

THE RISE AND FALL OF



GERMANY AND EUROPE

About the Cover: Germany and Europe are identified in prophetic warnings in the Bible! While their immediate future will lead to great power and world influence, they are destined to suffer terrible loss—all culminating in the powerful return of Jesus Christ!

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Introduction

Surprising as it may seem, the Bible has much to say about the coming destruction of Germany and Europe. To understand those prophecies, we must first of all understand where Germany is mentioned in the Bible. You will not find it with that modern name, but the biblical records, history and archaeology prove that the German and Austrian peoples of today are descendants of the ancient Assyrians. (For proof, please read our free booklet, *“Germany in Prophecy.”*)

The ancient capital of Assyria was Nineveh. As we will see, Nineveh was destroyed, but not before it was given a warning. That warning was proclaimed through the prophet Jonah, as recorded in the *Book of Jonah*. When Jonah uttered the warning message of imminent destruction, the Ninevites repented, and the city and the people were spared. But not forever. Subsequent generations of Assyrians engaged again in horrible sinful conduct, and that time, Nineveh was utterly demolished, as recorded, for instance, in the *Book of Nahum*.

However, the events pertaining to Nineveh are not just ancient history. Both the Books of Jonah and of Nahum are part of the collection of the Minor Prophets for the end time—our time today. This means, God is warning modern Assyria—the German-speaking peoples—of imminent impending destruction, and as in ancient times, the modern capitals of Germany and perhaps Austria, as well as the modern religious “capital” of the European Empire, are facing total demolition, which will occur during the prophetic “Day of the LORD,” a time span beginning with about one year prior to Christ’s return.

Many prophetic passages in the Bible speak about the time of the Day of the LORD, including, as we will discuss, the *Books of Habakkuk and of Joel*. Much information is also included in our free booklets, *“Germany in Prophecy,” “Europe in Prophecy”* and *“The Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.”*

We will begin with analyzing the historic events and their prophetic application in the Book of Jonah. It includes a message for ancient and

modern Nineveh, but also for God's Church today which must fulfill its commission of warning the nations, including Germany and Europe, and it must not be a reluctant servant as Jonah was at the beginning.

The Book of Jonah

According to tradition, Jonah wrote the book himself, around 786 BC. 2 Kings 14:23–25 refers to Jonah as a prophet and as God’s servant. He came from Gath Hapher, a location in the north-east of *Nazareth*.

Jonah lived at the same time as Elijah and Elisha, as well as the prophet Amos. The meaning of the name “Jonah” is dove.

In Psalm 55:6–8, we read that David wanted to be a dove and fly away, thereby trying to flee from his problems. In Genesis 8:8–12, the dove is a symbol of hope for survival and a new beginning. Matthew 3:16 informs us that the Spirit of God appeared like a dove. In Matthew 10:16, we are told to be harmless as doves.

From this, we can already ascertain that we must not try to flee from God, but that we must zealously and wholeheartedly fulfill our commission. We must do what God tells us to do, and that without guile or ulterior motives. We are not to look for vain glory or recognition for ourselves. We are not to seek our personal advantage, or that of our special group or even our nation, when that means being unwilling to fulfill our commission given by God.

On the other hand, we are not to behave like silly doves, without sense, as Jonah did, and as Ephraim is doing today (compare Hosea 7:11). [Ephraim, a son of Joseph and grandson of Jacob or Israel, refers today to Great Britain, as is explained in our free booklet, “*The Fall and Rise of Britain and America*.” We also reveal in that booklet that additional modern descendants of the House of Israel can be found today in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other English-speaking nations. The modern House of Judah describes today’s Jews and especially the State of Israel.]

The Book of Jonah has been traditionally read on the *Day of Atonement*, which pictures a time when all men are going to be reconciled with God. Everyone will be offered repentance by God and will be given access to His Holy Spirit (Compare our free booklet, “*God’s Fall Holy Days*” and “*God the Father Is the Highest*.”). Jonah was supposed

to symbolize God's reconciliation with the world and as a physical forerunner of God's reconciliation with the nation of Assyria, but he first refused to become such a symbol. We are to preach reconciliation today, which begins with repentance. Germany and Austria are receiving this warning today, but so far, not many are listening and changing their evil ways.

The Book of Jonah is placed in the middle of the so-called *Minor Prophets*, right between Amos, Obadiah and Micah. All these prophetic books have special meaning and relevance for the end time. This applies to the Book of Jonah as well.

Jonah, Chapter 1

Jonah 1:1–3 begins the fascinating record of Jonah's commission in this way:

"Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 'Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.' But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD."

Jonah ran away. He fled to Joppa, in order to travel from there to Tarshish. Today, Joppa is identical with today's city Jaffa.

Joppa or *Jaffa* is mentioned later in the Bible again, in Acts 9:36, 42–43; and in Acts 10:5. Here it was that the Apostle Peter received the vision of a great sheet filled with unclean animals. He was told three times to eat of them (Acts 10:16), and when he was still wondering what the vision meant (Acts 10:17), three men (Acts 10:19) came and asked him to visit their master Cornelius, a Roman soldier. Then Peter understood the meaning of the vision—that he was not to treat any MAN unclean or common (Acts 10:28), and that God had granted Gentiles repentance to life (Acts 11:18; 10:35). As we will see, that Jonah fled to Joppa and that Peter received the vision in Joppa is no mere coincidence.

We read that Jonah wanted to flee to *Tarshish*. This city is in all likelihood identical with today's Tartessos, a Phoenician city of trade and commerce in Southwest Spain. Jonah tried to flee to a city which was in the exact opposite direction of Nineveh where Jonah was supposed to have gone.

WHY did Jonah try to flee to Tarshish? The Bible says in verse 3 that he wanted to get away from “the presence of the LORD.” Did Jonah believe that in doing so, God would not be able to see him or find him anymore? This is doubtful. Jonah must have known passages such as Psalm 139:1–12, which explain that no matter where we go or are, God is always there.

As a servant of God and as a prophet, Jonah must have known that he could not hide from God’s Spirit which is everywhere. God the Father is a Person, and so is His Son, Jesus Christ. But through the Holy Spirit, which is the power of God and spirit essence, God is everywhere, or omnipresent. It’s like air which is everywhere, or light. But light emanates from a source, and so does God’s Spirit. The source is God the Father and Jesus Christ. So why, then, did Jonah try to get away from God?

Jonah knew certain prophecies dealing with the destruction of ancient Israel (compare Amos 2:6–16). And Jonah knew too that it would be the ancient Assyrians who would destroy Israel (Hosea 9:3; Isaiah 10:5–6). And remember, those prophecies are also, and mainly for us today, showing that it will be modern Assyria, as part of a European power bloc, which will destroy the modern Houses of Israel and Judah.

Therefore, Jonah might have argued something along the following lines: If I warn Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, and if Nineveh repents of its evil ways and survives, without being destroyed by God, then God will be able to use Assyria to destroy my country, Israel. That means, I will be, at least indirectly, responsible for the destruction of my nation by the Assyrians. And my countrymen will not be very happy to learn that it was I who warned the enemy of our nation, that it was I who saved our enemy from destruction, so that that enemy could destroy us.

Later, Jeremiah was treated as a traitor by the king of Judah when he told the Jews to surrender to the Babylonians.

Today, the *Church of the Eternal God*, being headquartered in the USA, and its international affiliates, the *Global Church of God* in the UK, the Church of God, a Christian Fellowship in Canada, and the *Kirche des Ewigen Gottes e.V.* in Germany, have a commission to warn modern Assyria and the European power bloc of their pending destruction through Far Eastern nations. But before Europe’s destruction occurs,

it will defeat and conquer the modern Houses of Israel and Judah.

Also, Jonah might have thought, in addition: If Assyria repents because of my warning, so that it will not be destroyed, then I will be looked upon as a false prophet, since I said, Assyria would be destroyed. In any case, I am the loser. But this is what Jonah should have said, and what he was supposed to recognize, as recorded in Ezekiel 3:17–19:

“Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul.”

This is what we must say today as well, and even though the fulfillment of the prophecies regarding the destruction of the USA and the UK, as well as Germany and Europe, might not be delayed much longer, the Church’s commission to warn and to proclaim God’s Word as a witness still stands, with the hope that some may repent and change and turn to God.

Still further, it is highly probable that Jonah was of the opinion, as was generally believed in Israel at Jonah’s time, that God was only concerned with Israel and that He did not care about other nations. If so, then Jonah could not understand why God would send him, a prophet of ISRAEL, to Nineveh, a Gentile city, to warn THEM. Even in New Testament times, the Church had to slowly come to an understanding that God was not just the God of one specific nation, but that He is the God of ALL peoples. He is not only concerned with English-speaking nations, but also with all nations worldwide.

Let us also remember that Moses came up with all kinds of excuses why he could not go to Egypt to bring his people out of slavery; and when he could not think of any other excuse, he plainly said to God: Send whom you want, but don’t send me.

Jeremiah did not have any desire, either, to go as a prophet to certain nations. He told God: Send somebody else, because I am too young.

And so Jonah tried likewise to flee, to escape from God. He thought, perhaps, When I flee in the opposite direction, then God has to find

somebody else who will deliver the warning to Assyria. And with his flight, he wanted to show God: Send whom you want, but don't send me.

The rest of the first chapter shows us how God creates a big storm on the ocean and how He makes the sailors understand that the storm came because of Jonah.

Jonah 1:4–9 reads:

“But the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up. Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load. But Jonah had gone down into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep. So the captain came to him, and said to him, ‘What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish.’ And they said to one another, ‘Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble has come upon us.’ So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. Then they said to him, ‘Please tell us! For whose cause is this trouble upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?’ So he said to them, ‘I am a Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.’”

Jonah was suffering from self-delusion. He was trying to flee from God; he refused to do what God told him to do; and still he says, “I fear the LORD.” Are we sometimes acting in the same way?

Continuing with Jonah 1:10–12:

“Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, ‘Why have you done this?’ For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. Then they said to him, ‘What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?’—for the sea was growing more tempestuous. And he said to them, ‘Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me.’”

Instead of turning to God, accepting God's Will for his life and starting to fulfill his commission, he rather wanted to die.

Continuing with Jonah 1:13–16:

“Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them.

Therefore they cried out to the LORD and said, 'We pray, O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man's life, and do not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O LORD, have done as it pleased You.' So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows."

God works another miracle – the ocean immediately became calm, when Jonah was thrown overboard. We also see here a remarkable contrast: Jonah, the Hebrew prophet of God, had refused to fulfill God's Will, and did not even pray to God. He was sleeping in the lowest parts of the ship during the storm. (Elijah, too, had run away from God's commission and had fallen asleep, willing to die. But an angel woke him up and gave him food to eat twice, so that he could continue his work). The pagan, Gentile sailors prayed first to their idols, but then to the true God. And THEY did God's Will. And then, they sacrificed to God and made vows to Him.

Jonah 1:17 probably constitutes the most "controversial" verse in the book. We read:

"Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."

Many have felt that because of this passage, the Book of Jonah must be a legend, a fairy tale, and an invention. It had to be because how can a man be swallowed up by a fish and later be vomited onto the shore, alive (see Jonah 2:10)?

However, Jesus Christ did accept the historical contents of the book of Jonah as true, and especially the story about Jonah in the belly of the great fish. We read in Matthew 12:38–40:

"Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, 'Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.' But He answered and said to them, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.'"

It is interesting that many do not accept those words of Christ as true, either. They say, Christ was not in the grave for three days and three nights, but only for 1 ½ days and two nights. They say, Christ was crucified on a Friday and resurrected on a Sunday. But Christ said

He would be in the grave for three days and three nights, that is, for 72 hours, JUST AS Jonah was in the watery grave of the sea monster for three days and three nights. And history and the Scriptures prove that Christ was crucified and placed in the grave on a Wednesday afternoon, just before sunset, and that He was resurrected 72 hours later, late Saturday afternoon, just prior to sunset. (For biblical and historical proof, read our free booklet, "*Jesus Christ—a Great Mystery.*")

As Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so Jesus Christ became a sign to His generation (Luke 11:30). And surely, the Church of God, in fulfilling its commission of warning the world, including modern Assyria, will become a sign to the end-time generation, as God's people will be hated by everyone (Matthew 10:22; Luke 21:17).

In addition, historical records confirm that human beings can be swallowed up by sea monsters and survive in their bellies for a short period of time.

Eerdmans' Handbook to the Bible states on page 448 that sperm whales and large sharks capable of swallowing a man are not unknown in the eastern Mediterranean.

In "*Miracles and Riddles of the Holy Scriptures,*" we read on page 254: "For quite some time, it is assumed that the big fish that swallowed Jonah was not a fish, but a sperm whale. Sperm whales swallow their prey completely, and their throat is big enough for a human body. ...In 1891, historical records state that a sailor was found alive in the belly of such a whale one day after his ship had sunk."

Scientists know of spectacular fights in the depth of the ocean between sperm whales and giant squid. They have found remains of squid in the bellies of sperm whales. Those remains were much larger than the body of a human being.

But could it have been a sperm whale? Does not the Bible say, Jonah was swallowed by a great fish? And a sperm whale is not a fish, but a mammal. The *scientific classifications* of marine or water mammals and fish may not be identical with the biblical classifications. Let us note that scientific classifications are sometimes pretty arbitrary, capricious and unconvincing: Their classifications differentiate between animals that lay eggs—then it's not a mammal—and animals that don't lay eggs, but bring forth living offspring, which are then suckled or nursed—then it's a mammal. Further, an additional criterion is whether the sea creature

has lungs—if it does, it's not a fish. This differentiation fits for most, but not for all water creatures. For instance, the duckbill or platypus lays eggs, but is classified as a mammal. The shark does not lay eggs, but brings forth living offspring, but it is of course classified as a fish.

The *biblical classifications* are sometimes different from scientific classifications. This is clearly true, for example, for birds and mammals. Science, for example, refers to bats as mammals, but the Bible refers to bats as birds (Leviticus 11:13, 19). Also, science states that the hare is not an animal chewing the cud, while the Bible claims that it is (Leviticus 11:6). There is therefore a difference between the “scientific” and biblical designation of what it means to “chew the cud.”

Biblical commentators, such as *Rienecker*, state that the Bible sometimes refers with the word “fish” to *all* creatures living in the ocean.

In Genesis 1:21, we read that God created “great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded.” The *Authorized Version* translates, “great whales,” and the annotation of the *Ryrie Study Bible* says: “Better: sea monsters.” But in Genesis 1:28, all these sea animals are summarized with the word, “fish.”

In Matthew 12:40, where Jesus speaks about the belly of the sea creature which swallowed up Jonah, and where it is translated with “great fish,” the Greek word is “*kaetos*.” It refers to a big sea creature. Other translations say here, “whale” or “sea monster” (compare *Zürcher Bibel*: “*Meeresungetüm*”). So, the reference in Jonah 1:17 to the great fish swallowing up Jonah COULD include a reference to a whale such as a sperm whale.

But more importantly, one should not forget the fact that the great fish or the whale which swallowed up Jonah is not described as a merely natural event, but as a miracle. God brought this miracle about. We read in Jonah 1:17: “The LORD HAD prepared a great fish.” This seems to indicate that God had created such a fish or whale or sea monster just for this occasion. It was an animal which could swallow up Jonah, keep him in its belly and vomit him onto dry land, unharmed and without injury, three days and three nights later.

Much indicates that God had planned this event very carefully, especially because Christ would later use the sign of Jonah as the only sign which He, Christ, would give to His generation to prove that He, Christ, was the Messiah. Remember, too, that Jonah grew up in the

region of Nazareth, where Jesus would grow up later.

That would mean, then, that God knew from the beginning that Jonah would not follow God's Will at first; that he would try to flee from God; that he would end up on a ship sailing to Tarshish; and that the sailors would throw Jonah overboard, to be swallowed by the great fish created by God for that occasion. There should be no doubt that when God called Jonah for this job, He knew Jonah's thoughts, his mindset, and how he would react. But God knew that ultimately, Jonah would do his job, and He also knew how to bring him to the point that he would do so.

Remember, too, God knew that Pharaoh would not let Israel go, unless forced by a mighty hand and many signs and wonders (Exodus 3:19–20). And God said, He raised Pharaoh up for this purpose, so that He, God, could work those miracles to His honor and glory (Romans 9:17).

As God worked in the life of Jonah, God works also in our lives. At times, we may think that we can hide from God; that we can refuse to do what we know is right and what God requires of us. But if God wants us to do His Will, He will see to it that we will do it... with or without our cooperation. However, if we resist God, we bring much pain and sorrow to ourselves.

Jonah, Chapter 2

Chapter 2 sets forth Jonah's prayer in the belly of the fish. It is presented as if the fish brings delivery and rescue. The fish, in swallowing up Jonah, prevents Jonah from drowning in the sea.

Jonah 2:1–9 reads:

"Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish's belly. And he said: 'I cried out to the LORD because of my affliction, And He answered me. Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice. For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the floods surrounded me; All Your billows and Your waves passed over me. Then I said, "I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple." The waters surrounded me, even to my soul; The deep closed around me; Weeds were wrapped around my head. I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars closed behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my

life from the pit, O LORD, my God. When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the LORD; And my prayer went up to You, Into Your holy temple. Those who regard worthless idols Forsake their own Mercy. But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.”

At the end of his prayer, Jonah states that he will sacrifice to God. He knew, then, that he would survive and be carried to the shore. Also, the prayer is introduced by calling God the God of Jonah. In spite of all of his rebellion, he knew deep down inside who his God was.

When did Jonah make this prayer? It appears, when he was swallowed up by the fish—not three days later, but right at the beginning. Was *Jonah alive* during these three days and three nights? Perhaps. But remember what Christ said, “For AS Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, SO will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” And Christ was DEAD for three days and three nights. So maybe Jonah was dead too, and God resurrected him when the fish vomited him onto the shore. This would be another miracle, in addition to the miracle which we read about in Jonah 2:10, which says: “So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.”

God gives a command to the fish to vomit Jonah onto dry land, and the fish does so. We see here the unlimited control of God over events. God determines what should happen, and it happens.

This is not the only time where the Bible tells us that God directs animals to carry out His Will. We read for instance in 1 Kings 17:4 that God commanded ravens to bring Elijah food.

It is also made clear here that a man cannot do anything against God’s Will. Jonah tried to circumvent God’s Will, by fleeing in the opposite direction, but God sees to it that Jonah ends up near the location where he was supposed to go. Bible commentaries tell us that Jonah was vomited onto dry land in the region of Sinope, the southern shore of the Black Sea, north of Assyria.

Jonah, Chapter 3

In chapter 3, God repeats His commission for Jonah to go to Nineveh in order to warn the people of impending disaster; and this time, Jonah is obedient.

Jonah 3:1-4 tells us:

“Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, ‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.’ So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day’s walk. Then he cried out and said, ‘Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!’”

Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, is referred to in Genesis 10:12 as the “principal” or “big” or “great” city. It was more like a city-state. Smaller, surrounding cities belonged to it. The entire region has been estimated as 60 miles in diameter. God later tells us, in chapter 4, verse 11, that 120,000 people lived in the city, who could not discern between their right hand and their left. If this expression means little children who cannot discern yet between right and wrong, then that would mean that an additional 200,000 to 300,000 teenagers and adults lived in the region as well.

Continuing with Jonah 3:5-10:

“So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.”

The people of Nineveh, small and great, rich and poor, as well as the king, believe Jonah, repent and begin to fast. When God sees that, He decides not to destroy the city. Christ confirms that the repentance of the Assyrians in Nineveh was genuine and sincere. It was not repentance leading to eternal salvation, but a change of heart and

action, departing from evil. They will be resurrected with everyone who was not called for salvation in this life, in the so-called Great White Throne Judgment or Second Resurrection, as Christ explained in Matthew 12:41:

“The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.”

God did not destroy Nineveh at that time because they “turned from their evil way.” Jeremiah 18:7–8 confirms that this is generally the way God operates, where God is quoted as saying: “The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it.”

Jonah, Chapter 4

The fourth chapter describes the displeasure of Jonah because God did not destroy Nineveh.

Jonah 4:1–2 reads:

“But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. So he prayed to the LORD, and said, ‘Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.’”

Jonah states that one reason why he did not want to go to Nineveh was that he was afraid God’s long-suffering and mercy would save the Assyrians and would keep God from destroying them. But Jonah should have understood that HE should have been as merciful as God; that God wanted him to become more merciful. But Jonah did not see it at first.

We read in verse 3 that Jonah said to God:

“Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live!”

Jonah wants to die again, because God does not act in the way Jonah wants Him to.

Continuing with verses 4 and 5:

“Then the LORD said, ‘Is it right for you to be angry?’ So Jonah

went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city.”

Jonah did not answer God’s question whether it was right for him to be angry. Rather, he made himself a shelter on the east side of the city, watching what would happen and hoping that the repentance of the people of Nineveh was not sincere, so that the city could still be destroyed.

Verses 6–8 continue:

“And the LORD God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant. But as morning dawned the next day God prepared a worm, and it so damaged the plant that it withered. And it happened, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah’s head, so that he grew faint. Then he wished death for himself, and said, ‘It is better for me to die than to live.’”

We are not told what this worm was which God especially prepared, like he prepared the plant. But when the worm damages the plant, the plant withers away. All of this is being done by God to teach Jonah a lesson. God prepared the plant in a night and let it perish in a night (verse 10). Notice, too, in verses 6, 7 and 8, it says, “God prepared.” It does not say here, “God had prepared.” This is in contrast to the great fish, which swallowed Jonah. In that case, it said: “God HAD prepared a great fish.”

In verse 8 we read that once again, Jonah wants to die. That is now the third time that Jonah wants to die in this short book.

Continuing and concluding the book with verses 9–11:

“Then God said to Jonah, ‘Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?’ And he said, ‘It is right for me to be angry, even to death!’ But the LORD said, ‘You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?’”

God reveals Himself again as ruler and sustainer. The people of Nineveh were His children, too, whom He had made—not only the

Israelites. And in addition, God had created all the animals as well that were living in Nineveh.

The concept is conveyed here, too, that Jonah had pity for the plant, for which he did not labor, which he did not make grow, and which existed only for a short time, while GOD had pity for Nineveh's people and animals, for which God had labored, which He had made grow, which had existed for a long time, and in which people lived who could not discern between right and wrong.

The Book of Jonah describes the Will of God to reconcile all peoples to Him. That is why it is read by the Jewish community on the Day of Atonement. The book explains that God does not look at the person or his or her national origin, when it comes to salvation, but that God accepts everyone who is willing to submit to the Will of God. No human being is in God's eyes unclean or common, and His gospel of the soon-coming Kingdom of God is to be proclaimed to all the nations in all the world (Matthew 24:14), so that everyone who does repent and becomes converted can be saved (Luke 24:46–47), regardless of nationality or race.

This teaching is not only proclaimed in the Old Testament in the book of Jonah, but also, for example, in the Book of Ruth. Ruth was not an Israelite woman, but a Moabite, but she married Boaz, and because of and stemming from that relationship, first king David and later Jesus Christ were born.

That God loves Gentile nations is clearly revealed in the Bible. Amos 9:7 reads: "Are you not like the people of Ethiopia to Me, O children of Israel?" says the LORD. 'Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, The Philistines from Caphtor, And the Syrians from Kir?'"

This teaching is of course found and expounded in the New Testament. But it took the Church a while before it understood this teaching. Matthew 4:12–16 tells us that Christ had become a light to the Gentiles already at the time of His first coming. But He also emphasized that repentance was necessary (verse 17). Matthew 8:5–13 and Luke 4:24–30 are further examples, showing how Christ dealt with Gentiles and what He had to say about them.

Unfortunately, the repentance of the people of Nineveh was not passed on to their next generations. Each and every human being is individually responsible for his or her actions. A son or daughter does

not inherit righteousness from a righteous father or mother (Ezekiel 14:14, 19–20; Jeremiah 15:1). So, as will be explained later, especially in the Book of Nahum, the next generations of Nineveh did not inherit the repentant attitude of their forefathers, either, and so the city of Nineveh was subsequently destroyed.

As mentioned, the Book of Jonah belongs to the Minor Prophets. The modern significance of the Book of Jonah for us today is clearly the commission of the Church of God to warn the modern Assyrians of coming disaster.

Whether modern-day Assyria, as a country, will listen to such a warning, is more than doubtful. But some will. And regardless, that can't be the focus. God commanded modern-day Ezekiel to warn the modern House of Israel, and we know that only very few will listen. But some will repent, believe and be baptized. They will be spared from the terrible Great Tribulation just ahead of us.

Jonah should have been willing to warn his fellow man from impending destruction. He was not, at first, but we believe that he came to repentance and acknowledged the errors of his way. After all, God used him to write the Book of Jonah. God's Church in these end times should learn from Jonah's example and willingly and zealously proclaim the warning message of impending destruction to modern Assyria and Europe, as well as to the Houses of Israel and Judah, because destruction is coming, as so vividly described in the Book of Nahum, which we will discuss next.

The Book of Nahum

The meaning of Nahum is “consolation” or “full of comfort.” It is the short form of Nehemiah, which means, “the LORD comforts.”

Nahum came from Elkosh, maybe Capernaum, which means, “Nahum’s city.” He is said to have lived at the time of Joel.

In the Book of Jonah, the Assyrians at Nineveh repented (Jonah 3:6–10). It is perhaps remarkable that in modern days, Germany and Austria did not fight any wars after World War II, although especially Germany has become one of the biggest manufacturers and exporters of weapons in the world.

A warning message was given to Germany through God’s Church during and following World War II. When Germany was defeated and many German cities were totally destroyed and demolished at the end of World War II, God’s Church proclaimed that fallen Germany would rise and become most powerful again, and that it would bring destruction to the entire world.

In more recent days, Germany is engaging more and more in warfare and proxy warfare (such as in Russia’s war against Ukraine), and so, the warning through God’s Church is continuing.

The *Ryrie Study Bible* tells us that Nahum wrote about 100 years after Jonah’s preaching to Nineveh. The people of Nineveh and Assyria had quickly reverted to their cruel and heathen practices. They had destroyed Samaria (the Northern Kingdom; that is, the House of Israel) in 722 BC.

Nineveh was considered impregnable, with walls 30 meters high and moats 18 meters deep. It was the capital of the Assyrians. Nineveh which had been built by Nimrod (Genesis 10:11), was destroyed around 612 BC. It was rediscovered in 1842 AD.

The destruction of Nineveh occurred through an alliance between Medes, Babylonians, Persians and others against Nineveh. It was mainly the Medes who besieged and destroyed Nineveh. Today, as we will explain, the modern Medes can be found in countries such

as Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. They are commonly referred to as “White Russians.”

Nahum, Chapter 1

Nahum 1:1 reads:

“The burden against Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.”

According to the *Soncino* commentary, the word “burden” means, “lifting up (of the voice).” It signifies the severity of the message (compare Habakkuk 1:1; Malachi 1:1).

Verse 2 continues:

“God is jealous, and the LORD avenges; The LORD avenges and is furious. The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves *wrath* for His enemies.”

This is a reference to the prophetic Day of Wrath—or the Day of the LORD, which will begin about one year prior to Christ’s return. This gives us the approximate time setting as to when the destruction of end-time “Nineveh” will occur.

Verse 3 states:

“The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And will not at all acquit the wicked. The LORD has His way In the whirlwind and in the storm, And the clouds are the dust of His feet.”

God will punish wicked Nineveh. In ancient times, people worshipped “gods of nature,” which were associated with powerful winds and clouds with much rain. Here, the reference is mainly to the god of Baal (the sun god) and the goddess of Astarte, also known as Ishtar, the goddess of spring who was worshipped at Easter time. The thought expressed here is that God is mightier than any other “gods” or idols; they are dust of His feet.

As mentioned, modern Assyrians can be found in German-speaking countries such as Germany and Austria. And even though they may not worship winds and clouds, they are still engaging in the worship of pagan gods, such as Baal and Ishtar, when they celebrate their “holy days” such as Sunday, Christmas, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. (For more information, please read our free booklets, “*Don’t Keep Christmas*” and “*Man’s Holidays or God’s Holy Days?*”)

Verse 4 continues:

“He rebukes the sea and makes it dry, And dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither, And the flower of Lebanon wilts.”

God allowed Israel to cross the Red Sea and the river of Jordan, as if going on dry land. Bashan, Carmel and Lebanon were known as very fertile regions (compare Micah 7:14–15; Amos 1:2; Ezekiel 31:16). What God is conveying here is that even the most fertile regions of modern Assyria will wither or be destroyed.

Verse 5 states:

“The mountains quake before Him, The hills melt, And the earth heaves at His presence, Yes, the world and all who dwell in it.”

The mountains and the hills refer, symbolically, to the leaders and prominent people of modern Assyria. They quake and melt before God.

But this passage does also talk about literal earthquakes, as the next verse, verse 6, shows:

“Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, And the rocks are thrown down by Him.”

“His fury” describes again the Day of Wrath or the Day of the Lord. Revelation 6:12–17 and Revelation 16:17–18 associate this time with great and powerful earthquakes.

The question in verse 6, “Who can stand before His indignation?” is answered, for example, in Psalm 15:1–5; 24:3–6.

Verse 7 continues:

The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.”

God will grant His people—true converted Christians—a “stronghold” or protection during the time of the Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord. The *Menge Bible* states: “He knows them who seek refuge in Him.”

Beginning with Verse 8, God becomes more specific as to the nature of His punishment of modern Assyria and its capital, modern Nineveh. We read:

“But with an overflowing flood He will make an utter end of its place, And darkness will pursue His enemies.”

The overflowing flood describes armies destroying their enemies (compare Revelation 12:15 and Isaiah 8:7–8. Also note Daniel 11:40, which the *Authorized Version* translates as “he... shall overflow,” and

the *New International Version* reads, “he shall sweep through them like a flood.”). In addition, a reference to the darkness pursuing God’s enemies can be found in Revelation 16:10–11, stating that the kingdom of the beast—the end-time Assyrian leader of a united European power bloc—will “become full of darkness.”

Verse 9 tells us:

“What do you conspire against the LORD? He will make an utter end of it. Affliction will not rise up a second time.”

In other words, all human plans and devices of the Assyrians do not prevail against God and His Will; rather, the ultimate end-time destruction of Assyria is inevitable, which the following verses show.

Verses 10 and 11 state:

“For while tangled like thorns, And while drunken like drunkards, They shall be devoured like stubble fully dried. From you comes forth one Who plots evil against the LORD, A wicked counselor.”

The literal translation of “wicked counselor” is “counselor of Be-*lial*,” which shows Satanic influence and possession. We know from the book of Revelation that the beast will be demonically possessed. King Sennacherib might have been a forerunner (2 Kings 18:13), but this end-time prophecy refers to the beast or the modern King of Assyria (Isaiah 10:5–7). He is called “King Jareb” in Hosea 5:13. Jareb means fighter—somebody who wants to fight and conquer. His fate is described in Isaiah 30:30–33.

Verse 12 continues:

“Thus says the LORD: “Though they are safe, and likewise many, Yet in this manner they will be cut down When he passes through. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more.”

God says that He will have afflicted the modern Houses of Israel and Judah through the beast power, as He punished the ancient Houses of Israel and Judah through the Assyrians and Babylonians. Other translations render this phrase: “I have severely punished you.” But God also says that their punishment will end soon.

Verse 13 explains:

“For now I will break off his yoke from you, And burst your bonds apart.”

“Yoke” describes slavery and captivity, as Isaiah 10:27; Jeremiah 30:8; and Hosea 11:5 show. The modern Houses of Israel and Judah

will be defeated in war and enslaved by the final European revival of the ancient Roman Empire under the leadership of an “Assyrian” Führer—the beast. This attack will take place at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. But God promises that He will end their captivity which will occur when Jesus Christ returns, to free them from slavery and bring them back into the Promised Land.

Verse 14 reads:

“The LORD has given a command concerning you: ‘Your name shall be perpetuated no longer. Out of the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the molded image. I will dig your grave, For you are vile.’”

Verse 14, specifically directed at the end-time king of Assyria, conveys the thought that he will have no posterity. The *neue Lutherbibel 2009* translates: “...no descendant of your name shall remain.”

This could perhaps indicate that the beast is homosexual. Daniel 11:37 could support this conclusion stating that the king of the North—another designation for the beast or the King of Assyria—does not regard the “desire of women.” The *Schlachterbibel* says, “the love of women.”

We also read that God will destroy the gods and idols in the house of the king, and that the king himself will be killed, as a grave will be dug for him. That grave is a lake of fire, as described in Revelation 19:20.

The king is described as being “vile.” The *Living Bible* says: “you stink with sin.” The *Menge Bible* says in their annotation: “an abomination.” A preview of these events could be the death of Sennacherib (Isaiah 37:37–38). As the *Ryrie Study Bible* states, at that time Nineveh was sacked and destroyed by the Babylonians and Medes. But this is an end-time prophecy, when end-time Babylon (the economic and religious system of modern Europe) will be destroyed by the modern Medes.

In ancient times, the Medes lived in present-day Iran. Originally, under Assyrian rule, they revolted against and expelled the Assyrians and imposed their rule over the Persians. They then attacked Nineveh and overthrew the Assyrian Empire. Under Cyrus the Great, the Medes and the Persians were considered as one people. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* (ed. 1959) points out that at least some of the Medes were not Iranians or Indo-Europeans, but perhaps connected with the numerous tribes of the Caucasus.

The historian Herodotus wrote in *Terpsichore*, 9, that the Medes began to settle throughout South Russia and present-day Ukraine. He stated: "They say that they are a colony of Medes." Pliny wrote in *Natural History*, book VI, section xi, that the people who colonized the lands along the river Don claim to be "descended from the Medes."

The Church of God has long held and taught that the modern Medes can be found among the Russian and Ukrainian peoples who will be instrumental in leading the Far Eastern nations to destroy Europe. This means that Russia and Ukraine will collaborate and ultimately combine forces with other Far Eastern nations, such as China, to fight against Europe, just prior to Christ's return. Current developments seem to indicate that these events are not too far off.

Isaiah 13:17–19 confirms that it is basically the modern Medes whom God will use to destroy the modern Babylonian system under the modern king of Assyria:

"Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, Who will not regard silver; And as for gold, they will not delight in it. Also their bows will dash the young men to pieces, And they will have no pity on the fruit of the womb; Their eye will not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, The beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."

Jeremiah 51:27–28 contains the same idea:

"Set up a banner in the land, Blow the trumpet among the nations! Prepare the nations against her, Call the kingdoms together against her: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a general against her; Cause the horses to come up like the bristling locusts. Prepare against her the nations, With the kings of the Medes, Its governors and all its rulers, All the land of his dominion." Compare also Jeremiah 51:11.

In Isaiah 21:2, we find a description of the destruction of modern Babylon through the modern Medes and the modern Persians (Iranians).

The modern Medes will be part of the modern Kings of the East—an alliance of Far Eastern nations. They will apparently, together with or independent from ten core European nations—destroy and burn the city of Rome—the religious capital of the revived Roman Empire—the city built on seven hills (Revelation 17:9, 16, 18; 18:10, 16, 18–19, 21).

Some feel that Nineveh could be a designation for modern Rome, but Rome is not the capital of or even a city in modern Assyria

(Germany or Austria). It is therefore much more likely that Nineveh refers to the *political capital* of the revived Roman Empire which will also be destroyed. Even though the beast will have a temporary “tent” in Jerusalem (Daniel 11:45), his throne and political capital will still be in Europe. And so, the modern Medes will also destroy modern Nineveh, which would be Berlin today. (Some have suggested that this capital may be Vienna, the capital of Austria, and some have suggested modern Nineveh might be Brussels, but Brussels is not the capital or a major city of modern Assyria.)

Much has been written about the fear of a nuclear war between Russia and Germany. This war will indeed take place, and in the process, the modern Medes will totally destroy the modern city of Nineveh, but only AFTER the modern European-Babylonian Empire will have attacked and conquered the USA, the United Kingdom and the State of Israel.

Nahum 1, verse 15 continues:

“Behold, on the mountains The feet of him who brings good tidings, Who proclaims peace! O Judah, keep your appointed feasts, Perform your vows. For the wicked one shall no more pass through you; He is utterly cut off.”

The messengers of good tidings and peace (Isaiah 52:7–10; 41:27; Romans 10:14–15) proclaim especially to Judah that Nineveh is destroyed (compare the *Ryrie Study Bible*). Now, Judah can again celebrate God’s weekly and annual Holy Days (Leviticus 23:2), and it is also admonished to keep their vows (Psalm 116:14), because “the wicked one”—the beast—who had invaded and conquered the Promised Land, is utterly cut off or completely destroyed. According to the *Soncino* commentary, the word is the same word as the word in Nahum 1:11, where it is rendered as “counselor of Belial.”

Nahum, Chapter 2

Verse 1 of chapter 2 states:

“He who scatters has come up before your face. Man the fort! Watch the road! Strengthen your flanks! Fortify your power mightily.”

The one who scatters can also be rendered as the destroyer. The *Soncino* commentary informs us that this is a reference to the Medes who besieged Nineveh in 625 BC. The phrases “watch the road” and

“strengthen your flanks” have to be understood ironically. Although the Assyrians thought and will think they could not be conquered, their destruction is decreed. The same applies to modern Assyria today.

Continuing with verse 2:

“For the LORD will restore the excellence of Jacob Like the excellence of Israel, For the emptiers have emptied them out And ruined their vine branches.”

The *Menge Bible* translates: “The LORD restores the vine [or the branches] of Jacob and the vine [or the branches] of Israel,” emphasizing that all the tribes of Israel are included.

Verses 3 and 4 read:

“The shields of his mighty men are made red, The valiant men are in scarlet. The chariots come with flaming torches In the day of his preparation, And the spears are brandished. The chariots rage in the streets, They jostle one another in the broad roads; They seem like torches, They run like lightning.”

The reference to “red” and “scarlet” could describe military colors or blood. The chariots with flaming and lightning torches are destructive modern weapons of war. They describe the weaponry of the modern Medes, destroying Assyria—the countries of Germany and Austria.

Verse 5 continues:

“He remembers his nobles; They stumble in their walk; They make haste to her walls, And the defense is prepared.”

The king of Assyria thinks of and relies on his nobles or powerful military leaders, but they only stumble in their walk, unable to present a meaningful defense.

Verse 6 states:

“The gates of the rivers are opened, And the palace is dissolved.”

Anciently, the River Tigris and smaller rivers encircled parts of the capital. Ancient Nineveh was situated at three rivers. The gates of the dams were opened, and the walls broke. The palace was conquered.

Berlin is also situated at a major river, the river Spree, which flows through the city. There are also smaller rivers, like the river Havel, which encircle the city. (Of course, Vienna is situated at the Danube river.)

The phrase, “the palace is dissolved” should be translated as, “the palace is terrified.” According to the *Ryrie Study Bible*, “the palace” should be rendered with “the temple of Ishtar.” The modern idolatry

of pagan Easter celebrations in "Assyria" is again emphasized here.

Verse 7 continues:

"It is decreed: She shall be led away captive, She shall be brought up; And her maidservants shall lead her as with the voice of doves, Beating their breasts."

In the Hebrew, "she shall be led away captive," is referred to as "Huzzab." That is also how the *Authorized Version* renders this phrase. According to *Soncino*, "Huzzab" is either the name for the queen or for the city [as Rahab can refer to a person or to the land of Egypt (Isaiah 30:7)], or it can designate the name for the principal deity of Nineveh.

The *Schlachterbibel* states that the term refers to the goddess of Nineveh, apparently Ishtar, whose statue was taken away by the conquerors.

The maidservants were temple prostitutes who lamented the fate of their goddess.

In modern times, we might think of the "Virgin Mary" who is also called the Queen of Heaven (compare Jeremiah 7:18), and the weeping of nuns when her statue or image is taken away (compare Revelation 13:15).

Verse 8 reads:

"Though Nineveh of old was like a pool of water, Now they flee away. 'Halt! Halt!' they cry; But no one turns back."

The pool of water is a reference to the inhabitants of Nineveh (compare Revelation 17:15).

Verse 9 continues:

"Take spoil of silver! Take spoil of gold! There is no end of treasure, Or wealth of every desirable prize."

The attackers are being told to plunder the wealthy treasuries of Nineveh.

Verse 10 reads:

"She is empty, desolate, and waste! The heart melts, and the knees shake; Much pain is in every side, And all their faces are drained of color."

In Joel 2:6, a similar expression is used when describing the paleness of human faces. There, Assyria's attack on Israel and Israel's reaction are described; in verse 10 of Nahum 2, the attack of the Medes and Nineveh's and Assyria's reaction are set forth, also showing the total justice of God.

Verse 11 continues:

“Where is the dwelling of the lions, And the feeding place of the young lions, Where the lion walked, the lioness and lion’s cub, And no one made them afraid?”

Nineveh was and will be a fierce lion; that is, a strong military power, with young lions [Assyrian warriors] and a lioness [others say: an old lion], whom no one wanted and will want to challenge. From this, it follows that Germany seems to be the main biblical focus when referring to modern Assyria.

Verse 12 states:

“The lion tore in pieces enough for his cubs, Killed for his lionesses, Filled his caves with prey, And his dens with flesh.”

“Lionesses” could be a description of wives or mistresses. The end-time Assyrian army is also described, figuratively, in Revelation 9:8 and Joel 1:6, with clear references to lions and lionesses.

Verse 13 concludes the second chapter in this way:

“Behold, I am against you,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more.’”

Young lions or high-ranking Assyrian officers will be killed with the sword. Furthermore, their military weapons and equipment will be totally destroyed. The voice of the king’s messengers who pass on the commands of the king of Assyria, including the king’s propaganda minister and their helpers, will not be heard anymore, because they will all die.

Nahum, Chapter 3

Nahum 3:1–2 states:

“Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and robbery. Its victim never departs. The noise of a whip And the noise of rattling wheels, Of galloping horses, Of clattering chariots!”

The bloody city describes Nineveh’s inhabitants, i.e., ruthless people. Cracking whips describes the method of urging the horses to greater speed. The *Ryrie Study Bible* relates the horses to those of the Medes and the Babylonians.

Verse 3 continues:

“Horsemen charge with bright sword and glittering spear. There is a multitude of slain, A great number of bodies, Countless corpses—They stumble over the corpses...”

A bright sword and glittering spears are again a reference to modern weapons and warfare.

Verse 4 goes on to say:

“Because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, The mistress of sorceries, Who sells nations through her harlotries, And families through her sorceries.”

The reference to the harlot, being described in Revelation 17 and 18, is obvious (note Revelation 17:1–2, 18; and Revelation 18:3, 23. Note also Revelation 14:8). The seductive harlot and sorceress rides on the beast—the final political and military revival of the ancient Roman Empire under German leadership. Germany will be the leading nation of the Babylonian revival. The harlot—the false religious power—influences and rides on Nineveh, the political capital of modern Assyria.

Her sorceries are also vividly described in Isaiah 47:9, 12.

The *Soncino* commentary points out: “The Assyrians lured their victims as though they were under a spell.”

Assyrians were—and will be again—under the spell of Satan and his demons. This was true in ancient times; it was very obvious when Hitler was in power, and it will be true again. Modern Assyrians will also be under the spell of the harlot—the great false “Babylonian” church of Revelation 17.

We should also note that Nahum 3:3–4 explains that God punishes Nineveh for its involvement with the harlot and the acceptance of the harlot’s evil practices.

Verse 5 continues in addressing the harlot:

“Behold, I am against you,” says the LORD of hosts; “I will lift your skirts over your face, I will show the nations your nakedness, And the kingdoms your shame.”

Isaiah 47:1–3 contains a description of the modern religious power of the Babylonian Mystery Religion, referring to the harlot as the “daughter of the Chaldeans” and describing God’s uncovering her nakedness.

Verses 6–8 state:

“I will cast abominable filth upon you, Make you vile, And make

you a spectacle. It shall come to pass that all who look upon you Will flee from you, and say, "Nineveh is laid waste! Who will bemoan her?" Where shall I seek comforters for you? Are you better than No Amon That was situated by the River, That had the waters around her, Whose rampart was the sea, Whose wall was the sea?"

These verses switch back to the political capital of modern Assyria. Nineveh is being compared to "No Amon," another name for Thebes, which was situated at the Nile River. The name meant "City of [god] Amon."

The Assyrians destroyed it in 663 BC. It was considered unconquerable and was also called the city of hundred towers. Likewise, modern Nineveh will be defeated and destroyed, even though Europeans won't really believe that that could happen.

Verse 9 states:

"Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, And it was boundless; Put and Lubim were your helpers."

No Amon had mighty allies, but they were unable to help. Those allies included Ethiopia, Egypt, Put or Libya and Lubim, certain very influential regions of Libya.

Modern Assyria will likewise have Arabs as allies in their fight against Israel (compare Psalm 83:1-7).

Verses 10 and 11 continue:

"Yet she was carried away, She went into captivity; Her young children also were dashed to pieces At the head of every street; They cast lots for her honorable men, And all her great men were bound in chains. You also will be drunk; You will be hidden [better: you will hide yourself]; You also will seek refuge from the enemy."

Modern Nineveh will "be drunk" from the cup of God's wrath or fury (compare for the wording Isaiah 51:17; Revelation 16:19 and Psalm 75:8). They will try to hide and seek refuge from their enemy, but this attempt will be in vain. Some translations render this verse as, "You will seek in vain refuge from your enemy."

Verses 12-15 continue:

"All your strongholds are fig trees with ripened figs: If they are shaken, They fall into the mouth of the eater. Surely, your people in your midst are women! The gates of your land are wide open for your enemies; Fire shall devour the bars of your gates. Draw your water for the siege!

Fortify your strongholds! Go into the clay and tread the mortar! Make strong the brick kiln! There the fire will devour you, The sword will cut you off; It will eat you up like a locust. Make yourself many—like the locust! Make yourself many—like the swarming locusts!”

In Joel 1:4; 2:25, locusts are compared with a great army. Here, a similar analogy is used in that the sword will devour the Ninevites like locusts. As the Assyrians behaved like devouring locusts, so the Medes will devour them like locusts.

Verse 16 states:

“You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars of heaven. The locust plunders and flies away.”

The merchants are part of the ancient center of merchandise, i.e. Tyre (Ezekiel 27:23–24). But since this is a prophecy for today, modern Tyre describes the Babylonian economic system under modern Assyrian or German leadership. Germany is the most powerful economy in Europe today.

Verse 17 states:

“Your commanders are like swarming locusts, And your generals like great grasshoppers, Which camp in the hedges on a cold day; When the sun rises they flee away, And the place where they are is not known.”

The *Authorized Version* says: “Thy crowned are as the locusts.” The commanders (“Thy crowned”) are compared with modern armies and modern weapons of mass destruction. In describing the modern war machine, Revelation 9:7 states: “The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold. And their faces were like the faces of men.”

Verse 18 states:

“Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; Your nobles rest in the dust. Your people are scattered on the mountains, And no one gathers them.”

Shepherds describe the religious leaders of modern Nineveh, and nobles the military and political leaders. All are sound asleep, and so destruction of the scattered and aimless people will hit quickly and unexpectedly.

Verse 19 states:

“Your injury has no healing, Your wound is severe. All who hear news of you Will clap their hands over you, For upon whom has

not your wickedness passed continually?"

Their severe wound (compare for the terminology Jeremiah 30:12) and their incurable affliction (compare Isaiah 1:5–6) show that their fate will be sealed, and nothing will change this. Those who hear of Nineveh's fall and the end of Nineveh's king (the beast) will clap their hands in joy and gratification (Psalm 47:1–3), that finally the end of their wickedness has come. A vivid description of the end of the wicked king of Assyria and of the modern Babylonian system (the beast power and its end-time leader, as well as the religious leadership) can also be found in Isaiah 14:3–8. But the kings of the East, including the modern Medes, will not escape God's punishment either for their wickedness (Zechariah 12:9; 14:2–3, 12, 15).

However, Assyrians will play an important and leading role in the Millennium, after their conversion (Isaiah 19:23–25). Furthermore, all those who have died will obtain their chance for salvation during the Great White Throne Judgment period, and that will include Ninevites at Noah's and Nahum's time, as well as those who live today.

The next book which we will discuss here, the Book of Habakkuk, goes back in time and shows how and why the Houses of Israel and Judah were to be destroyed by Babylon and Assyria—something which the prophet Jonah knew about and why he probably refused at first to warn the Ninevites—but even though these events took place in ancient times, the Book of Habakkuk is a prophecy for our days.

Therefore, it describes first and foremost the destruction of the modern Houses of Israel and Judah through the modern Babylonian system under Assyrian rule, but it also shows the subsequent punishment of modern Babylon and Assyria through a mighty power from the Far East.

The Book of Habakkuk

According to Rabbinic tradition, the word Habakkuk means “One Who Embraces” or “Clings.” The thought is that the prophet Habakkuk clings to God. The *Ryrie Study Bible* comments that he was called an “embracer” because of his love for God.

He could have been a Levitical singer (note Habakkuk 3:19).

He was a contemporary of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Zephaniah. His reference to the Chaldeans led some to assume that he wrote in the seventh century BC., shortly before Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah and led Daniel and others into captivity in Babylon.

Habakkuk describes the defeat of the Houses of Israel and Judah through the end-time Babylonian system in Europe under the leadership of the King of Assyria, and their subsequent punishment.

Habakkuk, Chapter 1

Habakkuk 1:1 begins:

“The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw.”

Sometimes it is a burden or burdensome to proclaim God’s prophecies of destruction and calamity. But according to the *Soncino* commentary, the word for burden here means “lifting up (the voice)”, in other words, proclaiming God’s warnings like a powerful trumpet.

Verse 2 continues:

“O LORD, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear? Even cry out to You, ‘Violence!’ And You will not save.”

Habakkuk laments the violence in Israel, waiting for God’s intervention.

Continuing with verses 3 and 4:

“Why do You show me iniquity, And cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me; There is strife, and contention arises. Therefore the law is powerless, And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.”

Habakkuk keeps talking about the horrible situation in Israel, including plundering, violence, strife, contention, rejection of the law and lack of justice. As a consequence, the righteous are persecuted by the wicked, and perverse judgments take the side of the ungodly against the innocent. For another description of the situation in Israel and Judah which Habakkuk addresses, note 2 Kings 17:9–10, 13–16, 19–20, especially referring to idol worship.

However, we need to note that this is a prophecy for our times, and the accusation against “Israel” is directed against the modern nations of the Houses of Israel and Judah; that is, the nations of the USA, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and the State of Israel.

Verse 5 continues:

“Look among the nations and watch—Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days Which you would not believe, though it were told you.”

Now, God begins to answer. He says to Habakkuk that He will do a work in his days which will be utterly astonishing and surprising to the people. But since this is a prophecy for the last days, God is telling us that He will perform such a totally unexpected work in our days.

Verse 6 explains to us what this work is which God will do:

“For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans, A bitter and hasty nation Which marches through the breadth of the earth, To possess dwelling places that are not theirs.”

In Habakkuk’s days, God used the ancient Chaldeans to punish Israel. In our time, God will use the modern Chaldeans to punish the Houses of Israel and Judah.

The Chaldeans were the backbone of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (Ezra 5:12; 2 Kings 25:1, 5; 2 Chronicles 36:17). In Daniel 2, the word is also applied to the Babylonian priestly class, who also engaged in divination, astrology, and magic or sorcery.

In Babylon’s sphere of influence, the Chaldeans also had a *religious* function—mainly because the planetary orbits were interpreted as the expression of the will of deities that had to be fathomed.

In late antiquity, the name Chaldeans was used almost exclusively for the Babylonians and became primarily a designation for astrologers, since Babylon was considered a leader in the field of astrology.

The “Chaldean Oracles” of the 2nd century were considered a popular book of divination.

They also believed very strongly in the power of *demons*. According to some commentaries, one description of the “power” of these pagan gods reads as follows:

“Against man’s head cursed Asak directs his might, against man’s life cruel Nemtor, against man’s neck the vile Utuk, against man’s breast the pernicious Alu, against man’s entrails evil Ekim, against the hand of man the terrible Gallin.”

In our time, the Chaldeans describe modern Babylon—a religious, political, economic and military power. It is the final and last resurrection of the ancient Roman Empire—a collaboration between church and state—under the leadership of a charismatic leader—the beast or the king of the North or King Jareb of (modern) Assyria who will work together with the “false prophet”—a powerful religious leader. Under the beast’s leadership and the influence of the false prophet, the modern Chaldeans will invade “dwelling places that are not theirs” (Habakkuk 1:6). This occupying force under the modern Assyrian leader is also described in Isaiah 10:13–14 and in Daniel 11:41–44.

In a way, the final resurrection of the Roman Empire occurs because of Israel’s wickedness (compare also Isaiah 10:6).

In Acts 13:38–41, Paul applies the passage in Habakkuk 1:5–6 to the preaching of the gospel, and also as a warning for those who reject the Truth.

Continuing with verses 7–10:

“They are terrible and dreadful; Their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves. Their horses also are swifter than leopards, And more fierce than evening wolves. Their chargers charge ahead; Their cavalry comes from afar; They fly as the eagle that hastens to eat. They all come for violence; Their faces are set like the east wind. They gather captives like sand. They scoff at kings, And princes are scorned by them. They deride every stronghold, For they heap up earthen mounds and seize it.”

A powerful swift and violent army is described which conquers its enemies in a blitzkrieg. The imagery clearly relates to the revived Roman Empire in Europe which we find described in Revelation 13:2. They are determined to move forward (verse 9), and they design a

conquering wall and seize the fortress (verse 10).

Habakkuk 1:11 continues:

“Then his mind changes, and he transgresses; He commits offense, Ascribing this power to his god.”

The words for “he transgresses” literally means, “he passes over.” The reference here is no longer to the Chaldean army, but to its leader—the beast. The words for “his mind” literally mean, “his wind” or “his spirit.” What is being described here is demonic influence or possession, as is the case in Job 4:12–16, where the same terminology is used.

After this leader has come to power, he will be demonically possessed (Revelation 16:13–14)—his spirit will change. He will commit offense, by erecting the abomination of desolation at the holy place. He ascribes his power to his god—a possible reference to the false prophet (Revelation 19:20) whom he might consider as a god and whom he follows (compare Daniel 11:36–39).

Continuing with verse 12:

“Are You not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, You have appointed them for judgment; O Rock, You have marked them for correction.”

Now, Habakkuk answers God, by pleading with Him not to let Israel become extinct as a nation, but to use the Chaldeans only as a temporary punishment; echoing Jeremiah’s plea in Jeremiah 10:24.

Continuing with verse 13:

“You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?”

Habakkuk states the timeless fact that God’s eyes cannot look on iniquity with any kind of approval. He then asks the question why God does not prevent the Chaldeans from attacking Israel, given the fact that they are more wicked than the Israelites. This also applies to our time today. Of course, deep down inside, Habakkuk knows the answer, as he had just stated in the previous verse that God will use the Chaldeans to punish Israel for their wickedness. But the fact that an evil nation is used by God to accomplish His purpose does not mean that it will not receive severe punishment from God in due time for their wickedness.

Beginning with verse 14 and continuing until verse 17, Habakkuk describes the captivity of ancient and modern Israel and Judah through the ancient Chaldeans and the modern Babylonian system:

“Why do You make men like fish of the sea, Like creeping things that have no ruler over them? They take up all of them with a hook, They catch them in their net, And gather them in their dragnet. Therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice to their net, And burn incense to their dragnet; Because by them their share is sumptuous And their food plentiful. Shall they therefore empty their net, And continue to slay nations without pity?”

In verse 16, the previous thought of the king ascribing his success to his god—the false prophet—is mirrored by the Chaldeans who sacrifice and burn incense to the religious harlot or fallen woman in Revelation 17, who they believe gives them their military victory.

Habakkuk, Chapter 2

Habakkuk 2:1 reads:

“I will stand my watch And set myself on the rampart, And watch to see what He will say to me, And what I will answer when I am corrected.”

A modern watchman who is to proclaim powerfully and forcefully the “burden” of the Lord (Habakkuk 1:1) is standing watch (compare also Isaiah 21:8, 11–12). Some translations render this verse in such a way that he will wait for an answer from God to the questions he had asked Him. God’s modern servants will watch and proclaim God’s warning with the hope that some will listen and change their evil ways, but most will not take heed (Jeremiah 6:17).

Continuing with verses 2 and 3:

“Then the LORD answered me and said: ‘Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.’”

Habakkuk was to write down clearly what he saw, so that those who walk by can read it (and perhaps run to seek shelter and protection). This passage is clearly referring to the end time, assuring us that what God has prophesied will take place (compare Revelation 10:5–7).

Continuing with verse 4:

“Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.”

First, God explains that the proud Chaldeans are not upright; many translations state that the proud will have no inner peace which is the deserved penalty for them. Then, God addresses, as a contrast, the believer (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38).

Continuing with verse 5:

“Indeed, because he transgresses by wine, He is a proud man, And he does not stay at home. Because he enlarges his desire as hell, And he is like death, and cannot be satisfied, He gathers to himself all nations And heaps up for himself all peoples.”

The reference is again to the king of the modern Chaldeans—the beast—who is proud and deluded by the wine or the religious deception of the harlot (Revelation 17:1–2) and her representative, the false prophet.

Continuing with verses 6 and 7:

“Will not all these take up a proverb against him, And a taunting riddle against him, and say, ‘Woe to him who increases What is not his—how long? And to him who loads himself with many pledges’? Will not your creditors rise up suddenly? Will they not awaken who oppress you? And you will become their booty.”

The Medes will destroy the modern Chaldeans and the entire Babylonian system, including the religious capital of Rome and the political capital of the empire; that is, modern Nineveh which appears to be Berlin [or perhaps Vienna]. As God raises up the Babylonians to punish Israel, so He will raise up the Medes to punish Babylon. The reference to the avenging “creditors” might imply that the European power bloc had been indebted in some way to the modern Medes.

Verse 8 states:

“Because you have plundered many nations, All the remnant of the people shall plunder you, Because of men’s blood And the violence of the land and the city, And of all who dwell in it.”

The violence of the city could refer here not only to modern Nineveh, but also to the city of Rome which is built on seven hills and which has dominion over the nations. It is also representative of the entire Babylonian system (compare Revelation 17:18). That system is violent

and filled with bloodshed (Revelation 18:24).

Continuing with verse 9:

“Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house, That he may set his nest on high, That he may be delivered from the power of disaster!”

Those addressed in this verse think they can escape calamity and their punishment by building their houses way on high, as an eagle builds his nest up in the mountain. The “woe” may not only refer to the Chaldeans and their coming punishment, but also to the Israelites who follow the same evil practices. Three “woes” are mentioned in Revelation 8:13, which also addresses in the following chapters the modern Chaldeans and the modern Medes.

Continuing with verses 10 and 11:

“You give shameful counsel to your house, Cutting off many peoples, And sin against your soul. For the stone will cry out from the wall, And the beam from the timbers will answer it.”

The entire structure of society cries out for justice; everyone hopes for the end of the Babylonian system.

Verse 12 states:

“Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed, Who establishes a city by iniquity!”

Jeremiah 22:13 expresses the same general thought, while Micah 3:8–10 addresses in particular the Houses of Israel and Judah, and especially the city of Jerusalem.

Verse 13 continues:

“Behold, is it not of the LORD of hosts That the peoples labor to feed the fire, And nations weary themselves in vain?”

God sees to it that the plans and the imaginations of the peoples who are hostile to God will come to nothing. Jeremiah 51:58 expresses this thought especially for modern Babylon.

Verse 14 states:

“For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.”

This marvelous prophecy is given five times in the Old Testament (cp. Habakkuk 2:14; Numbers 14:21; Psalm 72:19; Isaiah 6:3; and Isaiah 11:9). It will be fulfilled when Christ has returned.

In addition, and by contrast, the book of Habakkuk includes five times the word “woe” for Babylon (cp. 2:6; 2:9; 2:12; 2:15; 2:19).

Verses 15 and 16 continue:

“Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, Pressing him to your bottle, Even to make him drunk, That you may look on his nakedness! You are filled with shame instead of glory. You also—drink! And be exposed as uncircumcised! The cup of the LORD’s right hand will be turned against you, And utter shame will be on your glory.”

As Babylon has poured out his poisonous wine of false teachings into the cup of the people, so it and all nations being equally culpable, including the modern Houses of Israel and Judah, will have to drink from the cup of the LORD’s Wrath, as is so vividly depicted in passages such as Jeremiah 25:15–29 and Isaiah 51:17; as well as Revelation 16:19.

Verse 17 continues:

“For the violence done to Lebanon will cover you, And the plunder of beasts which made them afraid, Because of men’s blood And the violence of the land and the city, And of all who dwell in it.”

This passage can also be rendered in such a way that the disturbed beasts will make the people afraid, and that violence or rape is committed to the land. God will avenge the destruction of plants, animals and men being committed by the Babylonian system. The “beasts” could also refer to the kings of the East—and especially the Medes—which will destroy modern Babylon.

Verse 18 states:

“What profit is the image, that its maker should carve it, The molded image, a teacher of lies, That the maker of its mold should trust in it, To make mute idols?”

This is referring to the modern Chaldeans, and perhaps also to the Houses of Israel and Judah. The reference to the molded image as a teacher of lies is interesting in light of Revelation 13:15 about the image of the beast which speaks. This image is going to be erected on behest of the religious power and the false prophet. It might even be placed in the Temple which will still be built prior to Christ’s return.

Continuing with verse 19:

“Woe to him who says to wood, ‘Awake!’ To silent stone, ‘Arise! It shall teach!’ Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, Yet in it there is no breath at all.”

The “silent” stone is a stone without breath or spirit. It cannot

speak. But demons can create an illusion which may look very real, as will apparently be the case in Revelation 13:15. A demon can of course speak “through” a stone, pretending that the stone speaks. This is a focal point of entrapment.

Verse 20 concludes the second chapter as follows:

“But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him.”

God is in His holy temple in heaven from which He observes what is happening on earth (Psalm 11:4–5). When God causes His judgment to be heard from heaven, the earth will be afraid and quiet (Psalm 76:8; Zechariah 2:13; compare also Revelation 8:1).

Habakkuk, Chapter 3

Chapter 3 contains a prayer, or better a song, which could be characterized as a song of lamentation. Some say, it is a song for the innocent.

Verses 1 and 2 read:

“A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on Shigionoth. O LORD, I have heard your speech and was afraid; O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy.”

The meaning of the word “Shigionoth” is obscure. A similar word is used in Psalm 7, which is a lament psalm. Habakkuk asks God to revive His work, which, as we have seen, refers to the rise of the end-time Chaldeans and the preaching of the gospel. This should be done in the midst of the years—that is, suddenly and unexpectedly. It will be a time culminating in the Day of the Lord, the wrath of God. Habakkuk pleads for mercy for the innocent during this dramatic time. When the Chaldeans have finished their work and the gospel has been preached, Jesus Christ will return. Hosea 6:2 addresses the end of that terrible time after two days and on the third day, when God will raise up His people.

Verse 3 continues:

“God came from Teman, The Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His glory covered the heavens, And the earth was full of His praise.”

Teman is a reference to Turkey. The same reference to Christ’s coming is made in Judges 5:4. Also note Deuteronomy 33:2–5, speaking of

the time when God thundered the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai to the people of Israel, but as the passage is worded, it also seems to refer to Christ's return.

Verses 4 and 5 continue:

"His brightness was like the light; He had rays flashing from His hand, And there His power was hidden. Before Him went pestilence, And fever followed at His feet."

The *Authorized Version* renders the last part of verse 5 as: "... burning coals went forth at his feet." The entire description reminds us of the coals in connection with the description of the glory of God and His holy angels in Isaiah 6:6 and Ezekiel 1:13-14. The time setting of this passage is the wrath of God and His pouring out of the seven last plagues, described in the Book of Revelation. This same theme is continued in the entire third chapter of the Book of Habakkuk.

Verses 6-8 state:

"He stood and measured the earth; He looked and startled the nations. And the everlasting mountains were scattered, The perpetual hills bowed. His ways are everlasting. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; The curtains of the land of Midian trembled. O LORD, were You displeased with the rivers, Was Your anger against the rivers, Was Your wrath against the sea, That You rode on Your horses, Your chariots of salvation?"

The tents of Cushan refer to Ethiopia, being in affliction (compare Daniel 11:43). The horses and chariots speak of God's angels and their fiery chariots, which are mentioned during the lives of Elijah and Elisha.

Continuing with verses 9-10:

"Your bow was made quite ready; Oaths were sworn over Your arrows. Selah. You divided the earth with rivers. The mountains saw You and trembled; The overflowing of the water passed by. The deep uttered its voice, And lifted its hands on high."

This poetic description of God's mighty intervention finds its expression in Psalm 77:16-20, specifically referring to the escape from Egyptian slavery, but as the entire Book of Habakkuk is a prophecy for our time, it also reflects what Christ will do when He returns. The duality is also clearly shown in the following verse.

Verse 11 states:

"The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; At the light of

Your arrows they went, At the shining of Your glittering spear.”

As God intervened supernaturally at the time of Joshua (Joshua 10:13), so He will supernaturally intervene when He returns to fight for and free His people.

Verses 12 and 13 continue:

“You marched through the land in indignation; You trampled the nations in anger. You went forth for the salvation of Your people, For salvation with Your Anointed. You struck the head from the house of the wicked, By laying bare from foundation to neck. Selah.”

The “head” is a reference to the beast, and the “house of the wicked” is a description of the modern Chaldeans. They will all be destroyed when Christ returns.

Verse 14 states:

“You thrust through with his own arrows The head of his villages. They came out like a whirlwind to scatter me; Their rejoicing was like feasting on the poor in secret.”

The one who is supposed to be scattered could be describing the modern House of Judah. But the enemy will destroy itself with their own arrows, as Zechariah 14:13 describes.

Continuing with verse 15:

“You walked through the sea with Your horses, Through the heap of great waters.”

This could again show God’s supernatural intervention in the future, who will use symbolic horses or His angels in the process (compare Micah 7:15).

The next verses revert back to the time prior to God’s intervention, when the Chaldeans—modern Babylon under the beast—will attack the modern Houses of Israel and Judah.

Verse 16 states:

“When I heard, my body trembled; My lips quivered at the voice; Rottenness entered my bones; And I trembled in myself, That I might rest in the day of trouble. When he comes up to the people, He will invade them with his troops.”

The day of trouble or tribulation refers to the time of the Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord. In a vision, Habakkuk sees the protection of God’s people who can rest in peace. “When he comes up to the people” could refer to the beast and his attack on the people

of Israel and Judah, and it can also refer to his invasion of additional countries with his troops [that is, the troops of those ten nations which had given their authority to the beast (compare Revelation 17:12–13)].

Verses 17 and 18 continue:

“Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines;
Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food;
Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd
in the stalls—Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of
my salvation.”

Even though there will be calamity and disaster all around, Habakkuk points out God’s great purpose for His people and for all of mankind. A similar statement can be found in Isaiah 61:10–11, which describes the return of Christ—the bridegroom—and the beautiful conditions during the Millennium. And so, the worthy conclusion of the matter can be seen in the next and final verse.

Verse 19 states:

“The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s feet, And He will make me walk on my high hills. To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.”

The same expression of hope and conviction can be seen in 2 Samuel 22:34 and in Psalm 18:31–33. When God is on our side, leading, guiding and strengthening us, we do not need to fear, and He will honor us with great glory and eternal life in His very Family.

A Prophecy from the Book of Hosea

Before turning to the Book of Joel, we would like to address a peculiar set of end-time Scriptures in the Books of Hosea and Zechariah. Hosea 5:7 reads: “They have dealt treacherously with the LORD, For they have begotten pagan children. Now a New Moon shall devour them and their heritage.” Verse 1 speaks to the priests, the House of Israel and the house of the king. Verse 3 says that God knows Ephraim and that Israel is not hidden from Him.

Verse 5 says that Israel and Ephraim will stumble in their iniquity, and that Judah will stumble with them. Verse 8 says that the ram’s horn and the trumpet are to be blown, obviously referring to impending war, and verse 9 continues that Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke. Verse 10 speaks of God’s wrath; and verse 13 says that Ephraim

won't succeed in trying to find help from King Jareb of Assyria. Finally, verse 15 announces that ultimately Ephraim and Judah will earnestly seek God when they are being afflicted, indicating repentance.

The context of the entire chapter describes end-time events and addresses the modern descendants of the ancient Houses of Israel and Judah. The reference to Ephraim is to be understood as, foremost, describing the nations and peoples of the United Kingdom; and perhaps Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the white populations of other English-speaking nations belonging to the Commonwealth of Nations [formerly known as the British Commonwealth], such as South Africa and Zimbabwe; and when Israel is mentioned in addition to Ephraim, it would refer to Ephraim's brother Manasseh whose descendants can be found today in the United States. Judah, of course, is a reference to the state of Israel and the Jews in general, and the modern Assyrians can be found today in Germany and Austria.

God speaks of the trumpet of war (referring also to the Feast of Trumpets, as we will see) and of His wrath which He will pour out on all nations during the Day of His Wrath, just prior to Christ's return. Finally, reference is made to the priests—the religious leadership in all of the above-mentioned countries—and the house of the king, referring to the royal house and monarchy of Great Britain.

Since verse 5 tells us that Ephraim, Israel (Manasseh) and Judah will all fall together, what then is the meaning of verse 7, telling us that because of their harlotry (verse 3) and the upbringing of pagan children, the "new moon" shall devour them and their heritage or posterity?

Commentaries are quite divided on the meaning of this verse. Many overlook the end-time application of the verse. But several commentaries recognize the fact that the "new moon"—the first day of the month—is mentioned in connection with blowing a ram's horn and a trumpet; apparently referring to the annual Holy Day of the Feast of Trumpets. This day is of course still to be kept today by Christians and Jews, but without the sacrifices, and it especially symbolizes the seven last trumpets mentioned in the Book of Revelation, culminating in the return of Jesus Christ. The thought seems to be that as Christ will return quickly and unexpectedly at a time of worldwide war, the destruction in war of modern Israel and Judah will likewise occur quickly and unexpectedly.

Hosea's end-time prophecy in chapter 5 describes the sudden defeat in war of the USA and the United Kingdom; and perhaps Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Zimbabwe; in addition to the state of Israel and many Jews. This will occur through a modern King of Assyria—the “beast” or the “king of the North”—who will be leading a European collaboration of ten nations or groups of nations—referred to as ten kings in the book of Revelation, chapter 17, and ten toes in the book of Daniel, chapter 2.

These ten nations or kings will receive power for “one hour” (Revelation 17:12)—again, a very short time—to share it with the “beast”. They will fight with him, and he will also be accompanied and supported by the “false prophet,” a religious leader of a worldwide organization claiming to be Christian. As the reference in Revelation 17:12 to “one hour” does not mean 60 minutes (it apparently refers to 3 ½ years, note Daniel 7:25, or a somewhat shorter time span than that), the reference to the “month” in Hosea 5:7 does not have to mean a time span of 30 days either—what is expressed here is the very shortness of time. For instance, the Day of the Lord will probably last one year... not just 24 hours (compare Isaiah 34:8; 61:2; 63:4).

A Prophecy from the Book of Zechariah

We find an interesting parallel passage in Zechariah 11:8 which reads: “I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.” There is much speculation about this verse as well, and many apply it only to the time of Zechariah. However, the prophecies in the Book of Zechariah have end-time applications, as is the case with Hosea 5:7, and the reference to “one month” in both passages is striking.

Some, understanding this, have suggested that Zechariah 11:8 refers to shepherds or leaders in various splinter groups of the Church of God who make merchandise of the brethren; live an ungodly lifestyle; preach wrong doctrines and practices; misappropriate religious titles to themselves which only belong to Christ; or claim ministerial positions of rank and stature which were not given to them by God, such as being an apostle, a prophet, or one of the two witnesses. Others suggested that the three shepherds might perhaps refer to leaders or influential persons of remnants of previous Church of God eras or of

the very last era, whom God will deal with because of their disloyalty and faithlessness.

In light of Hosea 5:7, the reference to the “month” in Zechariah 11:8 could also refer to God’s quick intervention in regard to three ungodly entities which will be responsible, directly or indirectly, for the defeat and destruction of modern Israel and Judah: One possibility here is that God refers to *three leaders* of “Ephraim,” “Israel” (Manasseh) and “Judah” (Hosea 5:5), who, due to their ungodly conduct, will inflict God’s wrath and who will thereby *indirectly* cause or contribute to the defeat of their sinful countries which will be falling together within a short period of time. God will bring about their defeat due to their many national sins, but God places the blame foremost on the ungodly political and religious *leaders* of those nations (compare Isaiah 1:5, 10; 3:12; 9:14–16; 28:7; Jeremiah 2:8; 23:11–14, 16–22, 26–27; Ezekiel 22:25–27; Micah 3:1–7).

These “three shepherds” might refer to the *political* leadership of the USA, the UK and the state of Israel at the time of God’s intervention. As God addresses in Hosea 5:1 the *priests*, the house of Israel and the *house of the king*, it is also possible that the three shepherds to be dismissed within “one month” could describe the *religious, political* and *kingly* leadership of the USA, the UK and the state of Israel. In any event, the implication is that the collapse of these institutions and false religious and political leaders will occur suddenly and quickly. [For the defeat of the *monarchy* in Great Britain, please read our comments in our free booklet, “*The Fall and Rise of Britain and America*,” where we state on page 11: “The final king of the house of David, prior to Christ’s return, may cease to rule for a very short period of time: ‘At dawn the king of Israel Shall be cut off utterly’ (Hosea 10:15).”]

This destruction will be caused by modern “Babylon”—the last European revival of the ancient “Holy Roman Empire.” Therefore, another possibility of the dismissal of the three ungodly shepherds could be seen in the three powers or power blocs which will be *directly* responsible for the defeat of the modern descendants of the ancient Houses of Israel and Judah—namely, the beast, the false prophet and the group of ten core European nations or groups of nations. As God will deal with and bring about the defeat of sinful USA, the UK and Judah in “one month”—in a very short time—so He will also

deal with and bring about the defeat of wicked modern Babylon in “one month.” Revelation 18:8, 10, 17 tells us that the ungodly and demonically inspired end-time Babylonian system will be judged and destroyed “in one day” and “in one hour.” Again, the implication is that it will happen unexpectedly within a very short time. Notice Jeremiah 51:8 and Isaiah 47:5–11.

In conclusion, Hosea 5:7 does not necessarily say that the downfall and defeat of the USA, the UK and the state of Israel—the ungodly religious and political leadership as well as the entire nations—will occur within a literal month, consisting of 30 days, but we are clearly warned that it will happen very quickly, and that they will all fall together at approximately the same time; and especially the Feast of Trumpets warns us that a coming ungodly European power bloc will begin a terrible nuclear war which will destroy, defeat and enslave the modern descendants of the ancient Houses of Israel and Judah, but it also tells us that the European superpower will also be destroyed very quickly (Jeremiah 51:27–33, 49).

With this background, we now want to examine the prophetic message in the ancient Book of Joel in detail.

The Book of Joel

The Book of Joel describes events leading to and during the Great Tribulation, the Heavenly Signs and the Day of the Lord, including the defeat in war of the USA and the United Kingdom through the modern Babylonian system in Europe under the leadership of a modern Assyrian Führer, as well as their punishment through the modern Medes, and the destruction of all worldly powers wanting to fight against Jesus Christ when He returns.

Not much is known about the author of the book, and when exactly it was written. The name Joel means “Yahweh Is God” or “Yahweh Is Strength.” Joel’s father was Pethuel, which means, “convicted by God” or “open towards God.”

Even though ancient events are being alluded to, the main theme of the book is the DAY of the LORD—the time span beginning about a year prior to Christ’s return, and it describes events leading to the Day of the Lord and those events during the Day of the Lord. The book describes the attack of the modern Babylonian system and modern Assyria on the modern Houses of Israel and Judah, and the destruction of that system through a Far Eastern power.

Joel, Chapter 1

Joel 1:1–3 reads:

“The word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. Hear this, you elders, And give ear, all you inhabitants of the land! Has anything like this happened in your days, Or even in the days of your fathers? Tell your children about it, Let your children tell their children, And their children another generation.”

What is described in the Book of Joel are unique experiences at the end of this age. Joel 2:2 confirms this where it states about the day of the LORD: “The like of whom has never been; Nor will there ever be any such after them, Even for many successive generations.”

Verse 4 continues:

“What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten; What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten; And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.”

Some say, four kinds of literal locusts or other damaging insects are being mentioned. Others feel, the description refers to four human empires and armies. They identify the “chewing locusts” with Assyria and Babylon; the “swarming locusts” with Persia; the “crawling locusts” with Greece; and the “consuming locusts” with Rome.

The literal translation of the verse is: “... the remainder [or the rest] of the chewing locusts the swarming locusts have eaten; the remains of the swarming locusts, the crawling locusts have eaten...”

A slightly different order of these “locusts” is given in Joel 2:25, where we read first about the “swarming locusts” (Persia), followed by the crawling locusts” (Greece), the “consuming locusts” (Rome) and the “chewing locusts” (Assyria and Babylon), all referring to successive armies attacking and conquering the ancient and modern Houses of Israel and Judah.

In Joel 2:25, these locusts are described as God’s great army, showing that God has raised and will raise—or has allowed and will allow—these powers to attack Israel and Judah. Anciently, the four successive powers attacked Israel and Judah in the way described in Joel 1:4, but in modern times, the order is more in line with the successive powers, described in Joel 2:25 and the Books of Daniel and Revelation.

Joel 1:5–6 continues:

“Awake, you drunkards, and weep, And wail, all you drinkers of wine, Because of the new wine, for it has been cut off from your mouth. For a nation has come up against My land, Strong, and without number; His *teeth* are the teeth of a *lion*, And he has the fangs of a fierce lion.”

The people, indifferent to the writing on the wall and willingly ignorant regarding the calamity which has befallen them, are admonished to repent and warned to recognize the signs of the time.

What is described here are events at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. Even though the Assyrians have already invaded the land, time for repentance is still possible, to be protected from the plagues of the Day of the Lord.

References to an army described as a lion can be found in Revelation 9:8, referring to modern Babylon—the final resurrection of the

ancient Roman Empire; and the teeth of the fourth beast in Daniel 7:7—Rome and its ten revivals, symbolized by the ten horns—also shows the connection to the statement in Joel 1:6.

Joel 1:7 continues:

“He has laid waste My vine, And ruined My fig tree; He has stripped it bare and thrown it away; Its branches are made white.”

The ancient and future destruction of the Houses of Israel and Judah especially through the modern Babylonian system is vividly portrayed here: The vine or vineyard is a reference to the House of Israel (Isaiah 5:7), while the fig tree describes the House of Judah.

Joel 1:8 states:

“Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth For the husband of her youth.”

Here we note that the main recipient of this message should be the Church of God—spiritual Israelites and Jews. A martyrdom of true Christians is prophesied for the end time, and especially for those who are not as dedicated and zealous for Christ as they should be. The husband or bridegroom describes of course Jesus Christ (compare Isaiah 54:5; Matthew 25:1; 9:15; and John 3:29).

Joel 1:9 continues:

“The grain offering and the drink offering Have been cut off from the house of the LORD; The priests mourn, who minister to the LORD.”

While describing the ancient events culminating in the enslavement of the House of Judah and the suppression of animal sacrifices at the Temple of God through Antiochus Epiphanes, we note that similar events are prophesied for the future. The beast—the final German or Austrian leader of the last revival of the ancient Roman Empire—will conquer Jerusalem and suppress animal sacrifices which the Jews will have begun to give again in the house of the LORD—the TEMPLE of God (the third temple which is still going to be built prior to Christ’s return).

Joel 1:10–11 continues:

“The field is wasted, The land mourns; For the grain is ruined, The new wine is dried up, The oil fails. Be ashamed, you farmers, Wail, you vinedressers, For the wheat and the barley; Because the harvest of the field has perished.”

The prophesied famine and destruction of the modern Houses of

Israel and Judah are also described in many other places in the Bible (compare Deuteronomy 32:23–25; Jeremiah 14:12–18). In addition, famine in general is prophesied for the entire world (compare Revelation 6:5–6; Matthew 24:7).

Joel 1:12 reads:

“The vine has dried up, And the fig tree has withered; The pomegranate tree, The palm tree also, And the apple tree—All the trees of the field are withered; Surely joy has withered away from the sons of men.”

We note again the reference to the fig tree and the vine—symbolic for the modern Houses of Israel and Judah. In addition, other “trees” are mentioned, which could also be a reference to the Israelites and the Jews. In addition, this passage describes a very real and devastating famine for the entire area.

Joel 1:13–14 states:

“Gird yourselves and lament, you priests; Wail, you who minister before the altar; Come, lie all night in sackcloth, You who minister to *my God*; For the grain offering and the drink offering Are withheld from the house of *your God*. Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; Gather the elders And all the inhabitants of the land Into the house of the LORD your God, And cry out to the LORD.”

Again, we note that due to the famine, certain offerings cannot be brought. Further, the distinction between “my God” and “your God” is interesting, as if the worship of God through the people is not the right kind of reverence, and not performed with the right attitude and dedication. That might also include the quality of the sacrifices which will be brought for a while (compare Malachi 1:7–8, 12–14) so that God will finally allow them to be suppressed entirely.

Finally, rather than translating, “Gather the elders... into the house of the LORD,” it should be rendered, “*Gather, you elders, all the inhabitants of the land...*” The religious leaders are being admonished to restore the right kind of worship.

Joel 1:15 says:

“Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is at hand; It shall come as destruction from the Almighty.”

This verse contains the first reference to the “day of the LORD,” showing the direct connection to events just prior to the return of Christ. But note that the Day of the Lord is “at hand”—it had not quite arrived yet.

For instance, Jeremiah 30:7 describes the unique and unparalleled events during the Day of the LORD, as they pertain to Jacob or the modern House of Israel; and the anger of God towards all rebellious and sinful people is pictured in passages such as Zephaniah 1:7, 14–16, 18; 2:3; as well as Amos 5:18–20.

Joel 1:16–18 states:

“Is not the food cut off before our eyes, Joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seed shrivels under the clods, Storehouses are in shambles; Barns are broken down, For the grain has withered. How the animals groan! The herds of cattle are restless, Because they have no pasture; Even the flocks of sheep suffer punishment.”

This passage shows again that at the time just prior to the Day of the Lord, a physical temple (“the house of our God”) will exist, but there will be no more sacrifices, due to the lack of grain. The famine on the land and the destruction caused by the invading army will be so severe that even the animals will suffer. It is a sad fact of life that due to man’s horrible misdeeds, nature is affected.

Joel 1:19–20 conclude the first chapter with these pictures of destruction for the entire land:

“O LORD, to You I cry out; For *fire* has devoured the open pastures, And a *flame* has burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field also cry out to You, For the water brooks are dried up, And *fire* has devoured the open pastures.”

As we will see, the “fire” and the “flame” do not describe here ordinary natural wildfires. It is also interesting that animals are mentioned at the time of these terrible nuclear devastations. Animals can survive in radioactively-polluted regions, as we know from observations in Chernobyl.

Joel, Chapter 2

Joel 2:1–2 continues the theme of the Day of the LORD:

“Blow the *trumpet in Zion*, And sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; For *the day of the LORD* is coming, For it is at hand: A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness, Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. A people come, great and strong, *The like of whom has never been*; Nor will there ever be any such after them, Even for many successive generations.”

The command to blow the trumpet echoes the same instruction in passages such as Jeremiah 6:17 to warn the people of the *coming* Day of the Lord and impending disaster. But as was the case in ancient times, the modern Houses of Israel and Judah will likewise, for the most part, ignore God's warning (compare Ezekiel 7:14; 13:5). God gives His command to act as a watchman, warning the people and His Church, spiritual Zion. The great and strong people, bringing destruction, clearly refers to a powerful human army. The statement that "the like of whom" does not refer to numbers, but to the unique nature of the last revival of the ancient Roman Empire (compare Daniel 7:23).

Daniel 12:1 also refers to this terrible unique time in the future, beginning with the Great Tribulation and culminating in the Day of the LORD (compare also Matthew 24:21). The Day of the Lord is also described in passages such as Amos 6:1-3.

Joel 2:3-5 continues:

"A *fire* devours before them, And behind them a *flame* burns; The land is like the Garden of Eden before them, And behind them a desolate wilderness; Surely nothing shall escape them. Their appearance is like the appearance of *horses*; And like swift steeds, so they run. With a noise like chariots Over mountaintops they leap, Like the *noise* of a flaming fire that devours the stubble, Like a strong people set in battle array."

As alluded to in the previous chapter, the fire and the flame are the consequences of modern weapons, and the horses and the noise of a flaming fire describe a terrible European army under the leadership of the beast, using weapons of mass destruction. Note the parallel passage in Revelation 9:7,9 ("The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle... the sound [or noise] of their wings was like the sound [or noise] of chariots with many horses running into battle.")

Joel 2:6 states:

"Before them the people writhe in pain; All faces are drained of color."

The invading European army will be ruthless and frightening.

Joel 2:7-9 confirms the identity of these horses as human soldiers:

"They run like mighty men, They climb the wall like men of war; Every one marches in formation, And they do not break ranks. They do not push one another; Every one marches in his own column. Though

they lunge between the weapons, They are not cut down. They run to and fro in the city, They run on the wall; They climb into the houses, They enter at the windows *like a thief*."

The Day of the LORD comes as a thief in the night (compare 1 Thessalonians 5:1–6).

Continuing with Joel 2:10:

"The earth quakes before them, The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness."

Here, clear references are being made to earthquakes and the Heavenly Signs, culminating in the Day of the Lord—the day of God's Wrath, which is described in Revelation 6:12–17; cp. Luke 21:25–26. We will discuss these passages below in more detail.

Joel 2:11 states:

"The LORD gives voice [*thunders*] before His army, For His camp is very great; For strong is the One who executes His word. For the *day of the LORD* is great and very terrible; Who can endure it?"

The reference to God's army is to the European army under the modern king of Assyria (a modern Führer of German or Austrian descent), as Isaiah 10:5 makes clear. The same concept is conveyed in Jeremiah 51:20–23, where the modern European army of the Babylonian system is being described.

Even though this is a wicked system under a wicked Führer over a wicked European union of ten core nations or groups of nations, it is God who directs and determines the outcome of wars. The *Lutherbibel* translates Psalm 46:9 in the way that God "directs" the wars in the world.

Joel 2:12–14 continues:

"'Now, therefore,' says the LORD, 'Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.' So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. Who knows if He will turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him—A grain offering and a drink offering For the LORD your God?"

A call for repentance is going out today to the people and especially to the Houses of Israel and Judah and the Church of God—spiritual Israelites and Jews—as well as to all nations, including those which are part of the modern Babylonian system in Europe (note Jeremiah

4:1; Luke 24:46–47; Acts 17:30; Revelation 18:2–4). Those who repent are compared with offerings for God; note Romans 12:1 and Romans 15:16 (“the offering *consisting* of the Gentiles”).

Joel 2:15–16 states:

“Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom *go out* from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room.”

Again, the trumpet call is heard—the warning message to the Church (“Zion”), admonishing God’s people who have slipped to repent and return to God (Revelation 3:3) with zeal and dedication (Revelation 3:19), and to prepare themselves to become worthy to escape all the terrible things which are going to come to pass (Luke 21:36), and to be brought to the place of safety here on earth during the time of the Great Tribulation or the “hour of trial” (Revelation 3:10; 12:14). This willingness to come out of their houses and to assemble with the brethren (Hebrews 10:24–25) stands in sharp contrast with those who are willing to submit to house arrests, self-isolation and quarantine during a time of an alleged epidemic, when such conduct is in violation of God’s direct command. (In this regard, please read chapter 9 of our free booklet, *“Obeying God Rather Than Man.”*)

Joel 2:17–18 says:

“Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say, ‘Spare Your people, O LORD, And do not give Your heritage to reproach, That the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’” Then the LORD will be zealous for His land, And pity His people.”

The “priests” could actually be those who had been entrusted with the task of bringing physical sacrifices at the temple. But this could also be a reference to God’s true ministers—the spiritual Levites—who pray to God for mercy in order to spare God’s people—members of the Church who were not found worthy to be protected at the place of safety.

Joel 2:19–20 continues:

“The LORD will answer and say to His people, ‘Behold, I will send you grain and new wine and oil, And you will be satisfied by them; I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations. But I will

remove far from you the *northern army*, And will drive him away into a barren and desolate land, With his face toward the eastern sea And his back toward the western sea; His stench will come up, And his foul odor will rise, Because he has done monstrous things.”

After Christ’s return, there will be no more famine, and God will bestow other physical blessings on His people. The “northern army” refers to the beast power under the modern Assyrian “Führer.” A similar prophecy is given in Zephaniah 2:13, where we read that God “will stretch out His hand against the north, Destroy Assyria, And make Nineveh a desolation, As dry as the wilderness.” The theme of the book of Zephaniah is also the Day of the LORD; hence, the quoted prophecy refers to the end time and a modern Assyria and a modern city of Nineveh—the capital of modern Assyria.

The following verses describe in beautiful ways the marvelous wonders which God will perform after the return of Christ.

Joel 2:21–29 reads:

“Fear not, O land; Be glad and rejoice, For the LORD has done marvelous things! Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field; For the open pastures are springing up, And the tree bears its fruit; The fig tree and the vine yield their strength. Be glad then, you children of Zion, And rejoice in the LORD your God; For He has given you the former rain faithfully, And He will cause the rain to come down for you—The former rain, And the latter rain in the first month. The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil. So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, And praise the name of the LORD your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; And My people shall never be put to shame. Then you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel: I am the LORD your God And there is no other. My people shall never be put to shame. And it shall come to pass *afterward* That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.”

After Christ’s return, He will bring the descendants of the modern

Houses of Israel and Judah to the Promised Land where He will bestow on them physical blessings, replacing famine with plentiful harvests (For more information, please read our free booklet, *“Biblical Prophecy—From Now Until Forever”*). Then, the people will understand that God is THE ONLY God, and upon repentance and belief, they will receive God’s Holy Spirit, and at that time, accompanying signs of that gift will be their ability to prophesy or say things with spiritual understanding, and they will have dreams with meaning and see visions. Isaiah 44:3 gives us a similar prophecy for the time after Christ’s return.

A preliminary fulfillment of the events described in Joel 2:28–29 is reported in Acts 2:17–18, when the people received God’s Holy Spirit at that time on the Day of Pentecost in 31 AD.

However, in the next two verses, the book of Joel returns to the events which will occur prior to the beginning of the Day of the Lord and Christ’s subsequent return.

Joel 2:30–31 reads:

“And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood [blood of men] and fire and pillars of smoke [nuclear bombs]. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.”

Following the Great Tribulation and the attack on the modern Houses of Israel and Judah, signified by the blood of men, mingled with terrible nuclear weapons (“fire and pillars of smoke”), heavenly signs [the sun turning into darkness and the moon into blood] will make people even more afraid. Those Heavenly Signs (compare also Luke 21:25–26) will in turn “introduce” the great and dreadful Day of the LORD.

The *order of events* is therefore: the Great Tribulation; the Heavenly Signs; and the Day of the Lord. This order is confirmed in many other places in the Bible.

For instance, we read in Revelation 6:12–17:

“I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of

the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the *great day of His wrath* has come, and who is able to stand?'"

Matthew 24:29 adds:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

Isaiah 13:6–13 gives another description of the events, culminating in the Day of the Lord. Notice in this regard that the events, beginning with the Great Tribulation and the subsequent Heavenly Signs, will continue throughout the Day of the Lord until Christ's return:

"Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. Therefore all hands will be limp, Every man's heart will melt, And they will be afraid. Pangs and sorrows will take hold of them; They will be in pain as a woman in childbirth; They will be amazed at one another; Their faces will be like flames. Behold, the day of the LORD comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine. 'I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold, A man more than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, And the earth will move out of her place, In the wrath of the LORD of hosts And in the day of His *fierce anger*.'"

Joel 2:32 concludes the second chapter in this way:

"And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be *deliverance*, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls."

This speaks mainly about the time ahead of us, and especially, but not exclusively, the time of the Millennium. The one who calls on God will be saved or better delivered from the wrath to come, but just

saying, "I believe in Jesus," is most certainly not enough. Hebrews 5:9 shows us what is necessary: "And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who *obey* Him."

We must obey God, as we also read in Romans 1:5 and in Romans 16:26. John 3:36 tells us how we can escape the wrath of God: "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does *not obey* the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him" (*Revised Standard Version*).

Joel, Chapter 3

Joel 3:1 states:

"For behold, in those days and at that time, When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem..."

The modern descendants of the Houses of Israel and Judah, who survive the terrible attack on their lands, will end up in captivity. When Christ comes back, He will free them from their captivity and lead them into the Promised Land (compare Jeremiah 16:14–15; 46:27). But before that occurs, the next verse informs us what will happen first.

Joel 3:2 states:

"I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the *Valley of Jehoshaphat*; And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land."

The final "battle" will take place in the "Valley of Jehoshaphat," which means, "God judges or decides." It refers to the Kidron Valley in the East of Jerusalem. This battle is described in more detail in Zechariah 14:1–5, 12–13, 15:

"Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east... Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You [or: Him]... And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against

Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. It shall come to pass in that day That a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor, And raise his hand against his neighbor's hand... Such also shall be the plague On the horse and the mule, On the camel and the donkey, And on all the cattle that will be in those camps. So shall this plague be."

Isaiah 66:15–16 adds: "For behold, the LORD will come with fire And with His chariots, like a whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by His sword The LORD will judge all flesh; And the slain of the LORD shall be many."

Many speak of the battle of Armageddon. But Armageddon is not the place of battle but it is the place where armies gather to move from there to Jerusalem to fight the returning Jesus Christ in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Notice Revelation 16:12–16:

"Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 'Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.' And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon."

The beast or the king of Assyria or the king of the North—the coming Führer of ten core European nations or groups of nations—will attack a great power bloc in the Far East, called in the Bible "the kings of the East" (compare Revelation 9:1–12; Daniel 11:44). The kings of the East will fight Europe *in retaliation* for the attack of the European power bloc (compare Revelation 9:13–19).

Shortly before Christ's return, at least parts of the armies of the kings of the East—mainly the modern Russians and Ukrainians—will apparently sweep through Europe and create devastating havoc there.

The Bible shows that after the ten European nations, under the

authority of a modern Assyrian leader of German or Austrian descent, subdue and conquer many nations, including the USA and the UK, they themselves will be defeated in war by the modern Medes.

At the same time or shortly after their final attack on Europe, the kings from the East will be crossing the dried-up river Euphrates to move their armies and equipment to a place called “Armageddon” in the Middle East (Revelation 16:12, 16). “Armageddon” or the “hill of Megiddo” (“har” meaning “hill” in Hebrew; in German, the word is “Harmageddon”) is about 55 miles or 90 kilometers north of Jerusalem, and about 15 miles or 25 kilometers inland from the Mediterranean Sea.

Megiddo is a huge mound with a commanding view of the long and fertile valley of Jezreel—an ideal place for armies to gather. The kings from the East, as well as all of the other kings of the earth, will be influenced by Satan and the demonically possessed beast and the false prophet to assemble there together (Revelation 16:13–14), to combine their forces with the beast’s armies to fight the returning Christ.

We do not read that there will be a battle *at* Armageddon—the “battle” will be fought farther south in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which is called today the “Kidron Valley,” which borders Jerusalem on the east. Christ will supernaturally destroy and wipe out those armies trying to fight Him.

Joel 3:3–9 continues:

“They have cast lots for My people, Have given a boy as payment for a harlot, And sold a girl for wine, that they may drink. ‘Indeed, what have you to do with Me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia? Will you retaliate against Me? But if you retaliate against Me, Swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head; Because you have taken My silver and My gold, And have carried into your temples My prized possessions. Also the people of Judah and the people of Jerusalem You have sold to the Greeks, That you may remove them far from their borders. Behold, I will raise them Out of the place to which you have sold them, And will return your retaliation upon your own head. I will sell your sons and your daughters Into the hand of the people of Judah, And they will sell them to the Sabeans, To a people far off; For the LORD has spoken. Proclaim this among the nations: ‘*Prepare for war!* Wake up the mighty men, Let all

the men of war draw near, Let them come up.”

The mighty men, being asked to prepare for war, are those who are going to fight against modern Babylon—that is, the modern Medes and their allies.

We also read that God will sell the sons and daughters of Gentile nations into the hand of the people of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off. This is foremost a passage for the Millennium, after Christ has freed the people of Israel and Judah from captivity. But this passage does not teach slavery in the Millennium. Rather, the sons and daughters of the Gentiles will be handed back to their parents—or given to Gentile foster parents if their real parents had died during the Great Tribulation or the Day of the Lord. But notice what will ultimately happen.

The Sabeans (lit. “Shebaites”) are mentioned in Isaiah 60:6 where we read: “The multitude of camels shall cover your land, The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; All those from Sheba shall come; They shall bring gold and incense, And they shall proclaim the praises of the LORD.”

A similar passage can be found in Isaiah 49:22–23 where it reads: “Thus says the LORD God: ‘Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in their arms, And your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders; Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me.’”

These passages do not imply that there will be slavery in the Millennium. In our free booklet, *“Old Testament Laws—Still Valid Today?”*, we state on pages 25 and 26 that it is highly unlikely that any slavery will exist in the Millennium. We discuss Isaiah 14:1–2, which deals with the Millennium. The passage reads:

“For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land. The strangers will be joined with them, and they will cling to the house of Jacob. Then people will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids in the land of the LORD; they will take them captive whose captives they were, and rule over their oppressors.”

We then quote several commentaries ruling out the possibility of slavery in the Millennium. For instance, *Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible* writes:

“And they shall take them captive...’—That is, they shall induce them to become proselytes; to be willing to accompany them to their own homes, and to become their servants there. It does not mean that they would subdue them by force; but they would be able, by their influence there, to disarm their opposition; and to induce them to become the friends of their religion... This is one instance where the people of God would show that they could disarm their oppressors by a mild and winning demeanour, and in which they would be able to induce others to join with them. Such would be the force of their example and conduct, of their conversation and of their deportment...”

The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* adds: “‘captives’—not by physical, but by moral might; the force of love, and regard to Israel’s God [compare Isaiah 60:14].”

Likewise, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible* states:

“... this will have... accomplishment in the latter day, when the Gentiles shall bring their sons and daughters in their arms, and on their shoulders, and on horses, and in chariots, to Jerusalem [Isaiah 49:21–23]... [They will choose] rather to be servants and handmaids to them, than to return to their own land, and who were a kind of inheritance or possession to the [Israelites]... It may be understood of Gentile converts..., who would willingly and cheerfully engage in the service of the church of God, and by love serve his people, and one another [Isaiah 61:5]...”

The same explanation should be applied to the passage in Joel 3:8.

Joel 3:10 continues:

“Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, ‘I am strong.’”

This refers to the time prior to Christ’s return and is an obvious reversal of the prophesied millennial time of peace, pictured in Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3 where we read: “They shall beat their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.”

Before this peaceful time can begin, the nations are willing to prepare for war, eager to fight the battle in the Valley of Jehoshaphat

in their attempt to defeat Christ, and God will not prevent them from trying to do so. But note what is prophesied to happen.

Joel 3:11–13 states:

“Assemble and come, all you nations, And gather together all around. Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O LORD. ‘Let the nations be wakened, and come up to *the Valley of Jehoshaphat*; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, *for the harvest is ripe*. Come, go down; For the winepress is full, The vats overflow—For their wickedness is great.”

The ripe harvest is also referred to and described in passages such as Revelation 19:15–16; 14:14–20 (verse 20 describes the spilled blood of these hostile armies, covering a distance of about 184 miles or 296 kilometers).

Joel 3:14 continues:

“Multitudes, multitudes in the *valley of decision*! For the *day of the LORD* is near in the *valley of decision*.”

The *multitudes* refer to the European armies under the beast and those from the kings of the East.

Joel 3:15–16 continues:

“The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness. The LORD also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; But the LORD will be a *shelter* for His people, And the strength of the children of Israel.”

The Heavenly Signs which began after the commencement of the Great Tribulation will continue and reach their climax at the time of the final battle of hostile armies against Christ. At that time, the Lord—Jesus Christ—will roar from Zion (compare Isaiah 31:4–5). And He will be a shelter for His people—converted Christians who will be protected and fed at the place of safety here on earth during these terrible times (compare Isaiah 33:14–16; Revelation 12:6,14). God will also show Himself strong in defense of the physical people of Israel and Judah.

Joel 3:17 continues:

“So you shall know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy, And no aliens shall ever *pass through her again*.”

This means, from that time on, no alien or foreign power will

occupy Jerusalem again. And even though Asiatic hordes will try to occupy Jerusalem and the Promised Land at the very beginning of the Millennium—and also at the very end of it—God will intervene to prevent their plans from being carried out.

Joel 3:18 states:

“And it will come to pass in that day That the mountains shall drip with new wine, The hills shall flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water; A fountain shall flow from the house of the LORD And water the *Valley of Acacias*.”

The Valley of Acacia or Shittim describes the location from where the Israelites went into the Promised Land (Joshua 2:1). The “brooks of Judah” being flooded with water are also referred to in Zechariah 14:8 where they are identified as “living waters.” The spiritual application of these physical and quite literal descriptions is obvious.

Joel 3:19 continues:

“Egypt shall be a desolation, And Edom a desolate wilderness, Because of violence against the people of Judah, For they have shed innocent blood in their land.”

These powers, having been hostile to Israel and Judah and also, of course, to Christ Himself, will have to give account for their deeds. This includes Assyria as well as the entire Babylonian system. Revelation 18 describes the destruction of the Babylonian system, as well as the city of Rome which is built on seven hills (Revelation 17:9, 18).

The beast is associated with the number 666 (Revelation 13:18). It refers to the numerical value of the letters of the name or designation of the beast. But in 1 Kings 10:14, a connection is also made with incredible wealth. In the Greek, two very common nouns with the numerical value of 666 are wealth and tradition. And the mark of the beast is actually a reversal of the sign of God for us when we keep His Word (Deuteronomy 6:4–8; 11:18). We worship God in vain when we lay aside the commandments of God for our human traditions.

Joel 3:20–21 concludes:

“But Judah shall abide forever, And Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will acquit them of the guilt of bloodshed, whom I had not acquitted; For the LORD dwells in Zion.”

An unparalleled coming time of peace is prophesied, but before this occurs, Isaiah 29:9–10 gives this sobering warning about impending

disasters which the religious leaders of this world are unable to grasp:

“Pause and wonder! Blind yourselves and be blind! They are drunk, but not with wine; They stagger, but not with intoxicating drink. For the LORD has poured out on you The spirit of deep sleep, And has closed your eyes, namely, the prophets; And He has covered your heads, namely, the seers.”

But in Isaiah 29:18–19, this assurance is given: *“In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. The humble also shall increase their joy in the LORD, And the poor among men shall rejoice In the Holy One of Israel.”*

A similar warning and reassurance are also found in Romans 2:5–10:

“But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds’: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Let us make sure that we seek God’s glory, honor, immortality and peace.

Conclusion

We have seen in four different Old Testament books that God's warning of impending disaster for many nations and powers is very real. At first sight, these four books might not be related, but the opposite is clearly the case. And so, God's Church has been given the commission to warn the world of what is in store. We must not be like Jonah who ran away, because much—too much—is at stake.

Most in the USA, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand; the Jewish people; the Europeans and especially the Germans and the Austrians, and also people in Far Eastern nations such as Russia and Ukraine, will NOT listen to God's end time warning and in all likelihood the very last warning before the storm. But some—very few—will hear and heed, and it is those few who can be protected from the terrible times ahead.

Will YOU be one of the chosen few?

The following booklets are available, upon request:

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