense they are building instruments and clothing for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Temple. They have compiled data from many Jewish records and oral traditions to give them the blueprint—in their eyes—to be able to prepare many items ahead of the Temple rebuilding, based of course upon the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple plans rather than an understanding of the Temple as revealed through Ezekiel. Beautiful high priestly garments, including a breastplate have been made as well as musical instruments and instruments associated with sacrifices. They have just completed the High Priest's crown and are starting on crafting a laver. Over 60 temple vessels have already been constructed by their own craftsmen.

There was no sense of waiting until Messiah should appear and working under his direction. No, if they could gain control of the Temple Mount they would work towards rebuilding the Temple themselves. Their web site speaks of their founder's vision:

Based on his extensive Torah knowledge and wisdom, Rabbi Ariel clearly demonstrates in his writings, the belief and conviction, as emphasized by Torah scholars and luminaries of earlier generations, that every generation is obligated to do all within its power towards rebuilding the Holy Temple. This, as opposed to those who believe that we must wait for the messiah to arrive before it can be rebuilt.

One marvelled at their vision and dedication, even if misplaced.

There are others Jews in Israel who believe that Jesus is the Messiah and await his return.

According to various sources there are between 3000 and 5000 Messianic Jews in 85 congregations in Israel alone, but there are many more believers who do not belong to these fellowships, which some see as Hebrew speaking churches. Many of these believers are working out their messianic faith in small housegroups, feeling that the ideal would

be synagogues where Yeshua was recognized without sacrificing any Jewishness. Still more orthodox Jews find they are able to remain in their synagogues, whilst secretly believing in Yeshua. Some believe there are as many secret believers as there are open believers in Messianic fellowships. [www.wildolive.co.uk/messianic\\_history](http://www.wildolive.co.uk/messianic_history)

### **Like the removal of a veil**

Yet it is apparent that much more will be needed to bring about the change, likened by the apostle Paul to the removal of a veil.

*But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.*

*Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.*  
2 Cor 3:15,16

Moses removed his veil when in the tabernacle. (Ex 34:34) When a bride removes her veil, her face is seen in a moment. The figure of the removal of a veil is expressive of an action that is sudden. It points to a dramatic day when Israel's eyes will be opened as to whom their Messiah is. There was such a day in New Testament times when light dawned on a section of the Jewish people who just a few weeks earlier had been led by their leaders to cry out "*Away with him, crucify him.*" (Jn 19:15). A series of extraordinary events had followed—darkness at mid-day, a powerful earthquake and the story that must have swirled around the city that this man's body could not be found. The tomb was empty! And its military guard's stories had been unbelievable. And then Jerusalem was abuzz with stories that he had been seen alive and his followers were claiming that he was indeed the Messiah!

On that day of Pentecost the words of Peter and his fellow apostles fell like thunderbolts upon the consciences of those present. In the light of the earlier happenings they were mightily convinced of their guilt in rejecting their long hoped for Messiah. Their eyes had suddenly become unveiled and they cried out as their consciences were seared:

*Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins... Acts 2:37-38*

In Peter's day those Jews who lived in the land had been subjected to a 7-year period in which the teaching of John the Baptist was followed by the ministry of the Lord Jesus and of the 70 who had been sent out. Every part of Israel had heard the message. So the seed had been sown and the words of the apostles on the day of Pentecost were the final step that caused it to sprout in good and honest hearts.

### **Preparing for the Messiah**

It is reasonable to expect that there will be a similar time of preparation before the 2<sup>nd</sup> revelation of Israel's Messiah. Let's examine the scriptural evidence.



*Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. Mal 3:1*

We recognise that these words are quoted in the New Testament of the work of John the Baptist (Mat 11:10,11 etc) and indeed he did come as a messenger, a herald to prepare the people for the Lord's coming. But is this the only fulfilment of these words? An examination of Malachi's words makes it clear that he is speaking of even more dramatic events, events that had no fulfilment in Jesus' first ministry.

*But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:*

*And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.*

*Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. Mal 3:2-4*

Was the priesthood purified in John's day? Were their offerings pleasant to God? No! With some exceptions, the majority of the priests opposed the teachings of the apostles. Clearly this has yet to be fulfilled when once again *my messenger* is sent to prepare God's people. Malachi goes on to amplify this matter:

*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:*

*And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. Mal 4:5,6*

Here then is the one who shall be *the messenger* preparing the heart of Israel for meeting the Messiah. It is a two-way work. Israel has to be changed in order for the newly resurrected fathers to see in Israel children walking by faith. It needs a change in Israel's heart for them to recognise Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as their fathers.

Elijah will be sent to Israel to restore them back to their Jewish roots. The penultimate verse of Malachi reads: -

*Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Mal 4:4*

What appears to be an odd verse, points to the role in which Elijah is eminently suited. Elijah through the schools of the prophets was a great upholder of the Law and its teachings. He will bring them back to the statutes and judgements of the Law, back to their Mosaic roots. As the Lord

Jesus emphatically taught, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things" (Matt. 17:11).

We remember that Elijah, having revealed on Mount Carmel with a great display of power, who the true God of Israel was, retreated to Horeb, there to be shown that his work lay in the still small voice of the schools of the prophets. Through these, Elijah was able to restore a measure of faith amongst those who would respond. Presumably a similar system will take place during the interval between the return of the Master to the household and the coming down of the nations against Israel. In performing this work he brings a remnant that will listen to his teaching to a harmony with the ways of their fathers. Not all respond—the coming time of trouble is like a refiner's fire. (Mal 3:2) It will be the third that escape the dreadful calamities (Zec 13:8) that will be purged by this refining process. Do we not see God's hand preparing for this sending of Elijah? Many of the Gaza settlers who were forcibly evacuated from that area were God-fearing Jews. Instead of being tucked out of sight, as it were, in an isolated corner of Israel, they have now been scattered within Israel. Could this be in preparation for Elijah's work of preaching to a responsive remnant? We have noted too the shift towards religious matters on the part of the Israelis.

### **When does this change begin to happen?**

It fits very well in the time period after the return of the Master to the household, when he will have raised the dead and gathered the living to Sinai, but before the Gogian invasion. There are hints that from the Gogian invasion of Israel to the final nation submitting to Christ's rule will be a 40-year period. Micah speaks of these times as being like the days of the coming out of Egypt—a 40-year process that transformed the nation. Much has to be accomplished. Israel saved from the Gogian forces, the gospel proclaimed to the nations, the great destruction in Europe because of their resistance and the need to educate the farthest nation in the ways of God. Clearly this is not the work of a moment. If this is so then a 10 year period to cover the events of the judgement seat would make a total of 50 years—a jubilee period which forms one of the larger cycles of God's hand at work.

### **The time of Jacob's trouble**

Now the Spirit word reveals a coming day for Israel of great distress. The peace agreement that looked as if it was going to give them the security they had wanted will have proved to be but a mirage. The unthinkable has happened. Jerusalem has been taken from them, and once again Jews have been led away captive into many nations. Some have fled, multitudes have been slain and those left in Israel are in dire distress. To whom can they turn? Their land is occupied by "christian" nations whom they thought were their friends. Like in the terrible crusades in the past, many nations have come against her. Her wealth has been stripped and taken off in triumph by their enemies. (Joel 3:5; Ez 38:12) What is to be done in such a situation? Why has God allowed this to happen? From their knowledge of



the Scriptures they will recognise that as in the days of old there is but One who can save. In that day they will cry out to their God and He will send them saviours, Michael and the host of resurrected ones. (Dan 12:1-3) As Nehemiah explained to his generation:

*Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies. Neh 9:27*

Faith and obedience are essential characteristics. This is the greatness of our God; He is merciful and compassionate. Although He punishes wickedness, His delight is to bring His people to repentance that He might save them, and He has sent *my messenger* to build their faith.

*Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.*

*He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*

*Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old. Mic 7:18-20*

### **How the veil is lifted**

To Zechariah was revealed this wonderful change. At a time when Jerusalem has been compassed by many nations, at a time of great distress, God will save them by the hand of Christ and his saints.

*And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. Zec 12:9*

*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. Zec 12:10*

Who has destroyed their enemy so dramatically? It is their Messiah, bearing in his hands and feet the scars of his rejection at his first coming. They will then know beyond a shadow of doubt who this Saviour is; like a veil being lifted, their eyes will be opened to their past blindness. As at Pentecost they will surely cry out again, "*What must we do to be saved?*" The answer will be the same. Miraculously there is now a river flowing out from Jerusalem, through the newly created valley caused by the splitting of the Mount of Olives. In this river they will be baptised into the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins.

*In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. Zec 13:1*

### **Elijah—a key to the invasion of Israel?**

This map of Gog's companions gives us a hint as to why the nations seek to destroy Israel—they are predominantly “Christian”, with Persia and Libya, Moslem! There are several indications that the coming contest has two facets. Eze. 38 points to the aspect of a *spoil and a prey*; other passages indicate that it is additionally a *religious* contest. We quote from *Simplicity* by Bro Graham Pearce, written in early 1948.



### **The day of the controversy of Zion**

Armageddon and the Gathering to Armageddon figure prominently in the Old Testament prophecies.

*My determination is to gather the nations, ... to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fierceness of my jealousy. Zeph 3:8*

*And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. Eze 38:18*

*Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Hab 3:12*

*Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy; his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire: and his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity. Isa 30:27,28*

No wonder Ezekiel records of that day, after the Gogian host is overthrown, *Behold it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God; this is the day whereof I have spoken. Ez 39:8*

Now what is the cause of such a gigantic assembling of all nations, and of such terrible “indignation” “fierce anger,” “jealousy,” and “fury,” which God displays at this time? There must be adequate cause to create so marvellous an effect. The prophets give the answer that it is the day of the controversy for ZION. It is a conflict between the world and Zion, in which the continuance of Zion is at stake.



Thus Isaiah declares, chapter 34, that the fury poured out upon the assembled nations is *the day of the Lord's vengeance and the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion*.

And Micah says, *Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand his counsel: for he shall gather them as sheaves into the floor. Arise and thresh O daughter of Zion . . .*

And the words of Joel are: *I will also gather all nations and will bring them down into the valley of Jehosaphat and will plead with them there for my people, and for my heritage Israel*.

Such is the character of the Gathering to Armageddon and of Armageddon itself.

Now if God intends to bring the age-long "controversy of Zion" to a head in order to vindicate His name, then at that time "Zion" and "Israel" must be something known and distinct. The passages quoted show that this is so, for their intention is to "defile Zion" etc. Such a situation will require a much more Israelitish character in the land than we now see. Hence it is essential that the nation's faith in the Promises to the fathers, in Messiah, and the things of the Law should be built up to some degree beforehand and something of a true Israelitish flavour imparted to the nation. This development of a tangible Israelitish policy in the land will stir up anti-semitism among the nations and provoke a "christian" crusade, thus gathering the nations against Zion.

We can now see another aspect to the Elijah-mission. Not only does it prepare the nation for the coming of their Messiah, but their turning in some measure to the true faith is the means of bringing the controversy of Zion to a head, and gathering the nations to battle, against Israel. Hence we see a further need for the Elijah mission, prior to Armageddon. We can see that work among the nation causing it to become more Israelitish is instrumental in gathering the nations to Armageddon. Thus "He (the Christ-body) gathered them into Armageddon". *Simplicity No 9 p16,17*

We marvel at God's care for His people. Time has not been wasted. In the fulness of time their hearts will begin to respond to His overtures. When the eyes of the remnant are opened to behold their Messiah, they will walk in uprightness and with a true heart. In that day the hearts of the children will indeed have been turned to their fathers, and their fathers will behold their children and dwell in peace with them in the land, under their Great King.

Then Elijah's work continues with the education and return of the Jews scattered around the world—as we saw in chapter 3 of *Milestones 2006*.

*We commence our look at events in 2007 by looking at how Israel has prospered in so many ways.*

## Chapter 4:

# ISRAEL TODAY—A PROSPEROUS NATION

*We look at what has happened over the past year in Israel. The repercussions from the Lebanon War of the previous year have rumbled on. Politically, Olmert is very weak and has had three separate criminal investigations lined up against him—a record for any Jewish Prime Minister!*

*Whilst the Israelis agonise over swapping land for peace, the peace talks opened in Annapolis. Are we on the edge of a time of peace and security or is it all to stultify? We will devote ch 5 to this important development.*

*Meanwhile, as far as Israel's economy is concerned it has been a boom year. One writer commented that given peace, Israel would be a super-power! We examine this remarkable nation and its prosperity.*

### What an incredible nation!

Israel is only a small country; *Wikipedia* lists her no. 151 in a ranking of countries by area, with just 0.11% of the world's population, and yet she lays claim to the following:

- At least 176 Jews and persons of half-Jewish ancestry have been awarded the Nobel Prize, accounting for 23% of all individual recipients worldwide between 1901 and 2007
- (The Muslim nations accounting for 20% (CIA figure) of the world's population have only managed 7 Nobel prizes in the same period.)
- Israel has the highest ratio of university degrees per population in the world.
- Israel produces more scientific papers per capita than any other nation by a large margin—109 per 10,000 people—as well as one of the highest per capita rates of patents filed.
- In proportion to its population, Israel has the largest number of startup companies in the world.
- In absolute terms, Israel has the largest number of startup companies in the world, except the US (3,500 companies mostly in hi-tech).
- Israel is ranked #2 in the world for venture capital funds right behind the US.
- Israel has the highest average living standards in the Middle East. The per capita income in 2000 was over \$17,500, exceeding that of the UK.
- Israel's \$100 billion economy is larger than all of its immediate neighbours combined.



- Twenty-four percent of Israel's workforce holds university degrees—ranking third in the industrialized world, after the United States and Holland—and 12 percent hold advanced degrees.
- Relative to its population, Israel is the largest immigrant-absorbing nation on earth. Immigrants come in search of democracy, religious freedom, and economic opportunity.
- With more than 3,000 high-tech companies and start-ups, Israel has the highest concentration of hi-tech companies in the world (apart from the Silicon Valley).
- Israel has the highest percentage in the world of home computers per capita.
- Israel leads the world in the number of scientists and technicians in the workforce, with 145 per 10,000, as opposed to 85 in the U.S., over 70 in Japan, and less than 60 in Germany.
- With over 25% of its work force employed in technical professions. Israel places first in this category as well.

[Data from [www.jinfo.org](http://www.jinfo.org); <http://www.freerepublic.com/>; [www.israel21c.com](http://www.israel21c.com)]

### “The potential for a world superpower”

International financier and philanthropist Michael Milken spoke at a *Globes* sponsored event in Tel Aviv, during which he said his Milken Institute had recently valued Israel's human capital at \$7.15 trillion.

Milken especially praised Israel's achievements in the areas of life sciences, and said the Jewish state could become the research laboratory for the world.

Milken said if Israel would properly leverage its impressive human capital, it would become a world economic superpower. *Israel Today* 9-12-07

In spite of the Lebanon War last year, Israel's economy has continued to grow rapidly. Under the headline **Israel's high-speed economic growth defies the experts**, the *Financial Times* 5-11-07 spoke glowingly of Israel's economy.

The country's TA-25 index of leading shares touched record highs last week, and is now up more than a third since the start of the year. Economic growth is forecast to reach 5.2 per cent this year, fuelled by rising consumer spending, buoyant corporate investment and strong exports. In a radical break with the past, Israel today runs a surplus both in its current account and budget. This has allowed the government to tackle one of the few remaining blotches in Israel's economic report card—the high debt accumulated during a two-year recession in 2001 and 2002.

Investment banks such as Morgan Stanley forecast that not even a slowdown in the US will stop the Israeli economy from “growing at a reasonably robust pace”.

Analysts agree that a durable peace would lift the Israeli economy. Tourism would benefit from a more benign security environment, as would foreign investment: no big foreign bank has yet set up a retail network in the country.

“If you had a peace treaty signed tomorrow we could reach annualised growth of 6.5-7 per cent owing to higher foreign investment, increased tourism and reallocation of defence spending,” Prof Leiderman says.

Unemployment had dropped to 6.9% at the year-end. *Jer. Post* 19-12-07

### **“Miracle in the Holy Land”**

Little noticed amid the grim Middle East headlines, a Jewish state founded by European socialists and long hobbled by stagnant growth and inflation is turning into a mature market economy. This ongoing transformation is no less dramatic than Eastern Europe’s since 1989. The third consecutive year of strong growth, up to 5.5% in 2007, is driven by exports of software, pharmaceuticals, consulting and other services. The government in 2005 tapped Stanley Fischer, formerly No. 2 at the IMF, as central bank chief. Inflation is around 2%, down from 400% in the 1980s and the shekel is stable. Strong human capital and an opening market are the best resources any country could ask for—a good lesson for the oil-rich Middle East. And while far from finished, the mini-revolution of recent years ties Israel into the world, and vice-versa. That’s good news for its future prosperity and security. *Wall St Journal* 8-12-07

### **“Silicon Valley of Water Technology”**

With many nations around the world suffering from water shortages, Israel has launched herself as the Silicon Valley of Water Technology

Israel, though lacking in natural water resources, is exporting its water technology across the globe ... the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor recently launched NEW-Tech (Novel Efficient Water Technologies), a program aimed at promoting Israeli water technologies.

NEW-tech will coordinate between Israeli government agencies, private companies and academic institutions to maximize Israel’s role in the global water market. The technologies focused upon include desalination, water purification, irrigation, sewage treatment, wastewater recycling, leakage prevention, water security, usage planning and infrastructure construction.

The goal of NEW-tech is to double the export of Israeli water technologies by 2010 to \$2 billion. Director Oded Distel believes that



water technology will become the Israeli economy's main growth engine in the future. *A7 news* 1-11-07

One can watch a video on this NEW-tech programme and Israel's successes around the world at <http://www.686group.com/water/water.html>

### **The security barrier**

This continues to rouse much passion from the critics of Israel. Most depictions are of the high concrete wall but this only makes up a very small proportion of the whole barrier. 95% is a fence. What was envisioned as a 12-month task back in 2002 when the Israeli cabinet agreed to its construction now looks as if it won't be completed by 2010 at the earliest. To date less than 60% of the 800-kilometer structure has been completed, which leaves some 290 kilometres to be constructed in the next three years.

Its effectiveness has been substantial. One can only estimate the number of lives saved – estimates of 2,000 have been made. It has brought a much more secure feeling to the country, tourists and residents travel much more freely. This was a comment made by a Jewess who frequently visits Israel.

What a difference the security fence has made. While the world screams its moral outrage (clearly without understanding or perspective), the streets of Jerusalem are alive once again. There are people everywhere. Restaurants are packed. Hotels are overbooked. ...We trip over tourist groups everywhere we go, to the point where I (almost) wish there were fewer of them.

And it's true all over the country. Even the Israeli Arabs feel safer and were picnicking up and down the Galilee to celebrate the end of Ramadan. .... The country is thriving, alive, bustling.

The security fence seems to be an effective effort; a practical action that has made a real and significant difference. Just ask the throngs in the streets. Don't just ask the Jews. Ask the Israeli Arabs, the nuns, the German tourists, the Coptic priests, the American evangelicals, the Japanese. Just don't ask the UN. *Aish* 13-11-07

### **Israel tourism bounces back**

This was the headline to an *Israel Today* article 27-11-07.

Despite having recently weathered a full-scale war and seven-year terrorist uprising, Israel's tourism industry in 2007 bounced back to the high levels experienced in the late 1990s.

By the end of the year, at least 2.3 million tourists will have visited Israel, a half-million more than came in 2006, reported *The Marker*.

Tourism was once Israel's major export product, but suffered devastating setbacks when the Palestinians launched their intensified terror campaign in late-2000.

The roads around Jerusalem are often jammed with tourist coaches, adding to the traffic problems of this crowded city!

### **Israel's population**

The population of Israel continues to grow steadily. The government is running a campaign to lure back those who have chosen to live in other countries. The living standards in Israel are as good as in most western nations. Israel's population on the eve of Rosh Hashana 5767 [Sept 2007] stood at 7.2 million, a relatively low growth rate of 1.8 percent, a Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) report revealed. The population comprised at least 5.4 million Jews and at least 1.4 million Arabs. (Haaretz 10-9-07)

### **Jericho: "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity"**

In another development, the Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians met in August to bring economic benefits to the Jericho area.

The foreign ministers of Israel, Jordan and Japan met yesterday in Jericho with senior PA officials, including PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas to discuss an initiative to develop agricultural-industrial cooperation between Israel, the PA and Jordan. The initiative, called the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" intends to create a joint agro-industrial park to be established in the Jordan Valley, which would likely be funded by Japan. The park would include factories and canneries and a new commercial bridge over the Jordan River, as well as an airport for Palestinian goods on the Jordanian side of the border. Jordan is a major exporter of West Bank goods and fully backs this joint project between Israel and the Palestinians. *BICOM* 16-8-07

### **"No Oil for Israel by 2020"**

This arresting headline from [www.energyandcapital.com](http://www.energyandcapital.com) 5-12-07 was making the point that with an oil shortage and not many friends, Israel could find herself very short of oil within a comparatively short period of time. It detailed Israeli efforts to find alternative supplies of energy. Solar-powered electricity is one field where Israel leads the world and the Negev is the ideal place for huge solar-panel farms. The Labour Party's National Infrastructures Minister, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer is keen that the government dramatically decreases its dependence upon oil.

"In the near future, we will propose a government decision to declare the Negev a national priority area for creating alternative energy," the Iraqi-born Ben-Eliezer said, adding that Jerusalem is being considered for major alternative energy investment as well.

In the southern desert known as the Negev, where the world's most highly concentrated solar radiation levels could turn sparsely inhabited areas (most of the region has fewer residents per 100 square kilometers than just a square block in Tel Aviv) into a renewable energy gold mine. With 14 hours of sun a day during the summer, and 360 sunny days a year, no wonder Ben-Eliezer is positive about the Negev.



## **“From Far Beneath the Israeli Desert, Water Sustains a Fertile Enterprise”**

This was the headline to a intriguing article by *Dina Kraft* of Kibbutz Mashabbe Sade (2-1-07) It described another “crop” that can increasingly be found in the Negev—fish! Brackish water from deep aquifers under the Negev are being used to farm fish in huge ponds. The water is extracted from these thermal sources at around 98°F—ideal for warm water fish. The dry air and few predators make these ideal fish-farming conditions. The recycled water from the fishponds with its naturally added nutrients from the fish is then applied through drip nozzles to irrigate acres of olive and jojoba groves. Elsewhere it is also used for irrigating date palms and alfalfa. There are many Arab countries that could use this technique to produce a range of foods.

### **Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZ)**

The US set up special arrangements with Jordan in 1999 and Egypt in 2005 for the goods produced in QIZ's to enter the US market without tariffs. A key is that they have to contain 10.5% (was 11.5%) of Israeli goods (Jordan 8%) to qualify. The idea is to bolster trade between Israel and her neighbours. They have been a success in both countries and so increased Israel's exports. According to an article in the *Financial Times* 10-12-07 there are about 30 textile factories in the scheme in Port Said providing jobs for some 30,000 people. Exports have grown dramatically and proved a life-line at an otherwise very difficult time for the textile industry. Other areas of Egypt are seeking this status. One of the problems is a shortage of skilled workers, in spite of the 10% rate of unemployment. Special training facilities are being put in to place to obtain more workers. As a result, Israel's exports to Egypt have jumped from \$29m in 2004 to \$125m in 2006.

Exports from Jordan to the United States grew from \$15 million in 1997 to more than 1 billion Dollars in 2004. Jordan's QIZ's are the country's strongest engine of job growth. Jordan estimates that more than 40,000 jobs have been created within its QIZs. [www.tamas.gov.il](http://www.tamas.gov.il)

### **Israel—the world's 4<sup>th</sup> largest arms exporter**

Israel has now overtaken Britain to the number 4 slot behind the US, Russia and France. So far this year she has signed contracts worth \$4.3bn

Israel's main exports in the defense field are radar systems, anti-tank missiles and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, and its major clients are India, Turkey, the U.S.A. and other western countries. *A7 News* 14-12-07

Israel is also nearly doubling her naval patrol fleet, with 7 new vessels due by 2009. Her whole fleet will be water-jet propelled.

In addition to traditional patrol, search-and-rescue and coastal-defense roles, the ships will be optimized for counterterrorism, anti-infiltration and weapon-smuggling missions, defense officials said.

Each ship is designed for rapid acceleration to top speeds of about 50 knots and to cruise at approximately 32 knots at ranges of about 700 nautical miles. *defensenews.com.7-11-07*

### **Earthquakes in divers places**

The Jordan Valley is part of the Rift Valley that extends down into the heart of Africa. It marks the meeting point of the African and the Asian tectonic plates and the area is noted for earthquakes. These are rarely strong enough to cause damage, but there have been some serious earthquakes in the region. There were big quakes in 1759, 1837 (2,000 killed) and 1927 (250 killed). Seismologists have predicted, on the basis of statistical analysis and historical records that “another major one is coming soon.” *United Press Int. 14-10-07*. The increased frequency of smaller earthquakes is seen as a sign of increasing earthquake activity.

### **Fourth earthquake in two weeks rattles Israel**

An earthquake registering 4.0 on the Richter scale originating in the Dead Sea Basin was felt in Jerusalem and the Coastal Plain on Sunday morning. Last Saturday a 4.1 quake was also detected, while earlier in the past two weeks quakes of 3.0 and 4.2 magnitude were registered throughout the country. No damages or injuries were reported in any of the seismic activity. Experts in earthquake preparedness have concluded that some 400,000 buildings have not been built to regulation and the 1,820 schools, 5,400 kindergartens, 12,000 government buildings and 105 factories containing hazardous material could not withstand a major earthquake. *International Christian Embassy Jerusalem 4-12-07*

Even the Israelis speak of some 700,000 potential victims if there was a major earthquake because of the number of vulnerable buildings. We have been forewarned of the extent of the coming earthquake – the descriptions leads us to fear that it will be on a scale not experienced before. Its effects will be felt far and wide. Consider what we have been told.

*Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.*

*And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. Zec 14:3,4*

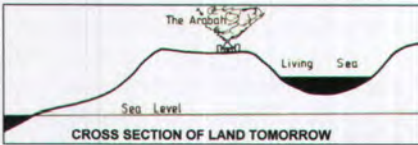
### **He will shake terribly the earth**

The Mount of Olives has an east-west fault line running through it, in preparation for it splitting and opening up a valley. The Mount of Olives is a solid looking hill—it will require a mighty earthquake under Christ's control to achieve this earth shaking alteration to the Jerusalem environment. There is more than that however.



*All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. Zec 14:10*

Today Jerusalem nestles amidst the hills, but that is to change in keeping with Jerusalem's role as being the central focus of the world. A



large section surrounding Jerusalem is elevated so that Jerusalem is visible from afar. Isa 2:2. Geba is six miles to the north and Rimmon some 30 miles to the south.

Another aspect of these dramatic ground movements is that a new river rises in Jerusalem and flows eastwards through the newly opened valley and down into the Dead Sea.

*And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. Zec 14:8*

Several prophetic passages speak of the effects that this great earthquake will have. It may trigger a series of earthquakes around the world.

*...the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. Isa 30:25*

*...the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.*

*The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. Isa 24:18-20*

*Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;*

*So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. Eze 38:19,20*

*The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel. Joel 3:16*

Having seen Israel's prosperity in fulfilment of passages such as Ez 38:12, we now turn to Israel and the Middle East Peace Talks, to see if these could lead to the time of peace and safety or security spoken of in Ez 38:11.

## Chapter 5:

# ISRAEL AND THE PEACE TALKS

*We turn from looking at Israel's economy and look at the more difficult political situation. As an outcome from the Lebanon War there has been a big drive to bring some stability to the region, for fear of Iranian aggression. Europe too has an energy interest in a Middle East at peace. She is waking up to her dependence on Russia and is fearful of a repeat of last year's energy shortages, when Russia chose to turn down the taps to Ukraine and thereby affected gas in transit to Western Europe.*

*Until the final picture is reached there will always be matters that are out of kilter with our expectations. We currently have the situation whereby France under Sarkozy is pro-America and not so friendly with Russia. Yet at the time of the end we expect this to be reversed. We also have the Arabs, to whom Iran has been the great enemy, but at the year-end, they were cozying up to her and America is losing favour!*

*What we have to remember is not to concentrate too deeply on the short-term situation. This will change—the pendulum of history swings to and fro. What we can quietly expect is that at the last it will be exactly as our Heavenly Father has decreed. God's solutions to arriving at an end position do not always turn out as we mortal observers would have anticipated! God can dramatically remove a person—Sadat, Rabin, Sharon—causing matters to flow in a different direction. What we do know is the angels are occupied in this behind-the-scenes work. It is wonderful that our lives too come under their direction.*

## Olmert's difficult year

No other Israeli Prime Minister has been the subject of three separate police investigations at the same time! His role in the Lebanon War was also subject to scrutiny by the Winograd Commission. In opinion polls his position as leader is rated very low and his Kadima party comes bottom of the main parties in polls asking for voting opinions.

His determination to press ahead with painful promises of withdrawal from parts of the West Bank and Jerusalem has pitted him against most Israelis, who have seen the effect of withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. They certainly have not exchanged land for peace. Just this year alone, over 2,700 rockets and mortars have been fired from Gaza into Israel. The town of Sderot has been under constant attack. Most Israelis see that to withdraw from the West Bank would be an open invitation to the terrorists to come in and launch their rockets at many parts of Israel.

Benjamin Netanyahu has come out strongly as a potential new leader. He has defended Israel's right to hold onto Jerusalem and the West Bank settlements.



Standing at the Tower of David guarding the Old City's Jaffa Gate, Israeli Opposition leader Binyamin Netanyahu stated that Israel must maintain control of all of Jerusalem.

"Jerusalem has been the pulsating heart of the Jewish people. Now there are those who come and say, let's divide this heart. The prime minister wants to come and divide this city. If we leave any part of Jerusalem, militant Islam walks in. That is the reality of the Middle East," Netanyahu said. *International Christian Embassy Jerusalem* 25-10-07

### **Annapolis Peace Talks—Background**

With a great deal of persuasion, the US cajoled and coerced the Arab nations to attend the Middle East Peace Talks, which were held in Maryland in the USA in November. We have been down this path before!

There was the Israel-Egypt peace Treaty in 1979.

The Madrid peace Talks began in 1991

The Oslo Agreement signed by Rabin and Arafat in 1993

The Egypt Peace Accord signed by Rabin and Arafat in 1994, Arafat moves to Gaza as head of Palestinian Authority

Oslo II Agreement signed by Rabin and Arafat in 1994.

Wye River Agreement signed by Netanyahu and Arafat in 1998

Camp David Peace Talks break down in 2000

Peace Talks in Taba break down 2001

The US, EU, Russia, and the UN, introduce the "Road Map for Peace" with talks at Aqaba, Jordan 2003

Israel withdraws from Gaza 2005

So what is different? There are a number of factors that might, just might, make this different! Firstly, these are the first talks since the death of Arafat. Secondly, the Lebanon War has shown the vulnerability to Iranian aggression not just of Israel, but Israel's neighbours. Thirdly, there are fundamental differences between the Arabs and Iran. Fourthly, the PA has split between Hamas in Gaza and Fatah in the West Bank. Fifthly, the other Arab nations have become involved. Let's look at these factors.

**Arafat** demonstrated that he never really sought peace to improve his fellow countrymen's lot. His cavalier treatment of the vast sums of money donated by the West to help the Palestinians, which could have helped them, saw them instead disappear into a web of corruption, the militia and Swiss bank accounts!

**Lebanon War.** The Hezbollah kidnappings triggered the start of the Lebanon War. Thousands of rockets rained on northern Israel. Israel's struggle to make progress was a salutary lesson. Hezbollah were well armed and well trained by Iran, and supplied via Syria. Israel too was fighting with a very biased world press against her, which Hezbollah had been trained to exploit to the full. After some 30 days of fighting a UN

resolution brought an end to the fighting. UNIFIL troops, mainly from Europe were stationed in Southern Lebanon as a buffer zone. Hezbollah have quietly restocked their rockets with an even greater supply and with an even longer range. They have improved their bunkers and are even better prepared than in July 2006.

It became clear that the rulers of the surrounding Arab States saw this as a warning to their own thrones. Iran's aggression had been mounted against Israel, but it was clear that if Israel fell, Iran would not stop there.

**Iran.** Although Iran is a Moslem country like most of the Middle East, there are two important differences. One is in the brand of Moslem religion. Iran, together with the majority of Iraqis are Shiite Moslems, whereas Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan etc are Sunni, as indeed Saddam Hussein was. There are fundamental differences between Sunni and Shiite—much blood has been spilled in conflicts between them.

The other important difference is that Iran is not an Arab state. As the map shows, there are many Arab nations; many of which became Arab through conquest.

Iran's origins, however, lie in the Medo-Persian Empire of Old Testament times. Their fiery president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has often spoken of his wish to see the Jews driven out of Israel and looks for a world free of Zionism. Incidentally the Iranians claim to be the original Aryan race – Darius I uses the name in an inscription.

I am Dariush, the great king, the king of kings. The king of many countries and many people. The king of this expansive land, The son of Wishtaspa of Achaemenid, Persian, the son of a Persian, 'Aryan', from the Aryan race. *"From the Darius the Great's Inscription in Naqsh-e-Rostam"*





Many millennia later, Hitler made the claim that the Germans were part of the true Aryan “master race” and used his theories to purge out any whom he considered inferior, including many millions of Jews. Interestingly too the swastika, which was adopted as a Nazi symbol, can be found on Persian inscriptions.

**Hamas and Fatah.** Fatah. This Palestinian militia group was set up in 1965, with Yasser Arafat as one of its founders. Unlike Hamas, it is not listed on any government’s wanted list of terrorist organizations. Its name comes from a reversal of its title - The Palestinian National Liberation Movement = HATAF which is Arabic for “sudden death” so it was reversed = FATAH which is Arabic for “conquest”!



Its emblem consists of two fists holding rifles and a hand grenade superimposed on map of Palestine without any sign of Israel.

On Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 they will celebrate their 43<sup>rd</sup> anniversary. The poster for this event depicts the whole of Israel as Palestinian, not the best omen for the Peace Talks!

The poster features a map of Israel that is entirely draped with a Palestinian keffiyeh scarf. It also carries a drawing of a rifle as a symbol of the “armed struggle” against Israel. *Jerusalem Post* 22-12-07



Hamas is a Palestinian Sunni Muslim terrorist organisation, which was founded in 1987, backed by Iran and Syria. It means “strength” “bravery” and is made up of the initial letters of the Arabic for Islamic Resistance Movement

Its emblem features a map of Palestine (without Israel), the Dome of the Rock, two crossed swords, the words “Palestine” “Islamic Resistance Movement-Hamas”, and two Palestinian flags with the wording “There is no god but Allah”, and “Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.”



After the death of Arafat, Fatah took over the running of the Palestinian National Assembly. It was riddled with corruption, and in the Palestinian elections of Jan 2006, Hamas won the elections, although technically they received a lower proportion of the votes, such was the voting system in place. This caused uproar amongst the moderate Palestinians and great concern in Israel. Many aid donor countries refused to allow aid via Hamas, channelling it through Fatah. Matters came to a head in Gaza in June 2007 when, in the “battle of Gaza”

or “the Palestinian 6-day War”, Hamas routed Fatah’s control of Gaza amidst much bloodshed. Mahmoud Abbas, the Fatah leader, had his seafront presidential palace ransacked. Those Fatah members who could, withdrew to the West Bank, others went underground fearing reprisals. Abbas tightened his control of the West Bank, declared a state of emergency, dissolved Parliament and imposed presidential rule. Hamas officials in the West Bank were dismissed and replaced by Fatah members.

Hamas continues to rule Gaza, under strict Islamic Law. The Christian Arabs have to keep a low profile and dress according to the Muslim code.

With Gaza under Hamas shunned by most countries, efforts to bring about reconciliation between Israel and the Palestinians has concentrated on Fatah. Israel has made it clear she will not negotiate with Hamas. Southern Israel had been under constant bombardment from Palestinian Kassam rockets; now with Hamas joining in with more accurate rockets, the numbers fired daily has been stepped up. In 2007 over 2,700 rockets and mortars have been fired from Gaza, in spite of Israel’s repeated actions against their launchers.

In a way, the Hamas take-over of Gaza has made it easier for Israel. Fatah appears in a good light, Hamas in a bad. However there are many in Israel who do not see much evidence of goodness in the Fatah movement. There has been little sign of the stamping out of corruption among the leaders, nor of a deep desire to reach out a hand of peace to live side-by-side with Israel. School textbooks still seek the elimination of Israel, in spite of the Oslo Agreement of 1993 banning this. Friday sermons still preach Israel’s destruction. Never the less, Olmert is prepared to gamble with Israel’s future in the hope that other nations can persuade them to take a more accommodating line on Israel.

**Involvement of other Arab countries.** Following the Lebanon War the surrounding nations realised that they would have to play their own role in holding back Iran. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are building security fences along their borders with Iraq—fearing an Iranian take-over of Iraq if the Americans withdraw. Saudi Arabia has emerged as the dominant country in the Arabian Peninsula. Saudi and her neighbours, although they have invested heavily in defence weapons, are very dependant upon American and British help in running and maintaining their equipment. If Iran started to move against them, they would need America’s assistance. Faced with this reality they need to have Israel there as America’s ally, the only nuclear-armed country in the region with the potential to thwart Iran’s plans. They are now seeking some accommodation that would see a resolution of the Israel-Palestinian conflict so that they can concentrate on the greater threat of Iran.

Before the Peace Talks began there were articles in Arab papers urging the other Arab nations to attend, because the time had now come to face what was the true threat to the Middle East. It was not America or Israel but Iran.



Arab columnists have been publishing articles emphasizing that the summit will serve Arab interests. The articles argue that it is imperative for the Arabs to support the summit, since it will bring stability to the region, promote a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, put an end to the exploitation of the Palestinian issue by the “unholy alliance” of Iran, Syria and Hamas, and even serve as a deterrent to Iran.

“We must move away from the narrow focus of a Palestinian-Israeli truce towards a broader Arab-Israeli settlement.” *MEMRI* 9-11-07

They have applied pressure on the Palestinians to come to some agreement since the split between Fatah and Hamas, and there were signs at the year-end that faced with international isolation, Hamas were seeking reconciliation with Fatah. There was even talk of Hamas seeking a truce as Israel continued to pick off their terrorist leaders one by one.

So it is against this background that on November 26<sup>th</sup> 2007 representatives from 44 countries met together for Peace Talks.

### **The Annapolis Peace Talks**

High-ranking officials from most Arab countries attended, although they insisted that “for security reasons” the Israeli officials had to use a different entrance. There were also many other officials from Europe, including the Vatican. However they did sit down together and the talks did make some progress, with the Israelis and Palestinians agreeing to move forward on several tracks simultaneously. The optimistic hope was for the talks to achieve success within a year!

“The Arabs have come here not because they love the Jews or even the Palestinians,” said an adviser to the Palestinian negotiating team who spoke on condition of anonymity. “They came because they need a strategic alliance with the United States against Iran.” *New York Times* 28-11-07 **Middle East Peace Through Anxiety**

Last week’s multi-national summit meeting here was about many things, the least of which, perhaps, was the pursuit of Israeli-Palestinian peace. Behind the calls for the creation of a Palestinian state that would live serenely and stably alongside the Jewish state, beyond the vision of a Middle East at last absolved of its longest-running conflict, was the paramount question of power—who in the region wields it and who in the region wants it. Indeed, while Annapolis is unlikely to succeed in bridging the gaps between Israeli and Arab positions, it effectively drew lines in the sand between those nations siding with America and the West and those allied with Iran. *New York Times* 2-12-07

There was an extremely poignant cartoon that accompanied the article. (Clue! Who is responsible for fracturing the letters?)

Over the coming months, the talks will break into about a half-dozen subcommittees to tackle such issues as dividing Jerusalem and dealing with Palestinian refugees. But none of those discussions are likely to lead to breakthroughs necessary to clinch a final agreement, analysts say.

Just as secret back channels laid the groundwork for historic Israel-Arab advances in 1977 and 1993, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas are liable to rely on behind-the-scenes talks far removed from the public, they say.

"There is no way they can work out a framework agreement if it's a public process," says Gershon Baskin, co-director of the Israel-Palestinian Center for Research and Information.

In contrast to the sprawling panels in the formal negotiations, back channels usually involve a limited number of confidants of each leader, helping the sides build trust while ensuring that compromises with risky consequences for the sides don't leak. To ensure a blackout, they have been held at remote estates or five-star hotels in third-party countries.

But instead of focusing on the details of an agreement, the secret talks are expected to find solutions on the three "core" disputes: agreeing on a border and the fate of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, settling the claims of Palestinian refugees, and finding a way to transform Jerusalem into the capital of two states. *csmonitor* 12-12-07

The first follow-up talks took place on Dec 12 at Jerusalem. Little was achieved; Israel had just announced plans to build 300 apartments in Har Homa in southern Jerusalem and a Fatah policeman had murdered an Israeli settler. With even more rockets from Gaza that day, there was little evidence of the Palestinians having curbed their terrorist forces.

Abbas and Olmert met two weeks later and some progress was made.

The two leaders also agreed to continue their bi-weekly meetings and to have Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams meet again next week. At the current stage of talks between the sides focuses on creating an agreed framework for talks on core issues. Once this is in place, smaller teams from both sides will begin negotiation on various aspects of the final status agreement, including final borders, a solution to the Palestinian refugee problem and the status of Jerusalem. *BICOM* 27-12-07





A report on the 28<sup>th</sup> Dec put the number of Israeli soldier and civilian deaths from terrorist attacks at its lowest since the 1980s, with the exception of 1999. Thirteen deaths in 2007 compared with 24 (187 if one includes the Lebanon War casualties) in 2006.

### **A Jewish State**

One of the stumbling blocks is the Arab refusal to recognise Israel as a Jewish State. A state where Jews and non-Jews can live – yes! But as a specific state where Jewish things are the reason for its existence – no! The fact that Arab countries enforce their way of life upon their inhabitants is, strangely, irrelevant. A Jewish State on what they regard as their territory is anathema to Arabs and also mainstream Christianity. Yet Israel is Jewish!

The idea of a Jewish state was born in Europe. Today, it is no longer popular there. In the eyes of some, it is not even legitimate. A Jewish state, the argument goes, is inherently undemocratic, because it is a state that belongs to one portion of its citizenry—the Jews—rather than to all Israelis. The remedy should then be an Israeli, rather than a Jewish state, where the national identity will be shared by all citizens, and all citizens will feel equally at home. Israel would thus become truly democratic, a “state of all its citizens”.

Certainly [today] the Jewish state has a Jewish character: its symbols, its calendar, and much else, are all drawn from the cultural heritage of the majority. *Jewish Chronicle* 19-10-07

### **International Palestinian aid meeting in Paris**

Following the Annapolis Peace Talks, the countries of the world met to state what aid they would give to the Palestinians. Thanks to the efforts of Tony Blair, this was judged a success.

At the Paris Donors' Conference yesterday donors from the international community pledged \$7.4bn to help revive and develop the Palestinian economy. The sum exceeded the amount originally requested, which was \$5.6bn. Among the international community there is general optimism regarding the serious intentions of PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, a former World Bank economist and his ability to re-establish the Palestinian economy. Topping the donors' list were the EU, which pledged \$630m, the US, with a \$555m pledge, and Saudi Arabia, which will donate \$500m. *BICOM* 18-12-07

As in the past the bulk came not from the Palestinian's rich fellow Arabs but the West. As the *Jerusalem Post* 17-12-07 opined: -

Call us naive, but one might think that an international conference convened to provide financial aid to the Palestinians would be organized by the Arab states, and led by their contributions. It is the Arab world, after all, that styles itself as the main champion of the Palestinian cause.

In reality, yesterday's donor conference was, as usual, led by the US and Europe. Israeli officials expect, based on past behavior, that the Arab states will make generous pledges and then not pay most of what they pledged. Diplomats told this newspaper that Egypt, in particular, will likely pay little in order not to antagonize Hamas.

### **Hamas rally**

On 15<sup>th</sup> December there was a huge rally held in Central Gaza City in celebration of Hamas' 20<sup>th</sup> birthday. Estimates varied from 200,000 to 500,000 people attending out of Gaza's population of 1.5 million. The city was filled with green flags, and a large banner reading, "We will not recognize Israel" adorned the stage. Hamas leaders denounced Israel in no uncertain terms, and the crowds chanted: "We will never recognise Israel" and burned Israeli flags. "Jews! We have already dug your graves."

"Today is the day of Jihad, resistance and uprising," Gaza's Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh said. "The message from you today is that Hamas and these masses will not yield before sanctions. Your presence today, brothers and sisters, asserts the choice of resistance...against America and the Zionist occupation." *A7 News* 16-12-07

Hamas is deeply isolated as *Haaretz* 17-12-07 reported: -

But even such fighting words cannot conceal the criticism the organization has suffered since its takeover of Gaza in June. Every public opinion poll since then has shown its popularity declining. Palestinians increasingly view Hamas as a cruel, dictatorial and frighteningly religious organization interested mainly in consolidating its position—a radical image change for a group once viewed as religious nationalists who dedicated much of their efforts to helping Gaza's poor. It appears to be losing its place in the Palestinian consensus.

### **Where now?**

In the short-term it is difficult to tell. Little progress seems to have been made in curbing the Palestinians' dislike of Israel, they want her wiped off the map and the land to be theirs. But it is the pressures that can be brought upon them that will decide the outcome. Both Hamas and Fatah are dependant upon outside funding, whether from Middle East countries or the West. The payer calls the tune and if there is a collective will to calm down the situation then we could see some progress towards the situation described in Scripture—that of the nations talking of peace and security and Israel actually dwelling for a time at peace and secure under some peace accord.

As we have remarked before, we must remember that this period of peace is termed by God, a "time of trespass", (Ez 39:26) because it is humanly contrived and not built on Israel's trust in God.

*We turn now and look at the changing situation in the wider Middle East.*



## Chapter 6:

# CHANGING BALANCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

*As we remarked at the start of the previous chapter: - What we have to remember is not to concentrate too deeply on the short-term situation. This will change—the pendulum of history swings to and fro. Throughout the year there did seem to be quite a change in the Middle East with the Middle East countries uniting against Iran; but at the year-end there was a shift back, with Iran courting Egypt and paying visits to Saudi Arabia!*

*What is more important is the longer-term trend. We are guided by scripture for this knowledge.*

## What are we looking for? Background

There are two strands to this. The first is the North – South split as foretold in the details of Daniel 11 of a King of the North and King of the South based upon the situation outlined in the earlier verses of Daniel 11. The second is in the details provided by Ezekiel ch 38 concerning the nations who are companions of Gog's invasion of Israel and in v13 those nations opposed to Gog's invasion. It is clear from prophecy that there is only one big invasion of Israel at this period. So we have to blend together the different aspects presented by the prophets, in the same way as we do the gospel accounts, to build a fuller picture. For this chapter we are only concerned with the southern grouping, we shall look at the northern in the next chapter.

We looked at the King of the North and the King of the South in *Milestones 2003* chapter 2 and refer readers to this for a fuller picture, or view a reprint at [www.milestonesuk.org](http://www.milestonesuk.org) We just need a brief summary here.

## The Ram and the He-Goat

For our starting point for looking at the King of the South in Dan ch 11, we need to go back to Daniel ch. 8 and the vision of the Ram and the He-goat. The He-goat with its



THE HE-GOAT—GREECE

THE RAM—PERSIA



notable horn we readily identify with Alexander the Great and his rapid conquest of the Persian - Ram - kingdom. Alexander's life was cut off in its prime at the age of 32. In the words of the vision—the horn was broken.

He had no heir. He is said on his deathbed to have whispered that the kingdom should go to the strongest. Eventually his kingdom was carved up between his four generals—foreseen by the 4 horns that came up in the place of the broken horn. Two of these horns were significant, because their territorial squabbles encompassed the Holy Land. To the north lay the territory of General Seleucus, to the south that of General Ptolemy. Israel lay in the middle – frequently experiencing the tread of invading armies.

### The King of the South

The original King of the South, although based in Egypt, was not an Egyptian power. As we have seen, Egypt was ruled over by the Ptolemy Soter (“the saviour”), the Macedonian general of Alexander the Great, who established the Ptolemaic Kingdom. Interestingly the important island of Cyprus was part of the King of the South’s territory. Daniel 11:40 makes it clear that there is to be a latter-day King of the North and King of the South.



*And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.*

In doing so Egypt falls to the King of the North: -

*He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.*

*But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. Dan 11:42,43*

So we ask—who is the power that occupies Egypt and the southern region at the time of the end? Britain used to occupy Egypt, and still has bases on Cyprus. The original King of the South was not an Egyptian but a Greek general. Are we to see Britain back in Egypt? Probably not as a conqueror, but may well be as a shadowing power with her young lions, America, India and Australia. Britain and America have huge investments in Egypt. The Suez Canal is vital to their Middle East operations. As Gog moves



southwards how natural for these occupying powers in the region to take up a defensive position in Egypt again. As we shall see, India has already been invited by the Gulf States to come and help their defences!

To this picture of the two Kings, we add the details of Ezekiel 38:13. Again we considered this in detail in *Milestones 2005*, where we traced out the territory of the Sheba and Dedan nations mentioned in this verse. We saw how very much Britain, America, India and Australia—the *merchants of Tarshish and her young lions* (Ez 38:13 RV) operate in this area.



### What are we looking for? Today

We expect that the nations represented by *Sheba* and *Dedan* will be friendly to Israel as well as the associated nations operating from this region. Traditionally the Gulf State nations of Saudi Arabia, Dubai, UAE, Bahrain etc., have been opposed to Israel. As Arab nations they have maintained a deep-rooted hostility to their brother Jacob. It is evident that there is to be a change in the situation—they are not on the side of Gog or his companions including Iran—but with the Tarshish power and her associates.

On the other hand, we expect that the King of the North/Gog will group the nations of Russia, Europe, Iran, Ethiopia and Libya into an alliance who come against Israel.

So what are we seeing in the Middle East? As a result of the Lebanon War there has certainly been a shift on the part of many Arab nations to recognise the value of Israel as a bulwark against Iranian expansion, as we saw in the previous chapter. These nations are very dependant upon *the merchants of Tarshish and her young lions* for their defence. There have been several multi-billion pound defence deals signed in this past year.

#### Iran's neighbors, if not West, see increasing threat to region

The Gulf Cooperation Council, fearing a nuclear Iran, has been pressed to increase defense and military cooperation.

A leading U.S. consultant said the six GCC states have increased defense spending and drafted plans for security and military cooperation. Forecast International said in a report that Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were driven by concern over an Iranian war with the United States.

"The GCC states are drawing closer together out of necessity in the face of what they perceive as Iranian designs of regional supremacy," Forecast Middle East analyst Dan Darling said.

In a Middle East markets analysis, Forecast said the GCC states, faced with Iran's missile and manpower superiority, have escalated defense spending. The report said GCC defense spending grew from \$31.15 billion in 2003, \$40.33 billion in 2005 to \$49.6 billion in 2007.

Forecast said GCC defense spending was expected to increase in 2008. Darling said the 2008 figure would exceed \$51 billion. *GeostrategyDirect* 19-12-07

### **Kuwait, UAE want Patriot missile defense systems**

Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have requested the PAC-3 missile defense system from the United States in deals valued at more than \$10 billion.

"The proposed sale of the weapons will strengthen the effectiveness and interoperability of a potential coalition partner, reduce the dependence on U.S. forces in the region, and enhance any coalition operations the U.S. may undertake with the United Arab Emirates," Defense Security Cooperation Agency said on Dec. 4. "The United Arab Emirates will have no difficulty absorbing these weapon systems into its armed forces." *GeostrategyDirect* 19-12-07

One of the matters that the Gulf States are finding difficult to accept at the moment is that Israel plays an important role in America's defences against Iranian missiles, as this *Debka* article 23-3-07 shows.

### **Israel's Arrow Slots into US Missile Shield in Europe.**

The US has designated the Israeli-made Arrow anti-missile missile system and its Green Pine radar the first line in its defensive shield against Iranian ballistic missiles. Any incoming missile would have to first outmaneuver the Israeli system located in the Negev before reaching the Europe-based links—10 interceptors, which Washington plans for Poland and a radar station projected for the Czech Republic—and possibly Georgia too.

The American and Israeli anti-missile deployments are to be integrated to create an inter-operational multilayered air defense system by 2013.

To make this happen, Washington will sink another \$1 billion into the Israeli technology on top of the \$2.8 billion already invested.

The US-Israeli missile defense network is designed not only to intercept Iranian ballistic missiles of 1,300-1,500 km range fired at Europe, but also the short-range Iskander-E short-range ballistic missiles, which Russia has sold to Syria and is ready to hand out to any other Middle East nation.



### Present-day unwillingness

For many Gulf States this is a link-too-far. Doubtless circumstances will change to make them more cooperative. At the year-end they were smarting under President Bush's apparent about turn regarding Iran's progress along the path to nuclear weapons. They—and Israel—were astounded at the seeming acceptance by President Bush of the U.S. National Intelligence Estimate report on Iran's progress towards nuclear weapons. Its central thrust was that Iran gave up the pursuit of nuclear weapons in 2003. At least that is what the report appeared to indicate at first, footnotes made it clear that what was given up in 2003 was the development of weapons to carry a nuclear device. The unanswered question is, have they now resumed such weapons? It is one problem producing a nuclear bomb; it is another to produce such a weapon that is small enough and strong enough to withstand the tremendous forces of being launched by a rocket.

The release of the NIE has effectively blindsided Israeli policymakers. Whether you believe it was the outcome of a nasty bureaucratic spat between the intelligence community and the Bush administration or a politicized realignment of U.S. policy designed to coax Iran into fruitful negotiations over Iraq (and *Stratfor* believes the latter), the implications are indisputable. Simply put, the U.S. no longer can make a viable case for military action against Iran. The U.S. is still pressing on the sanctions front to have a stick to use in negotiations, but Washington's war-mongering campaign has lost its credibility. *Stratfor* 7-12-09

Both *Stratfor* and *Debka* are convinced that America has done a deal with Iran to help them with the Iraq situation. Britain is now drawing down her troops, having handed over control of the Basra area to the Iraqi security forces. America too would like to reduce her force levels in order to concentrate on Afghanistan. It appears that America has been forced to acknowledge the influence that Iran has in Iraq. If Iran agrees to rein in the elements in Iraq who are loyal to Iran, then America would lift the threat of attack on Iran's nuclear facilities. Hence the timing of this report which seems on the surface to lift such a threat.

At the same time the Gulf States made overtures to Iran, after months of treating her as the great enemy.

#### **"Moderate" Arab rulers woo Tehran and Damascus, following track opened by Washington**

On Dec. 10 Cairo announced plans to resume diplomatic relations with Tehran after 27 years. DEBKAFile's Middle East sources report this step was part of an initiative for Saudi Arabian, Jordanian and Egyptian leaders to come together in a new summit to embrace the Syrian ruler and bridge their policy differences with the radical Syrian-Tehran line. *Debka* 11-12-07

There was a similar report in *Christian Science Monitor* 14-12-07

### Egypt and Saudi Arabia make new overtures to Iran

Are US Arab allies playing 'good cop' with Ahmadinejad to US 'bad cop'?

Iran is suddenly enjoying a thaw with its Arab neighbors—all close US allies—in the wake of a US intelligence report that judged Iran probably suspended its work on nuclear weapons four years ago.

Regional actors, in particular, are scrambling to engage Iran diplomatically, and analysts say they have the tacit approval of the Americans.

Egypt, a US ally and the only Arab state not to have full diplomatic relations with Iran, this week sent a high-level delegation to Tehran for the first time since that country's Islamic revolution in 1979

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad was invited by the Qatari emir to speak to the Gulf Cooperation Council earlier this month – the first time that has ever happened. On Wednesday, Iran announced that Saudi Arabia had invited Mr. Ahmedinejad to participate in the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, a first for an Iranian leader since the 1979 revolution.

"Qatar could not have invited Ahmedinejad to the GCC without an understanding with the Americans. I don't think Egypt would be sending a diplomat without some sort of green light either," says Emad Gad, an expert on regional politics at the Al Ahram Center, a government-linked think tank in Cairo. "All of this is part of a strategy, and I think it's an American strategy as well, to keep the freeze on the nuclear program while creating a friendlier climate."

A Western diplomat in Cairo, who asks not to be identified, says that creating space for Iranian reformers to maneuver is one reason for the outreach from Egypt and Saudi Arabia. He says the intent of their overtures is to show Iran that there are benefits to cooperation on the nuclear issue, while also creating an environment in which internal reformers in Iran are less likely to be branded tools of foreign powers.

"We'll be on a less threatening diplomatic track for a while now, as long as Ahmedinjad doesn't do anything inflammatory," says a Western diplomat in Cairo.

### India Offers Persian Gulf Sheikdoms Military Treaty

In another interesting development, the Gulf States have been seeking other partners to help them maintain their military strength, fearing that America might not always be there. According to *Debka* 21-12-07 only India has responded positively and enthusiastically! So we have one of the **young lions** in discussion with **Sheba** and **Dedan!** (Ez 38:13)

The Gulf emirs have responded by diversifying their security options. Although willing to host US military forces on their soil and across the



Middle East, they are no longer willing to rely exclusively on the United States for their security. The Gulf Cooperation Council heads have accordingly gone shopping around for new protectors against military aggression.

In particular, they want a shield against the clandestine nuclear menace that they feel is breathing down their necks from Iran.

The only affirmative reply to the Gulf plea came from New Delhi. Indeed, Manmohan Singh's government had two optional proposals ready:

1. A military treaty that would spread India's nuclear umbrella over the entire bloc.
2. Alternatively, separate pacts entailing the same nuclear shield between India and each of the six GCC members.

New Delhi, it was noted, is in the middle of a major expansion of India's naval, air and marine forces. They are perfectly capable of detaching the units needed for deployment in the Persian Gulf, the Oman and Arabian Seas and the Indian Ocean.

DEBKA-Net-Weekly's sub-continental sources report that no time was lost in taking up the offer: Gulf military and intelligence officers have started meeting with senior Indian security officials to develop the terms of the military pact.

Our sources add that New Delhi's eagerness to go forward with the new strategic association was quickened by intelligence received that Saudi Arabia had signed a secret defense pact with Pakistan's Pervez Musharraf, including a nuclear protection clause.

The GCC has not yet sent its collective response to the Indian proposals. But our sources report at least two of its members, one of which is Qatar, have entered into separate talks with New Delhi.

The upshot of these moves, if they mature fully, may see India and Pakistan sharing the Gulf region between them as providers of defense guarantees and nuclear shields.

India's added interest in planting a foothold in the Gulf region comes from the conservatively estimated three million Indian expatriates living and working in those countries.

Indian citizens make up one-fifth of Bahrain's population; 15 percent of Oman's, a quarter of Qatar's inhabitants and 32 percent in the United Arab Emirates.

So we see at the moment a short-term shift towards bringing Iran in on the side of these southern nations, yet on the other hand they are making alternative arrangements in case Iran turns against them. As in the past, the fundamental differences between them will come to the fore. In the final picture Iran will be associated with the northern confederacy.

### Sheba and Dedan—trading nations again

An intriguing recent development has been in the status of many of these small nations that crowd the southern coastline of the Persian Gulf, countries on the old territory of the Hamitic Dedan. Dedan in Ezekiel's day was a trading nation, bringing goods from India, moving them across the Arabian Peninsula and trading them in the fairs of Tyre.

*The men of Dedan were thy merchants; many isles were the merchandise of thine hand: they brought thee for a present horns of ivory and ebony.*  
Eze 27:15

With their modern-day wealth from their oil, many of these nations are wishing to diversify their income from this single source and are turning into trading centres.

The Institute of International Finance reports that the six Persian Gulf States of the Gulf Cooperation Council now have more combined forex reserves<sup>1</sup> than mighty China. Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates have a combined US\$1.6 trillion in forex reserves. Now, what will they do with all that money?  
*dailyreckoning.com.au* 5-6-07

They are busy buying up assets; American companies are favourite targets. This is an account of one of the Gulf States: -

#### Dubai's bold bid to take on the City

Dubai's objective is simple: to establish itself as one of the world's leading financial centres.

"We aim to become one of the top three exchange groups in the world in the international capital markets," according to a spokesman for Borse Dubai, the holding company of the Dubai International Financial Exchange (DIFX) and its domestic counterpart, the Dubai Financial Market.

If the Gulf state's recent explosion into the world's financial markets is anything to go by, that ambition is far from implausible.

The emirate's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, has been busy assembling a portfolio of assets—often acquired from western companies or capital markets—which includes natural infrastructure-style plays such as real estate and ports, as well as small stakes in the likes of EADS, the European defence firm, and HSBC. Dubai International Capital, the country's leading dedicated private-equity vehicle, has also snapped up less obvious targets, including the owner of Madame Tussauds, and Travelodge, the hotels group.

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<sup>1</sup> foreign exchange reserves. Assets of the Central bank held in other currencies, i.e. dollar, euro, sterling



The Middle East's pan-regional boom looks well-set to play into Dubai's hands. Huge sovereign wealth funds amassed by neighbouring states such as Abu Dhabi and Qatar are contributing to the wall of capital which has turned the Gulf into one of the most formidable global centres for outbound mergers and acquisitions activity. *Daily Telegraph* 29-10-07

Abu Dhabi has helped rescue the US Citigroup, which was struggling after sub-prime losses. Borse Dubai and the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) now own roughly half shares of the London Stock Exchange.

High on the list is technology sharing, with the LSE likely to export its state-of-the-art exchange technology to the QIA in return for its friendly investment.

The LSE will also begin to focus on attracting companies from the Middle East to London, and vice versa, with a memorandum of understanding likely to be signed between the pair shortly.

The QIA, the state investment fund with more than \$50bn (£25bn) of assets under management, will give the LSE access to the Doha Securities Market.

With the Borsa Italiana merger scheduled to complete next month, the LSE will overnight have access to expansion paths in continental Europe and the Middle East, boosting its growth and earnings potential. *Daily Telegraph* 24-9-07

### **Saudi planning \$200m West Bank development**

Arab investors, led by Saudis, have signed a deal with the Palestinian Authority to develop a \$ 200 million West Bank real estate project in the first such venture since recent peace moves, officials said on Saturday.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said such deals by private Palestinian and Gulf Arab investors will help rejuvenate the ailing economy, reeling under tough Israeli constraints.

The Palestine Investment Fund, the investment arm of the PA, owns a fifty percent stake with Riyadh-based The Land Company in the \$50 million capitalised property firm set up to develop the multi-residential and commercial venture near the West Bank city of Ramallah.

The chairman of The Land Company, said construction will start in early 2008 as part of several multi-million dollar schemes the Saudi holding company was studying in Palestinian territories. *gulfinthemedia.com* 16-12-07

*We have seen the role of the Merchants of Tarshish and her Young Lions in this region of Sheba and Dedan, and the trading role of many of these Gulf States as was in the past. We will return to the Young Lions in the region in ch. 13, but now we look at some prophecies about the Papacy.*

## Chapter 7:

# PROPHECIES—THE PAPACY, EUROPE AND THE KING OF THE NORTH

*It is important that we have a scriptural understanding of the relationship between the Vatican and Europe and how that ties with the latter-day King of the North. Our main thrust in this chapter is to see the development of this dreadful system and to see God's assessment of it, by seeing the language He used in the many prophecies that cover its development. In parallel with that we shall build up a picture of what scripture leads us to see as the latter-day relationship between Europe, the Papacy and Russia.*

*Few non-Protestants are aware of the grip that the Roman Catholic Church has on the affairs of Europe, nor the parallel grip of the Orthodox Church on Russian affairs. (However the humanists see only too clearly the undue influence that Rome has on the affairs of Europe, which we shall consider in the next chapter.)*

*We will then finish by looking more particularly at Revelation ch 18.*

## God's viewpoint on today's religious systems

We are warned that Rome holds out a golden cup with which she deceives the nations. This information is given so that we might not likewise be deceived with her attractive wine!

There is one true religion, all the rest are, in God's eyes, false. We would encourage the reader to re-read ch 2 of *Milestones 2005* concerning the two seeds. For this study we are concerned with its Roman stage, which spans several millennia, and is what we see developing again today. In the following quotations I have underlined some of God's key descriptions.

**The man of sin.** We start with Paul's warning to the Thessalonians of the coming man of sin who would develop and be there still at the time of the end, to be destroyed by the Lord.

*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.... And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they*



*should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thes 2:3,4,8-12*

These are strong words of warning about a system of false worship that was to develop when the political system was right. This occurred with the coming of Constantine who removed paganism and made the Roman world “christian”. This allowed the Bishops of Rome to develop into the papal system. We note that the *man of sin* continues to the time of Christ’s return.

**The woman and the dragon.** The Lord spoke to John of this time when the *man of sin* would be revealed, using different symbols. The *dragon*, pagan Rome, was defeated by the man-child, Constantine, who was swept up to the political heavens and ruled as Emperor and head of the “church”.

*And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travelling in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. Rev 12:1-5*

A woman’s time of pregnancy is 280 days, so this being a book of symbols, a *woman bringing forth a man child* v5, represents the bride of Christ, playing the harlot, becoming pregnant with the seeds of error and gave birth to this man-child, Paul’s man of sin, 280 years on. What the apostles had to contend with as the Jews opposed their words and strove to bring back the Mosaic ritual, led 280 years later to a State Church that embraced much of the Mosaic system of priests, robes, incense, holy days, etc.

**Daniel’s 4<sup>th</sup> beast’s little horn.** The prophet Daniel, many years earlier, had spoken of the pagan Roman world under the symbol of the dreadful 4<sup>th</sup> beast. He was shown how the papacy was to arise. The title Pope (father) was not used until Leo I took the title in AD 451 and then it was applied posthumously to all previous bishops of Rome. Daniel sees the great and dreadful 4<sup>th</sup> beast – the Roman Empire—and is told how out of it would arise the papal “little horn” system.

*I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. ... even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the*

*saints possessed the kingdom. And he shall speake great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: Dan 7:8,20-22,25*

Again what a remarkably apt description this is of the power that would arise in the Roman world, different from the other 10 horn powers, in that it possessed eyes and a mouth, that spoke against God, changed times and laws and persecuted the saints—the Roman Church as the eyes and mouth of the Holy Roman Empire horn.

**The little horn of the goat.** In the next chapter Daniel is given further developments of the 4<sup>th</sup> beast system under the ram and male goat symbols. The he-goat shows us the origin and development of the military might of Rome, emerging out of the divided Greek kingdom following Alexander the Great's death. The power of Rome as a little horn (not to be confused with the little horn of ch 7) was to emerge from one of the 4 horns, and conquer the Holy Land and stand against the Messiah at his first coming.

*And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered. Dan 8:9-12*

The down treading would be for a long time.<sup>1</sup> Daniel ch 8 ends with a description of this horn power that had earlier come against Israel and magnified itself against Messiah – *the prince of the host* v11.

*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. 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. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall*

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel was shown a period of down treading for 2,300 "days", which is a compressed time period of a duration appropriate for the symbol—a goat can live for 6+ years. Applying the day for a year principle we have 2300 years of down treading for the nation of Israel. As no starting point for this time period's commencement is given, it could be commenced with a number of stages in the goat's horn history. If we take the start of the Grecian goat power in 334 BC, (Bro Thomas's chronology), then 2,300 takes us to 1967 with the retaking of Jerusalem. Later developments of the horn's history give times that could span into the near future.



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. Dan 8:23-25

It is a picture of the restored eastern military might of Rome. Just as Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire eastward to Constantinople, so the latter-day representative of the little horn of the goat, Gog, will retake Constantinople and linking with Europe and the Papacy will fulfil these verses. We will come back to this later in the chapter.

**The king of the North.** Further details are given in chapter 11 of Daniel concerning this little horn of the goat. This fascinating chapter is like a miniature book of Revelation, setting out history in relation to Israel and covers a span of some 2,400 years, reaching into the future with ch 12 outlining the salvation of Israel under Christ and the saints. Again we are noting God's viewpoint: -

And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. Dan 11:36-39

The "King" represented the military power of the Emperors in Constantinople, who supported the spiritual power of the Bishops of Rome.

**A god of guardians.** The "God of forces" (AV) refers to the Bishop of Rome as the spiritual leader. Bro Thomas translates this as "a god of guardians" (*Place of safety* – Gesenius.) A characteristic of this system is that it dedicates its places of worship to fictitious gods ("St. Peter", "St. Paul", "St. Margaret" etc) who are supposed to be in heaven and who protect them—gods of guardians. This was quite a different system from the pagan Emperors who claimed to be god on earth and high priest. This new system was indeed a "strange god" and the Empire was indeed *divided for gain*, being split into the many dioceses (Greek word for administration), that were, and still are, devoted to raising money to support the church.

Meanwhile let's go back to the development of Rome as portrayed in Revelation. The little horn of the goat aspect is depicted in Revelation chapters 12 and 13 as *the Dragon*. The shift in centre to Constantinople opened up the development of Rome and Western Europe.

**The Beasts of Revelation ch. 13.** Beast symbols are used for this and are briefly mentioned in ch 11:7 as a persecuting power against the saints, but given greater detail in ch. 13. Here are detailed the beasts that would arise on the Roman arena. The *Beast of the Sea* is followed by the lamb-like *Beast of the Earth* with its 2 horns, representing the Holy Roman Empire where Western Europe was dominated by Western Emperors and Popes. We refer the reader to *Milestones 2004* ch 4 for further exposition.

In addition there was a copy of this Beast of the Earth—the *Image of the Beast*, representing the Popes as kings over their papal states.

*And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six. Rev 13:15-18*

This is a frightening picture of the great power that the Papacy wielded in the past. These beasts came to an end in the time of the French Revolution and the times of Napoleon, as described in the first 5 Vials of Rev 16.

**The false prophet.** This was not to be the end. Having lost all her territories by 1870, a new symbol is needed and this one is a very appropriate one for this period when the only territory owned by the Popes was the tiny Vatican City, given to them by Mussolini in 1929. A false prophet is one who claims to speak in God's name but is a deceiver and a liar. Such is the Master's description of today's Roman Catholic system.

*And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Rev 16:13,14*

**The great whore.** Chapter 17 brings us to times that are beginning now but which will have their climax with the battles that will be fought when Gog has been overthrown and Europe is resisting Christ's call to submission.

*... the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. ... I saw a woman... And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE*



*EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: Rev 17:2-6*

We have to face this fact that there is no other religious system that fits all these passages other than the Roman Catholic Church with her main daughters the Greek and Russian Orthodox churches.

**Babylon the Great.** In speaking of the destruction of this evil system at the hands of the returned Christ, this language is used.

*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Rev 18:2-4*

*.. for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth. Rev 18:23,24*

As the saints at this time will be with their Lord, *my people* points in this instance to the Jews, many of whom share some of the teachings of Babylon, such as an immortal soul and heaven going, as well as living in Europe on “Babylon” territory. Following the destruction of the Gogian armies on the mountains of Israel, they will be in a fearful situation, hated and persecuted. Among them will be Gentiles who recognise that Christ is the returned Messiah and will forsake their old paths and seek Zion. See exposition in *Rome & Jerusalem*, CSSS, p.120, and Jer. 50:4-9.

**The false prophet destroyed.** This evil system with all its ramifications and associations will eventually be rooted out and the earth will then be at peace, with Zion’s king ruling all the earth.

*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. Rev 19:20*

It is clear from the language of these many passages that we are faced with a system that is abhorrent in God’s eyes. It corrupted the true way and deceives people and leads them away from the true path of salvation. Hence the severity of God’s past judgements in the time of the French Revolution, and the coming judgements under Christ.

### **The two little horns in the latter days**

It is clear that both these horns are in existence at the time of the end. We reproduce a section from a little booklet written probably in the 1940’s by

Bro Bert Gates entitled *Daniel. A brief illustrated Exposition.*

It will be perceived that the two little horn powers exist in some way when the Christ-body is manifested. For in regard to the fourth beast's little horn it is written that he prevailed until the Ancient of days came and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; whilst in regard to the goat's little horn it appears that his standing up against the Prince of princes and subsequent breaking "without hand" must refer to a future catastrophe at the hands of Christ. We need to ascertain how the ancient little horns will be represented in the latter days.

It is essential to remember the respective spheres of control of these two horns in past times. The 4th beast's little horn was ecclesiastical and western, whilst the more ancient little horn of the goat was imperial and eastern. For many hundreds of years following the reign of Constantine the eastern was the more powerful, but in later times the western waxed stronger.

It appears that this sequence must be repeated in the latter days but in a much shorter period of time. The Roman Empire will be revived and will pass through the two stages as it did before. In the first phase the Russian Gog is evidently the chief. He will take Constantinople and enthrone himself there as the Imperial ruler. He will honour the false prophet of Rome who, in turn, will acknowledge the supremacy of Gog.

The image in its complete latter-day manifestation will be based upon the revived two legs of the Roman Empire. It will be seen that as well as being "little horn of the Goat" in Constantinople, Gog will also be the latter-day representative of the northern horn of the Greek empire out of which the little horn originally came. He is thus the eastern leg of the image, the little horn of the goat and the king of the north. At this stage there will also be the western leg, otherwise called the little horn of the fourth beast. In the south there will be Britain and associated powers who will defend Palestine and fill the role of "king of the south."

The Russian Gog, whose territory will be vast and having support also from Persia, Ethiopia and Libya, will then seek to enlarge his border still further by annexing Syria, Palestine and Egypt. He will be opposed by the southern confederacy, but will meet defeat on the mountains of Israel after taking Egypt. Defeat will come, not by Britain, but by the new power, the chariots of Yahweh, newly developed in the recesses of Teman. By this means the image-power is deprived of its Russian headship; the eastern Constantinopolitan leg loses its supremacy, and future events switch to the west where the little horn of the fourth beast, the harlot upon the waters and the ten kings of the earth associate together to make war with the Lamb who will then have enthroned himself on Mount Zion and called upon the world to submit to his rule.

*Having given the scriptural background to this terrible system of corrupt christianity, we now look at how the Vatican is influencing the affairs of Europe, just as Scripture foretold!*



## Chapter 8:

# THE HIDDEN HAND OF THE VATICAN IN EUROPE

“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.” *Guy Emery Shipler* (Editor of *The Churchman* from 1922-1968)

*Wise words from somebody who took a close interest in the affairs of the Vatican. A whole generation of progress has taken place since he penned those words. In this chapter we will trace the rising power of the Vatican and in particular its influence on Europe. An exciting if not fearful growth in power; this is what our earlier brethren had predicted from their study of Scripture. And now it is happening, our community is largely asleep to the dangers it might bring to the brotherhood. Rome’s rise to power today has, as part of its success, made the Protestant community drunk with her wine. We have not been immune from this undermining of our opposition to this evil system. Protestantism is all but extinguished in this country. The headlines in the UK papers today proclaim that Roman Catholic Church attendances have overtaken that of the Church of England, due to the vast influx of workers from Poland and other Roman Catholic countries.*

*We begin by a look at a prophecy, which we did not consider in our previous chapter, but is very apposite to the considerations here.*

## The reflourishing of the Babylonian tree

Between the vision that King Nebuchadnezzar saw as recorded in Daniel 2 and the vision given to Daniel of the 4 beasts as recorded in chapter 7 are details of another vision seen by the king in chapter 4. Note its positioning. The previous chapter records the building of the image that the king insisted that all bow down and worship. The following chapter records the overthrow of Babylon by the Medes and Persians.

Chapter 4 seems rather an odd matter to record in scripture; the striking of the king with madness when he boasts of his achievements, and his subsequent restoration. Yet it is a sufficiently important matter that involves a God-given dream that Daniel is called upon to interpret.

This being the book of Daniel indicates to us that there is far more to it than the actual incident as recorded! Why for instance band the tree with iron and brass bands? We cut back hard a tree and it will normally sprout again without needing any support, after all it is the same trunk carrying now a much smaller weight. We come back to its position sandwiched between chapters 3 and 5. In the earlier chapter we see the king acting as the all-powerful king-priest. What he decreed was law, he was not only ruler but

in charge of worship. There is a considerable time gap between chapters 3 and 5. Overnight the power of Babylon crumbled before Darius the Mede. But was the spirit of Babylon at an end? No! That great city which had its origins in Babel was to live on; its false teachings, its mysteries were to continue and Babylon the Great be there at the time of the end still deceiving, still authoritarian.

*How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Rev 18:7*

So *Babylon the Great* (v2) says, *I sit a queen and am no widow!* That is what she claims prior to her overthrow. She had been widowed, but now was back in power. She had been widowed in the period of the Vials, poured out at the time of the French Revolution and the deeds of the French Napoleonic leaders. Gratton Guinness (1835-1910) remarked: -

“The extent and character of papal dominion during the dark ages is, in our days, little realised. It is not easy gazing on the rotten stump of an old oak, to picture to ones self what the tree was in the days of its glorious youth”.

What a remarkable change from his day to ours! In a remarkable way she gained power in the 1930's largely due to the agreement made with the Italian ruler Mussolini—the Lateran Treaty. There was however a much longer period of “widowhood” foretold—that of Daniel ch 4.

The setting of the chapter is Nebuchadnezzar's recalling of the events of the previous few years. He is writing from the aspect of having his sanity and power restored and describes the steps; first the dream, then its interpretation by Daniel, and then its fulfilment. He is brought to acknowledge the greatness of the God of Daniel.

*... I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:*

*And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? Dan 4:34,35*

However, the next chapter indicates that Babylon resumed her old ways; it records Belshazzar using the Lord's Temple vessels to praise his gods. Babylon's brief spell of revival was brought to an end by the one foretold in Isaiah ch. 45, Cyrus, *my shepherd, mine anointed*, (Isa 44:28; 45:1) whose name means “the sun”, or in Hebrew “like the heir”. He is a wonderful type of the Lord Jesus, “the sun of righteousness”, “the heir of all things”, who will destroy Babylon the Great.



So how does this link to Daniel ch 4? The tree was cut down and banded for 7 times. For king Nebuchadnezzar, this was, as far as we know, a 7-year period. Herodotus, ii. 586 records an inscription that states “for four years in Babylon buildings for the honour of my kingdom I did not lay out. In the worship of Merodach my lord, I did not sing his praises.” It is understandable he wanted to minimise the duration of this period. Seven times, or 7 years = 2520 days. This was the literal fulfilment. In the greater fulfilment, we have to apply a longer time scale—a day representing a year. If we commence this cutting down of Babylon with the date of its fall, then 2520 years brings us to modern times. Bro Thomas dates the fall as 542 BC which would bring us to 1978, a significant year, the year John Paul II became Pope.



Now the stump was banded with iron and brass, metals we recognise from chapter 2; Greece and Rome. So in what way was the spirit of Babylon preserved down through the centuries? It was in the Roman and the Greek churches. They incorporated into their worship many of the rites of Babylon and thus preserved them.

So what we are being told is that at the time of the end, Babylon the Great is to flourish again—for a short time—until destroyed, as the next chapter tells by the representative of the Lord Jesus. When is that reflourishing? At the end of the 7 times.

### John Paul II the great reformer

Even the Roman Church acknowledges the dramatic revival in their fortunes under this Polish Pope. This is the cover of the *National Catholic Reporter* 31-8-07 showing a picture of Benedict XVI and the headline: *A profound shift. The rise of evangelical Catholicism. John Paul II.* Here are a few extracts from the cover story.



History always cuts deeper than headlines, a point that clearly applies to recent Vatican moves to dust off the old Latin Mass and to declare Catholicism the one true church. Beneath the upheaval triggered by those decisions lies a profound shift in the church's geological plates, and perhaps the best way of describing the resulting earthquake is as the triumph of evangelical Catholicism.

Beginning with the election of Pope John Paul II in 1978, Catholicism has become a steadily more evangelical church—uncompromising and unabashedly itself. Evangelical Catholicism today dominates the church's leadership class, and it feeds on the energy of a strong grass-roots minority.

### **Accenting authority**

Defending church authority was a core concern of the John Paul II years, reflected in struggles to define the limits of theological exploration, to curb the authority of national bishops' conferences and to assert Rome's oversight of liturgical practice. That effort shows no sign of letting up under Benedict XVI, who as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger helped define the evangelical thrust of John Paul's papacy. For example, among the new pope's early moves was to drop the title "Patriarch of the West" as a way of insisting that papal authority is not just a phenomenon of the Western church but, at least in principle, is universal.

Indeed the flourishing of the Babylonian tree! Under John Paul II, communism was rolled back in the former Soviet Union, resulting now in many more countries being members of the EU and bringing with them a large number of faithful into the Union. The effect of this in Britain has been a big revival in Roman Catholic Church audiences as the new immigrants bring their faith and their babies!

### **Benedict asserts his authority**

As the Church of England drifts helplessly, having no strong leader prepared to stand up against modern day evils, Benedict works in marked contrast. He has emphasised again that truth can only be found within the Roman fold. His personal decision to permit holding of masses in Latin and his boldness in standing up against the Muslim advance, has only brought respect to the church.

### **A church's assertive shift toward tradition**

The leader of 1.1 billion Catholics, Pope Benedict XVI, is completing a significant theological shift of the Roman Catholic Church—a sweeping change that not only eclipses 40 years of a more moderate and collegial Catholicism, but seeks to reassert the spiritual supremacy of the Vatican and more openly proclaim the authority of the office of pope among all Christians.

Some two years after taking the reins, say Protestant and Catholic theologians and religious experts, the Bavarian-born pope is moving swiftly to affirm orthodox doctrines and medieval church rituals that undermine the spirit of Vatican II, a period of modernization in which the church appeared to be rethinking its centuries-long insistence that it had exclusive claims to matters of grace, truth, salvation, and church structure in the Christian world.

### **Radical reassertion is necessary**

Defenders say that only by a radical reassertion of traditional Catholicism can the church become the body able to bring clarity, order, and moral authority to a troubled world. *csmonitor* 18-7-07



In an age of shifting sands and passing fads, here is a voice of authority that the world turns to. This has not come about through chance; this has been long worked for and is now reaping its fruits. The tree has re-flourished.

### **Using the laity**

The Roman Church realised that she had to tap into the forces that the ordinary church members—the laity—could bring to bear, each in his own sphere, to promote the Church, harnessing their enthusiasm to her own benefit in her efforts to push back Protestant evangelism.

An interesting article, written 11 years ago, on how the laity should be working to further the church, concluded with this heading

#### **England Could Be Catholic In 35 Years**

Immorality is growing around us at an enormous rate. Even now it is extremely hard to live a saintly life in the world. What will it be like a hundred years hence? Will the young people then be blaming the Catholics of today because they were so slow in fighting the false principles of the world around them? It is said to be a fact that if only one in ten of the practising Catholics of England and Wales were to bring into the Church one convert per year then these countries would be entirely converted in less than forty years. *catholic.com/thisrock* May 1996

In many ways the church has used the laity to bring about the change in perception in a nominally Protestant country like Britain, where to be a Roman Catholic was looked down upon. By putting the Roman Catholic point of view in their daily tasks as workers, writers, news broadcasters, even rewriting history through books concerning say the Gunpowder Plot, a gradual shift in perception has been achieved. No longer does it carry a stigma; it is now respectable to be a Roman Catholic.

### **Winning the media war**

Extensive use is made of all types of broadcasting. Priests and laity are trained to be able to put over the church's teaching in interviews. Vatican radio and TV is beamed around the world, and widespread use is made of the internet.

Pope Benedict is skilfully using the media to put across his message. The *Urbi et Orbi* Christmas Day message by Pope Benedict XVI was broadcast on 88 TV networks, of which 35 were live, covering 57 countries.

While the mass media of the West fixate on the rise of Islamism to the detriment of Western society, another major religion is rapidly gaining ground in terms of its appeal to youth in particular, and more worryingly, its political clout.

The plain fact to which Western media have yet to awaken is that secularism is on the way to becoming *passé*. The liberal socialism that

morphed out of a combine of godless German rationalism, child of the 18th-century period that historians label the Enlightenment, and its clone, godless communism, so long the mentor of our campus intelligentsia, is on the back foot. Religion of an older, traditional form is increasingly returning to fashion.

A powerful force is rising across the Atlantic [i.e. in Europe], destined to pale all religious competition into relative insignificance. It's centered around a highly intelligent and articulate personality holding an office of increasing political significance. It has an annual budget founded upon assets that make it the richest institution in the world. It has greater command of media than any single one of its competitors. It's simply the oldest religion in the world, mother of them all, an imperial power.

Last week, Catholic World News reported that it had exceeded all records for reporting the number of current events involving the Vatican. Also last week, Pope Benedict XVI commented publicly on the power of the mass media to move the masses. Publicity and mass communication are so important to the Vatican that it has a high-profile department specifically devoted to its effective exploitation, the Pontifical Council for Social Communications.

The Vatican is winning the religious media war hands down! From the time of the record-breaking audiences that tuned in to see Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger conduct Pope John Paul II's funeral, to the massive media coverage of his investiture as Pope Benedict XVI, the small, slight figure of this Bavarian pope has become the most recognizable of personalities across the globe. Pope Benedict XVI enjoyed total audiences in 2006 greater than the annual audiences of any single previous pope, and far greater than any other single religious leader in history! *The Trumpet* 14-3-07

## **H2O—the new Roman Catholic news source**

A Roman Catholic media service has just been launched with the title H2O—water—which gives a new twist to the phrase: -

*The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.* Rev 17:15

It makes freely available, in 8 languages at the moment, highly professional broadcast material to any organisation who wishes to rebroadcast it. In a world where normally one has to pay for material to broadcast, which source are broadcasters going to use? It will be a powerful source of news, which will inevitably be slanted to put the Roman Church's point of view. Its web site [www.h2onews.tv](http://www.h2onews.tv) has this to say about itself: -

### **H2onews, Your Good News Source**

H2onews is a Catholic news service on a worldwide scale that creates and distributes multimedia news, every day, in eight languages. The



news focuses on the life of the Church and on social and cultural events that directly pertain to Catholics living in the world.

H2onews offers its multimedia services free of charge to Catholic television, web sites and radio stations so that the Pope's words and news about the Church are available to everyone interested.

### **How did the project start?**

H2onews springs from the Pope's request to use modern methods of communication for evangelization and promoting peace and development (World Social Communications Day, May 8, 2005).

The goal of H2onews is to respond to the need for growth in worldwide Catholic communication. This challenge was taken up by a group of television and information professionals who have created H2onews. This team draws on the professional experience of the sisters of the Home of the Mother, which has been gifted with a talent for audiovisual communication.

### **What is the editorial philosophy of H2Onews?**

H2onews takes a Catholic view of reality based on the official position of the Church's authorities.

### **Why online?**

H2onews believes that communication creates communion. Today, the most widespread distribution network is the internet, equal to television in terms of individual users. The internet's ease of access gives many people the possibility to share their experiences, professionalism and talents.

### **New German foundation to promote Church social teaching**

Here is news of a further promotion, this time in Germany.

A new German foundation has raised \$145,000 for a campaign to promote Catholic social teaching in German-speaking countries.

The mission of the Benedict Foundation will be to defend the dignity of human life, marriage, and the family, and to encourage social justice and solidarity. The foundation plans a program of lectures and other ventures to broaden appreciation for Catholic social teaching.

The Benedict Foundation, with headquarters in Munich, was founded by Father Eberhard von Gemmingen, SJ, the director of the German section of Vatican Radio. *Catholic World News* 14-12-07

### **Enlarging Europe**

John Paul II used his papal visits to promote the bringing of former communist countries into the embrace of the EU. The 2004 enlargement to bring in 10 new members followed by another two at the start of 2007 has added considerably to the Pope's sympathetic forces. Of the 12 new

countries, 7 are Roman Catholic, 2 are Lutheran and 2 are Orthodox. (Bulgaria is "non-religious"). The Lutheran Church widely supports Rome, so on most matters Rome can count on the support of 11 of them!

### **Caritas Internationalis**

This is a confederation of 162 Catholic relief, development and social service organisations that operates in over 200 countries and is one of the world's biggest humanitarian organisations. It is one of the organisations that the EU uses to channel its aid funds. As its web site says: -

It works together with the European institutions, with Member States and with many different public authorities, as well as with many public and private partners around the world, including Caritas organisations in other regions.

The extent of the use of EU funding was exposed on a Roman Catholic site Catholics *For a Free Choice—Europe* 21-3-05. It was quite revealing!

At present, the EU is not a religious polity. Religious organisations, like other civil society organisations, may apply for EU funds for projects that promote reflection on the idea of Europe in the context of religion, spirituality and values. A specific budget line (A-3024) was created in late 1990 under the name "A Soul for Europe." COMECE and other Catholic organisations have applied for and received grants to organise conferences and other educational projects under this rubric.

The EU funds that represent a more substantial interest for the church, however, are those for humanitarian aid, foreign development, poverty eradication and combating social exclusion. These are areas where Catholic charities constitute a significant portion of all service providers and therefore receive a large share of the funding. For example, according to the Catholic hierarchy, 25 percent of all AIDS patients are cared for by Catholic health care providers. As the EU funds such care at substantial levels, the International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity, a consortium of Catholic development agencies with offices in Brussels, has created a position of development policy officer to facilitate the access of its member agencies to EU funding and to monitor and influence EU decision-making on development policy. Between 1997 and 2002, Catholic charities received nearly €99 million of EU funding—close to 10 percent of the total €1 billion the EU spent on such projects. EU funding goes to Catholic organisations that do not always reflect the progressive values of the EU. The Vatican rejects EU policy but its charities get EU money. They do charitable work in the name of Christian values with the money of non-Catholics, with the Vatican becoming a substitute State in countries where the government does not provide the basic public services to meet the welfare needs of the weakest members of society, both in Europe and on other continents, making significant social and political capital for itself as a result.



## France—"the elder daughter"

With the change of government in France in May, we had a change in attitude towards the Roman Catholic Church. Nicolas Sarkozy visited the Pope in December for the ceremony of becoming honorary canon of Saint John Lateran's, an award originally given to French kings from Henry IV (1604) onwards and in modern times, to presidents of the republic. It is given "in return for keeping Protestantism at bay," according to the *Sunday Times* 21-1-96, when Chirac was awarded the title.

Sarkozy is much more supportive of the Church than Chirac. His speech was very interesting in the light of what we have been pointing out. France was publicly acknowledging its Roman Catholic roots!

Some speeches are important not because they offer original ideas, but simply because they expand the realm of what can be said. ... his words definitely expanded the realm of what can be said publicly in Europe.

Much of what he had to say dealt with what in Italian is called "laicità" ... the word refers to the ideal of a "secular," non-confessional state, strongly informed by the principal of the separation of Church and State.

What Sarkozy offered was his vision of a positive "laicity," one that "sees religion not as a danger, but rather as an advantage." He was seeking to separate himself from what he sees as an earlier, immature form of "laicity" that was merely anti-religious or anti-clerical. This (in part) is what he said:

"Laicity cannot be a negation of the past. It does not have the power to cut France off from her Christian roots ... To cut those roots means to lose meaning. It means weakening the foundation of the national identity and withering still further our social relations ... So we must hold together the two ends of the chain: holding on to France's Christian roots, and treasuring them, and at the same time defending a more mature form of laicity ... Thus, along with Benedict XVI, it is my belief that a nation that ignores the ethical, spiritual, and religious heritage of its own history commits a crime against its own culture, against its entire history, ... France needs convinced Catholics who are not afraid to affirm what they are and what they believe. We are longing for spirituality, values and hope... [France needs] joyous Catholics ... who, sustained by a greater hope, set out each day to construct a better world." *John Wauck* 21-12-07 (An Opus Dei priest)

"There has probably never been a French president who defended his country's Catholic heritage so vigorously." *La Croix* 20-12-07

*Prophecy tells us to expect the Catholic Church to be very strong at the time of the end before Armageddon and afterwards e.g. Rev. 17-19. We have seen evidence of her growing power and even France is now supporting her. We look at still more evidence in ch. 10, but first we will have a brief look at the growing ties between the churches.*

## Chapter 9:

# THE VATICAN AND THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES

*Benedict XVI has followed closely in John Paul II's footsteps in seeking reconciliation with the Russian Orthodox Church. Some progress was made under John Paul II but his dream of a visit to Moscow was never realised. The Russian Church is wary of Rome's intentions, fearing (rightly so!) that Rome wants to take over the Russian Church. The coming of a German Pope, and with the Russian Patriarch Alexy II also being German, has transformed matters. They are able to converse in the same language, and they have a similar way of thinking. Both are determined to bring Christianity back to the heart of Europe. We start with the efforts being made by the Russian Church to find accommodation with Rome.*

## Moscow reaching out to Rome

Just like John Paul II and Benedict XVI, the Russian Church has been pressing for Europe to get back to its Christian roots.

Europe must maintain its Christian culture in order to survive in the modern world, a ranking Russian Orthodox prelate told an ecumenical gathering in Sibiu, Romania, this week.

Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk, the chief ecumenical official of the Moscow patriarchate, said that the Christian faith is "a vital source of support for European civilization." His speech echoed the argument that has been made frequently in recent years by Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI. The shared goal of preserving Europe's Christian heritage has been an important factor in warming relations between the Holy See and the Moscow patriarchate. *Catholic World News* 7-9-07

The Russian Church maintains an office in Strasbourg to work with the EU. This might seem surprising, but the eastward expansion of the EU has brought many Russian Orthodox Church goers into the embrace of the EU.

In October, Alexy II made an historic visit to Strasbourg to address the Council of Europe. Part of his aim was to strengthen ties with Rome.

Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia has expressed hope that his official visit to France beginning on October 1 will help strengthen cooperation with Europe.

"I will address the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. We, the children of Orthodox Christian tradition, have our own view of many problems. Without this view it would be difficult to talk about forging truly pan-European cooperation," the patriarch said in an interview with the French magazine *La Vie*, posted on the official website of the Moscow Patriarchate.



The Russian Church, due to its location between Europe and Asia, “is called upon to be a bridge between West and East,” he said, adding that the history of the Russian Orthodox tradition “is inextricably linked to the history of Europe, East and Asia.”

Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia, in the course of his visit to France, has pointed to the importance of developing Orthodox-Catholic relations.

“I am convinced of the importance of developing further the bilateral relations between our two Churches in a spirit of love and mutual respect. This is especially important at a time when our Churches have to respond to numerous challenges of today”, the patriarch said during his meeting with the Catholic Archbishop Jean-Pierre Grallet of Strasbourg, October 2.

Alexy II cited as an example the cooperation between the two Churches on the level of the church representations in Strasbourg, which, according to him, are actively involved in the work of the Council of Europe, presenting the Christian position on many issues and making a real impact on decisions taken by political leaders. *Interfax* 2-10-07

There is talk of the Pope visiting Moscow “within a year”. One of the difficulties is the matter of Papal supremacy. However 50 representatives from the Roman Catholic and 50 from the Russian Orthodox Churches have been meeting to discuss this matter and *The Ravenna Document* was issued in October, summarising their findings. *The Trumpet* (ex Plain Truth) 16-11-07 commented: -

The Vatican has drafted a joint document with Orthodox Church leaders declaring that the pope has primacy over all Catholic and Orthodox bishops. The agreement was reached by a joint international commission in Ravenna, Italy, on October 13.

The document specifically declares that the pope held the highest position in the unified church before the Great Schism in 1054, and that the bishop of Rome was the *protos*, or first, among the patriarchs, including those of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.

That acknowledgment could pave the way for eventual reunification of the two churches—under the pope’s rule.

“This document is a modest first step and as such one of hope,” he told Vatican Radio. “But we must not exaggerate its importance. This will not be easy. The road is very long and difficult.”

The Orthodox Church split with Rome in 1054, largely because of disagreements over the authority of the pope. Its 220 million members fall under the authority of autonomous national churches, rather than a universal ruler, the way 1.1 billion Roman Catholics do.

Pope Benedict XVI has called regaining the Orthodox Church a priority of his administration. Benedict is literally making a career out of re-acquiring Catholicism's daughter churches. However, one dogma will remain the same: Everybody obeys the Pope.

As a result of these ecumenical maneuverings—resulting in Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant daughters being welded back into the universal Church—look for papal authority not to weaken but to ultimately increase even further than it has already.

Another report suggests that good progress was being made on the long road to heal the Great Schism of 1054.

The Moscow Patriarchate has noticed the intensification of its contacts with the Catholics during Pope Benedict XVI's pontificate and suggested that an alliance between the two churches could theoretically be set up in the future.

"After Benedict XVI was elected pope and declared the development of dialogue with the Orthodox Church among the priorities of his pontificate, bilateral relations between our churches have noticeably enlivened," Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, the head of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations, said in a report he presented at an inter-religious conference in Naples.

Both the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches "understand more clearly today than they have ever done before the importance of their joint testimony to the secular world about Christian values, which this world is trying to marginalize," Kirill said. *Europaica* 24-11-07

### **Warm relations with the Greek Orthodox Churches**

The Patriarch of Constantinople is regarded as the chief of the Patriarchs of all the Orthodox leaders. Originally there were 5 Patriarchs; Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. After the split of 1054, the Patriarch of Constantinople assumed supremacy of the Orthodox Churches. In later centuries, 5 younger Patriarchs were added, the most senior being Russia, followed by Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Georgia. The Greek Church is not senior enough to have its own Patriarch; it is headed by Archbishop Christodoulos.

Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople is therefore the highest-ranking Orthodox leader. There have been extensive contacts between Constantinople and Rome, including the Pope's visit to Turkey last year, which was covered in *Milestones* 2006. Progress continues as this report from *Catholic World News* 3-12-07 indicates

#### **Pope, Patriarch pledge ecumenical progress**

Cardinal Walter Kasper led a high-level Vatican delegation to Istanbul to join Patriarch Bartholomew I in celebrating the feast of St. Andrew, the patron of the Constantinople See, on November 30.



Following what has become an annual tradition, the secretary of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity brought the greetings of the Pope to the Constantinople patriarchate. In his message to Patriarch Bartholomew, the Holy Father recalled his trip to Turkey last year, when he himself joined in the ceremonies for the feast of St. Andrew in Constantinople. The Pontiff also welcomed the progress achieved during an October meeting of the joint Catholic-Orthodox theological commission, in sessions held at Ravenna, Italy.

In his homily during the Nov. 30 celebration, Patriarch Bartholomew made a similar point, saying that ecumenical unity is more necessary than ever in the face of advancing secularism and materialism. Christians must join together to lead a recovery of the sacred, relying on the efficacy of the sacraments and the soundness of Christian doctrine.

### **The Russian Orthodox Church and the State**

In Russia, Church and State now work closely together, a model perhaps for the West. This is a report of the Easter celebrations as reported in the German Press Agency *dpa* 8-4-07

Russian President Vladimir Putin and other politicians took part in the Easter mass of Russian-orthodox Patriarch Alexi II at Moscow's cathedral of Christ the Redeemer. Putin, who despite his secret service past is considered a devout Christian, wished his countrymen a happy Easter.

Putin explicitly honoured Alexi II's commitment to the "spiritual renewal of Russia." After the Easter mass in the Redeemer cathedral, Putin gave the patriarch a 16th-century icon of the Virgin Mary, which the Bolsheviks had sold abroad in the 1920s.

Around 150 million people worldwide belong to the Christian orthodox faith. The Russian Church, or the Moscow Patriarchate, is its largest sect with some 100 million believers in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and other countries. The Russian Orthodox Church has grown from 6,900 parishes just before the dissolution of the USSR to 26,600 today.

NB. Claimed world numbers of adherents range from 150-350m. *Wikipedia*

*We expect there to be one powerful religious leader at the time of the end. Nebuchadnezzar's image (Dan 2) has to stand up and it has one head of gold with one mouth directing its advance against the mountains of Israel, the eyes and mouth of Daniel's 4<sup>th</sup> beast (7:8,25). So it is of great interest to see the progress towards unity amongst the churches. We continue looking at Europe and the Vatican's influence by looking at the controversial Lisbon Treaty recently signed by the 27 European leaders.*

## Chapter 10:

# EUROPE, THE VATICAN AND THE LISBON TREATY

*In this chapter we continue our theme of the hidden hand of the Vatican in Europe by looking at what may turn out to be one of the most significant milestones in 2007, the Reform Treaty or, as it now known, the Lisbon Treaty. That is why we spend a whole chapter on this topic. Some of the matters are a bit dry—"article 16C" for example—but for those of us living in the EU these matters have the potential to make our witnessing to the Truth much more difficult.*

*This Treaty has been signed by the EU leaders, but still has to be agreed to by each individual country by the end of 2008. Even if some countries reject it—and Britain may well be one—the momentum towards a united Europe appears to be unstoppable.*

*In tracing the background to this Treaty we shall see that the Roman Church has manoeuvred itself so that it is in a strong position to continue to exert a great influence upon Europe. The Harlot has indeed made the preparations in order to ride the Beast of Europe (Rev 17).*

## Charlemagne the role model for Europe

The founding fathers of the EU looked back to Charlemagne as their role model for the future of Europe. In his day, Charlemagne and the Pope worked together, converting the conquered pagan tribes to the Church. He was known to be a great organiser—every aspect of living was covered by rules and regulations—something that those living in the EU are painfully aware of. As an example my grandchild's instruction booklet for a fairly complex electronic game was matched in size by the "health and safety" booklet!

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. *History Today*

From Charlemagne the King of the Franks, developed the Holy Roman Empire—the *Beast of the Earth* of Rev 13, which we looked at in chapter 7.

## Merkel wins the Charlemagne prize

That Charlemagne is seen as the role model is shown in the prize that his hometown of Aachen awards every year "for distinguished service on behalf of European unification". Not unexpectedly, the prize this year has been awarded to Angela Merkel, although the actual ceremony will not be



until 2008. The traditional day for this is “Ascension Day”—the day when, in the church’s eyes, Jesus went to his Kingdom! Merkel was determined to revive the ‘dead’ EU Constitution and with great energy overcame all the obstacles to present what was known as the Reform Treaty to the EU leaders at the end of her 6-month stint as EU president. In addition she was the main force behind the Berlin Declaration celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, which gave birth to what is now the 27-member EU.

### **Why they wanted a new Constitution**

The running of the EU is controlled by various Treaties, The Treaty of Rome, the Maastricht Treaty, and the Nice Treaty. With increasingly more members joining the EU it was getting very messy, and so it was proposed to draw up a Constitution for Europe, that would amalgamate the past Treaties and add more to unify the EU. Its aim was to have a Minister for Europe who could represent the whole EU instead of ministers from individual countries. It was also to have a President who would be in charge for a three and a half year term, replacing the present system of rotating 6-monthly presidencies.

In *Milestones* over the years we have looked at the build up to this Constitution and its killing off by its rejection by France and the Netherlands in 2005. 2007 has been the year of its successor—the Reform or Lisbon Treaty. This has been the work of Angela Merkel, and we will look at it when considering Europe in chapter 11. What we are looking at in this chapter is the way the Vatican has been seeking to influence the wording of the Constitution (which is now the Reform Treaty or the Lisbon Treaty) and also the Berlin Declaration celebrating 50 years since the 1957 Treaty of Rome. We see this as preparation to *ride* the European Beast.

### **Rome’s hidden hand in Europe**

John Paul II had been pressing the politicians of Europe to incorporate a reference to God in the Constitution for Europe.

A major source of conflict emerged during the discussions about the new constitution regarding the role and rights of religious entities. The Constitution draft includes a “church” article (Article 52 [now 16C]) which grants significant and unique privileges and rights to religious denominations and makes them exempt from some European laws and regulations. The Catholic church strongly backed these measures. As a result, there was intense lobbying by the Catholic hierarchy throughout the process, including Vatican audiences with high European officials. John Paul II received Valérie Giscard d’Estaing, president of the Convention, Pat Cox, president of the European Parliament, Tony Blair, prime minister of the United Kingdom, Joschka Fischer, German vice-chancellor, and others. He summoned the ambassadors of member states who are accredited to the Holy See to a meeting to inform them of his wish to have certain elements included in the European Constitution.

The lobbying was strong at the national level, too, where the national bishops' conferences used their many formal and informal structures to pressure their governments and their countries' delegates to advance the church's concerns. *Catholics For a Free Choice—Europe* 21-3-05

The Vatican is unique in being represented at the EU by both a Papal Nuncio—a right ratified by a EU treaty—and a representative from the Catholic Bishop's Conference. But despite all this lobbying and influence, the Vatican's victory was a limited one. True, the Vatican secured for itself exemption from certain things and inclusion in decision-making processes, but it nevertheless failed to get mention of God in the Constitution. Nowadays Rome happily signs Concordats with parties without mentioning God, but was chafed by its failure to get mention of Europe's [RC] Christian roots, which was what it was after.

When Ratzinger was still Cardinal Inquisitor he personally was pushing the Christian roots issue. In January 2003 he insisted that, "the Catholic church has the divine, ultimate and legitimate authority to define the truth on morality and what is right in politics. A political entity based on a social contract, the basis of political pluralism, is contrary to the idea of the divine foundation of authority." *European Institute of Protestant Studies*—(Ian Paisley) 15-9-06

Eight national governments pushed hard for a direct mention for a Christian God during the original EU constitution talks in 2004.

Italy, Poland, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Ireland remained in the minority after opposition was led by the UK, France and Sweden. *EUPolitix.com* 29-8-06

Although the Constitution became dead with its rejection by both France and the Netherlands, it was superseded by the drafting of the Reform Treaty. Again there was the same pressure, this time from the newly appointed Pope Benedict XVI. In 2006 both Angela Merkel and Hans-Gert Poettering, the President of the European Parliament (a fellow German) both promised the Pope that they would strive to get a mention of God in the Treaty.

Before the unveiling of the Reform Treaty text in June, was an important anniversary in March—50 years since the signing of the Treaty of Rome.

### **The Berlin Declaration**

Angela Merkel drafted the Berlin Declaration to mark this anniversary. Again there was pressure for this document to mention Europe's religious (i.e. Roman Catholic) roots. The Pope was invited to attend the celebrations in Berlin. When it became known that there was no such reference in it, (presumably because of pressure from President Chirac), the Pope was very forthright in his condemnation. A few days before the unveiling of the Declaration, the Pope was attending the Vatican's celebrations of this 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was a conference in Rome organized by the Commission of the



Bishops' Conferences of the European Community, COMECE, dedicated to the theme of "Values and perspectives for the Europe of tomorrow."

### **The Pope accuses EU leaders of "apostasy"**

In his keynote speech Benedict was very direct and, in the language of Revelation 16, very "frog-like":

#### **That Europe may again be "leaven for the world"**

Since March of fifty years ago, this Continent has taken a long journey that has led to the reconciliation of the two "lungs"—the East and the West—bound by a common history, but arbitrarily separated by a curtain of injustice. Economic integration has stimulated these political developments and has fostered the search, still underway with great effort, for an appropriate institutional structure for a European Union that, by this point, numbers 27 countries and aspires to become a global actor in the world.

In recent years it has become increasingly clear that there is a need to establish a healthy balance between the economic and social dimensions, through policies capable of producing wealth and increasing competition without overlooking the legitimate expectations of the poor and marginalized.

It clearly emerges from all this that one cannot think of building an authentic "common European home" while overlooking the very identity of the peoples of our Continent.

This is, in fact, an historical, cultural, and moral identity before being geographical, economic, or political; an identity constituted by a collection of universal values that Christianity has contributed to forging, thereby acquiring a role that is not only historical, but also foundational in relation to Europe.

If, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, the governments of the Union wish to "get closer" to their citizens, how could they exclude an element of European identity as essential as Christianity is, and with which the vast majority of them still identify themselves? Is it not a cause for surprise that today's Europe, while striving to position itself as a community of values, seems more often to contest the idea that there are universal and absolute values? Does not this remarkable form of "apostasy" from itself, even before [apostasy] from God, perhaps induce it to doubt its very identity?

*Apostasy*—strong language to the politicians of Europe! The press release gave the following message:

"Europe must be aware of its own Christian roots and of the public role of religion: such is the message from the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE) which gathered in Rome on 23-25 March, with more than 400 participants" *Zenit* 26-3-07

Hans-Gert Poettering, the President of the European Parliament, was one of the attendees. He had an audience with the Pope and invited him to address the EU Parliament to "set things straight" No date has yet been set, doubtless he is awaiting the right time. (In 1988 John Paul II addressed Parliament, using the phrase *Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's*. He implied that the politicians should look after the things of Caesar and he would look after the things of God.)

### **Humanists outraged at Pope's invitation**

The Humanists were soon vocally demanding why the Pope had been invited to put his case. They were of course delighted that there was no reference to God in the Berlin Declaration, but shocked that the Pope had been invited to address the EU Parliament.

The Berlin Declaration is an open challenge to the supremacy of the religion of Rome in Europe. The pope has met that challenge head on, and the EU has responded with an open invitation for him to come to its parliament and fix the problem. *The Secular Society* 30-3-07

It is very apparent from other messages on their web-sites that the humanists are worried about Rome's influence and it indicates the very real power that Rome wields. Consider this message on another site—*International Humanist & Ethical Union* 29-11-07:

Europeans who have no religion are increasing in number but are becoming increasingly disadvantaged in the political process. ... they are being betrayed by increasingly strident religious influence on moral matters in EU institutions. ... religious influence in European institutions is increasing. ... The influence of the Roman Catholic Church on EU institutions is huge but largely hidden, and its objective is clearly to impose its views on all EU citizens, not just Catholics. The Catholic Bishops' conference is represented as well as the Holy See as a sovereign state. ... There are sixty religious missions to the EU, but only one non-religious one, the European Humanist Association. It has little power and is rarely consulted.

Typical areas where this undue religious influence will be directed are start and end of life issues and sexual matters. The religious climate is becoming progressively less tolerant on such matters, partly because of the deepening conservatism in the Catholic and Anglican churches. But even more important is the growing influence of Poland and other former Eastern Bloc countries, and the rise in influence of Islam.

They also revealed that in fact, although there is no direct link to God in the Reform Treaty, they have succeeded in having a powerful section added which wasn't in the old treaties, which will serve the Roman Church well.



### **“How the Vatican Has Subverted Democracy in Europe”**

Any who have studied the history of the Roman Church, know that when the Church has power it exercises that power ruthlessly—hence the many descriptions of it in the passages we listed in chapter 7. When its power was broken in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Rome had to seek ways of gaining power. One was to make Concordats with individual countries. Again we quote from the *International Humanist and Ethical Union* website from 3-8-04, when the Constitution had just received its initial signing.

#### **How the Vatican Has Subverted Democracy in Europe**

The Roman Catholic Church attempts to negotiate concordats—binding agreements between church and state—with every state wherever and whenever such an agreement is politically possible. In this, the Catholic Church is not alone. The Lutheran Church in Germany and the Orthodox Church in Georgia have also reached such agreements.

Concordats differ in detail from state to state, as they codify already existing church privileges, and try to add a few more as well. The churches like to claim that these agreements are innocuous, because they mostly just restate what is on the law books already. But this argument is spurious. A key element of the concordats is that they remove church privileges from democratic control. They do so by requiring that the concordat can only be altered by the mutual consent of both parties. Since one of the parties to a concordat is a church, it is hard to imagine them agreeing to forgo any privilege once established.

A concordat is signed by the two parties even before it is ratified by parliament—a reversal of the procedure for normal laws which is permitted only because a concordat purports to be an international treaty. The Vatican's pretensions to statehood are then used by other religions to demand equal treatment. This legislative manoeuvre ...trivializes the content of the concordat: members of parliament are asked to ratify a fait accompli, and this tends to reinforce the idea that the whole thing is just a simple matter of tidying up and modernizing earlier legal arrangements.

In Germany, there has recently been a rush by both Catholic and Lutheran churches to push through concordats with all of the country's sixteen states. One reason for this is clear. Church membership is declining and the churches can no longer claim to represent the majority of the German population. This is an embarrassment for the churches, which have traditionally justified their power and privileges on the grounds that they were 'the people's church' and as such could speak as the moral voice of the people. A concordat with any state offers the church a way out of the problem of declining membership. It enables the church to subvert the inconvenient principle of majority rule, because it is an agreement which can be entered into by parliament, but cannot be unilaterally altered, or revoked by it. A concordat is thus a way of

crystallizing church privilege, including access to massive state subsidies, even as its membership is decreasing, and of locking these subsidies in. Once a concordat is in place there is no longer any possibility of reducing state support—ever.

However, the Vatican has another, more ominous reason for its rush to negotiate concordats within the European Union at both the state and national levels. Once their privileges have been codified they will be cast in stone by Article 16C<sup>1</sup> of the European Constitution. To quote Christian Eyschen, Secretary General of the French Freethinkers speaking on France Culture last December:

“When Article 16C<sup>1</sup> says the European Union will respect ‘the various forms of relationships between the Churches and the States’, that means that it will protect them by integrating them into Community Law, which is superior to the various national regulations. When the ratification of the constitution is achieved, every relationship between religion and State—the concordats; established Churches and State religions; the clerical statute of Alsace-Moselle; Church taxes; the offence of blasphemy—all that will be integrated into Community Law ...That is why the Vatican is urging states across Europe to endorse Concordats before the final ratification of the European Constitution. This is the result: of the 25 Member States of the European Union, 14 have Concordats with the Vatican. And most of the other Member States have established religions!”

### Religion enshrined in the Treaty

The final paragraph above reveals that behind the smokescreen of there being no reference to God in the preamble to the Reform Treaty, the battle has already been won! Here is more detail from *Federation Nationale De La Libre Pensee* (Nat. Fed. of “free-thinkers”) 8-4-07

#### From Rome to Berlin: still a Vatican Europe

But, like in 2005, the deeply clerical content of the Constitution won't be in the preamble but rather within the Constitution itself. Let's remind ourselves that Article 70 provided the possibility to express religious practice and denomination in the public sphere. And that Article 16C<sup>1</sup> gave important privileges to the Churches.

Therefore, it seems clear that the absence of any reference to God or Christianity in the Declaration of Berlin does not mean in the least that this future Constitution won't be clerical. In 2005, Cardinal Christoph Schonborn, one of the main leaders of COMECE, unveiled the manoeuvre: “*The preamble of the European Constitution is not the main*

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<sup>1</sup> In original it reads 51 which was initial numbering, in the next draft it became No 52, and finally in the Reform or Lisbon Treaty became 16C. For clarity I have amended to the current numbering.



*issue. What is the preamble? It is a foreword. The substance of the Constitution is what is written in the Constitution and I am very pleased to say that the fundamental options of the Constitution are good and acceptable from a Christian point of view."*

Once again, they are going to entertain the audience in Europe on the issue of the preamble in order to make religious domination more acceptable in the Constitution itself. Moreover, a complementary manoeuvre is beginning to take shape at the Council of Europe. Mr Van der Linden, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, said in a speech at Nizhny Novgorod, on 7 September, 2006: "The political and legal action of the Council of Europe must be reinforced by co-operation with churches and other confessional organisations... there is absolutely no reason why churches and other confessional organisations should not have an official status with the Council of Europe similar to that which we have granted to non-governmental organisations, but taking into account Churches' specific conditions.

"In this respect, we can take inspiration from the Treaty of the European Union establishing a Constitution for Europe, which has stressed the role of churches and religious organisations in contributing to the process of European integration and the need for granting them an official status in recognition of their important contribution..."

As usual, the Vatican has two strategies. Through the European Union or through the Council of Europe. A Vatican Europe is still marching on.

### **Constitution Article 16C—important privileges**

Under the Reform Treaty this section from the rejected Constitution has been lifted whole and is now article 16C. It reads: -

#### **"ARTICLE 16 C**

1. The Union respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States.
2. The Union equally respects the status under national law of philosophical and non-confessional organisations.
3. Recognising their identity and their specific contribution, the Union shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches and organisations."

*Catholics For a Free Choice—Europe* 21-3-05 helpfully explains the implications. It was written at the time of the unveiling of the draft of the original Constitution in 2005, so I have amended it to the new numbering.

The Vatican wanted five points to be included in the Constitutional Treaty. The three central ones were: -

• **The recognition of the “institutional dimension” of religious freedom.** The Vatican argued that full religious liberty comprises three dimensions: the individual dimension, namely the right to choose one’s system of beliefs; the collective dimension, or the right to associate with others to live out the precepts of one’s faith; and the institutional dimension, meaning the constitutional recognition that religious faith communities are also political actors in their own right, but in a specific form differing from other actors in civil society. According to the Vatican, the religious dimension embraces the whole range of human preoccupations and lends competence to the church in almost all matters, justifying a specific status, different from other civil society organizations. The main advocate of this point, besides the Vatican, was the German Catholic church, which already enjoys this status at the national level and would like to gain similar status within the EU. This request was acknowledged in Article 16C.

• **The recognition of an exemption from European law and regulations that the church considered to violate its teachings.** Religious freedom already grants the church the right to administer itself as a faith community, according to its teaching. This new right would institutionalise on a European level an exemption that grants the church the right to implement employment practices without having to comply with European policies and regulations that the church considers a violation of its teaching. This means that Catholic-run or affiliated hospitals, schools and social service projects would not have to respect EU principles and laws on non-discrimination. This request was acknowledged in Article 16C 1.

• **The institution of a specific consultative status for the church.** This would provide for the Catholic Church to be consulted in the pre-drafting stage of legislation on a wide range of matters where the Church feels it has expertise and for regular consultations at the highest level of the various EU institutions. The Catholic Church wished to have a constitutionally granted voice in state affairs and demanded a permanent liaison office within the European Commission. This request was acknowledged in Article 16C 3.

The two other points desired by the Vatican concerned the mention of God and of Europe’s Christian roots in the Constitution.

It is clear that the Vatican has succeeded in many ways to prepare for the day when those countries which sign up to the Lisbon Treaty will find themselves increasingly under the power of a Vatican dominated EU. With history to guide us, this makes us fearful of our retaining the freedom to witness against this evil system. The sooner Britain leaves, the better!

*Again we have seen how, in a remarkable way, the Vatican is tightening her grip on Europe—just as scripture warned us! We turn now to look at Europe and Germany in particular.*



## Chapter 11:

# EUROPE—THE FORMING OF THE BEAST

*We have seen the preparations of the Papacy for restoring her control of Europe as it was in the days of the Holy Roman Empire. We turn to look at the shaping of the Beast. The EU is not the Beast, but is a stage leading to the Beast. Germany played the lead role in the past Beast of the Earth; the other dominant power was France. We watch these powerful countries.*

## The first two German Reichs

Germany has gone through three empires or ‘Reichs’. The first is featured in the *Beast of the Earth* of Revelation ch 13.

This symbol aptly describes the situation through the dark days of Papal domination of Europe. The two horns symbolise the working together of Church and State, Pope and Emperor. This was the Holy Roman Empire. Initially started under Charlemagne in 800 AD, it moved from a French to a Germanic Empire with Otto I crowned by Pope John XXII in 962 AD. This Germanic Empire lasted until its destruction under the hand of Napoleon as detailed in the vial judgements of Revelation ch 16 and particularly the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> vials, which were “poured out upon the sun” and “the seat of the beast.” By 1806 Napoleon ruled supreme, having defeated the Austrians (the seat of the Holy Roman Empire at this time) and their allies.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Reich emerged 1871 to 1919, brought to an end by Britain and her allies in WWI. Under the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was tightly bound to prevent her emerging as a strong power again. Europe was carved up by the Allies to assist in this and to act as a barrier around Russia. Countries like Poland, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia were set up and Austria separated from Hungary. Germany resented the constraints and the nations that Germany had defeated had not been consulted as to the new shape of Europe and so they too resented the situation.

## The 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich

And so under Adolf Hitler the Germans rebelled against the shackles imposed on them and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich emerged under Hitler in 1933, amidst great unemployment and raging inflation. Preparations for war gave employment to many millions. Hitler and Stalin signed a Non-Aggression Treaty in August 1939 whilst secretly agreeing to divide the spoils. Hitler’s attack on Poland in September 1939 led to the outbreak of WWII and the division of Poland between the Soviet Union and Germany. Germany however attacked Russia, breaking the pact as Hitler had set his eyes on overthrowing communism. After a long and painful war—conservative estimates put the number of deaths at 50 to 60 million—Britain, America and their allies, together with Russia had defeated Germany and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich came to an ignominious end in 1945. Under the Yalta agreements

and later that year the Potsdam agreements, Germany was divided between the four Allies—Britain, America, France and Russia, and Berlin itself similarly divided. Germany's borders were again redrawn and Poland was effectively moved 100 miles westward thus reducing the size of Germany and giving extra space to the Soviets. It is estimated that over 5.6 million Poles (over 10% of their population) perished in WWII.

### **Divided Europe**

The new boundaries were to lead to the "Iron Curtain" that Churchill spoke of in his speech in America in March 1946:—"From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent."

In 1947 the British, American and French sectors were amalgamated to form the Federal Republic of Germany—"West Germany"—and in 1949 the Soviet sector became the German Democratic Republic—"East Germany".

With the passage of time the division of Germany ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the reunification of Germany in 1990. It was in East Germany that Angela Merkel, the current Chancellor of Germany, grew up; hence her fluent Russian and a burning desire that Germany should never again come under the control of Russia. This remarkable woman—dubbed a "Margaret Thatcher" and an "Iron Lady"—came to power in the German elections in November 2005. She was able to form a majority government and took over from Gerhard Schröder. (Schröder subsequently joined the Board of the consortium building the gas pipeline from Russia to Germany along the Baltic seabed).

Angela Merkel's father was a Lutheran pastor and she studied physics and quantum chemistry before becoming involved in politics. As well as Russian, her English is near perfect. Consider what a remarkable woman she is. She is the first Chancellor from East Germany, the first woman Chancellor and the first non-Catholic Chancellor. Her Lutheran background perhaps explains her work ethic. Remarkably, she has come to prominence just at a time when we have a German President of the EU Parliament, a German Pope and two important Russians with strong German links! Both parents of the Russian Patriarch Alexy II were German and Russian President Putin was previously a Russian spy in East Germany and therefore speaks German perfectly!

### **The 4<sup>th</sup> Reich?**

The Germans have never lost the desire to rule the world, the 'Master race'! This is well documented as being at the heart of Hitler's ambitions. As the Vatican shared this desire, it meant that all was not lost with Hitler's defeat. The Roman Catholic founding fathers of what is now the EU continued this dream. Unlike Hitler, they were bringing it about through peace. With the benefit of a lifetime seeing those dreams grow, we marvel at their vision. It set out to bring it about with so many small steps that its citizens would be



unaware of what was happening! This is what the former Italian Prime Minister, Giuliano Amato, who went on to be the Vice-President of the Constitution drafting committee, had to say back in 2000:

“The project of the European constitution is daring, but to overcome obstacles in politics it is necessary to conceal them. In Europe one needs to act ‘as if’—as if what was wanted was little, in order to obtain much, as if states were to remain sovereign to convince them to concede sovereignty. The Commission in Brussels, for example, should act as if it were a technical instrument, in order to be able to be treated as a government. And so on, by disguise and subterfuge. ...

“The sovereignty that is lost at national level does not pass to any new entity. It is entrusted to entities without a face: NATO, the UN and eventually the EU, which is in the vanguard of a world that is changing, pointing to a future of princes without sovereignty.

“The new entity is faceless and those who are in command can neither be pinned down nor elected...

“Therefore I prefer to go slowly, to crumble pieces of sovereignty up little by little, avoiding brusque transitions from national to federal power.” *Irish Democrat* 8-2-05

“Princes without sovereignty”! What an unintended echo of Rev 17:12!

*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.*

### **The Treaty of Lisbon—an important step to political union**

After the rejection of the EU Constitution in 2005 by France and the Netherlands, a Plan “B” was required. Evidently that time was not right for this next big step in creating a United Europe. Plan “B” was masterfully simple. The Constitution has been rejected because it is a Constitution, which makes it sound (indeed correctly) like a step to political union. Countries have constitutions. This would have created the country of “Europe”, with its Foreign Minister and President.

The simple solution was to instead call it a *Reform Treaty*, since Europe has in the past signed up to various Treaties. And Reform? Well there wasn’t anything really requiring reform, so let’s settle on *Lisbon Treaty*, which fits in with the pattern of the Maastricht Treaty and the Nice Treaty. So instead of abolishing the old treaties and replacing them with a document called a Constitution for Europe, we keep the old treaties and pop into this Treaty all the new elements that had been included in the rejected Constitution. This stratagem looks, by and large, to have succeeded. Britain always would have been the difficult one, but the majority of other nations seem to have happily swallowed this step. True, they have taken out the national anthem (Ode to Joy), the European flag and the euro. By sleight of hand, many items seemed to have disappeared, only to reappear as footnotes or

appendices! Also, the Treaty has fewer pages than the rejected EU Constitution—achieved largely by reducing the line spacing! Virtually everything has been incorporated. As for the flag, anthem and the euro: Germany, along with 15 other nations, did lead an unsuccessful last-ditch effort to insert these items just before the signing. But what brave soul is going to stop using them? They are now engrained within the fabric of the EU and, at the Lisbon signing ceremony, they all stood up when the choir sang the Ode to Joy!

As Giscard d'Estaing so elegantly put it:

"In the Treaty of Lisbon, the tools are largely the same. Only the order in which they are arranged in the toolbox has been changed. Admittedly, the box itself is an old model, which you have to rummage through in order to find what you are looking for."

"When the day comes that men and women with sweeping ambitions for Europe decide to make use of this treaty, they will be able to rekindle from the ashes of today the flame of a United Europe." *The Independent* 30-10-07

The federation of states begins to take on characteristics of a federal state, without the populations of EU member states having been democratically consulted on the radical constitutional changes being imposed. The victor in this process is Germany, whose power of decision, as granted by the terms of the "Reform Treaty," have over-dimensionally grown and dominate all other EU states. *German-foreign policy* 19-10-07

The driving force for this has of course come from Germany, especially Mrs Merkel. Here are some staggering facts about modern Germany.

### **Germany—Master of Transport**

This was a headline to an article (22-1-07) from a German source *German-foreign policy*; a group that are concerned at what they are seeing and seek to warn of Germany's plans. This particular article showed how Germany is working to be in control of the majority of the EU's movements in goods. Germany traditionally has been good at building and running railways, not only at home but abroad. Under the new assertive Germany, she is determined to be **Master of Transport**.

The planned expansion of the German Railroad Corp. is part of a state subventioned, comprehensive development of the German logistical economy, that will be in line with the orientation of the booming German foreign trade. Currently Berlin is pursuing the logistics business in Middle Eastern countries as well as in Russia. Whereas the Persian Gulf has become the turntable for exports to the Arab world, the Russian Federation is considered the "corridor" for overland transport to China—including weapons supplies to the Afghan theatre of operations. With additional billions, the German government is financing the



expansion of German maritime trade as well. The objective is for Germany to obtain the predominating global position in the transport of merchandise—"the world champion in transport".

It is said that the German logistics economy should develop into a "European hub" for the surrounding countries.

As well as expanding her railways she is capturing the container ship business. The statistics are frightening as these charts on the German news site *Der-Spiegel* show. She owns 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the world's container ships! The next chart shows new ships being built. Germany is way out front with nearly 1000 vessels being constructed. Picture what a stranglehold this will put on world trade if Germany seeks to assert herself. I wonder what military use these vessels could be put to in time of war!

These ships are being built in the Far East, but Germany's own boatyards are booming; as the 3<sup>rd</sup> chart illustrates—they build specialist vessels. Prior to WWII, Germany converted her boatyards to building military vessels, which took much

effort on the part of the Allies to defeat.

Could Britain find herself again challenged by Germany? At the moment she is cooperating as this next item shows!

### Germany leads sea manoeuvres

During its two weeks of manoeuvres in the Baltic Sea, the German Navy practiced new combat techniques for future combat deployments around the world. Units from eight EU member states [Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, UK, Latvia, Poland, Sweden] are operating under German command. The German Special Forces Commando (KSK) and the Air force are also participating. According to the German military (Bundeswehr), the manoeuvre scenarios are tailored to fit international deployments. Given

### Container Ships

by country of ownership  
2006

<b>Germany</b>	<b>1157</b>
China	261
Japan	235
Taiwan	187
Switzerland	172
Greece	161
Denmark	142
Singapore	140
South Korea	115
USA	81
Other	848

Total 3499

Source: ISL

### Ordered Ships

Investment in billions of dollars  
by countries of ownership  
Ships

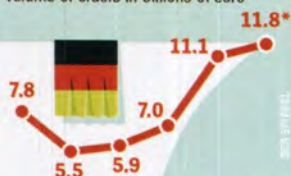
Japan	644	36.9
<b>Germany</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>33.5</b>
USA	126	21.5
Greece	430	18.8
Norway	317	16.9
Denmark	246	12.4
China	211	12.1
Italy	174	11.1
South Korea	130	6.7
Hong Kong	130	6.0
Other	2015	88.2

Total 5386 263.9

Source: Clarkson Research, as of Aug. 1, 2006;  
\* larger than 2,000 gross tons

### German Shipbuilding

Volume of orders in billions of euro



Source: VSM; \*1st half of year

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Number of Ships:	147	119	144	147	231	230*

the fact, that the majority of the world's population is inhabiting coastal regions, naval deployment forces could serve as flexible operational bases during combat missions. Experts predict that naval forces will also become more important for other reasons. Since the need to defend German territory has become more or less obsolete, the concept of "defense" has been expanded to include the "defense" of German ships and goods on the high seas in the service of the German export industry. Statistics show that for the economy to remain competitive, Germany must import raw materials and export finished products on the seven seas. This corresponds to the above average participation of German naval forces in the Bundeswehr's current foreign deployments.

### **Maritime Trade**

[Vice Admiral] Nolting is taking into account the needs of the booming German export industry, which has to ship its products abroad and acquire raw materials from abroad for their production. Last year this world champion in exports set a new record with a total volume of imports and exports at 976.9 tons at a composite value of 1,634.6 billion Euros. Around one-fifth of all foreign trade (190.6 m. tons) was processed through German seaports. ... Germany's merchant marine ranks third on a global scale. *German-Foreign-Policy* 24-10-07

### **"Our objective is an integrated European army"**

German has been behind the many steps to create a European Army, as it enables her to work though the EU to legitimise her plans. With Germany being the most populous and the most prosperous country in the EU, she would have no difficulties in taking command. Another article from *German-foreign-policy* 21-6-07 details these German plans.

SPD Members of the German Bundestag have laid out a plan for the further development of the military dimension of European Foreign and Security Policy. It envisions a series of concrete steps for the deepening of military cooperation in Europe. In the long run, these steps could open up the way to the creation of a European army.

The idea is not as new as it might at first appear. In 1954, nine years after the end of World War II, an attempt was made to form a European defence union. It was probably too early.

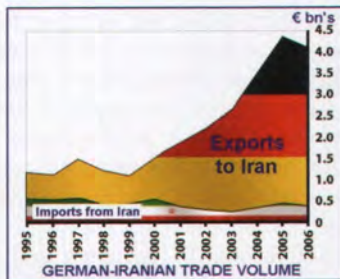
So now, half a century later, when we embark on a process towards developing a joint European army, we are not starting from scratch. Especially in the fifteen years following the end of the division of Europe, in other words since 1990, the EU has made great progress in closer cooperation on security and defence policy. Step by step, we have steadily advanced, even if from time to time our achievements are obscured by talk of crises and widespread Euro-scepticism.



## Germany and Iran

Germany has reluctantly joined in the chorus of voices calling for sanctions against Iran for her pursuit of a nuclear weapons programme. This reluctance becomes understandable as one considers the strong trading links between the two countries.

Germany is Iran's second-largest provider of products and exported some 4.4 billion euros (\$5.6 billion) of goods to Iran in 2006. ... The Iranian-German Chamber of Commerce indicates that three-quarters of Iran's small and medium industries rely on imported goods and technology from Germany, as one of Iran's greatest economic weaknesses is a lack of technological aptitude. Such imports are crucial for the development of sectors as varied as petrochemicals, transport, food processing and manufacturing. *Stratfor* 16-11-07



## A U turn in France

With President Chirac retiring, the French Presidential elections in June brought an era to an end. Chirac had not only been Prime Minister twice in the 70's and 80's but was the second longest serving President. He stood for the old things of France, the vision of General de Gaulle who saw only France's greatness and power. But it will not be France who ultimately leads Europe.

But French foreign policy the past half-century *has* been a failure. Initially under Charles de Gaulle and later under Jacques Chirac the dominant Parisian ideology was French exceptionalism, the idea that France merits a voice in international affairs far beyond what its geographic, demographic or economic size would justify. This ideology of Gaullism led Paris to create what is now the European Union; but in doing so it created an entity that Paris ultimately could not control.

In the last 20 years Germany has stitched itself back together bit by bit, and with the emergence of Chancellor Angela Merkel it has finally started to act like what it used to be: a world power. French history has always been defined by how Paris views Berlin, and in the post-World War II era France faced the benign environment of a Germany defeated, split, occupied and lashed to French ambition. No more. Germany is back! *Stratfor* 12-6-07

Nicolas Sarkozy swept to power with a mandate to modernise France's rigid labour rules and to look outward rather than inward. He soon visited President Bush and has shown support for America, in contrast to Chirac's anti-American policies. There have been spats with Germany, but beneath

the surface they are working to promote Europe's interests. We probably have one of those periods when the pendulum of history is swinging away from our expectations. At the time of the end, France will not be supporting America, but will be part of the European Beast and allied to Russia.

### Another big step to a united Europe

One great difference between Europe and the United States used to lie in the customs borders between each European country. The US was truly united, one crossed from one state to another without any apparent boundaries. Step by step this distinction has been done away. Since 1985 a growing number of EU states have signed up to the Schengen Zone, effectively abolishing border controls. This December saw the biggest enlargement step which, coupled with the euro currency, is uniting Europe and turning countries into what are, in all practical ways, states. There are also three non-EU members in the Zone.



At midnight on December 21<sup>st</sup>, the EU expanded its freedom of travel right up to borders of Russia.

The European Union expands once again in some practical and visible ways. The newest members of the Union—former East Bloc countries now well into fresh democratic starts—will become the new border region of what is known as the European Schengen zone.

From north to south, the border of the area in which most Europeans can move without passport control stops will shift about 400 miles east, with the instant inclusion of Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. *chicagotribune.com* 21-12-07

It will be March 2008 before all the new countries are completely ready. Switzerland (non-EU), Romania, Bulgaria, and Cyprus are hoping to join within the next year. Britain of course has not signed up to this treaty; you will need your passport to enter!

*Again we have witnessed the growing assertiveness of Germany to lead Europe, just as it was in the past under the Beast of the Earth phase. How encouraging to see prophecies fulfilling before our eyes! We are also seeing the great drive to make Europe one nation, in preparation for the Vatican Harlot to ride her! (Rev 17:3) Germany has strong links to Russia, which we consider along with other matters as we now move across to Russia and review the situation there.*



## Chapter 12:

# RUSSIA—PUTIN STAMPS HIS AUTHORITY

*We now turn to the other great European power, Russia, or in biblical symbology, the Dragon. The Dragon is very much a symbol of the Roman military might, and following the collapse of the Roman Empire, of her successors. Russia is well north of the original Roman Empire, but we must bear in mind that the military might of Roman Empire was based in Constantinople. Scripture indicated that the Dragon power still existed after the fall of Constantinople. Russia has taken that mantle and when Russia moves southwards and occupies Constantinople or Istanbul of today – then she will be seen as indeed the rightful heir to the Dragon title.*

*The Roman army was noted for its ruthlessness, as was foretold through Moses in Deuteronomy 28:48-51. Russia is living up to being a worthy successor! We start by looking at the cooperation between the Dragon power and the Beast power.*

### **Russia helping Germany to become strong**

Soviet policy was to make Germany strong during the period from 1920 to 1933 when Hitler came to power. Russia saw a strong Germany as a useful ally against America. However Hitler didn't work by the rules and the Soviets were taken by surprise when Hitler tore up his agreements and sent his troops against Russia! A particularly severe Russian winter ended Hitler's dreams of bringing the whole of Europe under Germany's control. Millions perished on both sides. Time passes, new generations arise, and we can see Russia and Germany working together again, as a further article shows. It was the report of a talk given in London on 29<sup>th</sup> January by an editorial member of *German-foreign-policy.com*, Horst Teubert. The headline was arresting—**Germany's bid for great power status through the EU**. He showed how Germany is using her position within the EU to project herself as a Great Power, but especially he showed the role Russia was playing.

Moscow wants to make Germany the hub for the distribution of natural gas to the rest of Europe. President Vladimir Putin said that this would alter the importance of Germany in the energy economy of Western Europe. This was a polite description for a massive growth of power which had already been announced with the construction of Nord Stream, the so-called Baltic pipeline.

Exclusive German/Russian cooperation, which shuts out other West European firms and makes Germany into the controller of West European gas supplies, is matched by military cooperation between the two countries. Joint Russian/German military exercises have taken place for years. In 2004 the two defence ministers agreed to develop military equipment and armaments in cooperation. In December Russia launched

the first German military espionage satellite into space—cooperation in space is closer between Moscow and Berlin than with Washington or Paris. The Kremlin has agreed that Russian transport planes can be put at NATO's disposal on a German air base.

When Putin declared that Dmitry Medvedev was to succeed him when he steps down as President next year, the German Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, was the first foreign minister to pay him a visit.

After Tuesday's meeting, Steinmeier, who is in Moscow to sound out the new power balance in the Russian leadership, said Putin's support for his deputy's presidential candidature sent an important signal to the Western world. He said Medvedev stood for economic regeneration and greater orientation towards Europe. *DW World* 18-12-07

Medvedev is, of course, chairman of Gazprom, which gives us an interesting link!

Not only does Germany have an ex-chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, firmly embedded in one of Russia's main industrial sources of income by virtue of his senior executive status with Russian energy giant Gazprom, but Germany's vice chancellor, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Schröder's old confidante, has more experience and proven expertise than any other EU representative in Russian-German diplomacy. *The Trumpet* 17-12-07

There is talk of Russia and Germany signing a non-aggression pact, an echo back to the days of Hitler and the pact signed in 1939 by Ribbentrop and Molotov. Russia is concerned with the America's plans to put a defence shield in EU countries on Russia's borders. She is also concerned at Germany's military preparations, just as Europe is of Russia's military build-up and her withdrawal from the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty. We wait and watch.

One of the hold-ups for strengthening ties between the EU and Russia was Poland, who had suffered terribly in WWII from both Germany and Russia. The signing of a Russia-EU Partnership and Cooperation Agreement has been held up because of Polish objections to a ban that Russia had imposed on imports of Polish meat. Elections in Poland in November brought down the anti-Russian government and the EU is hoping that relations will not now be jeopardised.

### **Russia-EU Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)**

The first 10-year PCA has just come to an end. Every six months there are joint talks to further the progress between them. The 20<sup>th</sup> meeting in November was an important milestone and President Putin summed up the progress that they had made in this 10-year period:

First and foremost we note that in the ten years since the signing of the basic agreement between Russia and the EU, we have really done a great deal. This is particularly true in the political, economic and cultural



areas. The proof of this is the constant increase in the number of contacts between our civil societies. Mr Prime Minister referred to the development of economic ties. Despite all the disputes and the fact that we have different positions on some issues, I would draw your attention to the fact that between 2000 and 2007, the volume of our economic cooperation has increased, not by a few percentage points but almost by a factor of five! This is eloquent testimony to the value of the relations between Russia and the EU and the importance of Russia's partnership for the EU. As far as volume of economic relations is considered, Russia is the third most important trading partner for the EU, and the EU is the most important one for Russia. The volume of our trade is now €180bn.

Of course there are problems between Russia and the EU. There couldn't not be; there were problems in the past and there will be problems in the future. Despite the existence of these, the main thing is that the immutability of the strategic partnership between the European Union and the Russian Federation could be reaffirmed.

Of fundamental importance to us is continuing the development of Russia's bilateral relations with the countries of the European Union and the implementation of 'road maps' for our four common spaces. We intend to encourage all the positive trends that characterise our relations, and we are counting on a similar approach from our partners.

We noted the positive dynamics of our sector dialogues, including those on transport, military affairs, visas and regional policy. It's not by chance that I mentioned military cooperation: it is developing through NATO and bilateral relations with many countries of the EU.

We had animated discussions about energy questions. During the meeting, the emphasis was on the future strengthening of Europe's energy security. To that end, we agreed to continue work on the establishment of a mechanism of early warnings for supply and demand of energy coming from Russia to the EU. It is based on exchange of information on potential problem situations and ways of solving them, including using the Russia-EU energy dialogue.

I want to draw your attention to the fact that the total amount of European investment in Russia is about 30 billion euros, whereas Russian investment [in Europe] is only 3 billion euros.

An important theme of the summit was building Russia-EU cooperation in countering new challenges and threats. Russia is a country with deep European roots and traditions. For centuries it has made an invaluable contribution to the development of European spirituality, culture and simply to civilisation itself. And we are naturally fully aware of our responsibility for maintaining the well being and stability of our European home. *Kremlin.ru* 26-10-07

Because of the dispute over Poland it has been agreed to extend this first PCA agreement by another year, whilst the next 10-year plan is drawn up. It is clear that in spite of short-term differences the drive is for greater cooperation between them. And the country with most to gain is, of course, Germany!

### Putin stamps his authority

*A Tsar is born* was the headline to the lead story in *Time* 31-12-07; Putin was voted “man-of-the-year” and his steely gaze looks out from the cover. The article revealed the “dark side” of Putin’s power. We refer readers to the details of this latter-day Assyrian in ch 14 of *Milestones 2006*.



### Elected Emperor

Putin has said that next spring, at the end of his second term as President, he will assume the nominally lesser role of Prime Minister. In fact, having nominated his loyal former chief of staff (and current Deputy Prime Minister) Dmitri Medvedev to succeed him as President, Putin will surely remain the supreme leader, master of Russia’s destiny, which will allow him to complete the job he started. In his eight years as President, he has guided his nation through a remarkable transformation. He has restored

stability and a sense of pride among citizens ... A basket case in the 1990s, Russia’s economy has grown an average of 7% a year for the past five years. The country has paid off a foreign debt that once neared \$200 billion. Russia’s rich have gotten richer, often obscenely so. But the poor are doing better too: workers’ salaries have more than doubled since 2003. True, this is partly a result of oil at \$90 a barrel, and oil is a commodity Russia has in large supply. But Putin has deftly managed the windfall and spread the wealth enough so that people feel hopeful.

Russia’s revival is changing the course of the modern world. After decades of slumbering underachievement, the Bear is back. ... Moscow exerts international influence not just with arms but also with a new arsenal of weapons: oil, gas, timber. ... Russia just made its first shipment of nuclear fuel to Iran—a sign that Russia is taking the lead on that vexsome issue, particularly after the latest U.S. intelligence report suggested that the Bush Administration has been wrong about Iran’s nuclear-weapons development. And Putin is far from done. The premiership is a perch that will allow him to become the longest-serving statesman among the great powers, long after such leaders as Bush and Tony Blair have faded from the scene.

But all this has a dark side. To achieve stability, Putin and his administration have dramatically curtailed freedoms. His government has shut down TV stations and newspapers, jailed businessmen whose wealth and influence challenged the Kremlin’s hold on power, defanged



opposition political parties and arrested those who confront his rule. Yet this grand bargain—of freedom for security—appeals to his Russian subjects, who had grown cynical over earlier regimes' promises of the magical fruits of Western-style democracy. Putin's popularity ratings are routinely around 70%. "He is emerging as an elected emperor, whom many people compare to Peter the Great," says Dimitri Simes, president of the Nixon Center, a well-connected expert on contemporary Russia.

Putin's global ambitions seem straightforward. He certainly wants a seat at the table on the big international issues. But more important, he wants free rein inside Russia, without foreign interference, to run the political system as he sees fit, to use whatever force he needs to quiet seething outlying republics, to exert influence over Russia's former Soviet neighbors. What he's given up is Yeltsin's calculation that Russia's future requires broad acceptance on the West's terms. That means that on big global issues, says Strobe Talbott, president of the Brookings Institution, "sometimes Russia will be helpful to Western interests, and sometimes it will be the spoiler."

This is the style that the Russian peoples seem happiest under, they have been used to it for centuries; the Tsars were Autocrats who gave them the security they desired. It is a completely different way of life to that in the UK!

### **Another record year for Russia**

With the high price of oil and other minerals, Russia has benefited greatly. Her economy has expanded greatly, with GDP rising 7.5% in 2007.

#### **Russian arms exports could reach \$7.5 bn in 2008**

Russia could export weaponry worth about \$7.5bn in 2008, head of the Russian Technology state-run corporation Sergei Chemezov said, adding that Russia's arms exports in 2007 were over \$7bn.

Russia has almost doubled annual arms exports since 2000, becoming the world's second-largest exporter of conventional arms after the United States, the RIA Novosti news agency reported.

Russia exports weapons to about 80 countries. Among key buyers of Russian-made weaponry are China, India, Algeria, Venezuela, Iran, Malaysia and Serbia.

The most popular types of weaponry bought from Russia are Su- and MiG-family fighters, Mi-family helicopters, main battle tanks, armored personnel carriers and infantry fighting vehicles. *Chinaview* 28-12-07

A strong arms export business boosts the home market; it helps to pay for research and development.

### **Russia Contemplating Rebuilding Naval Power**

Putin is determined to spend a growing proportion of her newfound wealth on rebuilding the military. We know from Dan 11:40 that, as King of the North, she is to come forth with many ships.

“Dear comrades! Russia always was and will be a great naval power,” said Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov.

Ivanov has already taken steps to back up those words. A presidential naval commission he chaired has approved a strategy through 2020 to develop the nation’s shipbuilding capability in order to ensure a Russian naval presence in important seas and oceans. Ivanov said a new state-run shipbuilding corporation would step up construction of civilian and naval vessels to ensure a large merchant and military fleet.

The presidential candidate told the conference that Russia has everything it needs in order to become a great naval power. The most important requirement he highlighted was political will. *The Trumpet* 26-6-07

The Russian Navy is expanding its hardware and capabilities to levels reminiscent of the Cold War. Thanks to a surplus of cash afforded by high energy commodity prices, Moscow is fast-tracking its fleet and feeding its navy so many rubles that it could reach its ambitious goal of becoming the world’s number-two naval power within a generation.

“We are already building practically as many ships as we did in Soviet times,” Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov said. “The problem now is not lack of money, but how to optimize production ....”

On the fleet’s wish list are six aircraft carriers, 40 frigates, a new large-tonnage shipbuilding dock near Severodvinsk, numerous upgrades for its more outdated branches, and a series of Yasen-class multipurpose nuclear attack submarines.

These submarines alone, naval analysts say, will cause a revolution in sub construction around the world, considering the model’s deathly silence underwater and its ability to engage in multiple types of missions, including cat-and-mouse spats with aircraft carriers and sub-to-land missile strikes.

The Russian nuclear armada is reviving, and is looking to sail full speed ahead to imperial-strength capabilities. *The Trumpet* 10-9-07

### **Russia “must restore a permanent naval presence in the Mediterranean Sea”**

This was Russia’s aim according to Admiral Vladimir Masorin, Commander of the Russian Navy! This was spoken in August 2007. Progress is being made on a port to provide facilities in Syria as was reported on in last year’s *Milestones*. A further report this year adds some detail.



For the first time since the fall of the Iron Curtain, Russia plans to re-operate the Tartus and Latakia ports in Syria as permanent bases for the Russian Navy in the Mediterranean basin, according to recent western media reports.

“Being present in the Mediterranean is very important for our Navy in the Black Sea,” Admiral Vladimir Masorin said. *Ynet* 6-8-07

### **Russia: a major Mediterranean Deployment**

*Stratfor* 17-12-07 reported that Russian ships were assembling from various points of the compass. Their destination? The Mediterranean!

The Admiral Kuznetsov, Russia’s sole aircraft carrier, is leading a battle group to the Mediterranean Sea. The move represents a major deployment for Russia’s Northern Fleet. Though the Russian navy suffers significant disadvantages in the sea, the deployment could ultimately prove to be the strongest naval showing in more than a decade for the Kremlin. Once at its rendezvous in the Mediterranean, the Russian battle group reportedly will be made up of four major warships.

### **Russia and Iran**

Mr Putin has been quietly extracting the maximum power he can from the Iranian situation. He knows Iran needs his help to pursue their nuclear aims; he knows too that America needs his cooperation to deal with the situation in Iraq. It suits Russia to have a large proportion of America’s forces tied down in Iraq. Whilst there, they cannot “meddle” with Russia’s interests elsewhere. So there is a delicate power balance. In the main Putin seems to hold most of the trump cards. He can spin out the supply of nuclear material and stay on the right side of America, or upset America and speed up Iran’s nuclear hardware. Yet Russia doesn’t want a nuclear Iran as her neighbour. So Putin has much to play for, and his policy seems to be to keep one step ahead of America. He knows Bush’s position is weak, elections in the US are now less than a year away and this is Bush’s last term in office. True, Putin’s term also comes to an end next Spring, but he has already made arrangements to hold on to power as we have seen. Russia should be able to exploit the M.E. situation to her advantage.

*Scripture guides us to expect the Dragon (Russia) and the Beast (German-led Europe) to work together to prepare to gather the nations to Armageddon. (Rev 16:13,14) We have seen a growing measure of co-operation. Scripture also guides us to see a strong Russia as the King of the North, Gog and Little Horn of the Goat power, leader of the confederation of nations who invade Israel. Russia is getting stronger and increasing her naval power to fulfil such passages as Dan 11:40; Ez 38:7. We finish with a brief look at what has happened in Britain and the “young lion” countries, before closing with our final exhortation.*

## Chapter 13:

# BRITAIN AND HER YOUNG LIONS

*We normally look at this section earlier in Milestones. It is not that it hasn't been an important year for Britain and her young lions, but we are at a bit of a crossroads. In June, Gordon Brown took over from Tony Blair as Prime Minister and is still finding his feet. Mr Bush is winding down ahead of US Presidential elections in 2008. Following an election in November, Australia has a new Prime Minister who again is new to office. So this will be a briefer chapter than normal.*

## Brown's troublesome start

After waiting many years for Blair to step down, Brown stepped unopposed into Blair's shoes and at first handled crisis after crisis with confidence. There was much talk of calling an early election to consolidate his position, as he had not actually been elected to be Prime Minister. His period of apparent dithering as to whether to take this risk coincided with a steady slump in popularity as incident after incident battered the party.

He was ridiculed for his indecision over whether to attend the signing ceremony in Lisbon for the Lisbon Treaty. In the end he arrived after the signing and the group photos, and signed alone. There is much opposition to this Treaty in Britain and anger over his refusal to hold a referendum.

The Treaty will now be debated in parliament. There have been many articles this year in the press about Britain leaving the EU. It is so obvious that the Treaty will take the UK several steps along the road to a European political union, a course that most Britons oppose.

## The Queen's special year

This year was the Queen's diamond wedding anniversary. She is a remarkably energetic 81 year old who shows little sign of slowing down. At 5pm on December 20th she became the oldest (but not yet the longest) reigning British monarch.

She and Prince Philip paid their 4<sup>th</sup> state visit to America in May. As the Queen remarked to President Bush: -

Administrations in your country and governments in mine may come and go, but talk we will, listen we have to, disagree from time to time we may, but united we must always remain. *Daily Telegraph* 9-5-07

In November they paid a 3-day state visit to Uganda where she attended the bi-annual Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, a very important occasion for her to meet all the leaders of this unique organisation.



## Anglosphere—ready-made alternative to the EU

An interesting article by John O'Sullivan in the *Daily Telegraph* 28-12-07 entitled **Anglosphere** proposed a ready-made alternative—the wonderful existing network of English speaking people. Greg Sheridan, the foreign editor of *The Australian* was researching the very close Australian-US military and intelligence relations for a book entitled *The Partnership*.

The more Sheridan examined this relationship, the more he was struck by something else: namely, “the astonishing, continuing, political, military, and intelligence closeness between Australia and Britain”.

Even though Australia has little at stake in Europe and Britain has only limited interests in the Pacific, everywhere Sheridan went in the US-Australia alliance, he found the Brits there, too: “Our special forces train with theirs, as we do with the Americans. Our troops on exchange with the Brits can deploy into military operations with them, an extremely rare practice, but something we also do with the Yanks.

“Australian liaison officers attend the most sensitive British intelligence meetings and vice versa, in arrangements of such intimacy that they are equalled only in our relationship with the US.”

In 2006 Sheridan attended a high level meeting between Blair and Howard and at his suggestion they set up AUK-MIN, annual meetings between Australian and British foreign and defence ministers, along the lines of their AUS-MIN meetings with Washington. John O'Sullivan continued: -

I had recently been reading the American writer James C. Bennett, in which he argued that such forms of developing co-operation were especially characteristic of English-speaking, common law countries such as, Britain, Australia and America. Bennett calls the English-speaking network civilisation “the Anglosphere”.

If you want to know which countries the British feel really close to, check which ones they telephone on Christmas Day (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, America... but you knew that). Network commonwealths don't demand surrender of sovereignty, either.

Bennett in *The Anglosphere Challenge* makes unmistakably clear that it is English cultural traits—individualism, rule of law, honouring contracts, and the elevation of freedom—rather than English genes that explain this success.

These traits enable a society to pull off the difficult trick of combining trust with openness. Nations with different genetic backgrounds that adopt such traits seem to prosper more than their similar neighbours. Hence the Anglosphere includes India and the West Indies, as well as the “old Commonwealth”.

If we were to pursue a deliberate strategy of strengthening such ties, we would discover a better “grand strategy” than the present muddled

shuttling back and forth between Washington and Brussels, feeling a “poodle” to both. Is it politically dangerous as an alternative to Europe? That would only be true insofar as “Europe” failed to meet our needs—in which case we would need an alternative.

We await a strong leader who will take Britain out of the EU, however, we may not see that this side of the Master’s call. God has a role for Britain to be with her young lions, not with the Beast system of Europe.

### **A Distant Affinity: The History of Australian-Israeli Relations**

This is the heading to a long and interesting article about the incredible affinity there has been between Australia and Israel from the days of WWI. The article can be downloaded at [www.milestonesuk.org](http://www.milestonesuk.org)

Israel has just lost a valued friend in John Howard who lost both Government and also his parliamentary seat in the November Australian Federal election. However, with such deep ties, it is not anticipated that under Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister there will be major changes in the good relations and growing trade between this young lion and Israel.

### **India, Israel to focus on joint R&D in defence**

From a scriptural viewpoint we are not surprised that the young lion countries of America, Canada, India and Australia should have strong affinity with Israel, for this is what Ez 38:13 leads us to expect. From a worldly point of view, however, it is rather odd! Why, for instance should India, primarily a Hindu country, have such strong links to Israel? Yet over the past years we have seen an ever-stronger linkage between these two countries. At the year-end the Indo-Israel Joint Defence group met in India.

There may be a few hiccups, political or otherwise, along the way but India and Israel will now ‘further intensify’ their already robust defence ties, which saw New Delhi do military business worth over a whopping \$7 billion with Tel Aviv since the 1999 Kargil conflict.

From man-portable miniature unmanned aerial vehicles and advanced radars to missile systems and electronic warfare suites, the two nations have decided to focus on more and more joint R&D projects rather than just continue with a mere buyer-seller kind of relationship, said sources.

This came at the end of the Indo-Israel joint working group (JWG) on defence... India, of course, is already Israel’s largest defence customer, with purchases worth \$1.5 billion in 2006 alone, displacing even the US to the second spot with \$1 billion.

The strategic ties with Israel, which includes regular intelligence-sharing for counter-terrorism, are however kept largely under wraps due to the domestic and international sensitivities involved. *Times of India* 2-1-08



## The young lions in the Middle East

Naturally speaking we would not expect to see so many of the young lion countries active in this region. Yet they are! Australia, America and India, like Britain, are friendly to Israel as well as being actively involved with trading links to the Middle East. Nor would we expect the links that bind the young lions to their mother country, Britain, to remain so strong. Yet they have. We noted the strong ties between Australia and Britain. They are equally strong between America and Britain—we have seen the visit the Queen made. They are equally strong between India and Britain. India is now the third largest investor in the UK, with more than 500 companies opening offices there. Gordon Brown, while visiting India, said:-

And as India today claims its rightful place in the emerging new world order, let me say I am sure that India and Britain together—the world's largest democracy and one of the world's oldest democracies, ...can, working in unison, play a critical role as partners in addressing the great challenges of our times. *hm-treasury.gov.uk* 17-1-07

## America—"Why we're in the Gulf"

This heading was to an article in the *Wall Street Journal* 1-1-08. Having dismissed the usual answer that America was only there because of the oil, Mead argues that it is because of America's role as the world's policeman.

For the past few centuries, a global economic and political system has been slowly taking shape under first British and then American leadership. As a vital element of that system, the leading global power—with help from allies and other parties—maintains the security of world trade over the seas and air while also ensuring that international economic transactions take place in an orderly way.

Thanks to the American umbrella, Germany, Japan, China, Korea and India do not need to maintain the military strength to project forces into the Middle East to defend their access to energy. Nor must each country's navy protect the supertankers carrying oil and liquefied national gas (LNG). For this system to work, the Americans must prevent any power from dominating the Persian Gulf while retaining the ability to protect the safe passage of ships through its waters.

America is here as one of the young lions, God's Purpose requires it!

*In a wonderful way we see this network of countries playing their long anticipated role. Although Ez 38:13 is but one verse it is a remarkable sign for our times.*

*So we bring our Milestones 2007 with a close with a final exhortation. We are greatly encouraged that our traditional interpretation of Scriptures has been borne out in the political situation that we have seen. We also witness the growing unrest in the natural world. Floods, earthquakes, fires and disease are growing evermore prevalent. Come quickly Lord Jesus!*

## Chapter 14:

# LIFT UP THINE EYES

*... lift up thine eyes and behold [the good land] with thine eyes: Deu 3:27*

We have now reached the end of another year, and still our Lord has not come! Will 2008 be the year? Well, we have been talking about this for an awfully long time. I understand that 70 years ago when my parents were first married they were so convinced of the Lord's imminent return they seriously considered not having children. Hitler's rise to power, talks of peace and problems for the Jews in Palestine, all pointed to the nearness of the Master's return.

How many times since then have expectations been raised? In 1948, 1967, 1976, the list goes on, but our Lord is still absent.

*Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: Prov 13:12*

Hope deferred. This is indeed the great test of our faith. Will we keep our eyes lifted up to behold the good land as Moses did long ago? Or will we drop our eyes and behold the things of this life which, humanly speaking, have a more powerful pull. Virtually everything is geared to making money for someone, so great attention is given to make whatever is on offer attractive and desirable, so we give it our time, our money, our attention.

The Word of God works on different lines; it is a call of faith, of present denial of what pleases the flesh in order to develop a mind that seeks to please the Great Creator, to trust in Him rather than ourselves, to seek His future Kingdom, rather than our own material things. To recognise that of the flesh comes no good thing, only from God comes real hope.

Our ecclesial problems reflect the length of our community's pilgrimage. Where is the vibrancy of the Hope of Israel? Many would even wonder what was meant by this phrase! Do our lecture subjects reflect our distinctive stance? Or have we subconsciously absorbed the wisdom of the flesh; the frog-like teachings of gender equality; and the lower moral standards promoted in the media? Is our worship governed by what pleases us or on what we prayerfully and carefully perceive as being what pleases God? Do we find it easier to criticise and to gossip, or to seek to build-up and strengthen? Do we seek the praise of man or of God?

Where are our eyes fixed? Downwards or upwards?

*Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. Heb 10:23-25*

*Look up, lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. Lk 21:28*



## Keep up-to-date!

World events are fast moving and to supplement the yearly *Milestones* review, one can keep up-to-date on a quarterly or a weekly basis.

### The Bible Magazine

Each issue of the quarterly *Bible Magazine* carries a *Milestones Update*, which looks at different topical areas of fulfilling prophecy. This lively full-colour magazine is of interest to brethren and sisters and is ideal to give to our young people as well as to interested friends.

Contact your local CSSS representative for subscription details, or go to the *Bible Magazine* website: [www.biblemagazine.com](http://www.biblemagazine.com)

### Milestones Snippets

*Milestones Snippets* consists of interesting articles that I glean off the web and e-mail approximately twice a week. Each article is indexed and cumulative indexes are e-mailed periodically. It is free. To subscribe, just email me your name and ecclesia and/or country to: [snippets@MilestonesUK.org](mailto:snippets@MilestonesUK.org)

### Milestones Website

The *Milestones* web site [www.MilestonesUK.org](http://www.MilestonesUK.org) carries details of back issues of *Milestones* and a wide range of books expounding prophecy and a section on books and DVD's against evolution, defending the Creation account. These can be ordered from the website or write for booklist. This year there will be available to download reprints of appropriate sections of older issues of *Milestones* that have been referred to in this issue.

### Prophecy Days

Both the *Bible Magazine* and the *Milestones* websites carry details of known Prophecy Days around the world that uphold our traditional understanding of the fulfilment of prophecy.

### MP3 version of Milestones 2007

We intend to make an audio version available of *Milestones 2007* in MP3 format. Invaluable to visually handicapped, or those who want to listen on the move! Contact me at [don@MilestonesUK.org](mailto:don@MilestonesUK.org) for details.

Don Pearce

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## ***Milestones 2007***

2007 is the anniversary of so many matters concerning Israel, so this is our main topic.

- ◆ We spend three chapters on **Israel**
- ◆ and one on the **Middle East** situation.

Our second main topic is the development of the Papacy. It is the great enemy of the Truth and of God's people. We trace the remarkable strides in Rome's development.

- ◆ We spend three chapters on the **Roman Church**
- ◆ and two on **Europe**.
- ◆ We then look at **Russia**
- ◆ **Britain and her young lions**
- ◆ concluding as always with a short **exhortation**.

The chapters have a mix of exposition of prophecies and their connection to the events of the year.

***Milestones 2007*** encourages us to sharpen our focus on things that really matter in preparation for our Lord's return.

