

A hand is shown holding a large, dark metal key. The key has a complex, multi-toothed head and a circular ring at the end. The background is a close-up of the American flag (stars and stripes) and the Union Jack (British flag). The text is overlaid on the lower portion of the image.

**The United States
And Great Britain
In Prophecy**

The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy

by John H. Ogwyn

More than 50 years ago, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong (1892–1986) wrote a book entitled *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy*. This booklet builds upon Mr. Armstrong's research, and that of other authors, to point the reader not simply to the history of the past, but to **history written in advance!**

Contents

PAGE

- 1** Preface: The Lost Master Key—Found!
 - 5** Ezekiel's Dramatic Vision
 - 9** Ancient Promises Are Made
 - 18** Israel's Captivity and Lost Identity
 - 29** The Birthright Promises Are Fulfilled
 - 39** The Coming Restoration
-

USP Edition 1.2, March 2008
©2008 LIVING CHURCH OF GOD™
All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

This booklet is not to be sold!

It has been provided as a free public educational
service by the Living Church of God

Scriptures in this booklet are quoted from the *New King James Version*
(©Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers) unless otherwise noted.

Cover: ©TW Illustration

Preface:

The Lost Master Key—Found!

What does the future hold for the world's English-speaking peoples? What *really* is on the horizon for the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand? Heads of government do not know. Leading analysts of foreign affairs do not know. Neither do the overwhelming majority of editors and newscasters. But **you** can know!

Astounding? Absolutely, but it is true!

How can you know? The answers to the really big questions in life, including the very future itself, are contained in the world's perennial best-seller, the Bible. More than a quarter of the Bible is prophecy, mostly for our day and beyond.

How can you understand these prophecies? Perhaps the most vital key to unlocking the mystery of Bible prophecy is the one you will see revealed right here in the pages of this booklet.

Nations such as Egypt and Ethiopia are directly mentioned in your Bible. What about the big nations that are major players on the modern world scene? Could it be possible that end-time prophecies would ignore the United States and Great Britain, and the British-descended peoples of the Commonwealth countries?

The vital key to unlocking many Bible prophecies is the knowledge of the *real identity* of the English-speaking peoples. These peoples are identified in the Bible by the name of their ancient ancestor. Who is that ancient ancestor, and can you prove it?

Why have the British-descended nations come to possess the richest portions of the globe? Why have they enjoyed wealth and

power without parallel? Rising quickly to prominence after the year 1800, Great Britain and the United States have clearly dominated the 19th and 20th centuries. But what about the 21st century? Will the English-speaking nations continue to play a leading role, or is a change ahead? It is vital that you understand what the future holds for you and for your family. The events of the next few years will absolutely confound the experts. But **you can know** if you understand how to use the lost master key to understanding prophecy.

Though much has been written about Bible prophecy in recent years, most of these works have been fatally flawed because writers have not known the *master key* to Bible prophecy!

Simply put, *most Old Testament prophecies are directed at the House of Israel*. Supposing erroneously that all the references to Israel in prophecy mean the Jewish people and the Jewish state in the Middle East, most Bible commentators have completely missed the point. They do not know the modern-day identity of the descendants of ancient Israel. Yet they could know, for the records of both history and Scripture are very clear.

While the Jewish state and the city of Jerusalem do certainly play an important role in end-time prophecies, *not all Israelites are Jews*. The ancient patriarch Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, was the father of 12 sons. One of those sons, Judah, was the progenitor of the Jewish people. What happened to the descendants of the other sons?

When the 12 tribes returned to the Promised Land after their Egyptian captivity, each settled in a different region. Eventually the tribes split into two kingdoms. The southern kingdom, called Judah, consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and most of the Levites. The remaining ten tribes formed the northern kingdom, called Israel.

In 721BC, after a three-year siege, the Assyrians conquered Samaria, Israel's capital. They began a systematic deportation of the Israelites to the area north of the Euphrates River, in the area between the Black and Caspian Seas (2 Kings 17).

After swallowing Israel, the Assyrians later advanced into Judah, the southern kingdom. King Hezekiah, on the throne in Jerusalem at the time, cried out to God in a heartfelt way, and God

intervened by sending an angel to destroy the Assyrian army of King Sennacherib in 701BC. Judah, thus spared, continued on for about a century before her independence was again threatened.

Then, in 604BC, the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah and advanced on Jerusalem. Judah was made a tributary state within the Babylonian Empire. Returning again in 597BC, Nebuchadnezzar took Judah's King Jehoiakim into captivity and placed Zedekiah upon the throne. Dissatisfied with Zedekiah's behavior, King Nebuchadnezzar returned approximately ten years later and completely destroyed Jerusalem, burning the temple and taking most of the Jewish population into captivity in Babylon.

Decades passed. Finally, in the fall of 539BC, Babylon fell to the Persian armies of Cyrus the Great. Within a short time, Cyrus issued a decree allowing the Jews to return from Babylon and to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem under the leadership of Zerubbabel.

The “Lost” Ten Tribes

However, and here is the crucial point that most seem to overlook: **The northern ten tribes never returned from their captivity!** Settled in an area hundreds of miles from where the Jews were taken more than a century later, **the ten tribes of Israel remained completely separate and distinct from the Jews.**

What happened to the ten tribes of Israel? History has called them the “lost ten tribes.” Where did they go? The answer to that question is one of history's most fascinating stories. In fact, the answer to that mystery is the actual key that unlocks most of the Old Testament prophecies!

As you may guess, the identity and location of these ancient peoples reveals *who we are* in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and among the British-descended peoples of South Africa. It explains *why* we have achieved such national greatness, and *what will happen* to us near the end of this present age!

The knowledge of the identity of the descendants of ancient Israel is revealed by a close examination of Scripture together with the record of secular history. The most highly educated leaders of

our modern world are blind to the true facts of this matter. They are blinded by the theory of evolution into completely discounting the Bible as relevant for today. As a result, they fail to see the amazing story laid out in Scripture and its relevance for our future.

Most religious leaders are in the same category. Even those who claim to acknowledge the Bible as their authority are blinded by the prejudices of denominational tradition.

But it is not just a question of ancient history! Your future, your family's future, as well as the future of your nation hangs on the answer! Where are the "lost ten tribes" of Israel today? As we shall see, this **lost master key** to unlocking Bible prophecy has been found!

Ezekiel's Dramatic Vision

A young Jewish captive stood on a riverbank near the southern Mesopotamian city of Babylon. He had been among the thousands of Jews removed from their homeland more than four years earlier by the conquering Babylonian armies under King Nebuchadnezzar.

At age 30, in his fifth year of exile, Ezekiel the priest looked up to behold a remarkable sight. At first it looked like a whirlwind approaching from the northern horizon. Looking intently, he saw that this was no ordinary approaching storm. Brilliant flashes of light emanated from the “whirlwind.” Seeing an increasing glow of light as the “storm” approached, Ezekiel began to identify details within this remarkable whirlwind.

First he saw four strange-looking angelic creatures. They had the general shape of men, but each possessed four wings and four faces. As he continued to stare, Ezekiel noticed gyroscope-like wheels next to each of these creatures. Then he noticed a great crystalline expanse stretched over their heads.

As the whole apparatus came ever closer, Ezekiel was able to discern a brilliant glow of light from above the crystalline expanse. Within this light he could make out the shape of a throne and of a glorious Being seated upon that throne. This, we are told, “was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD” (Ezekiel 1:28). At this point, Ezekiel simply fell upon his face.

Suddenly a voice came forth from the throne and told Ezekiel to stand up. The God of Israel proceeded to give him a commis-

sion. He was being set as a watchman for the House of Israel (Ezekiel 2:3; 33:7).

This awesome display of glory and majesty deeply impressed Ezekiel with the importance of his task since, for God to reveal Himself in such a dramatic way, there must have been a very important purpose indeed.

Ezekiel's Commission

Notice that Ezekiel's commission set him as a watchman *not to his own people* (the House of Judah), but to the *northern ten tribes* of the House of Israel! Judah was then only partially in captivity; the destruction of Jerusalem itself lay several years in the future. But the House of Israel had been transported into a strange land, hundreds of miles from Ezekiel, more than 120 years before. What would be the point of warning those people, already captive, of impending invasion and captivity?

Clearly, Ezekiel's message was not for the Israel of *his* day! God was not more than a century late in warning them of future punishment! That would make no sense at all. Besides, Ezekiel never had a chance to deliver his message in person to the House of Israel. We thus can see that his message was for the end time, and was written down and preserved for God's faithful servants to deliver today!

God commissioned Ezekiel to be a watchman. What exactly is a watchman? In ancient times it was customary to place someone in a high tower atop the city wall to serve as lookout when danger threatened. It was the watchman's job to be alert and vigilant, ever scanning the horizon for signs of an approaching enemy. When he saw evidence of an enemy's approach, the watchman was to sound a trumpet of alarm.

In the same way, God impressed upon Ezekiel that if he did not sound the alarm God gave him, and calamities overtook the people unaware, God would require their blood at his hands. If, on the other hand, he sounded the alarms but the people failed to respond, they would bear the responsibility themselves and Ezekiel would be guiltless (Ezekiel 33:8–9).

The House of Israel in Ezekiel's day *was already in captivity*. The generation that suffered the captivity had received a final warning more than a century earlier by the emissaries of faithful King Hezekiah of Judah (2 Chronicles 30:1–12). Only a few responded; the nation as a whole laughed the warnings to scorn, and Israel went completely into captivity. Now, more than a century later, Ezekiel was given a similar message of vital importance.

The events that would occur in Jerusalem and Judah were to be a “sign” to the House of Israel (Ezekiel 4:1–3). Ezekiel's warnings were for end-time Israel. In fact, we are told that the warnings are to be heard near the time of the day of the Lord (Ezekiel 7:19; 13:5; 30:1–3), the time of God's intervention at the end of this age. Other prophecies in Ezekiel point to the regathering *after* the coming of the Messiah. This will be the time when ancient King David will be resurrected and made king forever (Ezekiel 37:21–25). Clearly this will take place at the resurrection of the saints, a time prophesied to occur at Jesus Christ's return to this earth in power and glory (1 Corinthians 15:50–53; 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Ezekiel's dramatic vision has great meaning for us today. It impresses us with the seriousness and importance of the commission God had for him. Recognizing this, it is vital to understand clearly the whereabouts in today's world of the descendants of the ancient House of Israel. Once we understand their identity, we must share with them the contents of Ezekiel's urgent message.

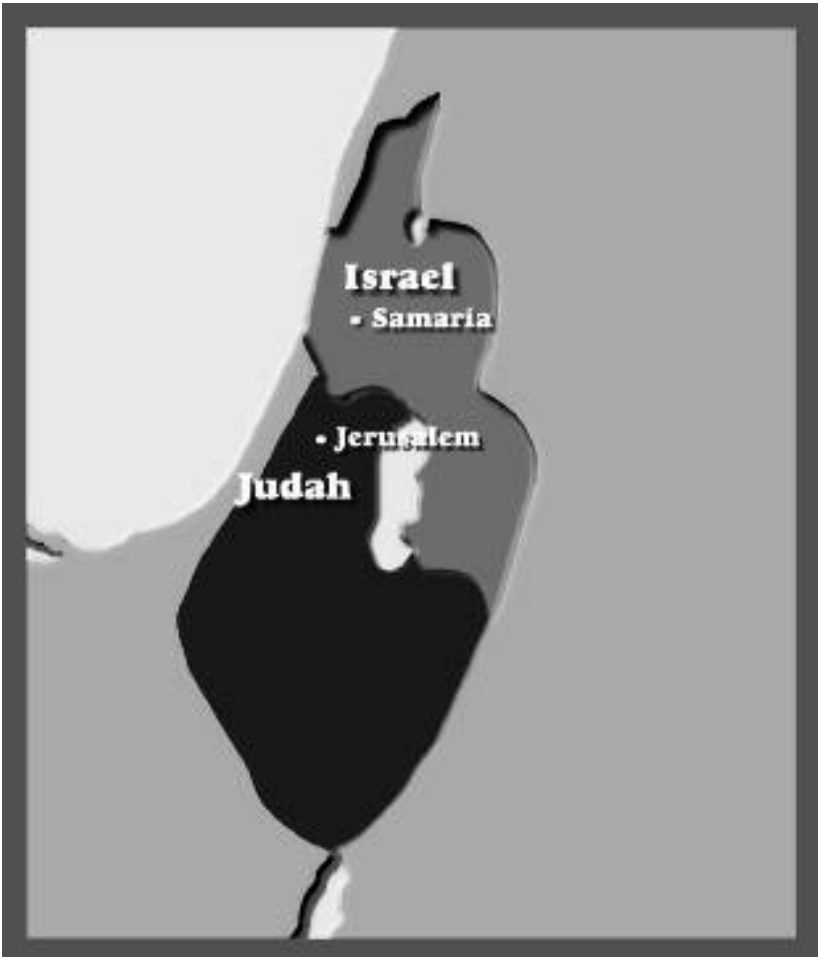
Ezekiel's message is a message of indictment for sin, a call to repentance, and a promise of future deliverance and restoration. While on the one hand it is a message of dire warning of God's impending judgment, it is on the other hand a message of glorious hope for the future. In fact, it contains the only real hope there is for our nations. The English-speaking nations have lost their moral compass and have seemingly lost their way in the world. Beset with serious problems and challenges at home and abroad, our peoples lack both the wisdom and the will to respond.

Having fallen from the pinnacle of world power at the close of World War II, the American and British peoples have seen increasing challenges in the post-war world. But worse than the challenges on the world scene, has been the moral slide from within.

In the midst of material prosperity we are beset with moral poverty! There are challenges that lie ahead in the immediate future of which our leaders and our people do not even dream.

How can you know for sure that the Bible prophecies relating to Israel relate primarily to the American and British peoples? What do those prophecies really portend for your future? Read on for the amazing answers to these and other questions.

The Northern and Southern Kingdoms



Ancient Promises Are Made

In Genesis 11:26–32 we are introduced to Abram, whose name was later changed to Abraham. The rest of the Bible is an outgrowth of God's dealings with him and the promises He made to Abraham and to his descendants. The promises to Abraham are the basis of nearly all future Bible prophecies!

Abram was born into a family that lived in Ur of the Chaldees, a city in southern Mesopotamia near ancient Babylon. After the death of one of his brothers, Abram, his father, and other family members moved a few hundred miles to the northern Euphrates city of Haran. A while after that, Abram's father, Terah, died and was buried. In the aftermath, God told Abram, then age 75, to leave the remainder of his family and to go to a land that He would show him. He promised to make him a great nation.

The promise first given in Genesis 12 is quite vague. It simply consists of an undefined land that Abram and his family would afterward be given for an inheritance. Throughout the remainder of Genesis we read a remarkable story of the unfolding of the promises made by God.

The Unfolding Promise to Abraham

In Genesis 12:1–3 we have record of the first promises that God made to Abram. God told him that He would make of him “a great nation,” that he would be blessed and that through him all

nations would be blessed, and that God would “bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you” (v. 3).

After Abram and his wife, along with his nephew Lot, came into the land of Canaan, an incident occurred which led God to further clarify the promises. Abram and Lot both had large herds and flocks and strife had arisen between their herdsmen over grazing rights. Abram settled the issue by offering Lot his choice of grazing land. Lot chose to cross the Jordan River and to graze his herds in the plain of Jordan, near the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

In the aftermath of the separation between the two, God reiterated to Abram the promises. “And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: ‘Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered’ (13:14–16). In Genesis 15 this promise is further amplified. Abram was told that his descendants would be like the number of the stars (v. 5). He was also given the boundaries of his inheritance in the Middle East. In verses 18–21 Abram was told that the land God was giving to his descendants would stretch from the river of Egypt all the way to the Euphrates and include the territory of several peoples who were currently occupying the land.

Father of Many Nations

Abram and his wife Sarai were both advancing in years and had not been able to have children. Yet God had told him that he would have descendants who would inherit a land. For 24 years after they left Haran, Abram and Sarai waited and pondered these promises. Finally, when he was 99 years old, God appeared to Abram once again.

In Genesis 17:6, God promised: “I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make **nations** of you, and **kings shall come from you.**” At this point Abram also learned that he would become the father of **many nations** (v. 4). God told him that He

was changing his name to Abraham, meaning the “father of a multitude,” and Sarai’s name to Sarah, meaning “princess.” Within a year, he was told, Sarah would bear him a son (Genesis 17:19; cf. 18:14). Such a thing seemed too incredible for words, but nevertheless it happened just as God said that it would and Isaac was born at the appointed time.

Actually, Abraham had had a son 14 years before Isaac’s birth, but this son Ishmael was not the son of promise. After ten years of waiting on God’s promises, Sarah had encouraged Abraham to take her maid servant Hagar and have a child by her. He did this and thereby engendered problems and conflicts that have endured to this day.

After Isaac’s birth, Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael away (Genesis 21:14). Ultimately Ishmael married among his mother’s people, the Egyptians, and had numerous children. The Arab nations take their origin from Ishmael’s sons.

Years later, God came to Abraham once again, this time to put him to the supreme test of his faith. God, who by this time had been personally dealing with Abraham for decades, told him to take his son Isaac and bring him to the mountains of Moriah to offer him as a sacrifice to God. Responding in faith, Abraham did as God asked and was at the point of offering up his heir and only legitimate son when God interceded and told him to stop, and instead offer a ram caught in a nearby thicket, as a substitute for Isaac.

In the aftermath, God reconfirmed the promises to Abraham as *having become unconditional*. “Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: ‘By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice’” (Genesis 22:15–18).

There are a couple of key points to notice here. No longer are the promises contingent upon future actions of Abraham and his descendants. Because Abraham has now passed this supreme test

of obedience, God has guaranteed the unconditional future fulfillment of His promises.

Additionally, one other detail is now given. Abraham's descendants would ultimately possess the "gates" of their enemies. A gate is a narrow passage, a means of entrance and exit. This promise means that not only would Abraham's descendants become many nations, but they would control the means by which their enemies must pass to come and go. We will examine the significance of this remarkable promise later in this booklet.

Promises Both Spiritually and Physically Fulfilled

"But aren't all of the promises to Abraham fulfilled in Christ?" some might ask. That is a question that must be answered directly from the Bible.

Clearly, according to Galatians 3:26–29, all true Christians are accounted as spiritual children of Abraham and heirs of the promise. The ultimate fulfillment of God's blessings upon Abraham include the promise that he and his spiritual offspring would inherit the whole earth (Romans 4:13; cf. Matthew 5:5). Abraham was promised an everlasting inheritance (Genesis 17:8), which certainly presupposes the possession of eternal life!

Obviously there was a spiritual aspect to the promises that God made to Abraham! God's grace was to be extended to all mankind through the one Seed, Christ (cf. Galatians 3:16). The Messiah, descended from Abraham, would be the One through whom the blessing of salvation from sin and the gift of eternal life would become available to all mankind through God's grace.

However, there was also a physical aspect to the promises to Abraham. The birthright involved promises of national greatness as well as agricultural and mineral wealth. In Genesis 13:16 Abraham was told by God that He would make his seed number like the dust of the ground. Here, clearly, the reference is to Abraham's numerous physical descendants who would inherit national greatness and possess the gates of their enemies.

The promises to Abraham include both spiritual and physical components. They point toward Jesus the Messiah, but they also

point toward the birthright blessings that would be bestowed upon a multitude of his descendants who would become a great nation and a great company of nations. This does not mean that the recipients of these blessings are any better or more special than those who did not receive the blessings. In fact, we see that those who received the physical blessings have, for the most part, squandered them and turned from God, for which they will have to face His judgment.

Israel's Beginning

Many years after the promises were first made, God reconfirmed them to Abraham's son Isaac. "Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; **because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws**" (Genesis 26:3–5). The promise to Isaac was based upon Abraham's obedience to God (cf. v. 24).

Isaac and his wife, Rebecca, had twin sons. Jacob and Esau were their names, and they were totally different in temperament and character from the very beginning. God had revealed prior to their birth that the older, Esau, was to serve the younger, Jacob (25:23). Yet Jacob, who was a natural wheeler-dealer, was unable to wait for God to give him the birthright blessings. He contrived to trick his father so as to secure them for himself on the timetable he and his mother conceived. God allowed this because it was His purpose for Jacob to receive the promises. Jacob then had to learn some difficult lessons through experience, to bring him to repentance.

However, let us notice the birthright blessings that Isaac conferred to Jacob. "Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over

your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!" (27:28–29). Here two details are mentioned for the first time. The first is that Jacob's descendants would possess great agricultural wealth. The second is that they would obtain rulership over other peoples and nationalities.

After Jacob had deceived his brother, Isaac and Rebecca told him to travel to the area where his mother's family lived. There he could find a wife and spend some time until his brother's anger cooled off. Isaac's parting words were: "May God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may be an assembly ["multitude," KJV] of peoples; and **give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and your descendants with you**, that you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham" (28:3–4).

A short time later, God came to Jacob in a dream and further amplified the promises. In his dream he saw a vast staircase reaching up to heaven and angels ascending and descending. "And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: 'I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; **you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south**; and in you and in your seed **all of the families of the earth shall be blessed**'" (28:13–14).

Here, for the first time, we learn that the inheritance God promised to Abraham encompassed more than just the land in the Middle East. Jacob's descendants were to spread abroad from that inheritance and affect the entire world. Their inheritance would bring them into contact with peoples all over the earth.

The story continues in Genesis and we see the lessons that Jacob learned during the time of his exile from Canaan. Finally, as he returned to his homeland, God met him at a location afterward named Peniel. After Jacob had wrestled all night with the Divine Messenger, God told him: "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed" (32:28). Jacob-Israel was the father of 12 sons, who were the ancestors of the 12 tribes of Israel.

The promises to Abraham were being passed down from father to son and had gradually been expanded. There is much more yet to come! Abraham had been told that he would produce “many nations” who would achieve national greatness and also that he would give rise to a kingly line. This promise was now divided among two of Jacob’s 12 sons. Notice the clear delineation given in 1 Chronicles 5:1–2: “Now the sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel—he was indeed the firstborn, but because he defiled his father’s bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel, so that the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright; yet **Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him came a ruler, although the birthright was Joseph’s.**”

Judah was clearly given the scepter promise of a line of kings culminating in the Messiah who would be King of kings. But take note! The birthright promises of national greatness went not to the Jews, but to the descendants of Joseph. Understanding this is the *master key* that begins to open up everything else!

Jacob (Israel) had 12 sons:

Leah’s Sons	Rachel’s Sons	Bilhah’s Sons	Zilpah’s Sons
Reuben	Joseph	Dan	Gad
Simeon	Benjamin	Naphtali	Asher
Levi	Judah’s descendants were promised a line of kings culminating in the Messiah. Joseph’s descendants were given the birthright promises of national greatness.		
Judah			
Issachar			
Zebulun			

Ephraim and Manasseh Receive the Birthright

Let us look further at how the birthright promises were amplified for the descendants of Joseph. An important part of this story occurred a short time before the death of Jacob-Israel. By this time

he and his entire family were living in Egypt where Joseph was serving as administrator directly under Pharaoh. Joseph came to visit his elderly and infirm father and brought with him his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. A little-understood ceremony occurred during this visit.

In Genesis 48:5, Israel informed Joseph that he was adopting Ephraim and Manasseh—that they would be counted as his and therefore be counted among the tribes of Israel. Thus Joseph was given a double portion. After Joseph brought his sons close, Israel embraced them, proceeded to lay hands on them and set them apart for special blessing.

At this time a remarkable event occurred. Joseph had purposefully arranged the boys so that the older, Manasseh, was standing on Israel's right side and the younger, Ephraim, was standing on his left side. This was so that he would place his right hand, signifying the greater blessing, on Manasseh and the left on Ephraim. Israel, however, crossed his hands and put the right hand on Ephraim and the left on Manasseh. When Joseph saw this he tried to correct what he perceived as a mistake on the part of his nearly-blind father. Israel resisted, however, and explained that this crossing of his hands was purposeful.

Israel told Joseph that his older son Manasseh was to become a great people, but that Ephraim was to become a multitude or company of nations (v. 19). Here we find that a **great nation** and also a **great company of nations** were to spring from the descendants of Joseph. They were the ones who receive the birthright blessings of national greatness. This included possession of strategic check points through which their enemies would have to pass, vast agricultural and mineral wealth, and status as world powers that would exercise dominance over other nations. Since God had promised that they would be a blessing to other nations, we know that their dominance as world powers would be exercised in a benign way overall.

Is there historical record of these promises being fulfilled? Before we examine that, look at a few more details that unfold in the book of Genesis. A short time after adopting Ephraim and Manasseh and conveying the birthright blessings upon them,

Israel called all of his sons to his bedside. He was at the end of his long life and wanted to give his last admonition and blessing to his family.

Notice what he told them. “And Jacob called his sons and said, ‘Gather together, that I may tell you **what shall befall you in the last days**’” (49:1). Israel’s prophecy that followed was not for his day or for the time when his descendants would come out of Egypt and enter into the Promised Land. It was for the end-times! Clearly, the descendants of Israel were still to exist at the end-time as separate, identifiable tribes.

Notice his words for Joseph. “Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well; his branches run over the wall” (v. 22). This is a poetic allusion to a people who would multiply and spread out all over. After all, Joseph’s sons were ultimately to give rise to a great nation and a great company of nations. Israel therefore foresaw them as a great **colonizing people**. He also conveyed the blessings of heaven above and of the deep that lies beneath. This implies great mineral wealth (blessings of the deep) as well as blessings of weather that would provide great agricultural wealth (blessings of heaven above).

But were these fabulous promises ever fulfilled for the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh? The very authenticity of your Bible as the word of God stands or falls on that point!

After they left Egypt, the tribes of Israel lived for centuries in the Middle Eastern territory that God had promised. There is *no record of Ephraim and Manasseh ever becoming a great nation and company of nations prior to Israel’s captivity*. They never became a blessing to all the nations of the world before they went into Assyrian captivity in the eighth century before Christ. Clearly, the fulfillment of the promises that God made to Abraham and reconfirmed to his descendants **did not** occur before ten-tribed Israel disappeared from plain view in the pages of your Bible and then from the pages of secular history.

How these promises were eventually fulfilled, as we shall see, is “the rest of the story!”

Israel's Captivity and Lost Identity

Before the children of Israel ever entered the Promised Land, Moses was inspired by God to warn them of the future. The promises of God were sure, but the timing of their fulfillment was up to God and depended upon Israel's conduct.

In Leviticus 26:1–2 God, through Moses, warned the Israelites: “You shall not make idols for yourselves.... You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD.” He went on to tell them: “If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit” (vv. 3–4). In the following verses, God detailed blessings of agricultural bounty and peace that would come upon the nation if it remained faithful. In verse 12, He concluded His promised blessings by stating: “I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.”

Just as there were blessings for obedience, however, there were serious consequences for disobedience. If Israel went into idolatry and forgot God's Sabbaths, then God would punish the nation for its actions. In verses 16 and 17, He detailed the punishments of diseases and of enemy incursions into their territory which would result. What would happen, if, after repeated punishment, Israel persisted in rebellion against God and His laws? Verse 18 tells us: “And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you **seven times** more for your sins.” The Hebrew word here rendered “seven times” can refer either to length of time or to intensity of punishment.

Seven Times Punishment

In Daniel 4 we read of a dream that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had. In the dream he was told that he would be punished for his pride by losing both his kingdom and his sanity. In this dream he was told that “seven times” would pass before his restoration. In the historical fulfillment of this dream, it is apparent that the seven times were a period of seven literal years.

What were the seven times of Israel's punishment promised in Leviticus 26:18? If this indicated a duration of time, how long was it to last? Understanding the significance of Israel's “seven times” punishment opens up history to far deeper meaning than you have probably ever understood before.

First, let us answer the question concerning the length of the “seven times.” How many days would “seven times” be? In Revelation 11 and 12 we find keys to understanding this.

Revelation 11:2–3 equates two periods of time: 42 months and 1,260 days. This is simple to understand, as there are exactly 1,260 days in 42 months of 30 days. In Revelation 12:6 we find another mention of 1,260 days, but this time that figure is paralleled in verse 14 by the term, “time and times and half a time.” We have already seen that 1,260 days is equated with 42 months, which is exactly three-and-a-half years. Clearly then, the Bible equates “time and times and half a time” with a three-and-a half-year period of 1,260 days.

“Seven times” is double the length of “time and times and half a time” (or three-and-a-half years). Therefore, seven times would represent a duration of 2,520 days (twice the length of the 1,260 days). How long a period of punishment upon Israel would these 2,520 days represent in Bible prophecy? To understand this, look at another incident of punishment on Israel. Numbers 13 and 14 give the account of Moses sending 12 spies, one from each tribe, to investigate the Promised Land. Ten of the spies brought back an evil report that discouraged the people and caused them to refuse to enter the land. God was greatly displeased with the people's lack of faith. Notice the consequences that followed: “According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty

days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection [‘breach of promise’ KJV]” (Numbers 14:34).

This meant a 40-year delay in entering the Promised Land and inheriting the promises God had made to their ancestors. The 40 years of punishment were figured on the principle of a day for a year. With each day representing a year in the fulfillment of Israel’s punishment, “seven times” would represent 2,520 years.

A similar point is made in Ezekiel 4 about punishment on Judah and on Israel. In this account, the prophet Ezekiel was told to lie upon his left side each day for 390 days to symbolize the duration of God’s punishment upon Israel. Then, he was told to turn and to lie upon his right side each day for 40 days in order to show the punishment of Judah. Next, Ezekiel was told: “I have laid on you a day for each year” (v. 6). In other words, once again a day equaled a year in the fulfillment of certain Bible prophecies. What is the full significance of this period of time? We will shortly see the amazing answer. But first, let us examine why Israel went into captivity at all.

Why the Ten Tribes Went into Captivity

In Leviticus 26, God made it plain that if Israel began to worship idols and to break His Sabbath, He would work through punishments to get their attention. Fulfillment of this prophecy is seen throughout the book of Judges as Israel lapsed into sin and God allowed terrorist raids by surrounding nations to disrupt Israel’s peace and its economy. Sometimes these nations actually brought Israel under direct rule for years. This cycle continued for more than three centuries before the monarchy was established.

After the death of King Solomon, the kingdom of Israel split into two totally separate nations. The northern ten tribes chose Jeroboam the son of Nebat as their king, while Judah remained loyal to Rehoboam, Solomon’s son. Shortly after the division of the kingdom, Jeroboam made a decision that affected the ten tribes of Israel for the remainder of their history.

We read this crucial story in 1 Kings 12. Jeroboam began to fear that the ten tribes would, in the future, long for reunion with Judah.

He decided that going up to worship God at Jerusalem during the festival seasons each year would lead to nostalgia for “the good old days.” He feared a future yearning for the time when they had been one nation under David’s dynasty in Jerusalem. This, he believed, would lead eventually to displacing himself or his descendants.

As he pondered this problem, Jeroboam came up with what he considered the solution. He called the people together and announced some changes. To make things more convenient, he told them that henceforth they would have two worship sites in northern Israel from which to choose. This way they would no longer have to go all the way to Jerusalem. He established his new sites of worship at the city of Dan in the north and at Bethel in the south. At each location a golden calf would be the object of worship. Additionally, the Levitical priesthood would be replaced by men loyal to Jeroboam and his new religion. We are told that, in fact, Jeroboam made “priests of the lowest of the people” (v. 31, KJV). As if all of this were not enough, he also introduced a change in the timing of God’s annual festivals. The Feast of Tabernacles, which came in the seventh month of God’s sacred calendar, was postponed until the eighth month.

Throughout the remaining 200 years of northern Israel’s existence as an independent nation, many dynasties came and went. Regardless of who was king, however, we are told over and over that he did not depart from the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who taught Israel to sin (cf. 1 Kings 15:34; 16:19; 2 Kings 3:3; 10:29; 13:2, 6, 11; 14:24; 15:18, 24, 28; 17:22). The ten tribes thoroughly disregarded God’s admonitions to their ancestors through Moses. They worshiped idols, violated God’s Sabbaths and, in general, simply disregarded God’s laws.

The consequences were inevitable. God had warned centuries earlier, through Moses, that a “seven times” punishment would come upon them if they persisted in disobedience. Finally, in the mid-eighth century, armies of the mighty Assyrian Empire invaded Israel.

Israel’s King Menahem bought a respite by giving Assyrian King Pul a large sum of money to withdraw. A few years later, however, during the reign of one of Menahem’s successors, Pekah, the Assyrians returned under Tiglathpileser. This time the

Assyrians subjugated much of the eastern and northern part of the kingdom. Several tribes, including much of Reuben, Gad and Naphtali, were taken into captivity and transported to Assyria. During the reign of Pekah's successor, Hoshea, things worsened. The Assyrians returned under their new king Shalmaneser and exacted tribute from the remnant of Israel. Then they returned a few years later and laid siege to Samaria. After a three-year siege, Samaria fell. The Assyrians then began to deport the population of ten-tribed Israel en masse.

Israel's Last Chance

This deportation took years to accomplish. Before it progressed very far, a righteous king came to the throne in Judah, the southern kingdom. This king, Hezekiah, assumed complete authority in 714BC, upon the death of his father Ahaz. He had been joint ruler with his father for several years, but did not have independent authority until his father's death. He, in sharp contrast to his father, was a man who sought with his whole heart to follow God. He initiated a revival in Judah at the very start of his sole reign. He reopened the Temple in Jerusalem, and called upon the people to repent and rededicate themselves to the worship of the true God.

Hezekiah told the people: "For our fathers have trespassed and done evil in the eyes of the LORD our God; they have forsaken Him, have turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the LORD, and turned their backs on Him.... Therefore the wrath of the LORD fell upon Judah and Jerusalem, and He has given them up to trouble, to desolation, and to jeering, as you see with your eyes. For indeed, because of this our fathers have fallen by the sword; and our sons, our daughters, and our wives are in captivity. Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His fierce wrath may turn away from us" (2 Chronicles 29:6-10).

This revival under Hezekiah not only offered Judah a reprieve from the sword of the Assyrians, which was destroying the kingdom of Israel just north of them, it was also a last chance for the northern ten tribes to avert complete exile. Notice what King Hezekiah did: "And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and also

Captivities of Israel and Judah



wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel... So they resolved to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that they should come to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem, since they had not done it for a long time in the prescribed manner” (2 Chronicles 30:1, 5). Hezekiah’s messengers warned the remaining inhabitants of the northern kingdom: “Now do not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to the LORD... For if you return to the LORD, your brethren and your children will be treated with compassion by those who lead them captive, so that they may come back to this land” (vv. 8–9).

What was Israel’s response? “So the runners passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, as far as

Zebulun; but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them. Nevertheless some from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem” (vv. 10–11). By and large Israel ignored King Hezekiah’s warning and his call to repentance—the final warning they were to receive. In the years immediately following, the Assyrians completely depopulated northern Israel and brought in people of Babylonian stock to resettle there. These newcomers were later known as Samaritans, taking their name from Israel’s capital city.

Israel had begun an odyssey that would not conclude for many centuries—2,520 years would pass before the descendants of Israel would begin to receive the birthright blessings promised to their ancestors. For 2,520 years—a year for a day—they would experience God’s “breach of promise.”

Israel’s Lost Identity

In Exodus 31:12–17, God instructed Moses that His Sabbaths were to be a sign between Him and Israel forever. A sign is something that identifies. The Sabbath is a perpetual reminder of who God is and who His people are. As long as Israel kept the Sabbath, they maintained their identity.

To this day, the people of Judah have maintained their identity, regardless of wherever around the world they may live. They have retained the sign of the Sabbath and have never lost sight of who they are.

Israel, on the other hand, from the time of King Jeroboam, abandoned God’s Sabbaths and substituted its own days of worship. As a result, captive Israel did not stand out as different from the surrounding nations and peoples. Those whom they met did not associate them with the Jews, and eventually most Israelites forgot their true origin.

Many of the customs that Israel carried into captivity were borrowed from the pagan nations around them. At the time of Israel’s Assyrian captivity, the prophet Micah was in Judah. He warned Israel of their impending punishment and why it was to come. “For the statutes of Omri are kept; all the works of Ahab’s

house are done; and you walk in their counsels, that I may make you a desolation, and your inhabitants a hissing. Therefore you shall bear the reproach of My people” (Micah 6:16).

Who was Omri, and what were his statutes? What did this have to do with Israel's lost identity?

Captive Israelites Become Known as Cimmerians

In captivity, Israel lost even its national name. Having abandoned their sign of identity that God established, the Israelites have become lost to most secular historians. However, they were certainly not lost to God. Notice the message he inspired the prophet Amos to record in the years prior to Israel's captivity. “Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth; yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,” says the LORD. ‘For surely I will command, and will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve; yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground’” (Amos 9:8–9).

In 1 Kings 16, we read of Omri and of his rise to power. He overthrew his predecessor, Zimri, and established a powerful dynasty. Though he only reigned 12 years, he established the capital city of Samaria and put laws in place that guided the nation through the rest of its history. His role as lawgiver was so established that 150 years after his death, and many dynasties later, the prophet Micah still referred to Israel as keeping “the statutes of Omri.” Clearly rejecting the laws that God had given through Moses, the House of Israel chose instead to keep the laws enacted by Omri. “Omri,” we are told by scripture, “did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all who were before him” (v. 25).

Plainly, then, the statutes of Omri included pagan religious practices. His son Ahab was married to Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal priest-king of the Baal worshipping Sidonians. Though many of the outward trappings of Baal worship were later eliminated by a subsequent king, Jehu, Israel never really returned to God.

Notice the comments of Langer's *Encyclopedia of World History* regarding the extent of Omri's influence. “Omri established a long-lived dynasty. He built a new capital at Samaria and renewed alliances

with Tyre... He also reconquered Moab as we learn from the Mesha inscription. Omri was evidently a strong king. **The Assyrians called Israel after his name, Bit Omri (Khumri)**" (1968 edition, p. 44).

The history of the ancient world, apart from what is recorded in scripture, comes down to us in the writings and monuments of the great empires of antiquity and in the writings of the Greek historians. The Assyrians, in their monuments, did not use the name "Israel," but rather referred to the "Khumri." This is the name by which Israel was known in captivity. **This name, and variants of it in the languages of neighboring peoples, is the name by which the people of Israel are identified in secular history.**

The people who were identified on Assyrian monuments as Khumri were called in the Babylonian language Gimmirra (or Gimiri). The Greek geographers such as Herodotus called them Cimmerians. Thus, the names by which captive Israel is identified in secular history are the names by which others called them, and those names varied in spelling and pronunciation according to the language of the writer.

Israel's Migrations

What happened to the Israelites who were taken captive by the Assyrians? The Bible tells us that they were settled near the River Gozan and in the cities of the Medes. Gozan was a tributary of the northern Euphrates River. The cities of the Medes were in the area just south of Armenia, between the Black and Caspian Seas.

The apocryphal book of 2 Esdras, written a century or so prior to the time of Christ, records the tradition that had been preserved among the Jews. "Those are the ten tribes, which were carried away prisoners out of their own land... and he [Shalmaneser] carried them over the waters, and so came they into another land. But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt... And they entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river" (13:40-43).

To say that the migrating Israelites followed the "narrow passages of the river" simply means that they went northward through the narrow mountain passes of the headwaters of the

Euphrates. This took them north of the Caucasus Mountains and on to the northern shore of the Black Sea. This is exactly where history places the Cimmerians, who later traveled up the Danube and Rhine River basins into northwestern Europe.

Lempriere's Classical Dictionary locates the Cimmerii "near the Palus Maeotis" (p. 149). Palus Maeotis was the name the ancient Greeks gave to the large lake at the northern tip of the Black Sea, now called the Sea of Azov. From this area some of the Cimmerians migrated directly up the river system into northwestern Europe, while others invaded Asia Minor, and after being pushed out also went up into northern Europe.

Regarding the Cimmerii-Israelites' entrance into northwestern Europe, M. Guizot in *The History of France from Earliest Times to 1848* states: "From the seventh to the fourth century B.C., a new population spread over Gaul, not at once, but by a series of invasions, of which the two principal took place at the two extremes of that epoch. They called themselves *Kymrians* or *Kimrians*... the name of a people whom the Greeks placed on the western bank of the Black Sea and in the Cimmerian peninsula, called to this day *Crimea*" (p. 16). Called Gauls or Celts by the Romans, these people spread through what is modern France and into the British Isles.

The heaviest periods of this migration into northwestern Europe were shortly after the original Assyrian invasions, and again almost 400 years later. In 331BC, Alexander the Great defeated the Medes and the Persians. Those Israelites who were still in the ancient area of the Medes were now free to leave. Interestingly, this marks 390 years from the fall of Samaria to the overthrow of the Medes (721BC–331BC)—the exact period that Ezekiel had prophesied for the House of Israel in Ezekiel 4:5.

Another ancient name by which the exiled Israelites were known is "Scythian." A vast area of what is today the Eurasian plain of Russia was anciently called Scythia. Various peoples inhabited this huge area, including many groups of exiled Israelites. According to the Greek historian Herodotus, "the Persians called them *Sacae*, since that is the name they give to all Scythians" (*The Persian Wars*, VII, 64). The word *Sacae* or *Sakae* is ultimately derived from Isaac, ancestor of the Israelites. This is the

true origin of the names Scotland, Saxon and Scandinavia.

The Scots preserve the story of their Scythian origins in the most famous document in Scottish history, the Declaration of Arbroath. This declaration was written in 1320 and signed by Robert the Bruce and his nobles. In it is the statement that the Scots “journeyed from Greater Scythia by way of the Tyrrhenian Sea... they came twelve hundred years after the people of Israel crossed the Red Sea [ca. 250BC], to their home in the west where they still live today.” This ancient letter, called by many “Scotland’s most precious possession,” is on display in a glass case in the Register House in Edinburgh. To the parchment is attached the seals of the 25 subscribing Scottish nobles.

Thus we see that the ten tribes of Northern Israel were uprooted from their homeland in the eighth century before Christ, and transported to a different area by their captors. Losing their identity, they became known to history by a variety of names. Cymri, Celts and Scyths are but a few. Today, guided by ancient records, we can trace the migrations of these peoples from the Black Sea to the British Isles and northwestern Europe.

How does all of this fit in with the prophecies of your Bible?

The Birthright Promises Are Fulfilled

Anciently, God made remarkable promises to Abraham and his descendants. We have already seen that the northern ten tribes were uprooted from their homes and that they ultimately migrated into northwestern Europe. What became of the fulfillment of the promises to Abraham?

Look at the remarkable way in which God has intervened in history to accomplish His purpose and to fulfill His word.

Seven prophetic times—2,520 years—went by from the time of Samaria's fall and Israel's captivity in 721BC. This brings us to 1800AD and the time when, according to Scripture, Abraham's descendants would begin coming into possession of the birthright promises. The remarkable story that unfolded in the history of the English-speaking people after 1800 is astounding.

To fully understand what happened and to put it into perspective, let us briefly look at the history of Europe. By the close of the 11th century after Christ, most of the European migrations were completed and nations were mostly in the areas in which we find them today. The Israelites had arrived, in waves of migration extending over centuries, in the new lands that they were destined to inherit. After all, God had anciently told Jacob that his descendants would spread abroad to the north, the west, the east, and the south (Genesis 28:14).

Throughout the ten centuries from Rome's collapse until the 15th century, Europe was totally dominated by the Catholic church and was in the throes of poverty, ignorance and warfare.

Much of this period has traditionally been called the “Dark Ages” by historians. In the last half of the 15th century, three milestone events took place. The first was the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453. This brought an influx of scholars and Greek manuscripts of the New Testament into Western Europe. Secondly, in 1456, Johannes Gutenberg perfected the use of moveable type and the printing industry was born. This made possible the widespread diffusion of knowledge. In 1492, Christopher Columbus sighted land, thus beginning the unbroken connection between Europe and the new world of the Americas.

At this same time, England finally emerged from the internal strife of the War of the Roses. At last a stable government emerged, under the Tudor dynasty of Henry VII. Over the next century a remarkable transformation began to occur in England. Literacy spread, Catholic control was overthrown, and the tiny island nation began to develop into a sea-power.

The year 1588 was a benchmark in England’s history. Spain had set out to conquer England and restore it to the fold of the Catholic church. In pursuance of this goal, a vast Armada set sail from Spain. Shattered by storm winds off the coast of England, the Armada was defeated and little England was saved.

Notice what Sir Winston Churchill, in his *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, wrote. “But to the English people as a whole the defeat of the Armada came as a miracle. For 30 years the shadow of Spanish power had darkened the political scene. A wave of religious emotion filled men’s minds. One of the medals struck to commemorate the victory bears the inscription ‘*Afflavit Deus et dissipantur*’—‘God blew and they were scattered.’ Elizabeth and her seamen knew how true this was” (vol. II, p. 131).

This miraculous victory guaranteed that England would not come back under the domination of the Papacy, and it set the stage for future religious freedom in England. An awareness of God’s role in English history fueled a newfound interest in the Bible, resulting in the translation and widespread dissemination of the Bible during the reign of Queen Elizabeth’s successor, King James I.

Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, English sailors and explorers set out across the globe. This marked the beginnings of

England as a sea power and set the stage for future commercial and economic greatness.

Still, when 1800 came, England and her former American colonies, the fledgling United States, possessed only a small portion of the world's land and wealth. In Europe, Napoleon was attempting to put together a vast continental empire with France at its head. Instead of that effort being successful, however, something altogether different occurred.

Over the following decades, England emerged in possession of the vast British Empire. It was the largest that the world had ever seen. Over one quarter of the world's land and people were under the British flag by the end of the 19th century. The United States, in 1800 still clinging to the eastern seacoast, had completely spanned the North American continent within five decades. The most powerful company of nations, the British Empire, and the greatest single nation, the United States, emerged right on schedule. The year 1800 marked the time when the 2,520 years of withholding the birthright concluded, and its promised blessings began to be fulfilled.

The British Empire Emerges

“How had the British done it? How, in the first place, did a peripheral island rise from primitive squalor to world domination? And how did they, between the [world] wars, still manage to keep their rickety empire together with little visible effort?” (*The Europeans*, p. 47). This was the question posed by author Luigi Barzini and it has been echoed by many.

While other nations set out with a cohesive plan to conquer vast stretches of territory and to build an empire, the British, it has been said, stumbled into theirs in a fit of absentmindedness. How did such a remarkable development come about?

Canada, a vast trove of agricultural and mineral wealth, came almost unbidden into the British Empire. After England's victory over France in the Seven Years War (1756–63), many in Parliament argued against even accepting Canada from France, warning that “its scanty trade in beaver skins would not offset the burden of defense and administration...” (*A History of England*

and the British Empire, by Hall & Albion, p. 463). In fact, “Halifax [Nova Scotia] was the only community in America founded by direct action of the British government” (p. 456).

Australia and New Zealand were no less thrust upon Britain as part of the empire. Of Australia, it has been said that the 1851 discovery of gold “precipitated a colony into a nation” (p. 664). The population jumped from 250,000 to almost a million in a little over a decade. As for New Zealand: “The home government long resisted the efforts to bring New Zealand under the British flag... So New Zealand went its lawless way until the actual planting of regular English settlers necessitated more definite control” (p. 664).

Over the course of the 19th century, Great Britain came into the possession of territory in every far-flung corner of the earth. Among these possessions were virtually all of the strategic seagates. Possessing the “gates of their enemies” was one of the blessings that God had promised to Abraham on behalf of his descendants. These narrow passages, through which sea traffic had to pass, were of inestimable value, both in terms of commercial value of trade and for security purposes during the two world wars of the 20th century. British control of the Suez Canal and the Straits of Gibraltar as well as of the strategic Isle of Malta was crucial to Allied control of the Mediterranean during World War II.

With Australia, New Zealand and Canada, Great Britain came into possession of some of the richest agricultural land on earth. The vast fields of grain and the innumerable herds of sheep and cattle represented a fulfillment of God’s ancient promises to Abraham. In addition, there was the vast mineral wealth of Canada, Australia, and South Africa. Britain itself came to control much of the Middle Eastern oil reserves. Her possessions and pipelines there helped provide the Allies the oil that was needed to fight World War II.

Overall, British influence was beneficial for the whole world, just as God anciently prophesied that it would be. It was the British Navy that wiped out the international slave trade in the early 19th century. The British and Foreign Bible Society, headquartered in London, was responsible for the Bible being translat-

ed into virtually every language and made available for the first time to peoples all over the earth.

Throughout the empire itself, British rule was not enforced by huge occupying armies. In fact, during the 19th century, the British army was quite small. It was called “the thin red line.” In vast India, inhabited by scores of millions even in the 19th century, it was the British civil service, never more than several hundred, that ruled. They administered justice, collected taxes, and enforced the laws. “They alone came into direct contact with the native population... they worked hard and efficiently... corruption was unknown among them, and they had triumphantly upheld justice, peace, and order for several decades” (p. 738).

Tiny little England emerged, practically overnight, to rule the greatest, most extensive empire that the world had ever seen. That empire developed into a great company of nations held together by allegiance to a common crown. Where else can anyone point to the fulfillment of the ancient promise that Jacob claimed for his grandson Ephraim? Clearly, God had kept His word to Abraham!

United States and United Kingdom Possessions at Their Peak



The Throne of David

God made a remarkable promise to King David of ancient Israel. Speaking through Nathan the prophet, God told David: “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But **My mercy shall not depart from him**, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. **And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever**” (2 Samuel 7:12–16).

God explained to David that while He might punish his descendants for their sins, He would not remove the kingdom from his line as He had done with Saul. What happened to that line of kings? History records that King Zedekiah, a descendant of David, was the last king to sit upon the throne of Judah in Jerusalem. In 586BC, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took Zedekiah captive to Babylon, burned the Temple, and destroyed the city of Jerusalem. Notice the statement in 2 Kings 25:7: “Then they killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, put out the eyes of Zedekiah... and took him to Babylon.”

Did God’s promise to David fail?

For the rest of the story, notice the prophecy that God inspired Ezekiel to record in Ezekiel 17. It starts out by posing a riddle that describes an eagle coming to a large cedar tree and cropping off the topmost branch. This small branch was taken to the “city of merchants” (v. 4). What is this riddle describing? Verse 12 tells us: “Say now to the rebellious house: ‘Do you not know what these things mean?’ Tell them, ‘Indeed the king of Babylon went to Jerusalem and took its king and princes, and led them with him to Babylon.’”

That is not the end of the story, however. God went on to tell Ezekiel in verses 22 and 23: “I will take also one of the highest branches of the high cedar and set it out. I will crop off from the

topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and will plant it on a high and prominent mountain. On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it; and it will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar. Under it will dwell birds of every sort; in the shadow of its branches they will dwell.”

We have already seen that the “top branch” of the cedar symbolized Judah’s last king, Zedekiah. A twig coming out from that branch would be one of his children. As we have also seen, his sons were killed. This “tender” twig must clearly refer to one of his daughters! God talks of her being taken to a high mountain (used in Bible prophecy to symbolize a nation) where she would be “planted” and would grow into a great tree. This shows that she would marry and produce offspring and that the dynasty would continue! Also note, while David’s line had been reigning over Judah, it would now be “replanted” ruling over Israel.

Irish history records the remainder of this story. It tells of the prophet Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch coming to Ireland after the fall of Judah with a young princess and the coronation stone, called in Gaelic *lia fail*. In ancient Irish records, the princess was named Tea Tephi. She married the son of the High King of Ireland. Their descendants reigned from Tara in Ireland for many centuries. Later, in the days of Kenneth McAlpine, they transferred their place of rule to Scone in Scotland. This same dynasty continues on down to today in the person of Queen Elizabeth II, a direct descendant of Tea Tephi and her husband. God has fulfilled his promises to King David just as He said!

The United States and the Blessings of Manasseh

What of the United States of America? Are the American people also truly descended from ancient Israel? Look at the plain record of history.

The first permanent English settlement in what is now the United States was Jamestown, Virginia in 1607. A few years later the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in Massachusetts. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, settlers from the British Isles flowed into what became the United States. Actually, as

Professor David Fischer points out in his important book, *Albion's Seed*, during those two centuries there were four main waves of immigration to the future United States. These waves of migration had their origin in specific parts of the British Isles and came to particular areas of the American colonies.

New England, for instance, was settled primarily by immigrants from East Anglia. Certain parishes of this south-eastern part of England were almost emptied of population between 1629 and 1641, as whole family groups migrated en masse. "Today, East Anglia seems very rural by comparison with other English regions. But in the early 17th century, it was the most densely settled and highly urbanized part of England, and had been so for many centuries" (*Albion's Seed*, p. 43).

Overwhelmingly, the immigrants who settled the United States before the Civil War came from northwestern Europe. Most were from either the British Isles or certain parts of northern Germany. These immigrants established the character of the American nation and have provided most of the nation's leadership until this day. Even some whose ancestors immigrated later from other parts of Europe may well have Israelitish background. After all, the prophecy was made by Amos that the House of Israel would be sifted through the nations like corn through a sieve, but not a grain would be lost (Amos 9:9).

Beginning in 1803 with the Louisiana Purchase, the United States began a rapid territorial expansion that led to its spanning the continent within one generation. The territory acquired by purchase from Napoleon, at less than a nickel an acre, included the richest farmland on earth—the American Midwest.

Because of its combination of agricultural and mineral wealth, America was destined to lead the world in per capita wealth. Whether in grain and cattle, or in its coal, iron, and petroleum production, America has had matchless bounty. As an example, during World War II the East Texas oil field alone produced more oil than the combined production of all the Axis powers. The prophecy of aged Israel to his grandson Manasseh, that his descendants would become the greatest single nation, has certainly been fulfilled in the United States of America.

The United States Expands Westward



Additionally, with the acquisition of the Panama Canal and various island dependencies gained in the latter 19th century, the United States has also possessed the gates of its enemies. The United States, in combination with Great Britain, controlled virtually every strategic passageway on earth through most of the 19th and 20th centuries.

At their pinnacles, the American and British nations have possessed or controlled an overwhelming share of the world's wealth. There are simply no other nations that can even compare with the wealth and power that has been exercised by the English-speaking peoples.

With great blessings also come great responsibilities, however. In addition, there are particular dangers for these nations of which they are warned in that book which became ubiquitous throughout the English-speaking world—the Bible.

A Warning for the Modern Nations of Israel

Moses was anciently inspired of God to set down a reminder for our people in the midst of our fabulous wealth and bounty:

“For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land... a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing.... Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments... lest—when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them... when **your heart is lifted up**... then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth’” (Deuteronomy 8:7–17). Our nations are admonished: “And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day” (v. 18).

One of the great dangers of wealth and plenty is a self-centered, materialistic outlook. Instead of being the most thankful of peoples, we have become the most self-indulgent.

Our national greatness was not achieved because of innate superiority. Rather, our possession of the fairest portions of the earth is the direct result of faithful Abraham’s obedience and God’s promises to him. Moses reminded our ancestors: “The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers” (Deuteronomy 7:7–8).

Israel was called to be a holy nation to God. Today, we have direct access to God’s word in an unparalleled way. Yet the conduct of our people and our leaders falls far short of what God enjoins upon us. In the midst of plenty we are unthankful and disobedient to the God who blessed us. Just as God dealt with our ancestors of old, so also will He deal with us today.

The United States and Great Britain, and all the British-descended peoples, are on a rendezvous with God’s judgment!

The Coming Restoration

In 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's "Diamond Jubilee," one of Britain's best-loved poets struck a somber note. The British Empire was at its height. In that context Rudyard Kipling wrote *Recessional*, a poem that was strikingly prophetic. "God of our fathers, known of old / Lord of our far flung battle line / Beneath Whose awful Hand we hold / Dominion over palm and pine / Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, Lest we forget—lest we forget!" He went on to add: "Lo, all our pomp of yesterday is one with Ninevah and Tyre! Judge of the Nations, spare us yet / Lest we forget—lest we forget!"

A century later, the American and British-descended peoples have forgotten their God. God's direct warning to these forgetful nations thunders down through time: "Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish" (Deuteronomy 8:19).

In what ways have these much-blessed nations forgotten God and His laws? The most fundamental national building block, the family unit, has been shattered by divorce and illegitimacy. We have "gay pride" parades in the streets of major cities from London to San Francisco to Sydney. Abortion is a silent holocaust that has taken the lives of millions of unborn babies. Violence escalates until people draw back with fear at the thought of walking the streets of our cities after dark. Greed, materialism, and immorality have seemingly been woven into our national fabric.

The messages of the ancient prophets are as descriptive of our national condition as any newscast. “Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward” (Isaiah 1:4).

There is even a lack of shame at our national conduct. “The look on their countenance witnesses against them, and they declare their sin as Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to their soul! For they have brought evil upon themselves” (Isaiah 3:9).

The Watchman’s Message

As we saw earlier in this booklet, God commissioned the ancient prophet Ezekiel as a watchman to the House of Israel. “So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear the word from My mouth and warn them for me” (Ezekiel 33:7). What is God’s message to modern Israel, preserved for our day through the pen of the prophet Ezekiel?

“Now, son of man, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? **Yes, show her all her abominations!**... You have become guilty by the blood which you have shed, and have defiled yourself with the idols which you have made” (Ezekiel 22:2–4). In addition to violence and idolatry, God inspired Ezekiel to indict Israel for immorality, including adultery and incest (vv. 9–11). Also, he talks about the breakdown of the family structure and the grinding down of the needy and defenseless (v. 7). Additionally, God thunders at our peoples: “You have despised My holy things and profaned My Sabbaths” (v. 8).

The book of Ezekiel contains an indictment of our national sins, a call to repentance, and a proclamation of God’s impending judgment. It also goes on beyond the coming judgment to look forward to a time of national repentance and of restoration after Christ’s return.

Collectively our peoples have turned further and further away from God in our actions, even while still calling themselves “Christian nations.” Our national sins are an affront to Almighty God, who has poured out upon us the choicest blessings of heaven!

There are coming on the English-speaking peoples, the modern-day House of Israel, problems that we can scarcely imagine. God declares that He will “break the staff of bread” (Ezekiel 4:16, KJV). He speaks of a time of famine and desolation when the cities will be laid waste (12:20). As unthinkable as this may seem to modern Americans, Canadians and Britons, God Almighty says that such things are coming!

A great supra-national union in Europe, even now shaping up, will become the seventh and final revival of the old Roman Empire. This system, according to Revelation 13 and 17, will come to dominate the entire world for a brief period of time. It is this powerful European superpower which will ultimately attack and subjugate the American and British peoples. It will also occupy the Jewish state, called Israel, in the Middle East.

Our people are complacent and materialistic. They have forgotten their Maker and ignored His instruction book, the Holy Bible. Yes, there is a day of reckoning coming! Most of you reading this booklet can expect to see it come in your lifetime.

There is a way of escape for you and your family, however. “Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?” says the Lord GOD, ‘and not that he should turn from his ways and live?... Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, **every one according to his ways,**’ says the Lord GOD. ‘Repent, and turn from all your transgression, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,’ says the Lord GOD. ‘Therefore turn and live!’” (Ezekiel 18:23, 30–32).

God’s desire is for repentance, not punishment. For many, however, God will only get their attention through severe national punishment. Many simply will not pay attention to a message of warning until their world comes crashing down upon them. What about you?

God’s Church is taking Ezekiel’s message of warning and of hope to the modern-day House of Israel. It is vital that you, and all of the people of our Israelitish nations, understand what God’s word says is in store—and then that you act upon that understanding!

Unfolding Events of the Years Ahead

Catastrophic economic and social collapse will set the stage for some soon-coming events, according to Bible prophecy. In answer to growing fears, there will suddenly emerge onto the world scene a powerful and charismatic leader in Europe. In alliance with a religious leader who will ignite an emotional mass hysteria through what the scripture terms “lying wonders” (2 Thessalonians 2:9), this military-political leader will use deceit to achieve great power. He will lead a revived Holy Roman Empire, called in Scripture “Babylon the Great” (Revelation 17; 18).

This European union of church and state will promise universal prosperity and will exercise worldwide economic dominance for a short while. Ezekiel 27, using the figure of the ancient commercial city of Tyre, speaks of this global economic combine which will include nations of Europe, Africa, Latin America, and Asia—along with Israel and Judah (v. 17). Portions of Ezekiel 27 are paraphrased or quoted in Revelation 18 where the end-time system, called Babylon the Great, is described.

The English-speaking nations will not prosper for long in connection with this system, however. In fact, they will ultimately be overpowered and destroyed by it militarily. Prior to military attack and occupation, devastating weather problems, combined with internal civil strife (“tumults in her midst” cf. Amos 3:9) will bring our nations to the point of internal collapse.

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge,” God inspired the prophet Hosea to write (Hosea 4:6). We have rejected the knowledge of God and His ways. The more we have prospered materially, the more our sins have increased (vv. 7–8). It appears that immorality and substance abuse have sapped and destroyed our national spirit (v. 11).

God inspired Amos to prophesy of this time of serious drought and water rationing, coupled with massive crop failures and disease epidemics (Amos 4:7–10). “Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel; and because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel! For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind, who declares to man what his thought is, and

makes the morning darkness, who treads the high places of the earth—the LORD God of hosts is His name” (vv. 12–13).

Jeremiah the prophet calls this coming time of national calamity “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7). He states that it will be a time worse than any other time in human history. Jesus Christ spoke of this very same period of time in Matthew 24:21: “For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.” There cannot be *two* times of trouble worse than any other, so clearly the Great Tribulation is a time of trouble and punishment for Israel. Punishment is not the end of the story, however!

Future Deliverance and Restoration

The prophet Ezekiel speaks of a future time when Israel will be regathered after the return of the Messiah in power and glory. “The Gentiles shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they were unfaithful to Me.... According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I have dealt with them, and hidden My face from them.’ Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel.... then they shall know that I am the LORD their God: who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their own land, and left none of them captive any longer” (Ezekiel 39:23–28).

Isaiah also looked forward to that time when God will again choose Israel and restore it to its own land (Isaiah 14:1). God will give the Israelites rest from their sorrows, their fears, and the hard bondage they will have experienced (v. 3). Israel will be regathered from captivity and will “blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit” (27:6). They will begin to rebuild the old ruined cities which had lain desolate and deserted for a period of years (61:4). The peoples of Israel, after the coming punishment of the Tribulation has finally brought them to repentance, will be regathered from the nations of their future captivity. God inspired Ezekiel to describe the true national conversion of Israel which will follow. This will be a prelude to the conversion of the whole world. “I will

cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.... I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them” (36:25–27).

Christ will have returned and the saints will have been resurrected to rule and reign with Him (Revelation 20:6). Again, we see in a number of places that ancient King David will be among those resurrected and he will actually be the direct ruler over regathered Israel (Ezekiel 37:24). Each of the 12 Apostles will be directly ruling over one of the 12 tribes (Luke 22:29–30).

At this glorious time, when God’s Kingdom will rule over all nations with Christ governing directly from Jerusalem, “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,’ says the LORD” (Isaiah 65:25).

Yet before this prophesied time of peace, the peoples of the United States and Great Britain will have endured a time of great trial. God’s punishment on these nations will come swiftly and amaze the whole world. Only those who have turned fully to God will be spared. The nations will be shaken, and moved to a genuine repentance and a return to God unprecedented in modern times (Ezekiel 36:24–32).

There are two ways to learn our lessons in this life, the easy way or the hard way. Our nations as a whole appear destined to learn their lessons the hard way.

What about you, personally? Will you heed the warnings contained in this booklet, which come directly from God’s word? Or, will you have to learn your lessons by hard experience?

We can show you the way to escape this coming holocaust if you are willing. You must be willing not merely to believe in God and in His Son, Jesus Christ, but to do what God commands. You must be willing to seek God in a way you have never done before! You must be willing to “come out” of this modern Babylon—its ideas and practices, its false religions and philosophies—and devote yourself to earnestly study and to “live by every word of God” (Luke 4:4).

The choice is yours to make! May God help you to choose wisely and rightly.

The Living Church of God offers a variety of free publications including a *Bible Study Course*, booklets and the *Tomorrow's World* magazine.

The following booklets may help you to better understand God's plans for you and the world. To request your free literature, please refer to the next page for the address nearest you, or order online at www.tomorrowworld.org.



Fourteen Signs Announcing Christ's Return



The Middle East in Prophecy



The Beast of Revelation

Regional Offices

UNITED STATES:

P.O. Box 3810
CHARLOTTE, NC 28227-8010
www.tomorrowworld.org
PHONE: (704) 844-1970

AUSTRALIA:

P.O. Box 300
CLARENDON, SA 5157, AUSTRALIA
PHONE: (61) 8-8383-6288
FAX: (61) 8-8127-9667

CANADA:

P.O. Box 409
MISSISSAUGA, ON L5M 2B9
PHONE: (905) 814-1094
FAX: (905) 814-7659

NEW ZEALAND:

P.O. Box 2767
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND
PHONE/FAX: (09) 268 8985

PHILIPPINES:

P.O. Box 492
ARANETA CENTER POST OFFICE
1135 QUEZON CITY, METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES
PHONE: (63) 2-723-0499
FAX: (63) 2-414-5349

SOUTH AFRICA:

PRIVATE BAG X7
HATFIELD, PRETORIA, 0028
PHONE: (27) 58-622-1424
FAX: (27) 58-623-1303

UNITED KINGDOM:

BM Box 2345
LONDON, WC1N 3XX
PHONE/FAX: 44 (0) 844-800-9322