

The Arabs in Bible Prophecy

The entire Middle East is exploding in the headlines of today's news. Not only are these countries important from geopolitical, economic and military aspects, but Biblically, they occupy a unique position in prophecy fulfilling, and yet to be fulfilled.

The area is rich in oil, a vital need of the modern industrial world, and it also holds a highly strategic position: the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean area, and especially the Gulf of Oman and the Straits of Hormuz, being particularly important. Almost Two-thirds of the world's oil lies near this region, so that with millions of gallons of oil being produced and shipped via these waterways, they constitute the jugular veins of the industrial nations. Europe and Japan receive over 90% of their oil from this vital area of the Middle East; the US around 25%. Let these supplies dry up and those nations would find their economic and political stability threatened.

Because of its vital importance, both Russia and the West view with greatest suspicion the involvement of each other in this area. And well they might, for, according to Bible prophecy, it will provide the powder-keg that will one day erupt, drawing all nations to the "battle of God Almighty", called in the Bible, Armageddon (Revelations 16:16).

Israel: Key To The Future

The purpose of Almighty God, however, is not that the earth shall be destroyed by the holocaust of Armageddon (though the devastation of that final battle of the nations will be experienced in all parts of the earth - Jeremiah 25:31-33), but that there may be established on the earth a universal kingdom under Christ, bringing truth and peace to all mankind. God's purpose is summed up in the statement of Daniel 2:44:

"The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people (its rulers will be immortal), but it shall break in pieces and consume all kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:44).

Here is predicted a world-wide Empire under immortal rulers that will subdue all nations, and establish a form of government honoring to God and beneficial to man. Innumerable references to that coming Kingdom are found in the Bible, and as we shall show, events are already operating in the earth that will bring it about. The Bible predicts the purpose of God in clear and certain statements, such as:

"The Lord shall be king over all the earth" (Zechariah 14:9).

"The kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15).

"They (the redeemed) shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4,6).

The purpose of God is to "fill this earth with His glory" (Numbers 14:21), and in so doing to "cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:11). That, of course, is not the state of things today, but it will become so, when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to assert his authority, and by force compel the nations to submit to the decree of heaven. As the result of his righteous government there shall be "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill towards men". It was for that state of things that Christ taught his disciples to pray, in the words: "Thy Kingdom come, that Thy will may be done in earth as it is in heaven".

That is not the state of things today. Nor will it be until the Lord Jesus Christ returns to earth to establish thereon the Kingdom of God. And his return for that purpose is clearly, plainly and positively affirmed. The Apostles were told as they saw him ascend into heaven:

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

But can we place any reliance upon such statements? In this modern, materialistic world, can we find faith to believe in Christ's return? Indeed we can! Tangible signs of it are already to be seen, and the turmoil of the Middle East, including the antagonism existing between Jews and Arabs, witness to it.

That is the significance of the modern revival of the nation of Israel.

Critically analyze this prediction of the Bible:

"Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all . . . and I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them; so shall they be My people, and I will be their God" (Ezekiel 37:21-23).

That prophecy, which is 2500 years old, demands these four developments in the latter days:

1. The return of the Jews to their ancient homeland.
2. The latter-day revival of the nation of Israel.
3. The conversion of the nation to a monarchy.
4. The restoration of the Jewish people to divine favor.

Israel's Coming King

Two parts of that four-pronged prophecy have had token fulfillment. In 1917, at the conclusion of World War 1, the Balfour Declaration issued by Great Britain, invited the Jewish people to

establish a National Home in Palestine (modern Israel). This Declaration was confirmed by the League of Nations, and the Jews commenced to return to their land.

At the conclusion of World War II, the nation of Israel was revived on the authority of the UN, and Jewish independence was established in those portions of the land granted to the newly formed nation.

These incidents of modern history are in full accord with the prophecy quoted above.

They challenge the skeptic in his unbelief, for they clearly fulfil the 2500 years' old predictions of the Bible.

Moreover, they have been dramatically fulfilled in the face of seeming impossible odds guaranteeing that the rest of the prophecy will be fulfilled: the conversion of the nation of Israel to a monarchy, and the restoration of the Jewish people to divine favor.

How will that be accomplished? By the return of Jesus Christ, the divinely appointed future king of Israel. Christ was born and died to fulfil that purpose of God. At his birth, wise men came from the east asking, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" (Matthew 2:2). At his death, the superscription was placed over him: "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews" (John 19:19).

At no stage has the Lord Jesus fulfilled that function; yet the whole purpose of God, as proclaimed in the Bible, hinges on it.

And the modern revival of Israel is God's token to humanity that this is about to take place. The Bible declares:

"Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for Mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the nations whither ye went . . . for I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land" (Ezekiel 36:22-24).

God declared that He would do this, not for Israel's sake, but for "His holy name's sake." He does it to vindicate His name, to fulfil His promises and prophecies; to demonstrate that complete confidence can be placed upon all that He has declared that He will accomplish in the earth.

Accordingly, the revival of the ancient nation of Israel, is a sure and certain sign of the imminence of Christ's return to fulfil the purpose that he initiated 1900 years ago. Christ is to return, to set up his power in Jerusalem, to discipline the Jewish people so that they become submissive to his control, and to extend his authority throughout the earth, so that the wonderful promise of the Gospel will become a fact in the earth: "In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Galatians 3:8).

This epitome of the Gospel message shows that God's purpose relates to the future of the earth, and all nations therein. Among those nations are Israel and the Arab powers, and an honored position is reserved for both in the Kingdom Christ will set up. It will see the termination of that state of hostility that has existed between those two related peoples for so long, and will culminate in them living in amity one with the other.

It is significant, that when the existence of Israel was threatened by war in 1956 and again in 1967, Radio Jerusalem broadcast the words of the Lord through the prophet Amos:

"I will restore the captivity of My people Israel, and they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them, they will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, and make gardens and eat their fruit. I will also plant them on their land, and they will not again be rooted out from their land which I have given them, said the Lord your God" (Amos 9:14-15).

The prophecies relating to Israel are clear, and the commencement of their fulfillment is evident in the earth today. A future epoch of rebuilding and prosperity in the Promised Land is clearly predicted

at the return of Christ, after which Israel will never again be uprooted from it (2 Samuel 7:10; Zechariah 14:11).

But before then, Israel will face a terrible crisis, out of which, however, she will be delivered (Jeremiah 30:7). The Middle East will become the focal center of Armageddon: a war that will involve all mankind, introducing a "time of trouble such as never was". The victor of that war, however will be Christ (Daniel 12:1-3).

Arab Opposition To Israel's Revival

To most Moslem nations, the presence of Israel in the Middle East is as a festering sore that only will be remedied by political surgery. Just as the Jewish people have clung to their hope of Messiah reigning in Jerusalem, so the Arabs have refused to give up their hope of driving Israel into the Mediterranean and restoring the entire land, including Jerusalem (the second most holy city in the world to Arabs) to Arab possession. With the wealth that they command from the rich deposits of oil discovered beneath the burning sands of their deserts, it seems only a matter of time before they will accomplish their aims.

But, in fact, they are fighting destiny. Already, on the field of battle, the Arabs have been defeated time and again. In 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973 their armies were repulsed, and on each occasion, Israel was able to extend its borders at the expense of its neighbors.

They will never drive Israel from the land. Prophecy makes that clear. But Bible prophecy also speaks of the future of the Arab nations in clear and certain terms.

A great proportion of the Arab lands of the Middle East is desolate and uninviting, bleached into sandy wastes by the merciless rays of its bright sun. Yet though deficient of the showers of heaven, and the verdure of nature's bounty, the land has released from its depths an incalculable treasure of black gold: oil! This wealth has

permitted its people, the Arabs, to exercise a global influence far exceeding their numerical, political and military potential.

"Almighty God," reasoned the Apostle Paul, "made the world and all things therein ... and both determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:24-26). It is of God that Arabia has been settled by the Arabs. It is He who placed that black gold beneath its deserts, which today is drawing the attention of all nations to the Middle East as is clearly predicted in the latter-day prophecies of the Bible. That oil has attracted the covetous eyes of all nations, and particularly those of Russia and the mighty powers of the West. Over 2500 years ago the Bible predicted of the latter days:

"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh . . . for I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle . . ." (Zechariah 14:1-2).

"Behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat (outside Jerusalem) . . ." (Joel 3:1-2).

Here is predicted a latter-day gathering of nations to the Middle East. For what purpose? "To take a spoil" declares the Bible (Ezekiel 38:12). The oil of the Arab powers constitutes such a "spoil".

Possession of that oil has brought the future of the Arab powers into prominence in the counsels of the nations. It is helping to mould the pattern that is shaping the world for Armageddon. It is a potential flash-point for war.

Islamic Disunity

Not all Moslem nations are of genuine Arab stock. The Turks, Persians and others are not Arabs, though, as Moslems, they are often classed among the Arab Nations. The true Arab descended from Ishmael, the half-brother of Isaac, predecessor of the Jewish people. Therefore, despite their mutual antagonism, Arabs and

Jews are closely related ethnologically. The character of the Arab was predicted before the birth of Ishmael 4000 years ago, and it remains true of him today. His mother, Hagar was told of her son:

"He will be a wild-ass man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren" (Genesis 16:12).

The first part of this prediction proclaimed the character of the people who would develop from Ishmael, whilst the second part described the location of their settlement. They would dwell in the presence of their brethren, the Jewish people. The area occupied by the Arabs is that barren, and in most parts, vacant land that lies between Persia, Syria, Israel, Egypt and Ethiopia. The northern part is the area adjacent to the Euphrates, a line of 1500 miles terminating at the Straits of Babelmandeb in the south. The sides of the triangle gradually enlarge with the southern section presenting a front of a thousand miles to the Indian Ocean.

The character of the Arabs who dwell in this inhospitable region conform to the description given to the mother of Ishmael. They are fiercely independent, and are dangerous when provoked or attacked. In spite of the pressures brought to bear upon the Arab countries, and their common hostility towards Israel, there has been little cohesion among them. Proclamations of Arab unity have been made but seldom properly implemented. In fact, the disunity among the Arab powers illustrates the truth of Genesis 16:12 to this day: "He will be a wild ass of a man his hand shall be against every man and every man's hand against him." The reference to the wild ass (as the Hebrew text has it) is most fitting. It is the image of the free, intractable bedouin character. As the Book of Job records, the wild ass is untamable, roaming at will in the desert, a wonderful symbol of the bedouin's boundless love of freedom and independence. The statement "his hand shall be against every man and every man's hand against him" is a fitting and vivid description of the incessant feuds among Arabs. And these continue to the present. Consider this record of disunity:

Egypt, at one time or another, has sent troops into Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, the Sudan, Algeria, Yemen. Its air force has raided Saudi Arabia and Yemen. It has bitterly fought Israel, but now has signed a peace treaty with that nation.

Syria has sent troops into Iraq and Jordan on occasions, and has attempted to instigate rebellion in both of them at other times.

Iraq has sent troops into Jordan, has massed troops to threaten Syria, has attempted to instigate coups and rebellions there on more than one occasion, and, as we write this, has suddenly launched an attack on Iran.

Saudi Arabia has sent troops into Jordan a number of times, into Kuwait once, and has interfered in Yemen on several occasions. It has attempted to instigate rebellion and political assassination at one time or another in Syria, Jordan and Egypt.

Jordan has sent troops in Kuwait, massed troops against Syria, involved itself in Yemen. King Hussein of Jordan lost control of the West Bank because of his stupid and stubborn involvement in the Six Day War with Israel.

The Arabs argue over many things important and otherwise. Iraq and Syria still quarrel over the correct interpretation of Baathist socialism. Iran and Iraq are divided over religion as well as claims of territory. Both are Islamic countries, but each supports a different and opposing sect. For there are several bitterly divided sects among the Moslems. The two chief branches are divided into the Sunni and Shi'a sects. Then there are the Kurds. They represent almost 20% of Iraq's population, and have been fighting for their independence for more than fifty years. Until the outbreak of war between Iran and Iraq, these two powers co-operated in suppressing the Kurds! The United Arab Republic formulated some time back by Syria and Egypt, shortly afterwards disintegrated, and today is no more!

With all these confusing and conflicting elements, the Islamic world remains as fragmented as ever, devoid of inspiring and unifying leadership, illustrating to this day the prediction of God to Hagar concerning her son Ishmael.

Uprise of Islam

The Book of Revelation is a book of symbols designed to foreshadow "things which must come to pass" (Rev. 1:1). It outlines in advance the progress of history leading to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, when "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15).

Among the incidents of history foreshadowed is the uprise of the Islamic movement. The work of Mahomet in that regard is symbolized as a star falling from the political heavens (Rev. 9). In A.D. 622, Mahomet was forced to flee from Mecca to the city of Medina. That year is called by Muslims the *Hegira, or Flight*, and it marks the beginning of the Mahomedan era. Mahomet proclaimed himself a prophet of God. Though he could not write, he dictated principles of his teaching which, after his death, were collated and published as the Koran, the Bible of the Muslims. Gradually the number of his converts increased. Proclaiming his belief in one God, he declared open war upon the Trinitarians of the Greek and Roman Catholics. As his power grew, and his influence extended over Arabia and Palestine, he sent ambassadors to the court of Constantinople, and when they were contemptuously rejected by the authorities of the eastern Roman Empire, he decided to overthrow it by force. He died in 632 before he could accomplish this, and was succeeded by Abubeker, the first Caliph.

In 637 Jerusalem fell to the Muslims. From Palestine and Syria they spread northwards to Asia Minor and Persia, and southwards to Egypt and North Africa. Within fifty years of Mahomet's death, they had advanced to the two great bastions of Europe:

Constantinople and Gibraltar, annexing the countries they conquered, and compelling the people to accept Mahomet as a prophet, and the Koran as their guide. Passing over the Straits of Gibraltar, the Saracens, as they were called, entered Spain and conquered much of its territory. At that stage they threatened to overwhelm Europe itself, and were only held at bay by the Meroviagian king of the Franks: a man by the name of Charles, who organized an army of Franks and allies and successfully opposed the Arabs at Poitiers (732).

We pause for a moment to wonder at the ease with which the Arabs accepted the authority and teaching of Mahomet and so were, for the first time, united in preparation for the mission before them. What explanation can be given to account for this remarkable development? The answer is found in the consideration of a further question. Why have the Jews returned to their ancient land? Why is it that suddenly and inexplicably, they turn from their accepted traditional avocations, and willingly, even cheerfully, accept the unaccustomed and incredible hardships of Israel? The answer is that Destiny is calling them. God has a purpose with them, and He has declared that He will regather them. The spirit which today moves Jewry and impels them to return to their land, is the hand of providence working in the nations, unknown to the majority of mankind (see Daniel 4:17).

So it was with the Arabs in the days of Mahomet. God had a purpose with them. The various elements which prepared the Arab mind for the acceptance of Mahomet's teaching, the readiness with which they united under his banner were all part of the preparation for their divinely appointed mission. At the death of Mahomet they were moved by a proselytizing religious zeal which erupted on to an apostate Christian world. When faced with the alternative of "the Koran or the sword" (the battle cry of Islam), millions quickly saw the point of the argument, and the Islamic religion extended far and wide.

At breathless speed, one dominion after another fell before the Arabs. Syria, Egypt and Persia were taken in rapid succession. By 750, the Arab Empire extended from the borders of China in the east to Spain in the west, and the eastern section of the Roman Empire had been reduced to the region of Asia Minor. The sword had brought overwhelming success to the Koran, so that the whole world trembled before the threat of Moslem power.

The Golden Age Of Islam

And now the Arabs entered the "golden age" of their history. By 750 their conquests were complete: their empire had reached its greatest extent. This remarkable people now turned to other triumphs. Science, philosophy, literature now claimed their attention. They absorbed and extended the learning of all the dominions where their sword had been successful. In the same way as they had introduced artillery into warfare, (predicted in the symbology of Revelation 9:9-10), they now learned paper making from the Chinese, mathematics from the Indians, commerce and banking from the Jews, astronomy from the Egyptians, poetry and literature from other parts. And wherever they went, they carried with them the results of their increasing knowledge. Western culture is greatly indebted to the influence of the Arabs. Many Arabic words are still in current use, such as alchemy, algebra, almanac, elixir, zenith etc. They established centers of learning throughout their empire, and notably in Spain. The University and Education systems, in current use throughout the Western world, were founded by the Arabs.

The age of the great navigators was made possible by the release of knowledge in the great schools of navigation and astronomy founded by the Arabs, though a further impetus was given this by developments that came from the fall of Constantinople by the Turks. The contests between Spain, Portugal, Holland and Britain for the supremacy of the seas, that came a little later, and Britain's ultimate rise to world mercantile ascendancy as the merchant

power of Tarshish (see Ezekiel 38:13), thus owes much to the Arabs.

With this age of learning, however, there came a decline in military conquests. Instead of attempting to extend their dominions, the Arabs, from 782 to 933 limited their contests to the eastern Roman Empire, bitterly attacking the Trinitarians of the Greek Orthodox Church, though failing to take Constantinople which they attacked on several occasions.

By 933, Arab military power was on the decline; secular power was wrested from the Caliph (as their ruler, the successor of Mahomet was called). No longer did he exercise the authority to wage war. The empire crumbled into dust, and the Caliphs continued only as the spiritual heads of Islam. Nevertheless that influence was extensive. Though Khomeini of Iran, does not pose as a Caliph, the spiritual authority that he exercised in toppling the Shah from his throne, illustrates how considerable was the power wielded by the Caliphate in the past. In the providence of God, its decline assisted the Jewish revival in the Land at the conclusion of World War 1.

Why should this power thus suddenly rise to prominence, exercise such influence, and as quickly wane? The answer is given in Scripture. Paul taught: "God hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). Daniel taught: "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will . . ." (Daniel 4:17). The uprise of the Arab Empire considerably restricted the growth of an apostate religious system (Roman Catholicism) which then was oppressing minority groups among which were some who held the Truth in its purity. This limitation of Papal power, permitted the development of greater freedom of thought in such countries as Great Britain, particularly in relation to Bible teaching and religion generally, so that among much error, Bible truth could be maintained. It also resulted in the spread of knowledge, assisting Britain to become a great mercantile marine power, and so take her place in national developments as required by Bible prophecy. The decline of

Islamic political power, and the division of thought which characterizes Moslem countries, has permitted the revival of Jewish national life in the land, as predicted in the Bible as the prelude to Christ's coming. Thus the growth and decline of Moslem power has furthered the plan of prophecy revealed in the Bible.

Decline of Arab Power

In 760 Baghdad was made the capital of the Empire, and the Caliph took up residence there. From that time, Persian influences were at work, laying the foundation for the divisions of thought within Islamic religion that followed. During the 10th and 11th centuries, province after province separated from a rulership which was now more Persian than Arabian. The learning that the Arabs had accumulated during the golden age of their empire was neglected, and their influence and learning declined.

In 1258, Baghdad was taken by the Turks, and Turkish power absorbed what was left of the Arab Empire. But though defeated militarily, the Arabs still retained sufficient spiritual influence to finally conquer their conquerors, for the Turks embraced the religion of the Koran. Mahomet, though dead, still triumphed.

During the centuries that followed, the desolating influence of the Islamic Turkish Empire destroyed the culture of the Arabs, and they reverted to their original condition of nomadic, independent and mutually hostile tribes and groups. The Turkish Empire replaced the Saracenic Empire, and completed the destruction of the Eastern Roman Empire. In 1453, Constantinople fell to Turkish forces, and the Empire was at an end. The Turks, echoing the cry of the Saracens: "The Koran or the Sword" extended their empire as far as west as Vienna, north into southern Russia, and as far south as Algiers in North Africa. The whole of the Middle East was under their control. The symbol of the Turkish Empire in the Bible is that of the River Euphrates, from whence originated their power. But the Bible foretold the decline of that power (Revelation 16:12), and when it had fulfilled the purpose of God in terminating the

Eastern Roman Empire, it did so. Students of the Bible long anticipated this decline in accordance with the requirements of the prophetic Scriptures. In 1643, Joseph Mede declared that the fulfillment of Revelation 16:12 demanded the gradual collapse of the Turkish Empire to be followed by "horrible and unheard-of preparation for war". In 1848, Christadelphian expositor of the Bible, John Thomas, interpreted this passage of the Bible similarly and from Ezekiel 38 and elsewhere, added that the final demise of Turkey would come by Russian aggression which will overwhelm Istanbul (modern Constantinople), and bring the independence of Turkey to an end ("Elpis Israel", part 3).

During the latter part of the last century, Turkish power which previously threatened Europe itself, began to decline. In 1917, the reverses suffered by Turkey in the Middle East at the hands of the British and Arabs in conjunction, led to their evacuation of the whole of the Middle East. Independent Arab nations again came into existence, such as Jordan, Saudi-Arabia, and so forth. The Jews began to return in fulfillment of Bible prophecy, and at the conclusion of World War 2, the state of Israel again came into existence. Bible prophecy was being wonderfully fulfilled.

The Islamic empires of the past have gone, replaced by the independent nations of Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and so forth, such as Bible prophecy requires (see Daniel 11:40-45), but a spiritual empire still remains. The influence of the Koran extends far beyond the confines of Arabia to Indonesia and Malaya, parts of China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Morocco, Tunis, Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya, and Russia. For many millions, the Koran is still the rule of faith, Mecca is still the holy city, and the eyes of these millions are turned five times a day towards the Middle East.

The Koran

Mahomet claimed to have received visions from the angel Gabriel, which he dictated to others, and after his death were collated to form the sacred book of Islam, the Koran. The Koran is a

concoction of ideas based upon the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, interspersed with the traditions and superstitions of Mohammed himself. He announced that as Moses had come to the Jews, and Jesus to the Christians to restore them to their original and pure faith, so he, Mahomet, had been set to the Arabs for the same purpose.

The doctrine and routine he set down are incorporated in the "five pillars of Islam" faithful observance of which, he claimed, will be rewarded on Judgment Day. Those five pillars are:

1. There is no God but Allah, and Mahomet is his prophet.
2. Prayer will take a believer half-way to God, therefore he is obliged to pray five times daily with his face towards Mecca.
3. Fasting will bring a believer to the door of God's palace, therefore, in the month Ramadan, he must abstain from food and drink, from all sensual pleasure and from unholy thoughts during the hours from sunrise to sunset. Alcohol, pork and other unclean foods are prohibited at all times.
4. Alms will gain a believer entrance to the Divine presence, therefore, one-tenth of his income is strictly reserved as "alms to God".
5. Every believer should undertake at least one pilgrimage to Mecca during his lifetime.

Accordingly, the Islamic religion is particularly adverse to Trinitarianism, and, therefore, bitterly antagonistic to orthodox Christianity (as is the Bible). On the other hand, it favors the monotheism of the Jewish people, and draws upon the Bible to acknowledge the latter-day restoration of the Jews to their ancient homeland. It acknowledges Jesus Christ as a great prophet, though subordinate to Mahomet, and teaches that he must return to set up on earth the Kingdom of God, with its headquarters at Jerusalem. A minaret in the Ommayad Mosque in Damascus, is named the "Minaret of the Coming of Jesus Christ," and is dedicated to his second coming. Arabs have been buried near the Golden Gate of

Jerusalem, because they believe that on Judgment Day the Lord will return to Jerusalem via that entrance.

Therefore, it is a remarkable fact, that the three great religions of Jerusalem: Judaism, Islam, and Christianity (as taught in the Bible as opposed to Trinitarianism) all announce the setting up on earth of a kingdom under the rulership of the Messiah. Judaism, however, does not recognize Jesus Christ as such; Mohammedism makes him subordinate to Mahomet, and mixes religion up with fallacies relating to the immortal soul; so that true Christianity alone, as based upon the Old and New Testaments, recognizes and proclaims the truth. Unfortunately, most sects of Christendom have intermixed serious and faith-nullifying error with their teaching.

The Bible teaches that there is but "one faith, one baptism, one Lord" etc. (Ephesians 4:2-6), but that is not the case in Christendom today, which includes over 300 different and antagonistic sects. It also predicted that there would be a departure from the true faith, so that the Gospel in truth, would be retained by a small minority (2 Timothy 4:2-4; 2 Peter 2:1-2; 3:3). True Christians will disabuse their minds of the errors that have been superimposed upon the teaching of the Bible, and will seek the way of God in truth, for as the Lord Jesus declared: "The Father seeketh such to worship Him" (John 4:23). Those errors include theories relating to an immortal soul, the trinity, an immortal devil, and the rejection of the teaching concerning the divine purpose with Israel and the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth. In view of the impending crisis relating to Armageddon, and the clear signs of fulfilling prophecy that witness to the imminence of Christ's return and the setting up on earth of the Kingdom of God, we urge the reader to seek into these matters. Eternal life at Christ's coming is based upon one's acceptance of the Truth in its purity.

What the Future Will Reveal

The key to the future of humanity is to be found in the boiling cauldron of the Middle East. In the drama being enacted between

Israel, the Arab nations, Russia and the west, the prophecies of the Bible are springing into being proclaiming the imminence of the greatest event of all time: the coming of the Lord to reign on this earth. Basic to the development of God's purpose with the earth is the restoration of the Jewish people, the revival of Israel as a nation, and the establishment of Christ as its king. Jerusalem will become the center of the world-wide dominion that God has declared He will set up in the earth. As its capital, the metropolis of the future, it will comprise a Temple-city where mankind will ascend to worship. In that day instead of mankind travelling on a pilgrimage to Mecca or Rome, they will visit Jerusalem. Hence the Bible teaches:

"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart" (Jeremiah 3:17).

"And it shall come to pass, that everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 14:16).

"In the last days it shall come to pass ... that many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:1-3).

These statements predict vast changes for the world and for Jerusalem. The former will be united in peace under the reign of Christ; the latter will be called "the city of truth" (Zechariah 8:3), the "city of the great King" (the Lord Jesus - Matthew 5:35), the "habitation of justice" (Jeremiah 31:23), "the city of God" (Psalm 87:3). Instead of the Dome of the Rock, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and other centers of superstition and falsehood, there

will be the wonderful Temple, described as "the house of prayer for all nations" (Mark 11:17; Isaiah 56:6-8). In that Temple city, Christ will preside as King-priest legislating for the benefit of humanity in things both material and spiritual. And associated with him will be those who have sought to obey him in this life by embracing his truth, submitting to baptism, and living in accordance with his precepts. Of them it is said, they shall "live and reign with Christ a thousand years" (Revelation 5:9-10; 20:4,6).

But because of the blindness of humanity, because of the refusal of man to acknowledge God and submit to His requirements, the world will first be purged through war. Armageddon will involve the whole of mankind in a universal conflagration, which shall center on the Middle East, and on Jerusalem. Bible prophecy declares: "I will gather all nations to Jerusalem to battle" (Zechariah 14:2).

The circumstances and involvement of nations in this we have outlined in a booklet entitled: "Russia's Bid For World Domination: Sure Sign of Christ's Coming", to which we direct the reader (see list of pamphlets on web page).

The Arab peoples will be involved in this crisis. In fact, the present state of the Arab powers conforms exactly to Bible prophecy. The independence of Persia is clearly prophesied (Jer. 49:39). Her involvement in the Russian attack on the Middle East is specifically mentioned (Ezekiel 38:5). The path of war will devastate Syria and Damascus (Isaiah 17:1), will erupt against Egypt (Daniel 11:42-43), and will finally terminate in Jerusalem (Daniel 11:45; Zechariah 14:2). There the Russian invasion will meet its fate, being overthrown by a greater power than mere man: "The Lord shall go forth and fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of battle" (Zechariah 14:3). Christ, wielding divine power, will overthrow the nations, and establish his rule and kingdom in the earth.

The Arabs In The Future

The Arabs will be granted an honored place in the Kingdom of Christ. In response to Abraham's prayer, "O that Ishmael might live before Thee", God promised, "I will make of him a great nation". That has yet to be fulfilled, even though the fullness of God's covenant was established with Isaac (See Genesis 17:18-21). Therefore, though the "first dominion" of Christ's world-wide Empire will be enjoyed by Israel (Micah 4:8), the Arab nations will also inherit their lot. God promised that they will dwell peaceably "in the presence of all their brethren" (including Israel - see Genesis 16:12). They will do so, not in the Promised Land that Israel will inherit, but in the adjoining territory of Arabia. Then "the deserts shall blossom as the rose" (Isaiah 35:1), and instead of the burning, blighting heat of their sandy wastes, there will be, as Isaiah predicts, "forests in Arabia" (Isaiah 21:13), and water in abundance (Isaiah 21:14).

In a prophecy relating to the future Kingdom of Christ on earth, the Bible declares of certain Bedouin Arab tribes descended from Ishmael: "They shall shew forth the praises of the Lord". Their offerings "shall come up with acceptance on Mine altar, and I will glorify the house of My glory" (Isaiah 60:6-7).

This passage predicts the conversion of the Arabs to the "hope of Israel" as the truth in Christ Jesus is called (Acts 28:20), and their incorporation into his Kingdom to be set up on earth. Both the land and the people will experience vast changes. They will have to replace the Koran with the Bible; they will have to change from the worship of Allah to that of Yahweh the God of Israel (Exodus 3:14); they will be compelled to acknowledge Christ instead of Mahomet; their mutual antagonism and restlessness, their hatred of Israel will cease, and they will have to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem instead of to Mecca (Zechariah 14:16).

Tremendous changes? Indeed they are, but only indicative of the vast changes to be brought about in all the world, as all nations will be compelled to accept Christ's reign in truth. The Bible declares:

"For the nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Isaiah 60:12). For the rest, the words of the Bible will be vindicated, and God will cause "righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:11).

Reader: you are living in momentous times. God's purpose with man relates to the earth not heaven. Bible prophecy is being fulfilled in a remarkable way. It is obvious that the world is facing a tremendous crisis. All mankind realizes that. But they do not understand the significance of that crisis. The time is at hand when the Lord shall return to set up his kingdom on the earth. Hence the present is a time of opportunity in which you can make your peace with God in order to inherit eternal life at Christ's coming. We urge you to look into these matters seriously. Give a little time to your eternal destiny. To that end we are available to assist you in the better understanding of the Word of God.