

# Why I Believe the Bible

I am fully convinced that the Bible is the infallible word of God. I have examined the subject critically and closely, and I believe that the evidence establishing this verdict is beyond all reasonable doubt.

The purpose of this article is to set forth some of the reasons for this conviction.

I advance four facts of evidence: (1) personal; (2) internal; (3) historical; (4) prophetic.

## Personal Witness

I advance first of all the profound impact that the Bible has had upon myself. Its influence has been outstanding. It is said that the age of miracle is past; but in a certain sense I cannot agree. I believe that tremendous miracles are being performed.

I do not refer to miracles such as turning water into wine, nor walking upon the sea, nor of healing the sick and raising the dead, as occurred in the ministry of the Lord. But the miracle of the impact of the Bible upon the lives of individuals. It exercises a tremendous influence upon individuals drawn to its truth. Through its power they develop spiritual qualities that they never possessed before. It has caused many to give up a life of selfishness for one of total self-surrender to Christ.

This has ever been the purpose and result of the preaching of the Gospel. Listen to the words of Paul. Writing to the believers in Thessalonica, he declared:

*"Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thess. 1:9).*

They had completely changed their way of life: had "turned around" to serve God.

Since then, many others have done likewise.

And from what have they "turned"? Very often from a life of self-indulgence or of crime. Hearken to Paul again:

*"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:9-11).*

It is a very compelling influence that will cause those who are habitually immoral or criminal to turn from such ways to a life of discipline and dedication. And the fact that the Bible has caused the miracle to happen so often, witnesses both to its power and its truth. Indeed, its teaching provides the only effective answer to the immorality, wickedness and violence of this age.

I have felt personally the impact of its influence. I do not pose as being particularly righteous; but what I am in that regard is directly traceable to Bible influence. It has changed the course of my life; helped to develop my character; caused me to turn from doing things of selfish self gratification; and created in me a different viewpoint.

Not only has the Bible changed my life, and altered my viewpoint, but I have found it to be the source of comfort, happiness and hope. It is a book that has deeply enriched my appreciation of life, such as only a divinely inspired true book could do. That also was the impact of the book upon the Apostle Paul. He declared to Timothy:

*"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come- This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation. For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, Who is the Saviour of all men, specially those that believe" (I Tim. 4:8- 10).*

There is no loss in the enjoyment of life in following the Lord Jesus. The loss is to those who seek their pleasure exclusively through gratification of the flesh, in selfish indulgence. Despite widespread affluence, the world is not a happy place today: it is a place of frustration and misery. There is no true joy in the faces of young people who avoid the way of life in Christ, but only an appearance of frustration. Observe their dull, aimless wandering, their want of purpose and expectation in life, their addiction to drugs, their recourse to all forms of depravity and perversion for the sake of excitement. Is there any future or happiness in such a way of life? And what of the disturbances of family life, the breakdown of the marriages, the fearful prevalence of divorce, the justifying of infidelity with all its resultant misery?

That is the way of life without Christ: a way that "may seem right, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

### **The Antidote to Social Misbehavior**

Many deplore the decline of morals in this age: few are prepared to turn to an influence that can lift them out of such a state. The condition of social misbehavior with which the current world is familiar was actually predicted in the Bible. It states:

*"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;*

*having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. . . " (2 Timothy 3:1-5).*

These prophetic words fittingly describe the social misbehavior of the times. Crime, immorality, violence are rising as a flood; and nothing seems to stem the advance.

In the same chapter, however, the Apostle shows the antidote to these conditions. He advances the witness of himself, and then the impact of the Bible as a counter to such a trend.

Concerning himself he wrote:

*"Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions which came unto me . . . what persecutions I endured. . ." (vv. 10-11).*

Paul suffered many privations and much persecution in witnessing for Christ. He catalogues his sufferings for Christ as follows:

*"In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received / forty stripes save one. Thrice was / beaten with rods, once was / stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day / have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. (2 Corinthians 11:23-27).*

Paul's witness is all the more powerful, because at first he did not believe in Christ. In fact, he was the most determined opponent to true Christianity. It was Paul (or Saul as he was then called) who is described in Acts 9:1 as "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord", and armed with authority conferred upon him by those in power he committed them to prison or to death.

But Paul was impelled by the force of Christ's revelation to completely change his life.

Later, when he was brought before the authorities on a charge of blasphemy, he advanced the miracle of his own conversion as evidence of the reality and power of Christ. He pointed out that he was first the bitterest of opponents of Christ, but becoming converted, and giving himself completely to what he now perceived as truth, he gave himself up with characteristic energy and zeal. In consequence, he became himself the most persecuted of believers. He told the court convened to consider his case:

*"I truly thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which things I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I Punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities" (Acts 26:9-11).*

Only complete conviction could cause such a change. Paul was a highly intelligent man, as his writings abundantly testify, and it is impossible that one of such intellect could possibly be changed by myth, legend or mere emotion. That such a change took place is a witness to the reality of Christ's resurrection, and the truths he espoused.

In fact, all the apostles experienced such a change. When the crucifixion of Christ took place, all of them forsook him, convinced that they had made a mistake. Only his living presence, the reality of his physical and literal resurrection from the dead, convinced them otherwise. And they required tangible proof. After the Lord had appeared to several of them, they reported their experience to another of their company who had not been with them at the time, declaring: "We have seen the Lord."

However, he demanded personal proof.

*"Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe!" he replied.*

Eight days later, the Lord appeared to him also, and so real and tangible was the experience, that Thomas was convinced in spite of himself. Thence afterwards he boldly testified to the fact of Christ's resurrection until martyrdom claimed him. His previous attitude of disbelief has given rise to the description of a doubter as being a *doubting Thomas*.

All the apostles ultimately suffered martyrdom for the things they believed. Do men of high intelligence, such as they were, do that for a fantasy, a myth or a legend? They do not. Great changes were observed in their way of life, their characters and their witness following the resurrection of Christ. They had been convinced in spite of themselves. So great was the change, that it is recorded:

*"When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).*

The miracle of such a change continues to take place to this present moment. Let a person examine the evidence of the Bible; let him immerse himself in the wonder of its teaching; let conviction take possession of him, and a change in character, in viewpoint, in contentment, in hope and in the way of life will take place.

The Bible is an antidote to the wickedness and hopelessness of this age, and this witnesses to its truth and power.

It can become the inspiration to a way of life now that results in more abundant living, a much more satisfying, pleasurable and profitable existence than is the lot of most people in this age of

frustration and evil. In that regard, we appeal to the reader in the words of David:

*"O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him" (Psalm 34:8).*

I have personally found those words true to fact, and that is one reason why I would like to share this experience with others.

## **2. The Internal Witness**

When the internal witness of the Bible is considered it will be acknowledged that as a book it is separate and distinct from all others. The very words on the spine of a Bible testifies to that. The title *Holy Bible* signifies *Separate Book* and claims that it is distinct from all other books.

No book has been so bitterly opposed as the Bible, but it has outlasted all such opposition. It has been burned, prohibited, ridiculed, derided, but it still retains its position as the most widespread book distributed. Each working day no less than 6 tons of Bibles are crated and dispatched for world-wide distribution from Bible House, London. This is the very site that centuries ago Tyndale's Bible was publicly burned as a protest against its use.

The Bible is a literary miracle, unique among all other books. It matters not whether you consider the wonder of its construction, the beauty of its unification, the marvel of its preservation, the truth of its prognostications, the claim of its inspiration, or the power it wields in transformation, it is outstanding and distinct among books, bearing the stamp of divine authorship.

The word *Bible* means book. The Bible is not one book, however, but a library of sixty-six books, the compilation of which extended over almost 1600 years. Its various authors, or amanueses rather (for God was the real Author), were drawn from every class of society. Kings, statesmen, priests, laymen, scholars, shepherds, fishermen and others cooperated in its production. One man wrote

one part in Syria, another man wrote in Arabia, a third man wrote in Italy, a fourth man wrote in Babylon, others wrote in Palestine.

And yet, though these writers were divided by time, class and distance so that there was no possibility of any collusion, there is a wonderful harmony manifest in all that they wrote that is quite unlike any other composite work in the realm of literature.

That is due only to the fact that God was the moving influence in its production, and in all that is recorded therein.

It was He Who caused the various authors to write as they did, so that each one, in his own individual manner, expressed that which Inspiration caused him to write. Thus all sixty-six books agree perfectly in teaching. Each one harmonizes with the rest, supplementing or expounding upon what has gone before, so that by "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. 2:13), the reader is brought to a complete understanding of the Divine will and purpose.

### **A Living Message For Today**

The Bible is also unique in that it provides for every kind of reader. It can guide the simple mind of a child, or satisfy the most profound student. As its writers were drawn from every strata of society, and expressed Divine truths from their individual standpoint, it is capable of helping and inspiring every type of person whether male or female, young or old, rich or poor, educated or ignorant. What it demands of all, however, whether they be simple or profound, educated or ignorant, is a faith to accept its message, and a disposition to apply its precepts.

The Bible is unique in that more books, commentaries and concordances have been published about it than any other work; and yet, though they have been appearing for centuries, new works of exposition continue to pour forth from the press. In short, the depths of its significance are inexhaustible, so that the Bible never stales; it remains a best-seller year after year. There is always some

deeper significance to be discovered, even in its basic message, that makes the reading of the Bible an exciting adventure in study.

How different that is to most books! I have, in my library, well over a thousand volumes, covering almost all subjects, some of which I have read more than once, though normally a single reading suffices; but the Bible I read through completely every year, besides giving close, detailed attention to sections of it, without ever becoming tired of doing so, nor losing my interest in its contents.

I know of no other book that I could read so often, without becoming completely bored by its contents.

Despite the great antiquity of the Bible, despite the fact that it was written primarily for a different age and a foreign people, it has a living message for today. Of what other book can that be said? The Psalmist truly declared:

*"I will never forget Thy precepts for with them Thou hast quickened me" (or given me new life - Psalm 119:93).*

This is the book we desire to study together. It can inspire us, purify our characters, give us peace of mind, and provide us with a glorious hope for the future. In its transforming influence is found, indeed, the stamp of its divinity.

### **Objections Considered**

The Bible challenges us with its divine origin. Five hundred times in the first five books, it prefaces or concludes its declarations with the assertion, "The Lord said," or "The Lord spake." Three hundred times again in the following books it does the same. Similar expressions occur no less than twelve hundred times in the prophetic books.

The Bible thus claims to be the inspired Word of God (Hebrews 1:1).

It must be judged upon that claim.

Some allow inspiration for some portions of the Bible, and deny it for others: but obviously, it must either all be true, or all be false, for its sixty-six books are indissolubly linked together. We must either accept all, or reject all; and, sooner or later, every person is forced to decide as to where he stands in this matter.

Some seek to belittle the Bible by pointing to inconsistencies revealed in the characters portrayed therein. They declare that David was an adulterer, that Peter was a traitor, that Paul was a murderer. But surely the impress of Divine inspiration is stamped in the recording of such matters. Life is presented in its true light. The sins of Peter are not omitted because he was foremost of the Apostles; the crimes of Paul are not overlooked though he did take the message to Gentiles; the great apostasy of the Jewish people is revealed in all its wickedness, even though they constitute the chosen race, the "people of the Book."

In a merely human document, these blemishes, most likely would be deleted or explained in a way as to not so harshly reflect upon the persons concerned; but the Bible, being what it claims to be, reveals human nature as it really is. Because the Bible is true and Divine, the characters that are portrayed therein, are set forth as seen through the eyes of God.

### **What About Contradictions?**

It is a common fallacy that the Bible is full of contradictions. This we refute. We do not dispute that a few errors and interpolations, due to mistakes in translation or transcription, have entered the text of the Authorized Version, but they are by no means as frequent as is generally thought, and are so minor in importance that they do not interfere with the general teaching of the Book. We were once handed a booklet entitled *One Hundred Contradictions In The Bible*. Examination proved it to be a very shallow publication. The so-called "contradictions" existed in the mind of the author, rather

than in the pages of Scripture. The meaning of Scripture was distorted to create contradictions, and the writer did not appreciate that apparent discrepancies can be harmonized without doing violence to the record.

For example, let four men report on a specific incident, and the four accounts will differ according to the particular interest of the person concerned. A superficial examination of the four accounts would suggest that they conflicted, whereas, in fact each one could be perfectly true, and revealed as such when the facts were thoroughly investigated.

This is the case with the four Gospel accounts of the life of Christ, and other records of Scripture. Though the writers were inspired, they expressed in their own words, or from their own standpoint, what Inspiration caused them to write. This is sometimes represented as contradiction by readers without discernment. On the contrary, we claim, with every assurance, that there is perfect harmony throughout the Bible, and would be pleased to show this to be the case.

Let us present a case of a so-called contradiction being harmonized when all the facts are brought to bear. The parallel accounts of the armies of Israel and Judah are recorded in the books of Samuel and Chronicles. The former provides figures that seem to be at variance with the latter. It states that there were 800,000 men in Israel, and 500,000 in Judah (2 Samuel 24:9); the latter gives 1,100,000 in Israel, and 470,000 in Judah (I Chronicles 21:5). At first sight a discrepancy seems evident, but a more careful reading will show that the basis of computation is not the same in the two records. In Samuel, the figures relating to Israel concern "valiant" men only, and represented only portion of the army (the veterans) whilst the figures for Judah in 1 Chronicles 21:5 omitted some of Benjamin usually counted with Judah (see v.6).

Thus these two accounts which seem to contradict each other when read superficially, actually harmonize and supplement each other when studied properly.

The same two chapters record a transaction that took place between David the king of Israel, and Araunah, a Jebusite, wherein the former purchased some land from the latter. The accounts seem to be contradictory. In 2 Samuel 24:24, the price is given as fifty shekels of silver; but in 1 Chronicles 21:22-25, it is said to be six hundred shekels of gold. Critics of the Bible advance the seeming contradiction triumphantly to prove their contention that it is fallible. But a careful reading will show that both the accounts are correct, for the former price related only to "the threshing floor and oxen," whilst the latter price was for "the place," a term which included the whole site of what was later the Temple area. The "threshing floor" was a very important, but relatively small part of the complete purchase, called in Chronicles "the place."

These are very minor matters, and even if it could be proved that they were contradictions, they would not affect the basic message of the Bible. We merely quote them to illustrate what is advanced as some of the "hundred contradictions" in the Bible, as set out in the book handed to us. Other so-called discrepancies were even more easily rebutted than these. It is apparent that the "contradictions" existed in the biased mind of the critic, not in the pages of the Bible.

### **3. The Historical Witness**

History confirms that the Bible is true. Even such an agnostic as H. G. Wells in his *History Of The World* gave testimony to that. He acknowledged that the Bible is true in its historical outline.

There are incidents recorded in Scripture that have been disputed by historians, but which have been confirmed by discoveries subsequently made. For example, the building activity of

Nebuchadnezzar was once disputed, until the Bible was proved true by the discoveries of archaeologists.

Again, critics of the Bible claimed that Belshazzar was not king in Babylon at the epoch of its fall as alleged by Daniel (Ch. 5:30). They pointed out that Nabonidus was the ruling monarch, and they claimed that Belshazzar never lived! In their claim that Nabonidus was supreme ruler of Babylon, they were right; but so also was the Bible. Many cuneiform tablets discovered by archaeologists in Babylon confirm that whilst Nabonidus was the chief ruler, he recently had elevated his son Belshazzar to power as second ruler in the Kingdom. Once again the challenge of learned critics of the Bible proved vain in the light of facts.

The discovery of these tablets illustrated how true is the Book of Daniel even in its detail, for Belshazzar is therein presented as offering *third place* in the kingdom to any who was able to read the writing on the wall (Daniel 5:7). "He shall be the third ruler in the kingdom," he declared.

Archaeology has revealed that this is true to historic fact, for there were already two kings ruling in Babylon: Nabonidus and Belshazzar, and whoever was elevated as promised would be "third ruler."

Again critics have claimed that the record of Daniel is notoriously false, and that he must have lived at a much later time. Evidence was advanced on the grounds of the use of Greek words in his book, and it was dogmatically stated that they were unknown in Babylon at the time. But again, archaeological fact has proved the theory false. The writer J. Urquhart stated: "The one contention that Greece carried nothing to Babylonia before the time of Alexander the Great (i.e. 200 years after Daniel) is now too absurd for serious discussion . . ." So a further bastion of the critics, and that a powerful one, has been destroyed.

As an indication of how true the Bible is to fact, is the statement found in Daniel 4:29 which describes king Nebuchadnezzar as "walking in the palace". It is normal for a king to walk in his palace, but, in fact, the original language describes him as walking "upon" his palace. It was thought that this must be a gloss of some kind, and so, in the translation, it is given as *in* not *upon*. But, in fact, the original is correct. One of the seven wonders of the ancient world were the hanging gardens of Babylon which were connected with the palace. It was the custom of the king to walk upon the flat roof of the palace to enjoy the beauty that he had created. It is quite natural, therefore, for him to say, as he viewed this wonder of the ancient world:

*"Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?"*

As a further witness to the truth of the Bible, Babylon, in spite of its strength and glory, was overthrown exactly as God decreed it would be. Isaiah the prophet declared:

*"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation . . ." (Isaiah 13:19-20).*

How could the prophet speak with such certainty of the future of so mighty a city? Today, Babylon remains in ruins on the banks of the Euphrates, *exactly in that state* described by Isaiah, yet the city was not overthrown until a thousand years after the prophet spoke those words. How could he speak with such dogmatism? Only by the inspiration of God. A powerful witness that the Bible is true and reliable in every detail.

Some time back Von Daniken wrote a best-seller entitled *The Chariots of the Gods*. He set forth a theory of an invasion of earth from outer space in ancient times. He claimed that only such an

invasion could account for the amazing records of architectural and scientific wonder that archaeology reveals ancient man manifested. He cited the wonder of the pyramids; the majesty of the temples of Baalbek; the remarkable accuracy by which the heavenly bodies and time were measured in ancient times. He concluded that if evolution is true (which he believes) then primitive man would lack the intelligence and ability to manifest such skills. The only conclusion he could think of was that earth had been invaded by beings of superior wisdom who had accomplished these wonders of the past. He claimed to find evidence of such an invasion from archaeological sources, which, however, a sane, balanced view does not permit.

However, archaeology does reveal that early man was at least as intelligent as modern man, and in some realms of knowledge, even more so. And this is what the Bible reveals. It teaches that God created man "very good," and implies that any deterioration came later.

Archaeology and history thoroughly confirm the Bible wherever they touch upon its records.

#### **4. Prophetic Witness**

I believe the Bible because of its prophetic testimony.

No one has yet shown the Bible to be wrong in its outline of history. On the contrary, history and archaeology have confirmed it upon every point where they have touched. Nevertheless, we freely concede that the mere fact that a book is true does not establish it as Divine; a greater reason must be given for such a claim to be made.

Such a reason is found in the amazing fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Man can not predict ahead with any certainty; but God has done so in the Bible, and events have thoroughly vindicated what He has proclaimed. As predicted, Babylon is still in heaps (Jer. 51:37), Nineveh still lies empty, void and waste (Nahum

2:10), Egypt still remains a base nation (Ezekiel 29:15); Tyre has been submerged by the sea and literally remains a place for the spreading of nets (Ezekiel 26:5); Israel has been scattered among the nations (Deuteronomy 28:64), and Jerusalem given over to the Gentiles (Luke 21:24), but today the Jews are returning to their land and restoring the wastes (Jeremiah 30:18-24; Amos 9:14), and Jerusalem is gradually gaining more independence, as foretold.

The evidence of prophecy is an irrefutable argument for the Divine inspiration of the Bible, proving that it is more than a merely human document.

But one nation above all others, has been set by God as a witness in the earth; and that is the nation of Israel. God invites all peoples to gather themselves together to consider this witness (Isa. 43:9-10). He declares:

*"I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure".*

Now consider some of the facts, and assess for yourself whether that declaration is true. Concerning Israel, God declared:

*"For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee; though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jeremiah 30:11)*

Where are the mighty empires of the past that scattered Israel? They have gone! Where are Assyria, Babylon, Greece or Rome? They have sunk into oblivion as far as their empires are concerned. But Israel remains; and in recent years has revived as a nation in the earth. God prophesied:

*"Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep*

*him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he" (Jeremiah 31:10-11).*

The modern revival of Israel in the earth is in accordance with these prophetic declarations. Even details of prophecy are being fulfilled. Jesus Christ predicted that Jerusalem would be dominated by the enemies of Israel until the latter days: (Luke 21:24), and so it has come to pass. In 1967, at the conclusion of the decisive Six Day War, Jerusalem was freed from Arab control, and for the first time in 2000 years, Jews controlled their ancient seat of government. Again prophecy was wonderfully vindicated.

Another passage of the Bible declares that "blindness in part" will be the state of Israel "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" at which time all tribes of Israel shall be saved. The Scriptures declares: "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Romans 11:25-26).

It is a matter of wonder to many that Israelis, in spite of the amazing fulfillment of Bible prophecy in the revival of the nation, still fail to comprehend God's purpose in the nation, and continue to refute the Messiahship of Jesus Christ. Jews are surrounded by miracles in the land, and yet refuse to believe! And that, in itself, is a miracle. It witnesses to the truth of the prophetic word that such would be the case until the Lord Jesus returns, when "they shall look upon him who they pierced, and shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son" (Zechariah 12:10).

In addition to the future of Israel, the Scriptures plainly reveal the future of other nations, and even the whole course of human history. Daniel 2, within the compass of nine short verses outlines the whole history of the world, and reveals the consummation of present national trends.

The chapter describes the vision of a metallic image as seen by the king. It had head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs

of brass, legs of iron, feet and toes part of iron and part of clay. Four different metals, and then a division answering to the toes of the image.

We are left in no doubt as to what the image is all about. Daniel interpreted it to represent four major world powers which history identifies as Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Rome itself was divided into two parts known to history as eastern and western Rome, answering to the two legs of the image. The toes represent the divided state of Europe such as we see today.

There are remarkable features incorporated into the prophecy of the Image that have had remarkable fulfillment. For example, it is a clear fulfillment of the prophecy that there have been four world empires (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome), and that the fourth was divided into two parts as required by the prophecy. It is also an amazing vindication of the prophecy that following that two-fold division, Europe was divided into a number of smaller nations (answering to the toes of the image) that have manifested their several independencies to this day.

The prophet declared of them that some would be strong and some would be weak (exactly as they are) and that all the efforts of man to bring peace would prove futile. "They shall not cleave one to another," he declared.

Is not it remarkable that in the light of that prophecy every attempt to unite mankind proves vain? The League of Nations between the two world wars was a hopeless failure; and has the UNO proved any more successful in bringing unity and peace to the world? It has not.

Here is a prophecy, proclaimed over 2500 years ago, declared the nations would be in the very state that we find them today. A clear vindication of its truth.

Moreover, Daniel the prophet declared that the rulers of the nations would have recourse to the processes of democracy and socialism

in an attempt to unite mankind, but in vain. The modern industrial unrest and spread of Communism answer to this.

He declared: "They (the kings or rulers) shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another". The attempts of rulers to "mingle" with the lower stratas of society (the word for "men" is *enoshim* and denotes the lowest order of mankind) in an attempt to solve the divisive features of modern life are notorious. There have been attempts to co-operate with communistic elements, but in vain. Industrial disturbances have become a modern way of life, referred to by the Lord Jesus when he spoke of the (political) sea and waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear . . . " (Luke 21:25-26).

Thus the very elements of political society that are so disturbing today vindicate the prophetic word. But that word also gives a hope for the future that permits a believer to follow the admonition of the Lord: "When ye see these things begin to come to pass then lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:25-26).

Daniel's final comment brings world history to a glorious climax. He declared:

*"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44).*

This is the great consummation that God has in store for the earth: a universal empire, reigned over by Christ from Jerusalem the city of the great king, and assisted by his friends then given eternal life.

The Bible clearly proclaims these matters. Listen to it:

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

*"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:25-26).*

*"The nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth" (Rev. 11:18).*

I believe all that because I believe the Bible; and I believe the Bible because of its impact upon me personally; because of its amazing internal evidence; because archaeology and history prove it true, and because its prophecies have been vindicated beyond all doubt.

Take the last quotation above. The nations are angry, but you may not believe that we are living at the epoch of Christ's return, the time of the dead that they should be judged, when the divine reward will be given unto those who believe and obey his word. But you cannot dispute the fact that with nuclear weapons today, for the first time in history man has in his power the means to destroy the earth. And that is what the statement is saying. You know also that there are men in power sufficiently ruthless to use those means to gratify their ambition, and so set the world alight with the flames of destruction. Who can stop them? Only the Lord Jesus Christ with the wisdom and power he has at his command. I believe that he will return to discipline and reign over the nations. I believe in the Bible.

And believing in the Bible, I have hope. It was written for that purpose.

The Apostle Paul taught:

*"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4).*

The glorious gospel of Christ can provide a hope for the future of this earth that is elevating and comforting.