

MIDDLE EASTERN AND AFRICAN NATIONS



IN BIBLE PROPHECY

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Author: Norbert Link

Editorial Review Team: Dave Harris, Rene Messier, Brian Gale, Wray Zehrunig, Phyllis Bourque, Margaret Adair, Joan R. Pope and Johanna Link.

Graphic Design: Shelly Bruno

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United States

Church of the Eternal God
PO Box 270519
San Diego, CA 92198
www.eternalgod.org

Canada

Church of God, ACF
Box 1480
Summerland B.C. V0H 1Z0
www.churchofgodacf.ca

United Kingdom

Global Church of God
PO Box 2111
Derby DE1 1ZR
www.globalchurchofgod.co.uk

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Middle Eastern and African Nations in Bible Prophecy

Introduction

The Bible speaks of many modern countries in prophetic terms, using, of course, ancient names for our peoples today. In order to understand biblical prophecies, one must understand the biblical identity of today's nations and countries.

For instance, Jacob or Israel, had 12 sons, the descendants of whom are alive today. The ancient tribe of *Manasseh*, a son of Joseph and grandson of Jacob, is predominantly the **United States of America**. *Ephraim*, another son of Joseph and grandson of Jacob, basically constitutes the English-speaking, Anglo-Saxon member countries of the Commonwealth of Nations (formerly known as the British Commonwealth). This includes modern countries such as **Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom or the British Isles, as well as part of South Africa**.

Another of the 12 sons of Jacob or Israel was Judah. The tribe of *Judah* (the Jewish people) is scattered today among all nations, with a large number now living in the modern **State of Israel** (For more information, please read our free booklets, "*The Fall and Rise of Britain and America*" and "*The Book of Zechariah—Prophecies for Today*"). Other ancient tribes of the *house of Israel* seem to be located in the following areas:

Reuben can be found today in parts of modern **France**; *Dan* in **Ireland** and part of **Denmark**; *Benjamin* in **Norway** and **Iceland**; *Zebulon* in **The Netherlands**; *Issachar* in **Finland**; *Gad* in **Switzerland**; *Asher* in **Belgium and Luxembourg**; and *Naphtali* in **Sweden**.

We are unable to determine exactly the modern identity of *Levi* and *Simeon*, as they were prophesied to be scattered among the rest of the tribes of Israel (compare Genesis 49:7); Levi in earlier times was mostly associated with Judah; however, strong evidence suggests that today, many in **Wales** are descendants of *Levi*, while some **Scots**, especially around Glasgow, are descendants of *Simeon* as well as of *Levi*. We should mention, of course, that people from many other countries have joined and settled among all of the above-mentioned

nations. This means that not everyone living in the United States, for example, is a descendant of the tribe of Manasseh.

As the Bible speaks volumes about the prophetic significance of the descendants of the ancient houses of Israel and Judah, it also mentions many other modern nations (using their ancient names).

For example, ancient *Chaldeans* or *Babylonians* can be found today in **central and northwestern Europe**. Some of the ancient Chaldeans were driven northward out of the Near East by the Assyrians and Medes prior to 610 B.C. They headed west into the Roman Empire. They settled in northern **Italy**, southeastern **France**, and parts of **Spain** and **northern Africa**.

(For more information, please read our free booklet, “*The Authority of the Bible*.”)

The ancient *Assyrians* can be found today among some of the **Germans, Austrians and other German-speaking countries**. *Small portions* of ancient Assyrians can also be found today in **Iraq** and other Middle Eastern countries.

(For more information, please read our free booklets, “*Germany in Prophecy*” and “*Europe in Prophecy*.”)

In addition, Bible prophecies clearly name many other nations that will be the focus of end-time events. In this booklet, we will mainly discuss the biblical prophecies of seven influential **Middle Eastern and African nations** that will play a crucial role in the not-too-distant future. The nations discussed herein are **Egypt, Syria, Libya, Iran, Ethiopia, Turkey and Saudi Arabia**.

In the Appendix, we have also provided a comprehensive list that includes the **identities of many other modern nations today in the prophetic Scriptures of the Holy Bible**.

The Appendix includes also a separate section that discusses the Muslim belief in a coming **Mahdi**, in relationship to Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Ethiopia, as well as what the **Koran teaches regarding Jesus Christ**.

Major world events, such as the “Arab Spring,” might leave us in doubt or uncertainty as to the outcome of certain developments, but when looking at current events in the light of Bible prophecy and correctly understanding the prophesied outcome, we will NOT be in the dark!

Pathros—original land of Egypt, also India

Philistia—Palestinians

Put—Libya (or parts of Libya), also parts of Northern and Central India, Pakistan and Bangladesh

Reuben—parts of modern France

Rosh—White Russians

Shinar—Iraq

Simeon—scattered; some in Scotland (especially in Glasgow)

Tiras, son of Japheth—American Indians

Togarmah—Siberia

Tubal—Tobolsk, Russia

Zebulon—The Netherlands

Gad—Switzerland

Gomer—Mongolia

Ishmael—Saudi-Arabia (also referred to as Kedar, Hagar, Hagrites, Tema, Dedanites; his daughter Mahalath married Esau (Edom))

Issachar—Finland

Javan—Greece

Judah—the Jews, scattered among all nations, with a large number now living in the modern State of Israel

Kir—uncertain: Albania or Media or Moab or Egypt or Assyria or Babylon

Levi—scattered; some in Wales and Scotland

Lot—Jordan

Lubim—perhaps part of Libya

Lydia—descendants of Egypt who settled in North Africa

Magog—China

Manasseh—United States of America

Medes—Russians and Ukrainians

Meshech—Moscow, Russia

Moab—Jordan, perhaps also Western Iraq

Naphtali—Sweden

Chapter 1

Modern Egypt

The Bible contains quite a few Scriptures dealing with Egypt's past, present and future conditions.

ISRAEL'S REMNANT ENSLAVED BY MODERN EGYPT

We read in **Isaiah 11:11–16** that in the end time (the reference in verse 11 is to the phrase “in that day,” speaking of a time beginning about one year before Christ's return, but continuing after Christ's return as well), God will free the enslaved remnant of His people—the descendants of the modern houses of Israel and Judah—from countries such as Assyria, Egypt and Cush. This means that they will be slaves in these countries, when Christ returns, and He will free them after His return.

As mentioned in the introduction, the modern descendants of the house of Israel can be found today in the USA (descendants of Israel's grandson, Manasseh), the United Kingdom or the British Isles, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and part of South Africa (all descendants of Israel's grandson Ephraim), while Judah or the house of Judah designates the Jews today. Assyria represents mainly modern Germany. *Cush* designates mainly *Ethiopia*, as we will explain later in this booklet (see [chapter 5](#)).

We also read that the remnant of the people from the houses of Israel and Judah will be held captive in *Pathros*, which is in this case a reference to the land of Egypt's origin (compare Ezekiel 29:14, which also tells us that Egyptians will become captive themselves; see below).

MODERN EGYPT BECOMES ENSLAVED

Further information on the future of Egypt is provided in **Isaiah 19:1–4, 14, 16–25**.

First, we read in verse 2 that *Egyptians will be fighting against*

Egyptians—a development which we have been observing in that country with the beginning of the “Arab Spring.” We read in verse 4 about the captivity and slavery of Egypt, and that a *fiere king will rule over them*. This is a reference to the king of Assyria, who is also referred to in Scripture as the beast and also as the king of the North.

Verses 16 and 17, 20, tell us that “in that day” Judah will be a terror to Egypt. This refers to the time when Jesus Christ, the Savior, has come; and verses 23–25 prophesy that when Jesus Christ rules on this earth during the Millennium, the nations of Egypt, Assyria and Israel will live together in cooperation and peace.

Isaiah 27:13 also explains that when the great trumpet sounds “in that day”—designating the resurrection of the just from the dead in the end time—captives from the houses of Israel and Judah will be released from slavery. We are also told that prior to their freedom, some will perish in the LAND of Assyria, and some will be outcasts in the *LAND of Egypt*.

We read in **Ezekiel 30:1–9, 18–19** that at the time of the “day of the LORD” (another reference to the end time), the sword will come upon Egypt, as well as additional countries like *Ethiopia* (Cush), *Libya* (Put; refer to [chapter 3](#)), and *Lydia* (or Lud; compare Jeremiah 46:8–9, showing that Egypt, Ethiopia, Lydia and Libya will be allies at that time of the end).

Regarding “*Lydia*,” not much is known, but it has been contended that it designates an African nation in Western Asia Minor, **descended from Egypt**.

Verses 4–5 refer to **Chub**, which is nowhere else mentioned in Scripture; the passage could also read, “and ALL (Chub) the men of the lands who were allied...” We also read specifically in verse 18 that at that time of the “day of the LORD”, *Egyptians will go into captivity*.

EGYPT NOT PART OF FINAL CONFEDERACY WITH EUROPE

We want to point out here that none of these countries referred to in this passage in Ezekiel 30 are mentioned in **Psalms 83:1–8**, which describes a confederacy between Middle Eastern nations and Assyria. It appears, then, that the countries mentioned in Psalm 83, which are allied WITH Assyria, are different from the countries mentioned in

Appendix 2

Biblical Identity of Modern Nations

Amalek—(Esau’s grandson), PLO and other violent groups

Ammon—Jordan

Aram, Arameans—Syria (with capital Damascus)

Asher—Belgium and Luxembourg

Assyria—Germany, Austria, German-speaking countries (small contingency in Iraq)

Benjamin—Norway and Iceland

Chaldea and Babylon— northern Italy (also southeastern France, and parts of Spain and northern Africa)

Cush—Ethiopia, formerly Abyssinia (some descendants also in India and Sri Lanka)

Dan—Ireland and part of Denmark

Ephraim—Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, as well as part of South Africa

Elam, Elamites—Iran, aka Persia (some descendants also in Poland)

Esau, Edom—Turkey (also referred to as Idumea, Teman, Bozrah, Seir)

Ezekiel 30, which are apparently by then allied AGAINST Assyria. (But note that prior to that development and final confederation *against* Assyria, Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia will fight *together with* Assyria against Israel, compare chapter 5).

Notice also that modern Babylon or mystical Tyre—referring to the end-time resurrection of the ancient Roman Empire in Europe—is described as an economic power in *Ezekiel 27*, with whom all nations have been dealing, up to a point, including Russia, Persia (modern Iran), Syria and Israel. And it does say in verse 10 that at one time, those from Persia, Lydia and Libya were or would be in Tyre’s army as men of war. (Persia or Iran, together with Ethiopia and Libya, are also listed in Ezekiel 38:5, describing an attack under the leadership of Russia, China and other Asiatic nations, against the modern house of Israel, AFTER Christ’s return. This passage will be discussed in more detail later in this booklet, in chapter 4). For more information on mystical Tyre, please read chapter 3 (“Ancient and Modern Tyre in Prophecy”) in our booklet, *“The Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.”*

Ezekiel 32:11–15 explains and confirms again that the *king of modern Babylon*—the king of Assyria or the king of the North; i.e. the beast—will ultimately **rule over Egypt**, just prior to Christ’s return.

Turning to the book of Daniel, we read in **Daniel 11:41–43** that the king of the North (the king of Assyria or the beast) will conquer many countries in the Middle East, *including Egypt*; and that Libya and Ethiopia will also be in subjection to him, but that countries such as Edom (modern Turkey, see chapter 6 herein), Moab (Jordan and West Iraq) and the prominent people of Ammon (Jordan) will escape—note that these countries which will not be enslaved by Assyria are some of the countries that had entered into a confederacy WITH Assyria, pursuant to Psalm 83.

EGYPT WON’T HELP ISRAEL

We obtain further pertinent information on the future of Egypt in the book of Hosea.

Hosea 7:11–12 tells us that Ephraim will try to get help from Assyria and Egypt, but will not receive it, and we are also told that the very fact of that occurrence will be announced in the last day. Technically, Ephraim designates the United Kingdom or the British Isles,

and perhaps countries of the British Commonwealth, such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, but since Ephraim was the leading tribe over the ancient house of Israel, the reference to Ephraim includes in all likelihood other major tribes of the modern house of Israel, including Manasseh or the USA.

Hosea 9:3 elaborates on the prophetic concept that Ephraim shall return to Egypt and eat unclean things in Assyria. On the other hand, Hosea 11:5, 10–11 informs us that Ephraim shall not return to the LAND of Egypt; rather, it will go into the kind of “Egyptian” slavery which ancient Israel experienced when it was in Egyptian captivity. As we have seen, the modern king ruling over the modern house of Israel will be Assyria. Deuteronomy 28:68; 17:16 confirms as well that “Egyptian” slavery is decreed over both the houses of Israel and Judah. But according to Isaiah 27:13, a part of the enslaved remnant will return from the LAND of Egypt.

JEWS ENSLAVED IN LAND OF EGYPT

Since Ephraim (and at least some within the modern house of Israel) will not be enslaved in the LAND of Egypt, it follows that those who will be enslaved in the LAND of Egypt will be mainly those from the *house of Judah*. This fact is supported in Joel 3:19, which tells us that **Egypt will become a desolation** because of their violence against the people of JUDAH or the Jews. For more information, please read chapter two (“The Modern House of Israel in Prophecy”) in our free booklet, *“The Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.”*

Finally, in Zechariah 10:10–12, we read again that some (apparently referring to Judah) will be freed from slavery and brought back from the *LAND of Egypt*, while others (Ephraim and some, if not many modern tribes from the house of Israel) will be freed from Assyria.

SLOW CONVERSION OF EGYPT

Zechariah 14:16–19 concludes by telling us that Egypt will slowly learn to accept God and His way of life in the Millennium, but it will take time. Ultimately, however, as we have seen before in Isaiah 19, Egypt will be blessed, together with Assyria and Israel.

In conclusion, when we take all the passages together, as quoted above, we should realize that developments in the Middle East are

Roman Empire, under Mussolini, was comprised of several nations and powers, including Hitler’s Germany, and as the final revival of the king of the North will consist of ten European nations or groups of nations, under Assyrian leadership, so *if there is to be a future king of the South*, he might very well constitute a coalition of **Middle Eastern nations, under Ethiopian leadership** (note that previously, the king of the South was King Menelik of Ethiopia, and later, at the time of Benito Mussolini’s occupation of Ethiopia, it was Emperor Haile Selassie).

A MUSLIM MAHDI IN CHRISTIAN ETHIOPIA?

What needs to be remembered, however, is that Ethiopia is and has been a “Christian” country, having adopted “Christianity” as its official religion, and that a majority of Ethiopians are “Christians.” [Of course, Ethiopia’s “Christianity” is quite different from the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.]

Only one-third of the population are Muslims. It would be difficult to conceive that if there was a final king of the South, under Ethiopian lead, he would be a Muslim Mahdi, trying to unite Arab and Muslim nations to form a Muslim power bloc. At the same time, it is interesting to note that, according to *the Wikipedia Encyclopedia*, the late emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie, was referred to by some of his supporters as the Mahdi, due to his direct lineage to the prophet Mohammed. Other supporters referred to him as the biblical Messiah. He himself remained an Ethiopian Orthodox Christian throughout his life.

In conclusion, **the Bible nowhere says that a Muslim Mahdi will appear in the Middle East or elsewhere, in an attempt to unite Arab and Muslim nations** (which would also require healing the long-time animosity between Shias and Sunnis) and to establish a power bloc, ruled by the Muslim religion. Nothing is said in the Bible about the religious identity of a future king of the South (if there still is one), but given the fact that “Christian” Ethiopia would have to play a predominant role in the configuration of a power bloc being led by a future king of the South, it is difficult to imagine that he would be a Muslim Mahdi, who would be accepted by both Shias and Sunnis, trying to unite the Muslim world in an attempt to establish the Muslim faith as the sole accepted religion in all the world.

the war! Verse 45—the coming Roman Empire shall establish its palace, as capital of the revived Roman Empire, and eventually its religious headquarters, at Jerusalem! Zechariah 14:2 says the city shall be taken! ‘Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him!’ This language signifies the end of the ‘beast’ and the ‘false prophet’ at the hand of God! You will find this end described in Revelation 19:19–20 and Zechariah 14:12! And now what is the time of this end, at the close of this marvelous prophecy? The next verse, Daniel 12:1, says at the time of the resurrection of the just—at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ!

“This prophecy [in Daniel 11] begins with the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, soon after the death of Alexander the Great—2,300 years ago. But it ends at the time of the resurrection and the Second Coming of Christ to bring peace at last to the region—and to the entire world! It is so plain, there can be no doubt of its right application!”

A FUTURE KING OF THE SOUTH?

What Herbert Armstrong suggests in his booklet, and also in other writings, is that the prophecy in Daniel 11, referring to the king of the South, has already been fulfilled—so that there is no biblical need for another king of the South to arise. But if there is still another king of the South to come, according to Herbert Armstrong, **it would NOT be Egypt.**

We read in Daniel 11:40, that in the end time, the king of the South will “attack” or more correctly, “push” at the king of the North (compare the *Authorized Version*). The king of the North can be identified as a succession of emperors of the ancient Roman Empire, and its revivals, culminating in the final resurrection of the ancient Roman Empire, in Europe. The last king of the North is identified in other passages as the king of Assyria, “King Jareb,” or the beast—the military leader of Assyria or modern Germany, but he will also lead a confederation of ten European countries or groups of countries. (For proof, read our free booklet, “*Europe in Prophecy*”). By the same rationale, **it is possible that the king of the South (if there is still another final king of the South to arise) would be leading a confederacy of Middle Eastern nations.**

It is by no means certain that there will still be a future king of the South, but it is of course possible. As the ninth revival of the ancient

leading to the end-time crescendo of *an outright war in the Middle East*, and **Egypt will play a prominent part in those developments.** However, it is not altogether clear, for example, as to exactly how and when the different stages of slavery and captivity will come about for the houses of Israel and Judah, as well as for Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries.

We should be careful to view all Scriptures on the subject, lest we pick and choose with the aim of creating our own prophetic scenarios, which may or may not be in accordance with the inspired Word of God. We should be patient enough to allow God to show us how these end time events will come about, rather than jumping ahead with our own imaginations, lest we be found wanting in our postulations and proclamations. Rather, we need to follow Christ’s command to *WATCH* world events, knowing that in His due time, God will reveal to His true servants exactly how the prophetic Scriptures will be fulfilled, and *when the LORD has spoken*, THEN His servants will proclaim it (Amos 3:7–8)!

Italians were cut to pieces because of their inexperience in fighting in mountainous country and because they were greatly outnumbered. This defeat was disastrous to Italian expansion in Africa.

“Ever since, Italy demanded revenge! In 1927 Mussolini set the time, at just 40 years from that defeat, or 1935, when he would be ready ‘finally to make our voice heard, and see our rights recognized!’ 1935 came. The hour struck! Mussolini attacked! Now notice verse 40: ‘... and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.’ A whirlwind comes in the air, sweeping all before it. Mussolini did send a great air force into Africa! Also many modern ‘chariots’—trucks, tanks, etc.—and ships, loaded with soldiers. More than 100,000 sailed to Ethiopia. And, notice it, Mussolini’s forces were to pass over—in the air! It is at this precise point in this astounding prophecy that Mussolini’s struggle in Ethiopia and in World War II ended. Mussolini did not finish the prophecy. There is yet another leader to arise in Europe! Notice what will next happen!

“[Daniel 11,] Verse 41—‘He shall enter also into the glorious land ...’—the Holy Land. This is yet to be fulfilled. When the coming revival of the Roman Empire takes the Holy Land, then the nations will be plunged into the initial phase of the great, last and final crisis at the close of this age! Other prophecies reveal that this revival of the Roman Empire will bring into subjection the U.S. and Britain!...

“‘And,’ continues verse 41, ‘many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon’—the modern land of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The coming dictator will unite many others with him—10 in all (Rev. 17:12)—reviving the ancient Roman Empire. [Daniel 11,] Verse 42 says **Egypt shall not escape, proving Egypt is not now the ‘king of the south.’**

“[Daniel 11] Verse 43 says the Libyans and Ethiopians (observe that after its conquest by Mussolini, **Ethiopia is not again referred to as the king of the south**) shall be at his steps—and he will then control them. Italy lost control of Libya and Ethiopia after the war. Verse 44—but news out of the east and out of the north—Russia and the Orient—shall trouble the revived Roman Empire. Russia will enter

called the “Mahdi,” who will unite many Muslim nations and attempt to establish the Muslim religion in all the world. This is strictly a Muslim concept, which may be part and parcel of all the other confusing and fanciful inaccuracies that are believed and taught by Muslims, as relating to Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God. (It is interesting that Muslims consider the belief in Christ’s divinity as the sole unpardonable sin, while the Bible forcefully teaches that no one—including Muslims—can inherit salvation and eternal life, unless they believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of mankind.)

Rather than teaching the establishment of the Muslim religion over this world, *the Bible says that a powerful religious organization, claiming to be “Christian,” will become a world-ruling power, which will attempt to convert everyone to its main religious doctrines and which will persecute those who refuse to accept its system. It is described in the book of Revelation (chapter 17) as “Babylon” and as a beast with two horns like a lamb, speaking like a dragon (Revelation 13:11).*

THE MAHDI—A FUTURE KING OF THE SOUTH?

Some other Christian groups believe that the Mahdi is a final king of the South, as spoken of in the book of Daniel, chapter 11, who is perceived to arise in the Middle East or in Africa, and who will “push at” the king of the North—the future military leader of the “Babylonian system” or the final revival of the ancient Roman Empire—the “beast” of the book of Revelation, who is also identified as King Jareb of Assyria (modern Germany).

However, note what has been said about an end-time future king of the south. In his booklet, *“The Middle East in Prophecy,”* copyright 1948, 1972, Herbert Armstrong wrote this:

“Ethiopia... is the only possible government that could be the king of the south. At the time of the end—our time—this king of the south was to push at the king of the north, now at Rome!

“In 1895 King Menelik, of Ethiopia, sent an army of 9,000 to 10,000 men against General Baratieri’s Italian army. North of Ethiopia was Eritrea, belonging to Italy. And southeast was Italian Somaliland. In 1896 General Baratieri with 13,000 men tried to defend Eritrea against the Ethiopians. They lost 4,600 whites and 3,000 native troops, and more than 3,500 were taken prisoner. In a later engagement the

Chapter 2

Modern Aram or Syria

In light of the ongoing violence in Syria, does the Bible tell us anything about Syria’s past, and does it give us any indications as to what is in store for it? The Holy Scriptures certainly do. Let’s take a look.

SYRIA’S HISTORY

Syria is sometimes referred to in the Bible as “Aram,” and the Syrians are called “Arameans.” Historically, there have been times of war and of peace between Syria and the houses of Israel and Judah. After Jacob had deceived his father Isaac and his brother Esau, he fled to and lived in Syria, where he was terribly deceived by his uncle Laban. Hosea 12:12 tells us: “Jacob fled to the country of Syria; Israel served for a spouse And for a wife he tended sheep.”

David fought against the Syrians (2 Samuel 8:5), and so did Solomon (1 Kings 11:25). Later, Assyria intervened on behalf of King Ahaz of the house of Judah and overthrew **Damascus**, the *capital of Syria*. At that time, Rezin, King of Syria, was allied with the house of Israel under King Pekah, and they both attacked King Ahaz of Judah. The king of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser, heeded King Ahaz’s request for help, and he killed Rezin, King of Syria, and carried the Syrians into captivity, to a region called **Kir** (2 Kings 16:5–9; compare a possible reference to these events in Isaiah 8:3–4).

In New Testament times, we read that Saul was persecuting true Christians, but on his way to *Damascus* to carry out further atrocities, he received a vision and was temporarily blinded by God (Acts 9:1–9). He became converted and was baptized, spending some days with the disciples in Damascus, and his name was changed to Paul (Acts 9:10–19). Later, he repeatedly gave vivid testimony of that extraordinary occurrence; for instance, when defending himself before King Agrippa against false charges (Acts 26:19–20). Paul’s activities

in Damascus also led to his persecution in Damascus itself (compare 2 Corinthians 11:32–33).

Turning to the end time, we read that Syria will at first have economic ties to the Babylonian system of the final revival of the ancient Roman Empire (compare Ezekiel 27:16, 18, referring to the Babylonian system as mystical “Tyre”).

COMING UTTER DESTRUCTION OF SYRIA

We also read of the coming *utter destruction of Syria and Damascus*, just prior to Christ’s return.

Isaiah 17:1–4 says, according to the *Living Bible*:

“THIS IS God’s message to Damascus, capital of Syria: Look, Damascus is gone! It is no longer a city—it has become a heap of ruins! The cities of Aroer are deserted. Sheep pasture there, lying quiet and unafraid, with no one to chase them away. The strength of Israel and the power of Damascus will end, and the remnant of Syria shall be destroyed. For as Israel’s glory departed, so theirs, too, will disappear, declares the Lord of hosts.”

The *King James Bible* clarifies in verse 4 that the reference is to the end time, as it says, “IN THAT DAY it shall come to pass that the glory of Jacob will wane [or made thin, or fade away].” See also verses 7, 9 and 11. The term “in that day” always refers to a time, which will begin approximately one year prior to Christ’s return, but it can also include the time after Christ’s return. In general, it designates the time when God will actively intervene in world affairs. It is also described quite often as the “day of the LORD.”

Contrary to common belief, today’s world is NOT God’s world. It is ruled by Satan the devil, the real god of this world! Following the sin of Adam and Eve, God allowed Satan to remain on his designated throne, only until Jesus Christ comes to replace him. But just prior to His second coming, God will begin to actively intervene in human affairs. His angels will blow the seven trumpets and pour out on mankind the seven last plagues of God’s wrath. This will be done to show mankind the gravity of their abominable and wicked sins. At that time, a few will repent, but most will continue in their outright rebellion against the true God. Sadly, the people of Syria will be no exception.

Jeremiah 49:23–27 gives us another stirring account of Syria’s

common reference to Jesus occurs in the form of ‘Ibn Maryam’ (son of Mary), sometimes preceded with another title. Jesus is also recognised as a prophet (nabi) and messenger (rasul) of God... Another title frequently mentioned is al-Masi, which translates to ‘the Messiah’. This does not correspond to the Christian concept of Messiah, as **Islam regards all prophets, including Jesus, to be mortal and without any share in divinity...**

“Islamic texts regard Jesus as a righteous messenger of God, and **reject the idea of him being God or the begotten Son of God. According to Islamic scriptures, the belief that Jesus is God or [the] Son of God is shirk, or... the sole unpardonable sin...**

“Muslims believe that Jesus was a precursor to Muhammad, and that he announced the latter’s coming. They base this on a verse of the Qur’an wherein Jesus speaks of a messenger to appear after him named Ahmad. Islam associates Ahmad with Muhammad... Muslims also assert that evidence of Jesus’ pronouncement is present in the New Testament, citing the mention of the Paraclete whose coming is foretold in the Gospel of John” [There, of course, Jesus speaks of the coming of the Holy Spirit—the “paracletos” or comforter—but Muslims refer this to the coming of Muhammad].

CHRISTIAN THOUGHT ON THE MAHDI

As mentioned, some Christian groups predict the coming of a Muslim Mahdi, who will commence to unify the Arab world. Some even claim that Mahdi will be the “beast” or the “Antichrist.” They are obviously influenced by the Muslim concept that in the future, the Masih ad-Dajjal (“Antichrist”) and the “Sufyani” (ruling in Syria) will establish themselves as false leaders in the Muslim world. **However, from a biblical standpoint, none of these concepts are correct.** The beast (many times wrongly referred to as the “Antichrist”) and the false prophet will not be Arabs or powerful persons arising in the Middle East, but they will be military and religious *leaders in Europe*. Biblically, these leaders will apparently be in power for about three-and-a-half years—not for seven years, as some falsely claim.

WHAT THE BIBLE DOES AND DOES NOT SAY

The Bible says nothing about a political or religious Arab leader,

the “Antichrist” [the Masih ad-Dajjal] and another Muslim dictator from Syria [the Sufyani], and as a consequence, Syria will be destroyed, and Iraq severely punished.

MUSLIM JESUS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM BIBLICAL JESUS

So that there is no misunderstanding, *Jesus is quite differently described in Muslim thought and the Koran, as the Jesus taught in the Holy Scriptures of the Bible*. Please note the following comments, quoted from the *Wikipedia Encyclopedia*, showing the **irreconcilable differences between Muslim and Christian beliefs, pertaining to Jesus Christ (emphasis added)**:

“The belief in Jesus... is required in Islam, and a requirement of being a Muslim. The Qur’an... states that Jesus was born to Mary as the result of virginal conception... **Jesus was not crucified** but instead, he was raised up by God unto the heavens. This ‘raising’ is understood to mean through bodily ascension... **Jesus is considered to have been a Muslim... Islam rejects the... view that Jesus was God incarnate or the son of God, that he was ever crucified or resurrected or that he ever atoned for the sins of mankind...** The Qur’an... states that **Jesus was created** from the act of God’s will. The Qur’an compares this miraculous creation of Jesus with the creation of Adam... Islamic texts categorically deny the idea of crucifixion or death attributed to Jesus by the Bible... there has been unanimous agreement amongst Islamic scholars in **denying the crucifixion...**

“Muslims believe that Isa (Jesus) will return at a time close to the end of the world... Jesus’ descent will be in the midst of wars fought by the Mahdi... the redeemer of Islam, against the Antichrist... and his followers... Jesus will descend at the point of a white arcade, east of Damascus, dressed in yellow robes—his head anointed. He will then join the Mahdi in his war against the Antichrist. **Jesus, considered as a Muslim, will abide by the Islamic teachings.** Eventually... there will be one community, that of Islam... After the death of the Mahdi, Jesus will assume leadership... **Jesus’ rule is said to be around forty years, after which he will die.** Muslims will then... bury him in the city Medina in a grave left vacant beside Muhammad...

“Jesus is described by various means in the Qur’an. The most

impending destruction. It specifically mentions that the young men of Damascus will fall in her streets, and all men of war shall be cut off IN THAT DAY. It also says that GOD will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus which will consume the palaces of the city and of the leadership and prominent people of Syria. Please note that verse 25 reads more accurately in the *Revised Standard Version*: “How the famous city [i.e. Damascus] is forsaken, the joyful city.”

ENSLAVED IN KIR

We also find a prophecy about Syria and Damascus in **Amos 1:3–5**, stating the following:

“Thus says the LORD: ‘For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because they have threshed Gilead with implements of iron, But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael [the Syrian leadership at that time], Which shall devour the palaces of Ben-Hadad. I will also break the gate bar of Damascus, And cut off the inhabitant from the Valley of Aven, And the one who holds the scepter from Beth Eden. The people of Syria shall go captive to Kir,’ Says the LORD.”

In **Amos 9:7**, we read that God had freed the Syrians from Kir, but in Amos 1, God says that they will go back to the slavery of Kir. We also read, in **Isaiah 22:6**, that Kir will be one of the nations or people assembled to fight against Jerusalem in the end time, during the “day of the LORD” (compare **Zechariah 14:1–2**).

Who or what is Kir?

Commentaries and Lexica are divided in their interpretations and explanations.

Clark’s Commentary on the Bible says that Kir is in the country of **Albania**, on the river Cyrus, which empties itself into the Caspian Sea.

Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible maintains that Kir is in **Media**.

However, in **Isaiah 15:1**, we find another reference to Kir as being situated in **Moab** (modern Jordan and Western Iraq), speaking of “Kir of Moab.”

The *Geneva Study Bible* says that Kir is in **Egypt** (In Latin, Kir is called Cyrene, and Acts 2:10 says that people were in Jerusalem, who had come from “Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene.”).

The *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown commentary* claims that Kir is a region subject to **Assyria**.

Several Lexica state that Kir is a place of exile in Southern **Babylon**, as well as a place in *Assyria* and in *Moab*.

Regardless of what people or region might be specifically referred to in the Bible, the *Living Bible* has the following interesting annotation to Amos 1:5:

“Decreeing that the Syrians should go back to Kir as slaves was like saying to the Israelites that they must go back to Egypt as slaves, for the Syrians had made their exodus from Kir and now were free (See 9:7).”

DESTRUCTION OF SYRIA THROUGH MODERN KING OF ASSYRIA?

We can safely say that **in the end time, Syria and Damascus will be destroyed**. Even though the Bible does not expressly state who will be the nation or “king” who will destroy Damascus and enslave the Syrians, if we look at *prior historical events*, it is *possible* that it will be done *through the modern Babylonian system under the leadership of the modern “king” of Assyria*—a mighty future leader in Germany who is also referred to in the Bible as the beast, King Jareb, and the king of the North.

Remember that in ancient times, the king of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser, destroyed Damascus and enslaved the Syrians. The concept of a DUAL prophecy (which might be fulfilled AGAIN in our times) could be even more compelling, because **Kir** is mentioned in the Bible in relationship with an ancient and a MODERN slavery of Syria, and it was the *ancient king of Assyria* who enslaved the Syrians and transported them to the region called Kir.

ATTACK OF MODERN ASSYRIA AGAINST SYRIA, ISRAEL AND JUDAH AT THE SAME TIME?

Remember, as well, that the ancient king of Assyria fought the house of Israel [under King Pekah] and Syria [under King Rezin] at about the same time. If history is our guide, then it would be interesting to contemplate the *possibility* that the destruction of Damascus and the overthrow of Syria *could occur at approximately the same time that the modern “king” of Assyria will attack the modern houses of Judah (the Jews) and Israel*—which can be found today mainly in the United Kingdom or the British Isles, as well as the USA.

same as mine and whose father’s name is the same as my father’s... He will rule for seven or eight years...’

“Among those Islamic scholars who wholly reject the Mahdi doctrine... Sir Muhammad Iqbal wrote: ‘...the concept of the Mahdi... is a completely Iranian... perception. This concept has no link to the Qur’an, Islam and Arabic perceptions...’

“In their book, *Al Mahdi and the End of Time*, Muhammad ibn Izzat and Muhammad Arif, two well-known Egyptian authors, identify the Mahdi in the Book of Revelation... In one place, they write, ‘I find the Mahdi recorded in the books of the Prophets... For instance, the Book of Revelation says: “And I saw and behold a white horse. He that sat on him [...] went forth conquering and to conquer.”’ Ibn Izzat and Arif then go on to say: ‘It is clear that this man is the Mahdi who will ride the white horse and judge by the Qur’an (with justice) and with whom will be men with marks of prostration (zabiba) on their foreheads.’”

In an accompanying article, the *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* describes “zabiba” as “a prayer bump,” stating, “A prayer bump or prayer scar, also known as a zabiba/zebiba/zebibah (‘raisin’ in Arabic), is a mark on the forehead of a Muslim, apparently due to the friction generated from the contact of the forehead with the prayer mat. Islam generally requires its adherents to pray five times a day (known as salah), which involves kneeling on a prayer mat and touching the ground with one’s forehead. When done for extended periods of time, a prayer bump may develop. Some Muslims may consider the presence of a prayer bump to be a sign of religious dedication and piety.”

Even though much confusion seems to surround the Muslim concept of a future Mahdi, it appears that the overall accepted belief within the Sunni and Shia religion (by those who believe in the coming of a Mahdi) is that **he will precede the coming of Jesus; that he will begin to establish the Muslim religion over all the world** (although it seems to be unclear whether the universal Muslim religion will be based on the Shia or Sunni interpretations of the Koran); that **he will rule the world for at least seven years prior to the “Day of Judgment” or the “Day of Resurrection”**; and that **Christ, upon His return, will judge and rule the world on the basis of the Koran**.

In addition, according to Sunni belief, the Mahdi will fight against

Muhammad. He will be a forerunner to Jesus' Islamic Rule. His coming will be accompanied by the raising of a Black Standard [the historical flag flown by Muhammad in Islamic tradition]. His coming will be accompanied by the appearance of the Masih ad-Dajjal (Antichrist). There will be a lunar and solar eclipse within the same month of Ramadan. A star with a luminous tail will rise from the East before the coming of the Mahdi...

"Shia Muslims believe that the Mahdi is Muhammad al-Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam, who was born in 869 CE and was hidden by God at the age of five (874 CE). He is still alive but has been in occultation, 'awaiting the time that God has decreed for his return'... [He] will return as the Mahdi with 'a company of his chosen ones,' and his enemies will be led by the one-eyed Antichrist and the Sufyani."

In an accompanying article, the *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* explains:

"[The] 'Sufyani' will be one of many Muslim tyrants that the Mahdi will have to face in the Middle East... he... will spread corruption and mischief on the earth before the Mahdi. He will be such a tyrant that he will kill the children and rip out the bellies of women. The Sufyani will murder those from the household of the Prophet and will rule over Syria. When he hears about the Mahdi, he will send an army to seize and kill him. However the earth will swallow this army before it even reaches the Mahdi."

However, in the somewhat contradictory main article, the *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* continues:

"The two armies will fight 'one final apocalyptic battle' where the Mahdi and his forces will prevail over evil. After the Mahdi has ruled Earth for a number of years, Isa [Jesus] will return... among the most commonly reported signs that presage the advent of the Mahdi in Shia Islam are the following:

"The Muslims will throw off the reins and take possession of their land, throwing out the authority of the foreigners. There will be a great conflict in the land of Syria, until it is destroyed. Death and fear will afflict the people of Baghdad and Iraq...

"Of those Sunnis that hold to the existence of the Mahdi, some believe the Mahdi will be an ordinary man, born to an ordinary woman. The Prophet Muhammad said: 'The world will not come to an end until the Arabs are ruled by a man from my family whose name is the

This scenario could make sense in light of the possible development that the Jews might ask Germany and the modern Babylonian system for help and intervention in the Middle East (as the ancient Jewish king Ahaz asked the ancient king of Assyria for help). Ironically, "Ephraim"—the USA and Great Britain—will make a covenant with modern Assyria (Hosea 12:1) and ask them for help as well. (Compare Hosea 5:13, which states in the *New American Bible* and the *Menge* translation: "Ephraim went to Assyria, and Judah sent to the great king.")

At that time, the modern "king" of Assyria (the king of the North or the beast) might just comply with both requests. We know that he *WILL* intervene in the Middle East (Daniel 11:41–43)—not because he really wants to help the Jews or anyone else, but because it will be in his heart to destroy and cut off not a few nations (compare Isaiah 10:5–7).

The modern "king" of Assyria will not really "rescue" the Jews or modern Ephraim (Hosea 7:11–12; 5:14–15). Even anciently, we read in 2 Chronicles 28:16–21 that Tiglath-Pileser, King of Assyria, did NOT really "help" Ahaz, King of Judah, but rather "distressed" or "oppressed" him (verse 20). In fact, we read that the modern "king" of Assyria, leader of the revived Roman Empire, will ultimately engage in a decisive war *against* the modern houses of Israel AND Judah (For more information, please read our free booklet, "*The Fall and Rise of Britain and America*").

In conclusion, it is certain that **Syria will fall in the next world war. Damascus will be destroyed and the Syrian people will go into captivity**—and so will the modern descendants of the houses of Israel and Judah (Hosea 5:9; Jeremiah 30:3; 33:7). It is incumbent upon us to *watch world events* so as not to be caught unawares when biblical prophecies come to pass.

Appendix 1

Will there be a Mahdi?

Muslims believe that a “Mahdi” will come to bring peace to this earth. Does the Bible indicate the coming of a “Mahdi” as well?

There are different schools of thought in the “Christian” world that seem to teach that a powerful and influential Muslim person will claim in the end time to be the Mahdi, trying to unify much of the Muslim and Arab world under his leadership. Some claim that the king of the South, mentioned in Daniel 11, will be that person; others claim that the “beast” in the book of Revelation, whom they very often mislabel as the “Antichrist,” will be that Mahdi.

HOW MUSLIMS VIEW THE MAHDI

Before discussing what the Bible says on that issue, let us review how the Muslim world looks at the Mahdi, a key figure whom they expect to appear on the world scene. Over the centuries, many have claimed to be the Mahdi, but so far, nobody [with one possible exception, see below] has been accepted by the Muslim world as the end-time Mahdi—for the obvious reason that nobody has fulfilled the predictions of the Koran that are associated with the coming of the final Mahdi.

The *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* summarizes the Muslim expectations of a future Mahdi, as follows:

“In Sunni and Shia eschatology, the Mahdi (... the ‘Guided One’) is the prophesied redeemer of Islam who will stay on Earth for seven, nine or nineteen years (according to various interpretations) before the Day of Judgment (... literally, the Day of Resurrection), and, alongside Jesus, will rid the world of wrongdoing, injustice and tyranny...

“The following beliefs concerning the Mahdi are shared by both Sunni and Shia Muslims... The Mahdi will be a descendant of Muhammad of the line of Fatimah... He will have the same name as

Chapter 3

Modern Put or Libya

No one seems to know for sure what the future holds for the biblical country of Libya. God’s Holy Scriptures do give us a glimpse, however, as to what we can expect to occur.

It is commonly accepted that **Libya** is designated as “*Put*” or “*Phut*” in the Hebrew Scriptures. Put was the son of Ham, a son of Noah (Genesis 10:6; 1 Chronicles 1:8). The word “*Put*” or “*Phut*” means “*bow*” or “*warrior*.” According to Josephus, Put settled in the land of Libya. Depending on what translation one might use, the word “*Phut*” is sometimes mentioned in addition to Libya. As the *Ryrie Study Bible* explains, the word “*Put*” can also refer—depending on the context—to just a part of the country of Libya.

As we pointed out previously on Egypt’s future (in [chapter 1](#)), **Ezekiel 30** gives us a prophecy dealing with the day of the LORD (verse 3)—describing a time just preceding the return of Jesus Christ. We read in Ezekiel 30 that Egypt and her allies will fall at that time. As we may recall, verses 5 and 6 designate Egypt’s allies in that way:

“Ethiopia, LIBYA, Lydia, all the mingled people, Chub, and the men of the lands who are allied, shall fall with them by the sword—those who uphold Egypt shall fall...”

As mentioned above, *Lydia* may refer to descendants of Egypt who settled in North Africa, and “*Chub*” might not describe a particular people, but could be translated as “*all*,” saying that “*all*” the men of the lands who are allied will fall.

ALLIANCE AND DOWNFALL OF LIBYA, EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA

We can take from this passage that in the very end time, **Libya will be allied with Egypt and Ethiopia, and that they will fall together.** A similar alliance occurred in the past with equally devastating consequences.

Jeremiah 46 describes the judgment on Egypt and Pharaoh Necho through King Nebuchadnezzar (verse 2), but it is clearly a *dual prophecy*, as in verse 10 a reference is made particularly to the day of the LORD.

We read in verses 9 and 10:

“Come up, O horses, and rage, O chariots! And let the mighty men come forth; The Ethiopians and the LIBYANS who handle the shield, And the Lydians who handle and bend the bow. For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, A day of vengeance, that He may avenge Himself on His adversaries. The sword shall devour; It shall be satisfied and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord GOD of hosts has a sacrifice In the north country by the river Euphrates.”

Barnes' Notes on the Bible explains that historically, all these nations were allies and **part of the Egyptian army**. He states:

“Go up, advance, ye horses; and drive furiously, ye chariots; and let the mighty men go forth. They march out of Egypt, arranged in three divisions, cavalry, chariots, and infantry, to begin the campaign. The armies of Egypt were composed chiefly of mercenaries. Cush [Ethiopia] and Phut [part of Libya, see above], the Libyans of Mauritania, supplied the heavy-armed soldiers... and Ludim, the Hamite Lydians of North Africa... a weaker race, served as light-armed troops. They march forth in haughty confidence, but that day, the day to which they are looking forward in proud hope of victory, is Yahweh's day, a day on which they will be the victims sacrificed in His honor.”

That this prophecy clearly relates (as well) to end-time events has also been recognized by *The Keil and Delitzsch Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*. It states:

“This formidable army shall perish; for the day of the battle is the day of the Lord of hosts, on which He will take vengeance upon His enemies. Among these enemies are the Egyptians [but also the Libyans, see above], who have grievously sinned against Israel, the people of the Lord, not merely of late...”

In ancient times, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon fought against and conquered Egypt and her allies, including Libya. Since this prophecy is dual and refers particularly to the day of the Lord, it is reasonable to conclude that a *modern king of a modern Babylon will be fighting against Egypt and her allies*. It is indeed the beast or the king of the North—the leader over a modern Babylonian system—who will fulfill that future role.

Conclusion

In this booklet, we have discussed seven nations in the Middle East and Africa that will have significant roles to play in the near future, according to biblical prophecies.

In additional publications, which have been mentioned throughout this booklet, the biblical identities and further roles of other nations are revealed, such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom or the British Isles, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Russia, China, Germany and other nations in continental Europe.

In future publications, we intend to discuss the biblical identities and roles of still other modern countries, which we have not specifically addressed so far.

The Bible has a lot to say about the past, present and future of powerful countries all over the world, and it is important that we heed the biblical advice of watching world events and correlating them to the sure word of prophecy. Not only will it help us to see that the Bible IS the inspired, infallible Word of God, but also that we must act upon that knowledge. If what the Bible says about entire nations is true, then it also speaks with authority to YOU in regard to YOUR life.

And so, let us conclude with these powerful words of God in Micah 6:8, which are directed to you personally:

“He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?”

of Isaiah to that occurrence. They overlook, however, that the prophecy is primarily for our times today (see below), but the question is whether the prophecy is dual, in that Assyria will again be the enemy defeating the Arabs in war, after they first had entered into an alliance with Assyria against Israel.

We also read that the Arabs are admonished to help those with water and bread who flee from the terrible weapons and distress of war—apparently referring to the war which will be started by the Babylonian system under Assyrian leadership, but it could also refer perhaps to the “retaliatory” war fought by the Russians and other Far Eastern nations against Babylon.

In that context, we note that the immediate context of this prophecy is the fall of the modern Babylonian system which is currently rising one more time in Europe (compare Isaiah 21:9, saying that “Babylon is fallen, is fallen”—referring to ancient *and* to modern times).

ARABS WILL WORSHIP CHRIST

We read that Kedar—Saudi Arabia—and all the other Arab tribes will ultimately recognize and worship Jesus Christ after His return (**Isaiah 42:10–13**). They will worship in Jerusalem and bring their gifts to that holy place where Christ will rule (**Isaiah 59:20–21; 60:1–3, 7, 14**).

LIBYAN MERCENARIES

The mercenary nature of some Libyans can also be seen in a passage in the book of Ezekiel. As mentioned before, mystical Tyre is described in **Ezekiel 27**. This passage does not deal mainly with the ancient city of Tyre, but with the *modern* Babylonian system, which is also spoken of in Revelation 17 and 18, and the parallels in these two passages between “Tyre” and “Babylon” are unmistakable.

Ezekiel 27:10 tells us that “Persia (modern Iran), Lydia and Libya Were in your army [the military apparatus of modern Babylon] as men of war; they hung shield and helmet in you; they gave splendor to you.”

Libyan mercenaries are also mentioned in the **third chapter of the book of Nahum**, which relates to the destruction of ancient Nineveh. The book of Nahum might have dual application as well, in referring to the destruction of the capital of modern Assyria.

LIBYA ON CONFRONTATION COURSE WITH EUROPE

In **Nahum 3:18–19** we read that the shepherds of the king of Assyria slumber; that his nobles rest in peace; that the people are scattered on the mountains; that no one gathers them; and that the people will rejoice when they hear of the continuing demise of the king of Assyria, who is, in modern terminology, the future leader of Germany, or the beast described in the book of Revelation.

In **Nahum 3:9**, we read that mercenaries from **Libya** had at one time supported Nineveh: “Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength; And it was boundless; **Put (Libya)** and **Lubim (perhaps a part of Libya)** were your helpers. Yet she was carried away, she went into captivity.”

As we explained before in **chapter 1** on Egypt, the modern king of Assyria will turn against Egypt and the nations allied with her, including Libya, and enslave them. However, the Bible shows that after ten European nations under modern Assyria (“the Babylonian system”) will have subdued and conquered many nations, they themselves will be defeated in war by the modern *Medes* (Compare Isaiah 13:17, describing the destruction of modern “Babylon” through the hand of the modern “Medes” or **Russians and Ukrainians**. Verses 6, 9 and 13 designate the timing as occurring during the “day of the LORD.” Compare also Isaiah 21:2 and Jeremiah 51:11, 27–29).

A future “alliance” or hostile confrontation between Europe

(“Babylon” under Assyrian leadership) and LIBYA is also indicated in **Daniel 11:43**, which states that when the king of the North (verse 40—the beast, or the modern King Jareb of Assyria) will enter the Glorious Land and overthrow many countries, including Egypt, “the LIBYANS and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.” It is not entirely clear what this passage means at this time.

Barnes’ Notes on the Bible writes:

“The proper sense of the Hebrew would be, that they accompanied him; that they marched with him or followed him; and the phrase would be applicable either to those who were allies, or who were led captive...”

Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible agrees, saying:

“And the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps; at his command and pleasure; shall follow him, being taken captive, or go where he orders them; that is, in all things shall be obedient to him.”

Since **Libya will be allied with Egypt**—and at that time **apparently against Assyria** (see [chapter 1](#) on Egypt)—and since Egypt will be overthrown by Assyria, it appears that **Libyans will also be overthrown and become captives of the Assyrians** (see also [chapter 5](#) on Ethiopia). This conclusion would also be supported by the fact that anciently, King Nebuchadnezzar fought against Egypt and Libya, and that this historic event might have prophetic application. In any event, the **Libyans will be subject to modern Assyria, either because of volition or compulsion**.

However, it appears that this situation will have changed when the modern *Medes or Russians and Ukrainians* invade Europe, just BEFORE Christ’s return. And shortly AFTER Christ’s return, we read that a mighty Far Eastern army (under Russian and Chinese leadership) will try to invade the modern houses of Judah (the modern Jews) and of Israel (being situated today mainly in the USA and the United Kingdom or the British Isles, as well as in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and part of South Africa). By that time, all the Israelites and Jews, who will have survived the Great Tribulation, will have been brought back to live in the Promised Land.

In regard to the future attempt by that great Far Eastern army to invade and conquer the Promised Land, **Ezekiel 38:5** states expressly that “Persia, Ethiopia and LIBYA are with them.” (For more information,

of “one Person in three Persons”) with customs, practices and rites adopted from paganism. That God’s charge is directed against the house of Israel in our time is clear from God’s statement in verse 9 that God brings those charges against “you” and “your children” and “your children’s children.”

We also read, in **Psalm 83:6** that *Ishmaelites*—the kingdom of Saudi Arabia—as well as other Arabic tribes, such as the *Hagrites*, will enter into an anti-Israeli confederacy with nations such as *Edom (Turkey)*; *Moab (parts of Jordan and perhaps Iraq)*; *Ammon (Jordan)*; *Amalek (perhaps today’s violent groups like the PLO)*; *Philistia (Palestinians)*; *Lot (Jordan)*; and, most noteworthy, *Assyria or modern-day Germany*.

When God intervenes in world affairs, He will begin to pour out His wrath and fury over all nations by bringing the sword over them (**Jeremiah 25:15–17**), including Arabia and Tema, one of Ishmael’s sons (**Jeremiah 25:23**). This will happen during the Day of the LORD of God’s wrath (**Jeremiah 25:33**), which will begin approximately one year prior to Christ’s return.

We find a remarkable and somewhat detailed prophecy about the future of Saudi Arabia in **Isaiah 21:13–17**, stating:

“The burden against Arabia. In the forest in Arabia you will lodge, O you traveling companies of the *Dedanites* [apparently descendants of Jokshan, the son of Abraham by Keturah, Genesis 25:3, who settled in the region of Arabia Petrea]. O inhabitants of the land of *Tema* [see above], Bring water to him who is thirsty; With their bread they met him who fled. For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, From the bent bow, and from distress of war. For thus the LORD has said to me; ‘Within a year, according to the year of a hired man, all the glory of [Ishmael’s second-born son] *Kedar* will fail; and the remainder of the number of archers, the mighty men of the people of *Kedar*, will be diminished; for the LORD God of Israel has spoken it.’”

SAUDI ARABIA DEFEATED IN WAR

This Scripture, quoted above, tells us that “Arabia”—Saudi Arabia today—will experience defeat in war, and the time span of one year is given, apparently referring to the Day of the LORD. We are not specifically told who will defeat the Arabs in war, but we note that in Old Testament times, the Assyrians did so, and most commentaries apply the prophecy

Babylon and all the Jews and Chaldeans who were with him (compare Jeremiah 41:2–3). Still later, Arabians opposed Nehemiah’s attempt to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem which had been destroyed by the Babylonians (Nehemiah 2:19; 4:7; 6:1–9).

On the other hand, we have seen that there were *at times friendly relationships* between Israel and Judah and the Arabs; for instance, when the kings of Arabia brought presents to Solomon and Jehoshaphat.

ARABS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Turning to the *New Testament*, we find that Arabs [non-Jewish proselytes who had converted to Judaism] were present in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost when God poured out His Holy Spirit on the New Testament Church (Acts 2:11), and that Paul, after his conversion, went to Arabia (Galatians 1:17) and stayed there for a while, perhaps, as *Young’s Analytical Concordance to the Bible* suggests, to associate with those Arabs who had been converted on the Day of Pentecost.

Paul states in Galatians 4:25 that Hagar is Mount Sinai in present-day Arabia, which is still not free, but enslaved to sin. This is true, of course, for the whole world today, which is cut off from God.

ARABS TODAY

Focusing on *our modern times*, we read in **Ezekiel 27:21** that Arabia and all the end-time princes of Ishmael’s second-born son Kedar would be the regular merchants of, and have regular bilateral economic trade relationships with mystical Tyre (symbolizing the end-time Babylonian system, as described in the book of Revelation).

ARABS IN THE FUTURE

Focusing more on *end-time prophecies*, we also find the remarkable statement that Kedar would not have changed their god in recent times—unlike the modern house of Israel which did (compare **Jeremiah 2:10–11**). Ever since the Arabs accepted Islam as their religion and began to worship Allah, they have over all maintained this form of religious worship.

The modern house of Israel, on the other hand, has totally abandoned the God of the Bible (Jeremiah 2:4, 9–11–13), and has instead adopted the worship of a “Trinitarian” god (the unbiblical curiosity

please read our free booklet, *“The Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.”* See also [chapter 4](#) on Iran/Persia).

In conclusion, a somewhat friendly relationship between Libya and Germany (when Libyan mercenaries serve in a European army under German leadership) will gradually deteriorate, while **an alliance between Libya and other Middle Eastern nations (including Egypt) and Ethiopia against Germany and Europe will develop. Europe will invade the Middle East militarily and conquer Egypt, and Libyans and Ethiopians will be at Europe’s step.** But then, Europe and Germany will be invaded by the modern Medes, and **Libya will develop a very close relationship with Russia and China**, which will be hostile towards the modern descendants of the ancient houses of Israel and Judah.

At the time of Solomon, the kings of Arabia were famous for their riches in gold which they shared, in part, with Solomon (1 Kings 10:15; 2 Chronicles 9:14), and at the time of Jehoshaphat of Judah, the Arabians gave him valuable presents in the form of livestock (2 Chronicles 17:11).

We read about the nomadic nature of Ishmael and his sons, when the Bible refers to the *tents* of Kedar (Psalm 120:5; Song 1:5); or when it speaks of Arabians pitching their *tents* (Isaiah 13:20); or when it mentions the *caravans* of Tema, one of Ishmael's sons (Job 6:19); or when it compares Israel with somebody *sitting by the road* like "an Arabian in the wilderness" (Jeremiah 3:2). Even though such nomadic nature would somewhat change in time, the Bible still uses those terms in respect to Ishmael and his descendants when addressing prophetic events of the future.

The Bible describes the relationship between Israel or Judah and Ishmael and his descendants *mostly as a hostile one*. We read in 1 Chronicles 5:19 that the sons of Reuben, the Gadites and half of the tribe of Manasseh made war with some of Ishmael's descendants, i.e., the Hagrites, Jetur, and Naphish.

1 Chronicles 5:10, 19–20 tells us that King Saul made war with the Hagrites, who are, as mentioned, the descendants of Hagar, the mother of Ishmael (The margin of the *New King James Bible* confirms that the Hagrites are descendants of Hagar.)

2 Chronicles 21:16 states that God stirred up the spirit of the Arabians, who were near the Ethiopians, against evil King Jehoram of Judah. Since raiders who came with the Arabians killed all the older sons of King Jehoram, his youngest son Ahaziah was made king over Judah, but he did not behave any better than his evil father (2 Chronicles 22:1–3). However, when later a righteous king came to the throne of Judah, namely King Uzziah, God helped him against hostile Arabians (2 Chronicles 26:7).

(In passing, we read that at the time of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, descendants of Ishmael's second-born son Kedar, the "men of the East," would be conquered, compare Jeremiah 49:28–29. It is not certain whether this prophecy has any dual application for us today.)

At the time of the prophet Jeremiah, we read in chapters 40 and 41 of the book of Jeremiah, that an Ishmaelite slayed the governor of

the Ottoman Turks, the Arabs were now being ruled by the Europeans. Later, in World War II, they sided with the Germans against the Allies.

The Plain Truth continued: “Eventually, however, various independent Arab states did at last emerge. Iraq became independent in 1932, Syria and Lebanon in 1941, Transjordan in 1946, Egypt in 1951. In Arabia, King Ibn of Nejd (central Arabia), in 1932... formed the soon-to-be oil rich kingdom of Saudi Arabia.”

The website *usahajjmission.com* sheds additional light on the history and present status of the “great nation” or kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

“The Saudi state was first established in about 1750 when a local ruler Mohammad Bin Saud merged with an Islamic reformer, Mohammad Abd Al-Wahhab. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded by King Abdul Aziz Al Saud (Ibn Saud) and named after the dynastic family of the Sauds. In 1902, Ibn Saud captured Riyadh with his Bedouin followers and gradually, took other major cities and regions including the Hijaz (Mecca and Medina) in 1924.

“Eventually in 1932, Ibn Saud united the disparate regions and proclaimed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Ibn Saud’s belief in a strict Sunni interpretation of Islam known as Wahhabism led to the strong religious basis of a governing Saudi Arabian authority. Observing Sharia (Islamic) law, the Holy Quran forms the constitution of the country... In 1938, the discovery of oil transformed the kingdom. One of the wealthiest nations in the Middle East, Saudi’s oil commodities enabled rapid economic progress and now constitutes 75% of the national income.

“Holding the largest oil reserves in the world, Saudi is now the world’s leading oil producer and exporter but for an economy so vulnerable to fluctuating oil prices, various political and economic dilemmas perhaps lie ahead...”

BIBLICAL HISTORY OF ISHMAEL

Focusing on the biblical history of Ishmael and his descendants, we note that Joseph’s brothers sold him to Ishmaelites, who in turn sold him to Potiphar (Genesis 37:27–28; 39:1).

Under David, an Ishmaelite officer was put in charge over camels (1 Chronicles 27:30). Previously, at the time of Gideon, Ishmaelites had the unusual custom of wearing golden earrings (Judges 8:24).

Chapter 4

Modern Elam — Persia or Iran

The Bible contains numerous passages that deal with the future of **Iran**, which was formerly known as **Persia**. Most commentaries and encyclopedias are in agreement that the modern-day Iranians are descendants of the ancient **Elamites**. For instance, *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* equates Elam with Persia.

Genesis 10:22 and 1 Chronicles 1:17 state that Elam was a son of Shem, and therefore, a brother of ancient Asshur or Assur. The city of Sushan or Susa was one of the capitals of the Elamite or Persian Empire, and Esther, Daniel and Jeremiah resided there at times. *Susa* is today known as *Shush*—a city in modern-day **Iran**.

In biblical times, the Medes [modern Russians and Ukrainians] and the Persians [modern Iran] conquered the Babylonian Empire. Famous King Cyrus of Persia permitted captured Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city and the temple. Subsequent Persian kings, such as King Xerxes, had a more or less friendly relationship with the Jewish people, specifically because of his Jewish wife, Queen Esther. In time, that friendly relationship would change, and present day Iran is viewed as one of the arch enemies of the modern house of Judah.

The Bible predicts that the modern house of Judah (the Jewish people) and the modern house of Israel (which is not Jewish, but is comprised of the peoples of the United Kingdom or the British Isles, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and part of South Africa, as well as the USA) will be conquered and enslaved by the final European revival of the ancient Roman Empire, under Assyrian or German leadership, called modern “Babylon” in Scripture. When Jesus Christ returns, He will free the survivors of that captivity and bring them into the Promised Land. Note from what countries the modern descendants of the houses of Israel and Judah will be freed.

Isaiah 11:11 states:

“It shall come to pass in that day [a reference to the time when God will begin to intervene in human affairs, but also including the time AFTER Jesus Christ has begun to establish the Kingdom of God on this earth] That the LORD shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left, From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush (Ethiopia), From **Elam** (Persia or Iran) and Shinar, From Hamath and the islands of the sea.”

IRAN WILL FIGHT AGAINST ISRAEL

In this context, we should note that in the near future, **Iran will participate in fighting against the state of Israel.**

Isaiah 22:6 prophesies, in the context of the future enslavement of the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem (compare verses 1–4):

“**Elam [Iran]** bore the quiver With chariots of men and horsemen, and Kir uncovered the shield.”

The timing is again the day of the Lord or “in that day” (verses 8, 12), when God has “removed the protection of Judah” (verse 8), since they looked to their armor or military, rather than to God (verses 8, 11). We note and recall, from **Ezekiel 27:10**, that at one time, “Those from **Persia**, Lydia and Libya Were in [mystical “Tyre’s” or modern Babylon’s] army as men of war.” So it appears that at least some modern Iranians will participate, perhaps as mercenaries, in the military attack of modern Babylon against the state of Israel.

IRAN AND MEDES ATTACK MODERN BABYLON

Focusing on other passages in the Bible, we are told that apparently sometime after that attack, the relationship between modern Babylon and Iran will deteriorate, and **Elam or Iran will form an alliance with the Medes or Russia and the Ukraine against “Babylon.”**

Isaiah 21:2 states:

“A distressing vision is declared to me; The treacherous dealer deals treacherously. And the plunderer plunders. Go up, O **Elam!** Besiege, O Media!”

Continuing in verse 9 we read that “Babylon is fallen, is fallen!” The repetitious curse shows the dual application of this prophecy to ancient as well as modern times.

SAUDI ARABIA—THE GREAT NATION

Saudi Arabia is the great nation that had been prophesied to Ishmael, the son of Abraham. Ishmael was born when Abraham was eighty-six years old. He was circumcised at the age of 13—a custom still followed today by the Arabs. Ishmael and his half-brother Isaac buried Abraham together. Ishmael died at age 137.

Common names among modern Arabs are Ibrahim for Abraham and Ismail for Ishmael. *Funk and Wagnall’s New Encyclopedia* states in volume 13 that “Muslims regard themselves as the descendants of Ishmael.” The *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary* says that “all Arabs claim descent from Ishmael.” The *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* says that the “Arabs themselves derive their descent from Ishmael.”

There are indeed many Arabic nations in existence today, but the prophesied predominant or “great nation” in the Middle East is, according to biblical prophecy, Saudi Arabia.

SAUDI ARABIA’S HISTORY

We need to note that originally, Ishmael and his descendants were more or less worshippers of the God of Abraham. They were of course not Muslims, because Islam only began about 600 A.D., in what is modern Saudi Arabia. Islam’s most holy city is Mecca, which is situated in western Saudi Arabia, being the center of the Islamic world. It is the birthplace of Mohammed.

The Plain Truth informed us in its December 1979 edition that from Ishmael’s son *Kedar* (Qaidar in Arabic), dated approximately 1840 BC, a line of descent can be traced to Adnan (or Qais) (122 BC), and from him (21 generations further on) to *Mohammed* (AD 570–632) of the Koreish tribe, the founder and prophet of the Islamic faith.

In the above-mentioned article, *The Plain Truth* also explained that in the 16th century, the majority of Arab lands came under the sway of the Ottoman Turks. During World War I, the Ottoman Empire fought with Germany and Austria/Hungary against Britain, which encouraged the Arab tribes to revolt against the Turks, and in 1916, Hussein Ibn Ali proclaimed himself king of the Arabs. In exchange, Britain promised the Arab tribes independence, but after the victory over Germany, Austria/Hungary and Turkey, the British and the French divided the majority of Arab lands amongst themselves. After occupation through

beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.”

We see that Ishmael would have twelve sons or princes, and that he would become a great nation—not twelve nations, as some have erroneously concluded.

The Critical and Experimental Commentary by Jamieson, Fausset and Brown says: “... even in dwelling with his brethren, would he maintain his characteristic hostility; and... he shall... dwell in the presence of his brethren, viz, in Arabia.”

We read that subsequently, Abraham sent away his concubines and his sons of his concubines, including Hagar and Ishmael, “eastward... to the country of the east” (Genesis 25:6). It is commonly agreed that Hagar and Ishmael settled in the land which is known today as Saudi Arabia, where Ishmael also died “in the presence” or “east of” all his brethren (Genesis 25:18).

ISHMAEL’S TWELVE SONS

The prophesied twelve sons or princes of Ishmael are listed in Genesis 25:12–16. They include *Tema* (“sun burnt”); *Dumah* (“silence”; compare Isaiah 21:11; Joshua 15:52); *Naphish* (“numerous”); *Jetur*, and the most prominent son, *Kedar* (“powerful”; compare Ezekiel 27:21; Psalm 120:5; Isaiah 21:13–17).

The Bible, when addressing the descendants of Ishmael, sometimes refers to **Ishmael**, sometimes to Ishmael’s second-born son **Kedar** (synonymously used in Scripture with Ishmael); sometimes to Ishmael’s mother **Hagar**; sometimes to any of the other above-quoted names of Ishmael’s sons; and sometimes simply to “Arabia” (“wilderness”) or “Arabians.” Specifically, Arabs are sometimes referred to in Scripture as *Ishmaelites*; *Hagrites* or *Hagarenes* in the *Authorized Version* (descendants of Hagar, Psalm 83:6); or as the tents or princes or people of *Kedar*. As an aside, Ishmael’s daughter Mahalath or Basemath married Esau (modern Turkey), the first-born son of Isaac and twin brother of Jacob (Genesis 28:9; 36:3).

Young’s Analytical Concordance to the Bible explains that “Arabia today consists mainly of Saudi Arabia. However, it also includes the two Yemens, Oman, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and the Sinai peninsula.”

A future alliance between Russia and Iran (which is already developing today) is not surprising, given the fact that these two powers were allied in the past as the “Medo-Persian Empire.”

IRAN WILL BECOME ENSLAVED

Placing all the pieces of biblical prophecy in the overall puzzle, we note that in the future, **Iran will be enslaved and subsequently freed from their captivity**. We are not specifically told who will enslave them, and when exactly this will occur, nor when exactly the captivity will end, but in light of the Scriptures discussed so far, it *appears* that after their mutual attack on Jerusalem, **modern Babylon**—a confederacy of many nations—**will turn against Iran** and enslave the Iranian people; and that Russia and the Ukraine will intervene and free the Iranians; and that Russia and the Ukraine (Media), together with Iran (Elam), will attack modern Babylon.

Jeremiah 49:35–39 tells us:

“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Behold, I will break the bow of **Elam**, the foremost of their might. Against **Elam** I will bring the four winds From the four quarters of heaven, And scatter them towards all those winds; There shall be no nations where the outcasts of **Elam** will not go. For I will cause **Elam** to be dismayed before their enemies And before those who seek their life. I will bring disaster upon them, My fierce anger [a reference to the coming day of the Lord’s great wrath or fierce anger];’ says the LORD; ‘And I will send the sword after them until I have consumed them. And I will set My throne in **Elam**, And will destroy from there the king and the princes,’ says the LORD. ‘But it shall come to pass in the latter days [a clear reference to the end times]; I will bring back the **captives of Elam**,’ says the LORD.”

Modern Iran will be captives [apparently of the modern Babylonian system], but they will be freed—apparently by the Medes or Russians and Ukrainians, as both will together attack modern Babylon. Note too that the context is related to a time when God will set His throne in Elam or rule over Elam. Today, as well as in ancient times, God does not and did not rule this world; the rulers of this world are and were Satan and his demons. It is true, of course, that Satan cannot do anything that God does not allow—but still, generally, God is not ruling this world at this point. [However, He is willing to rule His

disciples—those who have spiritually “come out” of this world and who look forward to a better world to come.]

THE DEMONIC PRINCE OF PERSIA

And so, we read in **Daniel 10:13 and 20** that at the time of Daniel, Persia or Iran was ruled by a demon—the *prince of Persia*. The angel Gabriel and the archangel Michael fought with this demon to carry out God’s directives. And we read that in the end time, just prior to the beginning of the Great Tribulation, Satan and his forces will try for a second time to overthrow God in heaven, and Michael and his angels will again fight against and defeat Satan and his demons in an outright spiritual war (Revelation 12:7–12).

IRAN PART OF FAR EASTERN CONFEDERACY AGAINST ISRAEL

Russia’s and Iran’s hatred against the modern descendants of the ancient houses of Israel and Judah will not easily disappear. Even shortly after Christ’s return, when Christ will have set His throne in Jerusalem, Iran will be a part of a great confederacy of hostile nations, under Russian and Chinese leadership, in an attempt to invade the Promised Land and to conquer those who are left from the modern houses of Israel and Judah.

Ezekiel 38 reports about this future futile event and describes the military leader of that hostile army as “Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal” (verses 2–3). Gog is described here as the hostile prince or leader of Rosh [Russia], Meshech [Moscow] and Tubal [Tobolsk], as well as other nations and cultures.

“Gog” means “mountain” or “high” and seems to be a reference to a commander (compare also verse 7). Magog has been understood as a reference to the Mongols—or more generally, China; and “Rosh,” meaning “blond,” refers to the White Russians. “Meshech” is another designation for the city of Moscow, and “Tubal” for the city of Tobolsk. Meshech and Tubal, being sons of Japheth—the father of the Eurasian peoples—and brothers of Gomer and Magog (compare Genesis 10:2), seem to refer here to the Great Russians. Included in this entire description are the vast regions in northern Eurasia extending from the Baltic to the Pacific.

Chapter 7

Modern Saudi Arabia

Many archeological and historical researchers and Bible commentaries have understood for a long time that the Arabs are descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham and Sarah’s Egyptian maid, Hagar. We read the following prophecy about Ishmael in **Genesis 16:7–12**:

“Now the Angel of the LORD found [Hagar] by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. And He said, ‘Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?’ She said, ‘I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.’ The Angel of the LORD said to her, ‘Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand.’ Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, ‘I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.’ And the Angel of the LORD said to her: ‘Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction. He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man’s hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren’ . . .”

According to this prophecy, Ishmael’s descendants would be greatly and exceedingly multiplied; Ishmael [which means, literally, “God hears”] would be a wild man [literally, a wild ass]; he would be against every man’s hand and every man’s hand would be against him [the ensuing conflicts would actually lead to the occupation of Arab tribes through the Turks and later the Europeans]; and he would dwell “in the presence of all his brethren.” This last phrase can also be rendered as, “east of all his brethren.”

Genesis 17:20 adds another important prophecy, where God’s promise to Abraham regarding Ishmael is cited as follows:

“And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall

Persia designates modern Iran; and Ethiopia (“Cush” in Hebrew) includes the people of the state of Ethiopia; it could also refer to some peoples in Central and Southern India and parts of Sri Lanka. [Cush’s sons, Seba and Raamah (Genesis 10:7), and Raamah’s son Sheba (same verse), were later worshipped by Hindus as the gods Shiva and Ramah].

Libya (“Put” in Hebrew) designates the people of the state of Libya, and it could also include some people from Northern and Central India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Gomer seems to designate the peoples from Asian steppes and deserts, including people from the region of Mongolia. Finally, the reference to “Togarmah from the far north” (Ezekiel 38:6) has been understood as a reference to the people living in Siberia.

As we saw, **Ezekiel 38:5** says specifically that “Persia, Ethiopia (Cush) and Libya (Put) are with them, all of them with shield and helmet.” We read in Ezekiel 38 and 39 that God will supernaturally intervene and totally destroy that great army.

IRAN’S PUNISHMENT

Jeremiah 25:15–38 describes God’s all-encompassing judgment on all God-defying nations of this earth, and **verse 25** mentions the judgment on “all the kings of **Elam**, and all the kings of the Medes.” Again, in **verse 29**, God gives us the approximate time setting when His punishment on all the nations will commence:

“For behold, I begin to bring calamity on the city which is called by My name [Jerusalem], and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished, for I will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth,’ says the LORD of hosts.”

As we have seen, the punishment of Iran will be carried out, mainly and ultimately, when God will destroy the great hostile army, as described in Ezekiel 38 and 39.

Another reference to Iran’s punishment is given in Ezekiel 32. First, let us note that in **verses 11 and 12**, God speaks first of the destruction of (ancient and modern) Egypt through modern Babylon—the “most terrible of the nations.” This same expression, “most terrible of the nations,” describing modern Babylon, is used in **Ezekiel 30:11–12**; **Ezekiel 31:12**; and **Ezekiel 28:7**. In **Ezekiel 7:24**, the phrase “worst of the Gentiles” is applied to modern Babylon invading the land of

Israel (For more information on modern Babylon, please read our free booklet, *"The Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord,"* especially pages 42 to 46.)

In **Ezekiel 32:24**, the destruction of Elam and all her multitudes is described in figurative and allegorical ways. The point is that no country will escape God's judgment, and so He also mentions this in the context of the fate of Assyria (verse 22) and of Meshech and Tubal (verse 26).

But there is hope for everyone, because God is not a respecter of persons. He accepts all of those, regardless of whatever race, nation or ethnic group they might belong to, if they seek God with all their heart and mind and soul.

In Acts 2:9, **Elamites** (modern-day Iranians) were peacefully assembled in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was given to the New Testament Church. And when Christ rules this world from Jerusalem, all nations, including Elamites, will ultimately flow to Him to learn God's ways (Isaiah 2:1-4).

that the country of Esau will be a wasteland forever and that no one in Esau will survive; otherwise, what would there be for the nations of Israel and Judah to possess, and why would saviors come to Esau to judge them? This conclusion is also confirmed by the following passages.

Amos 9:11-12 states:

"On that day [referring to the end time when God begins to actively intervene in human affairs] I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old; that they may possess the REMNANT OF EDOM, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name,' Says the LORD who does this thing."

There will be still in existence a "remnant" of Edom. Not all Edomites will have died. There will be some who will live in the Millennium and many of those will become converted.

Also, note **Isaiah 11:11-14**:

"It shall come to pass in that day That the LORD shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left... And will assemble the outcasts of Israel, And gather together the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth... they [especially Ephraim and Judah, verse 13] shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines toward the west... they shall plunder the people of the East; they shall lay their hand on Edom and Moab; And the people of Ammon shall obey them..."

As we have seen earlier, God will bring Israel and Judah into the Promised Land and replace those nations (including Edom) who took illegal possession of the territory. No illegal acts on the side of the Israelites and Jews are implied here; they "plunder" or "rob" their enemies by taking back or receiving from them what had been illegally taken away from them in the first place.

In conclusion, God will punish Edom or modern Turkey severely due to Edom's hatred and violence towards Israel and Judah. However, many of the surviving Edomites [the remnant of Edom] will convert to God in the Millennium, and their hatred towards their brother Jacob will end at that time.

them and devour them, and no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau, For the LORD has spoken. The South (Negev) shall possess the mountains of Esau... Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion To judge the mountains of Esau, And the kingdom shall be the LORD'S."

Even though it says in Obadiah 9 that no survivors shall remain of the house of Edom, we already saw—and will also show below—that some Edomites (for instance, the fatherless and widows) will survive. The reference in Obadiah seems to be to those "mighty men" in the Edomite army who fought against Israel and Judah, and who might be fighting with the Babylonian system against Christ at His return.

In what way will the house of Jacob and of Joseph become a flame, and the house of Esau stubble? Does this mean that when the house of Israel will be freed from slavery, they—mortal human beings—will fight in war against Esau and destroy them completely? This is hardly to be assumed, as by that time, "the kingdom shall be the LORD'S," and the house of Israel will follow God's ways and will therefore be unwilling to fight in war anymore (Isaiah 2:1–4). In fact, when at the beginning of the Millennium, Asiatic hordes try to overrun and conquer Israel, it will be God who will be doing the fighting for Israel by sending fire on those hostile armies—Israel will not fight at all (compare Ezekiel 38 and 39).

We read in **Isaiah 10:17** that "the Light of Israel will be for a fire, And his Holy One for a flame; It will burn and devour His thorns and his briars in one day." It will be Christ Himself and His angels who will punish His enemies through fire, when He returns (compare Malachi 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:3–10). At the same time, God's followers ("the saints") who will be resurrected and changed to immortality at the time of Christ's return, will also participate in the judgment and the execution of unrighteous people (compare Psalm 149:5–9). Today, true Christians are spiritual Israelites, and once they have become immortal God beings, they will of course have every right to rule the nations with a rod of iron (Revelation 2:26–27). Those from the house of Israel and Joseph who will have become immortal God beings, will be part of the "Light of Israel" and "the flame."

THE REMNANT OF ESAU

As mentioned, the passage in Obadiah 9, 17–21 does not convey

Chapter 5 Modern Cush—Abyssinia or Ethiopia

Even though Ethiopia is not mentioned as often in the current news as countries such as Egypt, Libya, Syria or Iran, the Bible has much to say about the past and future of Ethiopia. Indeed, Ethiopia will play an important role in the future.

PAST AND PRESENT ETHIOPIA

The *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* tells us:

"[Ethiopia] is the second-most populous nation in Africa, with over 85.2 million people... When Africa was divided up by European powers at the Berlin Conference, Ethiopia was one of only two countries that retained its independence... Addis Ababa [Ethiopia's capitol] became the location of several international organizations focused on Africa... Ethiopia is one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), G-77 and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

"Today, Addis Ababa is still the headquarter[s] of the African Union, the Nile Basin Commission, the Pan African Chamber of Commerce (PACCI) and UNECA. The country has one of the most powerful militaries in Africa and Addis Ababa is the headquarter of the continental African Standby Force (ASF)... Ethiopia has close historical ties to all three of the world's major Abrahamic religions. It was one of the first Christian countries in the world, having officially adopted Christianity as the state religion in the 4th century. It has a Christian majority and a third of the population is Muslim.

"...today Ethiopia has the biggest economy in East Africa... [It] is also one of the fastest growing in the world. It is a regional powerhouse in the Horn and east Africa..."

Many commentaries recognize that **Ethiopia**, formerly known as **Abyssinia**, descended from "Cush" of the Bible (compare *Young's*

Analytical Concordance to the Bible, under “Ethiopia.”). The word “Cush” means “black.”

(Please note, however, that descendants of Cush can also be found today in other parts of the world. See [chapter 4](#)).

Cush was a son of Ham, one of the three sons of Noah (Genesis 10:6). Cush was also the father of Nimrod (Genesis 10:8–12).

THE QUEEN OF THE SOUTH

Cush is identified, in Genesis 10:7, as the grandfather of Sheba. As mentioned before (in [chapter 4](#)), Cush’s son Sheba was later worshipped by Hindus as the god Shiva. However, most descendants of Cush settled in what is called Ethiopia today. It is overwhelmingly accepted that the famous queen of the South, or the Queen of Sheba, who visited King Solomon to test his intelligence and wisdom, was actually the Queen of Ethiopia (compare 1 Kings 10:1–13; 2 Chronicles 9:1–12; Matthew 12:42; Luke 11:31). The Queen of Sheba is known in worldly records as Ethiopia’s Queen Makeda, Empress of Axum.

According to legend and tradition, the royal house of Ethiopia under, then, King or Emperor Haile Selassie (1892–1975), claimed to be descendants of a “union” between King Solomon and the Queen of the South. It is also well known that one of the royal titles of Haile Selassie was the “king of Judah.” Not that well known is that three royal sons or princes and three royal daughters or princesses of the late emperor are still alive today.

BIBLICAL HISTORY OF ETHIOPIA

Historically, we read that Moses, apparently prior to his conversion, had married an Ethiopian woman (Numbers 12:1). Later, during the reign of King Solomon’s son, the king of Egypt attacked Judah with the help of Ethiopia because Judah had greatly sinned against God (2 Chronicles 12:1–3). Subsequently, Zerah the Ethiopian and his great army attacked Judah under King Asa (who was then a righteous king), but at that time, God helped Judah (2 Chronicles 14:8–13; 16:8). Later, Isaiah was given a prophecy proclaiming the defeat of Egypt and Ethiopia through King Sargon of Assyria (Isaiah 20:1–6).

At the time when Jeremiah was imprisoned and thrown into a dungeon because he proclaimed the unpopular message of an

foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem—Even you were as one of them. But you should not have gazed on the day of your brother In the day of his captivity; Nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah In the day of their destruction; Nor should you have spoken proudly In the day of distress. You should not have entered the gate of My people In the day of their calamity. Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction In the day of their calamity Nor laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity. You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut off those among them who escaped; Nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained In the day of distress (*Menge Bible*: the Great Tribulation). For the day of the LORD upon all the nations is near; As you have done, it shall be done to you...”

We have seen that Israel and Judah will have to go into slavery, and that Edom will actively participate in this future war against Israel and Judah which will bring about the complete downfall of those two nations. We also saw that Edom will possess at least parts of Israel’s and Judah’s territories. But what will happen with respect to Esau when the returning Jesus Christ frees Israel and Judah from their slavery and brings them back into the Promised Land? What will Israel and Judah do?

GOD WILL ACT TOWARDS ESAU “BY THE HAND OF HIS PEOPLE”

First, we read in [Ezekiel 25:14](#) that God says:

“I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel, that they may do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury; and they shall know My vengeance,” says the Lord GOD.”

Some commentaries say that this prophecy was fulfilled at the time of the Maccabees, but we need to note that this is an end-time prophecy, relating specifically to God’s vengeance, fury and anger. In what way will God act “by the hand of His people”?

[Obadiah 17–21](#) adds:

“But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance [margin: salvation], And there shall be holiness; the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau shall be stubble; They shall kindle

your ravines those who are slain by the sword shall fall. I will make you perpetually desolate [until circumstances change], and your cities shall be uninhabited [for a while, as major Israelite cities will first be uninhabited for a while]; then you shall know that I am the LORD.

“Because you have said, “These TWO NATIONS and these TWO COUNTRIES [referring to the houses of Israel and Judah] shall be mine, and we will possess them,” although the LORD was there, ‘therefore, as I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I will do according to your anger and according to the envy which you showed in your hatred against them; and I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. I have heard all your blasphemies which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, ‘they are desolate; they are given to us to consume’... Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘The whole earth will rejoice when I make you desolate. As you rejoiced because the inheritance of the house of Israel was desolate, so I will do to you; you shall be desolate, O Mount Seir, as well as all of Edom—all of it. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.’”

Edom will become desolate for a while, but not for all eternity. Ezekiel 35 emphasizes that they will realize that God is THE LORD—and many will turn to Him and believe in Him.

In this context, **Ezekiel 36:3–5, 10** adds: “... Because they made you [the mountains of Israel, verse 1] desolate and swallowed you up on every side, so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations... therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD... ‘Surely I have spoken in My burning jealousy against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, who gave My land to themselves as a possession, with whole-hearted joy and spiteful minds, in order to plunder its open country... I will multiply men upon you [the mountains of Israel], all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt...”

Obadiah sheds further light on the reasons why God will punish modern Edom so severely. We saw already that Obadiah’s entire prophecy applies to the time of the end—the Great Tribulation and the Day of the LORD. We read God’s words, beginning with verse 10:

“For violence against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, And you shall be cut off forever. In the day that you stood on the other side—In the day that strangers carried captive his forces, When

impending defeat of Jerusalem through the Babylonians, Ebed-Melech, an Ethiopian eunuch, came to Jeremiah’s rescue and was rewarded accordingly by God (Jeremiah 38:6–13; 39:15–18). Later, the famous Persian king Xerxes I (referred to in the book of Esther as king Ahusuerus), who married Esther, reigned over Ethiopia (Esther 1:1; 8:9).

In New Testament times, we hear that “a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury..., had come to Jerusalem to worship” (Acts 8:27). God sent the evangelist Philip to that influential man to baptize him, and he returned to his country “rejoicing” (compare Acts 8:39).

ETHIOPIA WILL HELP MODERN BABYLON

We read in **Nahum 3:9** that Ethiopia, as well as Egypt and Put (Libya), will be modern Nineveh’s helpers (that is, the modern Babylonian system under Assyrian or German leadership), prior to the destruction of modern Nineveh. They will help modern Nineveh to fight against Israel and Judah. Even during the time of the “day of the LORD” (a time beginning about one year prior to Christ’s return), the Ethiopians are still described as “mighty men” of war (compare Jeremiah 46:9–10).

BABYLON WILL CONQUER ETHIOPIA

But we also read that this particular alliance will change—as alliances change often and quickly in wars. As we discussed in [chapter 1](#) on Egypt, **the modern king of Babylon or Assyria will attack and conquer Ethiopia, Egypt and Libya** (Ezekiel 30:1–9; 29:10; compare also Isaiah 18:1–6). **Zephaniah 2:12** tells us specifically that “You Ethiopians also, you shall be slain by the sword.” We also read in **Daniel 11:42–43** that the modern king of Assyria of the Babylonian system will be ruling over the Ethiopians and others.

We are specifically told in **Isaiah 11:11** that at the time of Christ’s return, the survivors of the modern descendants of the houses of Israel and Judah will find themselves enslaved in countries such as Assyria (Germany), Egypt, Pathros (upper Egypt), Cush (Ethiopia), Elam (Iran), Shinar (part of Babylon, Genesis 10:10), Hamath and the islands of the sea. [Regarding “Hamath,” this word designates descendants of Ham’s son Canaan—a brother of Cush (Genesis 10:18). The word

has no connection to Syria or today's city of Hama which is 200 km north of Damascus. As we pointed out in [chapter 2](#), the Syrians are descendants of Noah's son Shem (Genesis 10:21–23; 22:20–21)—not of Noah's son Ham or his grandson Canaan.]

ISRAEL AND JUDAH CAPTIVES IN ETHIOPIA

We don't know when and exactly how the survivors of Israel and Judah will become captives in Ethiopia and in some of the other countries mentioned. It could begin to happen when Ethiopia fights with Assyria against Israel, or later, when Assyria fights against Ethiopia and then transfers and settles some of its Israelite captives there.

ETHIOPIANS FIGHT WITH RUSSIA AGAINST ISRAEL

Recall that some Ethiopians will become a part of an army, led by Russia, to invade the Promised Land. This will happen just after Christ's return to this earth (compare Ezekiel 38:5). God will supernaturally destroy this hostile army. As we will see, in the Millennium, the surviving Ethiopians will subsequently turn to God.

ETHIOPIA'S CONVERSION

God asks the question in **Jeremiah 13:23**: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots?" Even though the answer to this question is, "No," God will nevertheless see to it that the Ethiopian will change his mind. God is not a respecter of persons—he loves Ethiopia as much as Israel (Amos 9:7). And so, when God gives the Ethiopians a new heart and a mind to understand, they will respond. **Isaiah 18:7** has this to say about the Ethiopians:

"In that time a present will be brought to the LORD of hosts From a people tall and smooth of skin, And from a people terrible from their beginning onward, A nation powerful and treading down, whose land the rivers divide—To the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, to Mount Zion" (compare Isaiah 2:1–4; see also Isaiah 45:14, saying that the merchandize of Cush—Ethiopia—will become Israel's property, and that Ethiopians will come "in chains" and worship God and recognize Him as their only true God).

Finally, let us read this encouraging promise from God, relating to the future of Ethiopia, in **Psalms 68:31**: "Envoy's will come out of

desolate wilderness, Because of violence against the people of Judah, For they have shed innocent blood in their land." Note, in passing, that Egypt's desolation will end, as Egypt will become a major power in the Millennium, and Esau's desolation will also end, even though it will not become a major power in the Millennium.

Amos 1:11–12 adds: "Thus says the LORD: 'For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because he pursued his brother with the sword, And cast off all pity; his anger tore perpetually, And he kept his wrath forever. But I will send a fire upon Teman, Which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah.'" [As an aside, however, when Edom is punished, God will in turn punish those nations who act indecently and with unrestrained cruelty towards Edom, compare Amos 2:1].

Ezekiel 25:12–13 is even more specific, stating: "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because of what Edom did against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has greatly offended by avenging itself on them,' therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'I will also stretch out My hand against Edom, cut off man and beast from it, and make it desolate from Teman; Dedan shall fall by the sword [or, as the margin has it, even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword]...'"

Ezekiel 35:1–15 adds more reasons for God's anger with modern Edom. In that passage, the term, "you shall know that I am the LORD" is used several times. In prophecy, this expression is a reference to the time when God directly intervenes in human affairs, which He will begin to do about one year prior to Christ's return. The prophecy in Ezekiel 35 states in detail:

"Behold, O Mount Seir, I am against you; I will... make you most desolate; I shall lay your cities waste, and you shall be desolate. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. Because you have had an ancient [or everlasting] hatred, and have shed the blood of the children of Israel by the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, when their iniquity came to an end, therefore, as I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you have not hated blood [better: bloodshed], therefore blood shall pursue you. Thus I will make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it the one who leaves and the one who returns. And I will fill its mountains with the slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all

allies, and especially Assyria and the entire Babylonian system, will turn against Edom. **Obadiah 6–7** says:

“Oh, how Esau shall be searched out! How his hidden treasures shall be sought after [including those which they robbed from Israel and Judah, when they laid hands on their substance]! All the men in your confederacy Shall force you to the border [the meaning is, “they will expel you,” compare the *Soncino* commentary; or “make you captives,” compare *Barnes’ Notes on the Bible and Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*], The men at peace with you Shall deceive you and prevail against you, Those who eat your bread shall lay a trap for you [or, wound you].” The words for “lay a trap” or “wound you” mean, “both a wound and a plaster; they pretended to lay a plaster to heal, but made a wound; or made the wound worse” (compare *Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*).

In **Obadiah 8–9**, God makes clear that this will happen “in that day”—after the Great Tribulation and during the Day of the Lord—and that God will inspire the former allies of Edom to act in this way. It is as if God Himself will do it, because we read in verse 8 that God says: “Will I not in that day... even destroy the wise men from Edom... then your mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that everyone from the mountains of Esau May be cut off by slaughter.”

We also read in **Daniel 11:41** that the king of Assyria—the final king of the North—will at first NOT conquer Edom, but other Scriptures show us that he will later turn against Edom. This reminds us also of Psalms 60:8 and 108:9 (quoted above), which indicate as well a future defeat in war and captivity for the people of Edom.

The modern Babylonian system under Assyria’s lead will conquer Edom (modern Turkey) and enslave it, after Edom had at first escaped the “king of the North,” while participating in the defeat of the modern houses of Israel (mainly the USA and the United Kingdom or the British Isles) and Judah (the modern Jews).

REASONS FOR GOD’S ANGER WITH ESAU

Psalm 137:7 tells us one reason for God’s anger with Edom: “Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom The day of Jerusalem, Who said, ‘Raze it [Lit., make it bare], raze it, To its very foundation!’”

Joel 3:19 tells us: “Egypt shall be a desolation, And Edom a

Egypt; Ethiopia will quickly stretch out her hands to God.”

Sadly, much horror, pain and suffering will have to be endured before this glorious time can begin.

Psalm 83:6 tells us about a future confederacy of nations against “Israel.” This confederacy will consist of Edom (including **Amalek**, today’s PLO and other violent groups, one of Edom’s grandsons) and other Middle Eastern nations, as well as modern Assyria (Germany) and the revived Babylonian system (“Tyre”). The goal of that confederacy is to cut off Israel, so that “the name of Israel may be remembered no more” (verse 4). A reference to that conspiracy is alluded to in **Amos 1:6, 9** where we read that “Gaza” and “Tyre” will be punished because they “took captive the whole captivity to deliver them up to Edom” and because “they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom.”

The reference to the “captivity” is to the enslavement of the modern descendants of the house of Judah and perhaps some from the modern house of Israel. In addition to bringing about slavery, we are specifically told in **Amos 1:11** (among many other places) that Esau will pursue his brother (Israel) with the sword and cast off all pity, keeping his wrath against Jacob forever.

In fact, we read in **Obadiah 11–14** that Edom was as one of them who carried captive the forces of Israel, and who gazed on or gloated over the day of his brother’s calamity in the day of his captivity; that Edom rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; and that they entered the gate of God’s people in the day of their calamity and laid hands on their substance. We even read that Edom stood at the crossroads to cut off those among them who escaped and delivered those up who remained in the day of distress (verse 14), or, as the *Menge Bible* puts it, at the time of the Great Tribulation.

As will be shown below, Edom’s conduct during that time is a major reason WHY God will pour out His wrath over Edom. A parallel Scripture of Edom’s appalling conduct towards his brother can also be found in **Ezekiel 35:5**. God says that He will make Esau (Mount Seir) desolate, as the inheritance of the house of Israel had become desolate before (verse 15)—but Israel’s desolation will end, and so will Edom’s—and God states in **Ezekiel 36:5** that Esau plundered God’s country and occupied it as a possession for them.

ASSYRIA WILL TURN AGAINST ESAU

However, the Bible tells us that God will allow a change of the configuration of the conspiracy mentioned above. We find that Edom’s

coming from Seir or Bozrah, He will continue to declare His Law and execute judgment on all ungodly people (compare again Jude 15).

EDOM WILL CONTINUE TO EXIST

We also find a rather lengthy description of God's judgment on Edom in **Jeremiah 49:7–22**. God declares very specifically that Bozrah will become a desolation, a waste or ruin, and a curse, and that its cities will be perpetual wastes (verse 13). We also read that nations will fight against Edom (verse 14), that Edom will become small among nations (verse 15)—that is, it will not cease to exist—and that no one shall remain there, as “in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah” (verse 18). This will happen “in that day” (verse 22), when God will “come up and fly like the eagle, and spread His wings over Bozrah” (same verse). At the same time, we read in verse 11 that God tells Edom to leave their “fatherless children”; that God will preserve them alive; and that Edom's “widows” should trust in Him.

Barnes' Notes on the Bible says: “As with Moab... and Ammon..., so there is mercy for Edom. The widows shall be protected, and in the orphans of Edom the nation shall once again revive.” *Clarke's Commentary on the Bible* agrees, stating: “Even the widows and orphans of Esau, who escape the general destruction, shall be taken care of by the Lord.” *Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible* implies that God might be speaking ironically, and that no Edomite would survive, but this does not seem to be the meaning here.

The *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown commentary* says: “Thy fatherless and widows must rest their hope in God alone, as none of the adult males shall be left alive, so desperate will be the affairs of Edom. The verse also, besides this threat, implies a promise of mercy to Esau in God's good time, as there was to Moab and Ammon...; the extinction of the adult males is the prominent idea.”

The *Geneva Study Bible* concurs, saying: “The destruction will be so great that there will be none left to take care of the widows and the fatherless.” But some Edomites will survive, as we will see in more detail, and Edom will not remain a wasteland for all eternity.

EDOM'S PUNISHMENT IN DETAIL

How will Edom's punishment unfold?

Chapter 6 Modern Esau or Edom—Turkey

The Bible says that Turkey will play a major role in the future. We need to know, of course, who Turkey is in the language of biblical prophecy, as there is much confusion in this regard. As we will see, the Turks are the modern descendants of ancient Esau or Edom, the twin brother of Jacob or Israel.

Due to the fact that Esau sold Jacob his birthright for some red stew, he became also known as “Edom,” which means “red” (Genesis 25:30). Later the name Idumea (Isaiah 34:5, *Authorized Version*; the *New King James Bible* says, “Edom”) was applied to some of the descendants of Esau or Edom. Herod the Great was an Idumean. (It was Herod who killed the male babies in Bethlehem and surrounding areas, from two years old and under; compare Matthew 2:16.)

Edom is also referred to as the land of Seir (Genesis 32:3). Edom, or at least the southern part of Edom, became known as **Teman**, who was Edom's oldest grandson (Genesis 36:10–11). One of Edom's other grandsons was the fierce warrior **Amalek** (Genesis 36:12).

The *Easton Bible Dictionary* informs us that Edom “extended from the head of the Gulf of Akabah, the Elanitic gulf, to the foot of the Dead Sea... and contained, among other cities, the rock-hewn Sela, generally known by the Greek name Petra [2 Kings 14:7, compare margin of the *New King James Bible*]. It is a wild and rugged region, traversed by fruitful valleys. [Edom's] old capital was Bozrah (Isaiah 63:1). The early inhabitants of the land were Horites. They were destroyed by the Edomites (Deuteronomy 2:12), between whom and the kings of Israel and Judah there was frequent war [2 Chronicles 28:17].

“At the time of the Exodus they churlishly refused permission to the Israelites to pass through their land (Numbers 20:14–21), and ever afterwards maintained an attitude of hostility toward them. They were conquered by David (2 Samuel 8:14...), and afterwards by Amaziah

(2 Chronicles 25:11, 12). But they regained again their independence, and in later years, during the decline of the Jewish kingdom (2 Kings 16:6), 'Edomites'... made war against [the house of Judah].

"They took part with the Chaldeans when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, and afterwards they invaded and held possession of the south of Palestine as far as Hebron. [*Biblica—The Bible Atlas*, adds on page 308 that "Judah's final destruction occurred when Edom enticed Judah to join in an anti-Babylonian coalition... Edom then participated with Babylon in the destruction of Jerusalem that followed." As we will see below, similar events will occur again in the near future.]

"At last, however, Edom fell under the growing Chaldean power (Jeremiah 27:3, 6)... After an existence as a people for above seventeen hundred years, they have utterly disappeared, and their language even is forgotten forever..."

But this last statement is not true. As we will see, the Bible contains many prophecies about the nation of Edom for the end time; therefore, descendants of Edom must exist today. They may not be living in the areas where they used to live, and they are not known today as Edomites, but they must exist somewhere. The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1959, states for instance under Edom that "many of the Edomites, pushed out of their former territory by the Nabataens, drifted westward across the Araba..."

We also need to note that many commentaries apply end-time prophecies regarding Edom to ancient times and claim that these prophecies were already fulfilled. This is a grievous mistake, precluding those authors from realizing what is announced to happen in the near future.

ESAU'S "BLESSING"

We read about an interesting "blessing" in Genesis 27:39–40, which Isaac gave to his son Esau, after he had been deceived to bless Jacob. It says that Esau or Edom would dwell "without" [as it should be rendered] the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven [in comparison with the blessing which Isaac had given Jacob]; and that he would live by the sword and "serve" his brother (Jacob or Israel) [This last statement is actually a repeat of the prophecy pertaining to Jacob and Esau, which Rebekah received in Genesis 25:23].

time setting is very clearly identified as being in the future, when Christ returns (compare Isaiah 34:8, speaking of the "day of the LORD's vengeance" and the "year of recompense for the cause of Zion"). As mentioned before, the term "day of the LORD" *always* applies to a future time, beginning about one year prior to Christ's return.

God's punishment of Edom is also described in **Isaiah 63:1–6**. It says there that God Himself has punished Edom "alone" (verse 3); that "from the peoples no one was with" Him (same verse); that there "was no one to help" (verse 5); and that therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him (same verse). The meaning is, Christ will act without the help of any supportive human armies which would see the need for Edom's punishment.

Even though some nations will fight against Edom (see below), they won't do so because of wanting to do God's Will; rather, they will act because of ulterior selfish motives. (An interesting parallel passage as to motive may be Isaiah 10:5–7. God will use the modern King of Assyria to punish the modern houses of Israel and Judah. However, that king will not understand nor consider that he is a tool in God's hands. He will act because it is in his heart to destroy many nations).

In addition, the time setting in **Isaiah 63** is the day of God's anger and fury, as well as the day of His vengeance and the year of His redeemed (verse 4)—a future time when God's enemies will be destroyed and His people will be redeemed. When Christ returns, He will indeed act "alone" against His human enemies, without the "help" of human allies.

A possible parallel Scripture of God's punishment of Edom and His coming from Seir and Bozrah can be found in **Habakkuk 3:3**. The prophet asks God in the context of the revival of His Work in the midst of the years to remember mercy in wrath (verse 2). It is interesting to read in **Deuteronomy 33:2** that at the time of Moses, God came from Seir (Edom) "with ten thousands of saints" to declare His Law. Note that the word "saint" means "holy" and can refer both to angels and men. When God declared His Law to ancient Israel, He was accompanied by angels ("saints"). It is possible that the passage in Deuteronomy 33:2 is also a reference to Christ's second coming, when He descends with His disciples (the "saints") to the Mount of Olives (compare Jude 14–15; Zechariah 14:3–5). Christ will punish Edom at that time, and

MEANING OF THE WORD “FOREVER”

Very briefly, let us review the word “forever” in context. While “forever” may indeed convey an absolute sense of being perpetual, “forever” is also used in a conditional sense. For instance, Exodus 21:6 says: “...then his master shall bring him to the judges, He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl, AND HE SHALL SERVE HIM FOREVER” (compare Deuteronomy 15:17). The service of a particular individual was a life-long commitment—lasting as long as either the servant or master lived.

In another example, the mother of Samuel is quoted: “But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, ‘Not until the child is weaned; then I will take him, that he may appear before the LORD and REMAIN THERE FOREVER’” (1 Samuel 1:22). But we know that Samuel died—that he is not NOW still before the LORD! (Compare 1 Samuel 25:1.)

In biblical usage of the word “forever,” we see that the context and application MAY be for something that will come to an end. God said of the temple that Solomon built, “For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually” (2 Chronicles 7:16). However, because of the sins of Israel and then Judah, God caused this temple to be destroyed! (Compare 2 Chronicles 36:15–21.)

Regarding God’s indignation against Edom that will last “forever,” this simply means until circumstances change. In fact, they will change dramatically when Jesus Christ rules over this entire earth during the Millennium.

A vague reference to the “night” of punishment of Seir (Edom) is also found in **Isaiah 21:11–12**.

SPECIFIC SCRIPTURES DESCRIBING ESAU’S PUNISHMENT

In addition, the Bible includes very specific references to the punishment of modern Edom.

In **Isaiah 34:5–6**, we read that God’s bloody sword will come down on Edom, the people of God’s curse, for judgment, and that God has a sacrifice of a great slaughter in Bozrah and the land of Edom. The

Isaac also told Esau that in due time, he would break his brother’s yoke from his neck. *Halley’s Bible Handbook* claims that the Edomites “were subservient to Israel; and in time, they did throw off Israel’s yoke (II Kings 8:20–22).” *Biblica—The Bible Atlas* states on page 114 that “Herod the Idumean—better known as Herod the Great, the ruler who played a pivotal role in Jesus’ early life—murdered the royal family of Judea, including one of his own wives and a number of his children, and forged alliances with Rome. From that time on, Jewish tradition saw Rome as the embodiment of the continuing struggle between Jacob and Esau.”

While all of this may be partially true, we will see that Isaac’s prophecy for Esau is far more encompassing and applies also and foremost to more recent historical and even still future events. Edom is not just a symbolic reference to Rome or the modern Roman or Babylonian system in the end times, but a distinctively existing nation—which will however, to an extent and for a while, **support modern Babylon in an attack against the state of Israel**.

MODERN TURKS ARE ANCIENT EDMITES

Many Edomites are today to be found in the **modern nation of Turkey**, and biblical prophecies relating to modern Edom mainly address the **Turkish people**. (As an aside, the famous mountain of Ararat where Noah’s Ark rested after the Flood is situated in Turkey).

The following was stated in an article by *The Plain Truth*, dated 1966, titled, “Turkey in Prophecy”:

“Turkey can be identified by research in encyclopedias, or history books dealing with the subject, as the descendants of Esau... One of the grandsons of Esau was Teman (Genesis 36:11). Teman became a great leader among the peoples... As the Edomites began to expand..., portions of the land began to bear the name of Teman... much of the area... including ... Turkestan... became known as the ‘Land of Temani’ (compare Genesis 36:34 [according to the *Authorized Version*; the *New King James Bible* says: “the land of the Temanites”]... Is it any wonder then that the indelible stamp of Teman, one of the leading dukes of ancient Edom, was carried down into modern history in the form of the ‘Ottoman’ Empire?”

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE OF THE TURKS

The **Ottoman Empire** existed for about 400 years and ended with World War I. The *Funk and Wagnalls New Encyclopedia* tells us that the Ottoman Empire or the “Turkish state was the dominant power in the eastern Mediterranean from the 16th to the 19th century. It was broken up at the end of World War I, and its Anatolian heartland became the modern Republic of Turkey.”

During its high days and years of conquest, the Ottoman Empire ruled over countries and areas such as Algeria, Tunisia, Yemen, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Arabia, Iraq, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Armenia, Georgia and the Crimea, and it even besieged Austria’s capitol, Vienna (in 1529). It had at that time broken the yoke of Jacob (including Jacob’s son Judah) from his neck.

The fact that the name of the Turkish Ottoman Empire is derived from or related to Teman is confirmed by other authors as well. For instance, the encyclopedia *Wordnik* states regarding Edom: “Edom is O’theman of the Bible, and O’theman of the Bible is Turkey.” Also, many claim that the name “Turk” is associated with “Turkestan,” where, as we recall, many of the Edomites and more precisely, the Temanites, had settled. We are also told by some that the Khazars called the Byzantium Emperor the “King of Edom.” (Note that the name *Byzantium* is ancient for *Constantinople*, which is today Turkey’s capitol *Istanbul*.)

Turkey did in fact live by the sword, as Isaac had told Esau, but it has now advanced to a very prosperous country in the Middle East, manifesting more and more its (ongoing) independent status from the house of Judah—the Jews—and now also increasingly from the modern descendants of the ancient house of Israel—the USA and the United Kingdom or the British Isles.

This means, then, that the Turkish people can be identified today as belonging to the descendants of biblical Esau or Edom. Additional biblical references to modern Turkey are *Teman* (descendant of Esau), *Idumea*, *Bozrah* (ancient capital of Esau) and *Seir* (compare Joshua 24:4).

COMING PUNISHMENT OF TURKEY

Many Scriptures reveal that modern Esau—Turkey—will be severely

punished in the end time. Some of the Scriptures are more general in nature, while others are very specific. Some passages give us the reasons for modern Esau’s destruction and defeat in a coming war. Some Scriptures imply that God will directly and supernaturally destroy Edom before and at Christ’s return, while other Scriptures show that God will also act through other nations.

Some passages seem to indicate, at first sight, that Esau will be totally annihilated; that there won’t be any survivors; and that the country of Esau will become a wasteland for all eternity; but other passages suggest otherwise, and we know that the Bible cannot and does not contradict itself. We will also explore the role of modern Israel and Judah towards Edom.

GENERAL SCRIPTURES DESCRIBING ESAU’S PUNISHMENT

Psalms 60:8 and 108:9 show that modern Esau will be punished in the end time. God says twice that He will cast His shoe over Edom. *Wesley’s Notes* states that this is a proverbial expression to indicate slavery, while *Albert Barnes’ Notes’ on the Bible* says: “It is supposed that there is allusion in the expression ‘I will cast out my shoe,’ to the custom, when transferring a possession, of throwing down a shoe on the ground as a symbol of occupancy... The idea is, that he [God] would take possession of it, or would make it his own.”

Further general references to God’s future punishment of “[spiritually] uncircumcised” Edom can be found in **Jeremiah 9:25–26; 25:15, 21; and 48:21–24**. Another Scripture, **Lamentations 4:21–22**, describes the punishment of the “daughter” of Edom at the time of the captivity of the “daughter” of Zion (“daughter” here in prophetic terms signifies the end-time descendants of ancient Edom and Zion). Note also the general description of the destruction of Edom’s kings and princes in war in **Ezekiel 32:29**.

Further, **Malachi 1:4** says that God will throw down what Edom has built, and that God has indignation against the people of Edom “forever,” calling Edom “the Territory of Wickedness.” Note, however, that the word “forever” does not need to mean, “for all eternity,” but that it could refer to a certain period of time, until the circumstances change.