

The



Covenant Nations

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 3, 2011



**THE THRESHING FLOOR
AND THE WINEPRESS**

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THE BREAD OF LIFE

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▲ The Brigade of Dan was on the north side of the encampment of the tribes as described in *Numbers 2*. This banner portrays the symbols of the tribes in the Brigade – Dan, Asher and Naphtali. It belongs to Pastor Charles Jennings, *Truth in History*, USA.

◀ COVER PICTURE: This harvest scene brings to mind the words of Our Lord given to all who would work as His witnesses: “*Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest*” (Luke 10:2).

The Covenant Nations

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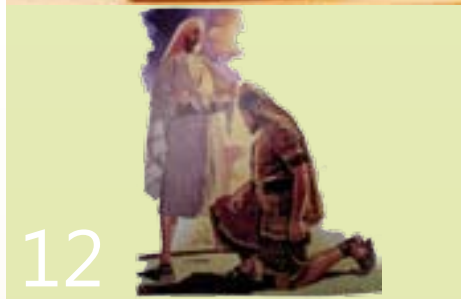
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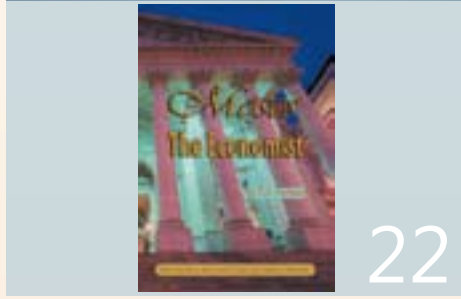
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Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in the articles are generally well-researched and considered. However, they do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.



Join us in the Great Cause to Wake Up God's Covenant Nations!

THE WORLD in the 21st century should be a better place to live in than that of the previous century. Amid all the unspeakable chaos it clearly is not and the slide to disaster accelerates. The reason for this is that the key to civilization ordered by Almighty God is being substituted by a pagan globalization, dominated by materialism, causing God's Covenant Nations to be merged with Mammon and a hierarchy of evil. Only with an understanding of the Great Plan and Purpose for this company of nations can we hope to prevent destruction.

In The Covenant Nations our mission is to demonstrate that the spread of the Christian message is the divinely appointed task of the Britannic peoples throughout the world; those today who are descended from God's Servant people, Jacob-Israel, whose covenant responsibility has always been the proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. While He has endowed them with authority and power to discharge this heavy duty, it can only be executed if, like the patriarch Abraham, they believe God and obey Him, leaning on the righteousness of Christ.

As events unfold we will continue to develop the scriptural theme of a dedicated people in the light of current affairs as proclaimed in prophetic vision by our Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles He commissioned. This message of overruling Providence in history is of supreme importance at this time of the end of the Age – a tempestuous period of which our Lord warned in His final address to His disciples. He foretold that His arch-enemy, Satan, would be increasingly active in a final endeavour to prevent the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. The world today reflects the tragedy which he said would herald the final manifestation of His Kingdom and His Return in power and glory to take up the Throne of David, established on earth as an everlasting throne of righteousness.

This is a message of great hope for all who will allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to them what God purposed to remain hidden as the treasure in the field of the world, until this appointed Age-end period of history.

We invite you to use *The Covenant Nations* as a witness to all who will receive this message. Please help us to make the maximum contribution to the spread of His Age-end counsel among our Christian Israel peoples.

EDITORIAL

THE ISRAEL KINGDOM QUESTION

Christians must get real and believe the Scriptural record

Without any doubt it is time for the prophetic record of the Bible in respect of the Kingdom of Israel to be read and believed by Christians in *continuity* – or as is often said about biblical belief – ‘from cover to cover.’ Why would Almighty God, the God and Creator of Israel, go to all the trouble to build a kingdom of people, a nation with His name stamped upon them, that of Israel, meaning ‘ruled by God,’ only to see them wiped out within a very short period of history? The people He has engraved upon the palms of His hands (*Isaiah 49:16*).

The spiritualization of prophecy in the Old Testament has violated the inspired word of the prophets, causing great and persistent blindness as the decades have rolled by. When, except during the World Wars, did we ever hear any leader in Church or State speak with authority on the greatest message of the Scriptures – the prophetic destiny of our people? Without sight, or indeed insight, how are the people to know who they are and what destiny they are to pursue?

The whole federalist European Project has deceived a generation in the United Kingdom into abandoning their ‘laws and customs’ in a treasonous pursuance by a breed of political false shepherds. It has been a counterfeit vision of the kingdom in our midst and the judgments of the Almighty are fast taking effect on this Babylonish ‘empire.’

What is the blockage in understanding the simplicity of the Scriptural record? There is one clear answer. The legacy of Replacement Theology from the Roman Catholic era, the seeds of which came through the Reformation to emerge again and grow into a monstrous piece of disinformation smothering the Historicist School of prophetic exposition of all the Reformers. The Jesuit Futurist School of prophecy began to

take root again in the mid-nineteenth century, just as the Israel Kingdom teaching also began to open the eyes of the people in the British Isles and in North America.

Overlaying this false teaching, the emergence on the world scene of the Israeli State since 1948 has hugely added to the confu-

In another sense, because the Israeli State appears as the fulfilment of a *positive* prophecy for the restoration of Israel at the end of the Age, a very great deal of faith in Scripture is out on a limb, unprepared for the *negative* prophecy and withering of the barren fig tree on which Christ placed His judgment, in a former and latter context.



Mount Zion in the Caucasus.
Photograph by David Aimer

sion on prophecy which dominates the Christian television channels in the United States and is distributed worldwide. The credibility of the tele-evangelists on prophecy is now so endangered by events that are within sight of taking place that there are literally millions of Christians who are going to be disillusioned.

In one real sense, the Futurists can never be wrong, because nothing ever happens to fulfill the error of their wild and lurid predictions of what will happen under a future Antichrist or world dictator. This enables the error to persist – yet it also brings discredit to true prophetic teaching.

In this issue of *The Covenant Nations* we are pointing to a far more profound interpretation of the prophetic record of Scripture. We take in the whole counsel of the inspired biblical record concerning the development of the *continuing* Kingdom of God upon earth. ‘The Prophecy of the Torn Cloak’ shows how the Kingdom of Israel was divided in order to expand on a global scale. It is the story of how negatives become God’s positives. We also announce the launch of our new full length film entitled *The Mystery of the Lost Tribes of Israel*. For the first time, the migratory route of the millions of Israelites delivered from their captivity in Assyria is traced through the Caucasus Mountains. It is a fascinating exclusive for the Christian world to get to grips with and to fill-in the greatest black hole of history.

The Israel kingdom question can only be answered in terms of the following logical sequence. There cannot be a King of kings without a throne and there cannot be a great throne without a Kingdom and there cannot be a great Kingdom without a great history and Constitution already in place, founded in symbol upon Jacob’s pillar (*II Kings 11:14*) which is the House of God (*Genesis 28:22*). It is the fifth **Stone** Kingdom of *Daniel 2:34*. We need to look for a great throne symbolized by a rough uncut stone. We surely need only one guess as to where we might find it – and it is not in the Vatican!

THE THRESHINGFLOOR AND THE WINEPRESS

Most Christians are familiar with the Elements of the Eucharist or Holy Communion – the bread and the wine. These are, of course, taken from the Last Supper, when Jesus broke the bread for His disciples and passed the cup of wine, with the solemn injunction, “*This do in remembrance of me*” (Luke 22:19). And so the sacred rite has been repeated for nearly two thousand years, always bringing to mind the crucifixion of Christ and the great price He paid for our salvation. But these symbols – the bread and the wine – have a much fuller and deeper meaning as they are revealed all through Holy Scripture; the ritual of the Last Supper was not a new or isolated incident but part of a whole design, and the fulfillment of foreshadowing in the Old Testament.

The first occurrence of bread and wine in the Bible is in *Genesis* 14:18, where Abram was returning from the battle of the kings. The account says that “*Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.*” This man Melchizedek is most mysterious, as he appears out of nowhere and there is no real explanation of who he is in *Genesis*; but in the Book of *Hebrews* in the New Testament, it is revealed that Melchizedek, King of righteousness and King of peace is “*without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life*” (*Hebrews* 7:3). So it is evident that Melchizedek was no ordinary man, but must have been a Theophany, a brief incarnation of the Lord in human form. This would seem to be confirmed by the fact that he gave Abram bread and wine, exactly as Jesus, the Lord incarnate, gave to His disciples two thousand years later. And so, the Last Supper was foreshadowed from the first book of the Bible.

The mundane reason for the two elements, bread and wine, is that they represent eating and drinking, the two necessary forms of nourishment, vital to life itself. And so, likewise, the two staples of agriculture were “corn,” the Old English word for grain in the King James Version, and vineyards. The two are always mentioned in tandem throughout Scripture. Two examples out of

many: In Isaac’s blessing of his son Jacob he entreated,

“*Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine*” (*Genesis* 27:28). And in the laws concerning the feast days of Israel, God commanded: “*Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine*” – the bounty of the harvest (*Deuteronomy* 16:13).



A flail for threshing wheat

Taking the reference to the harvest one step further, oftentimes the bread, corn and wine are described in harvesting terms as the threshingfloor and the winepress. In *Numbers* 18:27 and 30, God instructs that the tithe paid to the Levites (the priestly tribe) will be accounted to them as “*the increase of the threshingfloor, and as the increase of the winepress.*” Sometimes the threshingfloor is just called “the floor” as in *Deuteronomy* 15:14, “*Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress.*” An interesting feature of all these Scriptures which is easily overlooked, as it is so obvious, is that the corn and wine, floor and winepress, are always mentioned in that order – the grain

first, then the wine. There is a spiritual reason for this which will unfold later.

The Threshingfloor of Ornan

There is a curious incident in the Bible regarding King David of Israel, which is related in *II Samuel* 24, and *I Chronicles* 21. David had committed a sin against the Lord by numbering the people of Israel, and so, as punishment, the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel which killed seventy thousand men. But when the pestilence came near Jerusalem God said to the destroying angel, “*It is enough: stay now thine hand.*” The angel was by the threshingplace of Araunah (or Ornan) the Jebusite, who was threshing wheat, so God told David to build an altar unto the Lord in the threshingfloor. David asked to buy the threshingfloor, but Ornan offered to give it to the king, together with his oxen for the sacrifice, without cost. David replied, “*Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing.*” So David bought the threshingfloor for fifty shekels of silver and sanctified the site with his altar.

But why did God instruct David to build an altar at that particular place? One reason was that, as *I Chronicles* 3:1 tells us, the threshingfloor of Ornan was on Mount Moriah. Mount Moriah was already a sacred place in Israel, because it was there that in obedience to God, Abraham, in a test of his love and faith, prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac (*Genesis* 22). And so it was on this twice-hallowed ground that King Solomon, the son of David, laid the foundation of the house of the Lord, the great Temple that he built in Jerusalem. A physical temple stood on this site for over a thousand years, but in the New Testament, Saint Paul tells us that our bodies are the true temples of the Holy Spirit. In this we follow in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus, Who was the first embodiment of this sacred truth. In *John* 2:19-21, Jesus made the enigmatic statement to the Jews: “*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body.*” Thus, His body must have re-

lated in some significant way to the site of the temple, the consecrated threshingfloor. So let us look at the last events of Jesus' life more closely.

The Passion of Christ

The Last Supper of the Lord with His twelve apostles is described in the Synoptic Gospels, *Matthew*, *Mark* and *Luke* and in *I Corinthians* chapter 11. We are told that after the meal, Jesus took bread and blessed it and then broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take, eat: this is my body which is broken for you." Then, likewise, He took the cup saying, "Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Paul tells us that the purpose of our keeping this memorial was "to show the Lord's death till he comes," so it has always been held to represent Christ's crucifixion. But there is more to it than that.

We have seen that the corn and wine are always mentioned together, and in that order, and this was also true of the Last Supper. Jesus broke the bread first. Why? Because His redemptive suffering to come was in two parts – the scourging and then the crucifixion. The scourging is given very little prominence in the Gospels. *Matthew* 27:26 says only that when Pilate had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified; and *Mark* is similar. *John* 19:1 is even briefer: "Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him." So it would seem to have been of minor import. But a Roman scourging was a terrible thing. The scourge had many thongs, and in the tips of each were imbedded bits of metal to tear the flesh. Many victims died of that alone, and recently, thousands wept at its graphic portrayal in Mel Gibson's movie, *The Passion of the Christ*. Now threshing is done with a flail, and the dictionary says the word "flail" comes from the Latin flagellum, meaning a whip or scourge. This reveals indeed the very heart of the sacred mystery of the threshingfloor – Jesus' body being threshed or broken for our redemption. It was prophesied by Isaiah in chapter 50:6, where the Holy One says, "I gave my back to the smiters..." and then again in the Messianic chapter 53: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities...and with his stripes we are healed." In *Psalms* 129:3 a different but related metaphor was used: "The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows." So by revelation we see that it was not the crucifixion that Jesus was referring to when He spoke of His broken body, but the scourging that took place first. This fulfilled the symbolism of the threshingfloor; but in *Judges* 6:11 it says that "Gideon threshed wheat by

the winepress," implying that, spiritually, the two are close together. So how is the winepress related to Jesus' suffering?

A twelfth century abbess and mystic, Hildegard of Bingen, was given revelations concerning both the threshingfloor and the winepress. Regarding the latter, she wrote in a letter to Christian lay people, "...Because of your sins God allowed the Divine Son to be placed in the winepress of the cross." This was the climax, the Holy of Holies of His life on earth as a man. But in what sense is the crucifixion the winepress? Quite simply, a winepress was the place where the grapes were crushed under great pressure to extract their juice, from which was made the wine. Jesus said the wine in the Cup was His blood that would be shed, and this happened on the cross where He bled from wounds in His hands and feet, from the crown of thorns, and from His side after His death. It reflects a cryptic



An old winepress

prophecy in *Revelation* 14:20: "and blood came out of the winepress..." signifying the awful outworking and culmination of God's judgment – both aspects of which were fulfilled in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Frankincense and Myrrh

Jesus' sacrifice and suffering were also foreshadowed by gifts given to Him as a child – frankincense and myrrh. Frankincense and myrrh are both gum resins of trees indigenous to southern Arabia, and are obtained from cuts made in the bark. The resin which exudes hardens in drops called "tears" which, when burned, give a very fragrant odour. The tears of frankincense are white (its Hebrew name *lebonah* means "white"), and those of myrrh are a reddish-brown.

Now the frankincense was associated with the bread or meat (meal) offering, as it was put on the twelve loaves of shewbread which were always set forth on the Table of Shewbread in the Tabernacle (*Leviticus* 24:7). It was also to be put on the meat offering of grain *beaten out* of full ears (*Leviticus* 2:15). And even the frankincense itself was *required to be beaten*: regarding the incense, "thou shalt beat some of it very small" (*Exodus* 30:36); and on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest was to enter the Holy of Holies with his "hands full of sweet incense beaten small" (*Leviticus* 16:12). So we can see a strong correlation between the frankincense with the bread and Jesus' scourging or beating. On the other hand the myrrh, which is very bitter, was mixed with wine and given to Jesus on the cross (*Mark* 15:23). The red colour of the myrrh is associated with the wine and the blood of the crucifixion, just as the white of the frankincense is with the bread. And on the annual Day of Atonement (*Leviticus* 16), incense was taken into the Holy of Holies before the blood, exactly as Jesus fulfilled it on that great and final Day of Atonement. So we see why the gifts of the Magi, the frankincense and myrrh, were so important, and why they were given in that order. This is their true significance.

In conclusion, in Jesus' great discourse on the Bread of Life in chapter six of John's Gospel, He stated quite plainly: "I am the bread of life...which came down from heaven...if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Jesus Christ was the Word of God incarnate (literally "in the flesh"), the living Bread and the living Word. But the Holy Bible is the *written* Word of God – the same Word in another form, so it is also the bread of life. When we study the Word we break the bread, even as Jesus did, both literally and figuratively, to His disciples on the road to Emmaus: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (*Luke* 24:27). The bread is the Word of God and the wine is the vivifying effect of the Holy Spirit that quickens it to our understanding. So without any formality, we can daily partake of this bread and wine as we feed upon the life-giving Scriptures which God has so graciously given us.

PATRICIA BAGWELL BA

THE BREAD OF LIFE

The Staff of Life

Photograph by Glyn Lewis



Bread, in both its real and symbolic form, appears early on in Jesus' public ministry. Immediately following Jesus' baptism by John in the river Jordan, Jesus is led or driven by the spirit into the wilderness, there to be tempted by the devil. In His solitary existence in the wilderness, and after fasting for forty days and nights, Jesus becomes very hungry. Now the devil comes to tempt Jesus to depart from the way of life which will become the mark of His ministry.

But the devil's first temptation, which suggests Jesus turns stones into bread, is more subtle than simply satisfying Jesus' extreme hunger: it has a far deeper meaning, indicated by the devil's opening words, which is to separate Jesus from his humanness – "If thou be the Son of God ..." (*Matthew* 4:3). And although we may not im-

mediately recognise it as such, this temptation is an example of a particular kind of evil that is much in evidence today.

This evil is the pernicious influence which seeks to estrange men and women from their humanness: from their responsibilities to their fellow human beings, and to the Earth. This temptation by the devil is not new: it has been tried before, in the story of Adam and Eve, when the devil tempted Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Whether you regard the account of Adam and Eve and the temptation in the Garden of Eden as myth, or whether you believe in the story as fundamentally true,

the point is that the story is trying to tell us something. Eve, newly created as a human being, is tempted to take a step that will disassociate her from her humanness. The temptation to eat of the forbidden fruit promises Eve that she will not die, that her eyes will be opened so that she will see what is really going on, and that as a consequence instead of being only human, Eve will be like God, knowing everything ranging all the way from good to evil.

Today, the evil that has its root in this temptation has taken new forms, has become extremely powerful, and is affecting lives in ways that bode ill for the future. The temptation for Jesus to act, not as a human being, but as the Son of God and turn stones into bread, is mirrored in the lives of many of our young people, and even children, becoming wholly estranged from their fellow

human beings through taking drugs or losing themselves in forms of virtual reality that the artificial worlds of computer games offer.

Taking refuge in virtual worlds or using narcotics demonstrates how many people are becoming restless, seeking ways to escape from their daily lives because they lack the necessary inward strength or courage to face the realities of our times. So from whence is that inward strength to be found? As far as material bread is concerned, we have the phrase that bread is the "staff of life" from the prophet Ezekiel. Jesus recognises our need for this bread to sustain our lives, but He takes us to a deeper need.

Jesus, in countering the devil's temptation to turn stones into bread, quotes Moses' words, recorded in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Then, in a remarkable transformation of the old covenant into the new, Jesus becomes that "bread alone" by which we can live: he becomes the bread of life; the one of whom we must take, eat and live. He is, as it says in St. John's Gospel, "the living bread which came down from heaven," and whose flesh we must eat if we are going to have the life within us necessary to face the realities of our time.

The words, "eat the flesh of the Son of man," have been thought by some translators of the original texts as not denoting the dainty portion that will eventually find their expression in the Eucharist or Mass – no, the words here have been interpreted as implying "chew noisily," "chomp on," or even "crunch" on the flesh of the Son of Man. This is no snack. This is a meal, like the ones when 5,000 and when 4,000 ate of bread and fishes, and were all filled, with baskets of uneaten fragments left over at the end.

Jesus, the bread of life, has also become the staff of life: the answer to our inner need for the necessary strength and courage to face the realities of our times that so many are searching for. Take, eat, and be filled.

GLYN S LEWIS

THE KINGDOM STORY OF THE BIBLE

1. The Kingdom was established at Sinai (*Exodus* 19:5-6).
2. It was a theocracy.
3. Jehovah, the King, gave the Law (*Exodus* 20).
4. Later, Jehovah's earthly throne was established (*II Samuel* 7).
5. The Davidic throne was the throne of the Lord (*I Chronicles* 29:11-23).
6. The Kingdom was divided (*I Kings* 11:29-39).
7. The Kingdom went into captivity.
8. The Throne was transferred to another place (*Jeremiah* 33:14-26; *Ezekiel* 17:22-24; *Micah* 4:8-10).
9. Israel having been redeemed, the Kingdom is to be restored (*II Samuel* 7:10; *Isaiah* 9:6-7; *Isaiah* 11:10-12; *Jeremiah* 33:7-9; *Ezekiel* 34:23-24; *Ezekiel* 37:21-28).
10. The restored Kingdom becomes Christ's Kingdom (*Daniel* 2:44; *Daniel* 7:27; *Micah* 4:1-3).
11. The same throne of David becomes Christ's throne (*Isaiah* 9:7; *Luke* 1:32-33).
12. Until Christ returns, the Kingdom:
 - Is unclean, with tares in it (*Matthew* 13:38-41).
 - Is hidden, as treasure (*Matthew* 13:44).
 - Is not observed by men (*Luke* 17:20-21).
 - Was, however, among them (*Luke* 17:21. See margin, also R.V.).
 - Was taken from the Jews and given to a nation (*Matthew* 21:43). Here Christ dismisses the old steward (*Luke* 16:1-12) and appoints a new one.
 - The goods, pounds, or treasures of the Kingdom are entrusted to His ten servants (House of Israel) until He returns, and they "occupy till He comes" (*Matthew* 25:14-30; *Luke* 19:11-27).
 - The ten servants must be the nation to whom He gave the Kingdom in *Matthew* 21:43.
 - The Kingdom has old and new treasure in it (*Matthew* 13:52), and is therefore the story of both Old and New Testaments.

J J MOREY

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LIVING PROOF OF GOD'S WORD

“Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done” (Isaiah 46:9-10)

Some people see Christianity as some kind of intellectual suicide. A blind leap of faith. However, Christianity is a reasonable Faith. It is based on incontrovertible, historical facts. Christianity is not a blind leap into the dark. It is an intelligent step into the light. There is nothing virtuous about gullibility. We are not proclaiming faith in faith. It is all too possible to be sincerely wrong. Our faith needs to be in the facts that God has revealed in Scripture and in Creation.

Any sceptical enquirer is to be commended for wanting to examine the foundations of our faith. The Bible forms the solid foundation for our Faith. The Bible stands as the greatest Book ever written. It is unique in its circulation. The first book ever to be printed was the Bible. It has been read by more people, and printed more times, than any other book in history. No other book has been translated into so many languages.

The Forbidden Book

It is unique in its survival. No other book has been so viciously attacked throughout history as the Bible. In AD 300 the Roman emperor Diocletian ordered that every Bible be sought out and burned. He was determined to destroy Christianity by destroying the Scriptures it was founded on. Anyone caught with a Bible would be executed.

War Against God

Throughout history other tyrants have waged a war against God, seeking to annihilate the Christian Church. Just in the twentieth century alone well over 60 million Christians were killed by atheistic regimes. Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union closed down or destroyed over 48,000 churches and imprisoned more than fifty million Russian Christians. Mao Tse Tung's Marxist regime in Red China also sought to annihilate the Christian Church. Enver Hoxa declared Albania the first truly atheistic country in the world after closing every church and killing every minister in the country. Every Bible was destroyed and people were imprisoned in

labour camps for merely mentioning the Name of God. Samora Machel similarly attempted to turn Mozambique into the first truly atheistic country in Africa. Yet, despite the most extraordinary campaigns to destroy Bibles, the Bible has survived to continue to be the world's Number One bestselling book of all time.



Alexander the Great who destroyed the city of Tyre

Unique

Despite the intensive campaigns over many centuries to destroy the Bible, there are still an incredible 24,000 manuscripts of the New Testament dating back to the time of the early church. By way of comparison there are only 7 manuscripts of Plato's *Tetralogies*, 49 manuscripts of Aristotle's *Ode to Poetics* and 8 copies of the historian Herodotus' writings. By the standards of antiquity, the Bible is in a class of its own. No other ancient writing has as many manuscripts, and certainly no other book has been so scrutinised and subjected to such critical analysis, and yet survived the most withering campaigns of criticism.

Impressive Credentials

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in cliff top caves at Qumran, in 1949, provided manuscripts dating from the third century BC to the first century AD. It included a complete book of *Isaiah* and thousands of fragments representing almost every other Old Testament book of the Bible. Researchers were astounded to find that the manuscripts and translations which we have available to us today were accurate

and reliable in every way. The Bible, on any level you might wish to examine it, is the most impressively credentialed work of ancient literature.

Now, you may say, that's all very well, but how can I know that the Bible is the Word of God?

A Critical Test

The Law of God sets up a litmus test for prophecy: *“When a prophet speaks in the Name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen, or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him” (Deuteronomy 18:22).*

Prophecy

It is a fact that of the twenty six books of the world, that either claim to be, or have been proclaimed to be, Scripture, the issue of specific prophecy is glaringly absent. You do not find specific prophecies concerning events far in the future, in the writings of Buddha, Lao-Tsu, Confucius, or Muhammad. However, the Bible is absolutely unique in that, in the Old Testament alone, there are more than two thousand specific prophecies that have already been fulfilled. There has never been anything else in all of history to compare with the Bible's prophecies.

You may say, weren't they just lucky guesses, or vague generalities that could be interpreted in any way? Well, you be the judge. Consider these:

Egypt

At the time when Egypt was the greatest nation in all the world, the king of nations, the richest country on earth, Ezekiel prophesied: *“There shall no longer be princes from the land of Egypt” (Ezekiel 30:13).*

It is a fact of history that, until a few decades ago when the monarchy was overthrown, Egypt was always ruled by a prince, but during the 2,500 years since this prophecy was given, the princes of Egypt were never Egyptian. Their kings and queens have

been Persians, Macedonians, Romans, Greeks, Arabs and Ottoman Turks. Egypt has even been ruled by the English. But since the prophecy, given through Ezekiel no Egyptian monarch has ruled over Egypt. When Egypt was the world's superpower, no one could have predicted that.

Babylon

Iraq has been much in the news lately, so let us consider the biblical prophecies concerning Babylon. The Bible contains over 100 specific prophecies concerning Babylon's fate.

Babylon was not only the greatest empire in ancient times, its capital city was the greatest city in the world. The historian Herodotus recorded that the city consisted of 196 square miles of the most beautiful architecture, hanging gardens, palaces and temples. The walls were 15 miles long and 200 feet high. The towers were 300 feet high. The walls were 187 feet thick at the base. Every authority at the time would agree that the city of Babylon was impregnable. Yet the Word of God came that: "*The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken ... it shall be desolate forever*" (*Jeremiah 51:58-62*). Now, the Great Wall of China is not nearly as thick, nor as strong, as the walls of Babylon were, and although it is older it still stands today. The walls of Jerusalem still stand. But today there is no doubt that the walls of Babylon have been destroyed.

Determined to make this the capital of his worldwide empire, Alexander the Great decided that he would rebuild Babylon. Alexander issued 600,000 rations to his soldiers and ordered the rebuilding of the city of Babylon. Yet, Alexander died suddenly at the age of 32 and his enterprise of rebuilding Babylon was abandoned.

In the fourth century AD, Julian the Apostate, who attempted to restore paganism to Rome, was engaged in a war with the Persians. To prevent the Persians re-establishing the defenses of Babylon, Julian ordered the remnants of the wall of Babylon completely broken down. In this surprising way, one of Scriptures greatest antagonists of all time became the agent to fulfilling one of the clearest and most repeated prophecies in the Old Testament.

"*Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate ... it shall be no more inhabited forever*" (*Jeremiah 50:13, 39*).

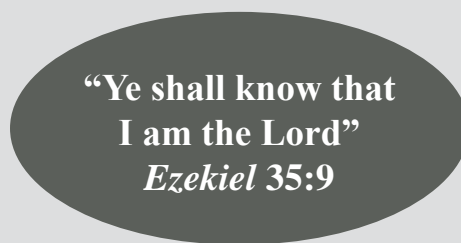
Today the ruins of Babylon are a wilderness inhabited only by scorpions and snakes. Although the fertility of the lands around

Babylon was legendary, today it is a barren desert.

Tyre

The city of Tyre was to the sea what Babylon was to the land. Tyre was the greatest port city in the ancient world. Yet, at the height of its power, God declared that this city would be destroyed, that its towers would be broken down, and that its stones and timber, and even its dust, would be laid in the midst of the water and it would become like the top of a rock, a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea (*Ezekiel 26:4-14*).

This very strange prophecy began to be fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon marched his army to the walls of Tyre and for 13 years besieged the city. When finally the walls of the city crumbled before the persistence of the Babylonians they found that many of the inhabitants had moved to



an island half a mile out into the Mediterranean. There they built an even more impregnable city.

For hundreds of years one might have said that the prophecy given through Ezekiel was not completely fulfilled. Then Alexander the Great came, defeated the Persians and demanded the surrender of the port cities of the Eastern Mediterranean. Tyre alone refused to open its gates to him, so Alexander then conceived the boldest and most daring plan in siege history. He ordered a causeway built across half a mile of the Mediterranean Sea to the island of the new Tyre. All the walls of Tyre were torn down, the timber, the stones, the rubble and the logs and they were cast into the sea. They scraped the very dust of the city itself into the sea to make this highway to destroy the new island city of Tyre. In this way the prophecy in *Ezekiel 26* was completely fulfilled.

Sidon

The prophecy against Sidon (*Ezekiel 28:21-23*) was that the inhabitants would be decimated, but the city would continue. History records that the city of Sidon was attacked, betrayed by its own king, and 40,000 of its inhabitants were killed. But the city of Sidon continues.

Samaria

The Scripture records a prophecy that Samaria, the capital of the Northern kingdom of Israel, would be destroyed, it would be turned into a vineyard and its foundations would be uncovered (*Micah 1:5-6*). In fact the walls of Samaria were cast down and today vineyards grow where once stood the capital of the Northern kingdom. Archeologists have also excavated to expose the foundations of the city just as the prophecy foretold.

Jerusalem

There were numerous other prophecies, that Jerusalem, the capital of the Southern kingdom of Judah would be destroyed, its inhabitants carried away and its wall broken down (*Jeremiah 24:9; 29:21; 35:17*). There were further prophecies that the city and the walls would be rebuilt and the people would be brought back (*Isaiah 4:3-6*). History records that all of this indeed happened, as prophesied.

Petra

When Petra was one of the great cities of the ancient world, and Edom was a powerful nation, the Word of God came to Edom: "*I am against thee, and I will stretch Mine hand against you and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord ... I will make thee a perpetual desolation, and thy cities shall not return; and ye shall know that I am the Lord*" (*Ezekiel 35:3-4, 9*).

To visit the desolate land that once was Edom, and the deserted ruins of Petra today it is hard to imagine the power and prestige that these places once had when the prophecy was given.

Incomparable

Those people who say that the Bible was just written by men are simply expressing their own ignorance on the subject. There is nothing comparable to the Bible in all the literature of the world. The power revealed through the Scriptures is none other than the power of God.

"*Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done*" (*Isaiah 46:9-10*).

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THE PROPHECY OF THE TORN CLOAK

The Kingdom Divided to Expand

This is a fascinating story about when negatives become God's positives. It concerns the Kingdom of Israel in the late tenth century BC being divided up from a united kingdom of Twelve Tribes under King David and then King Solomon,

to a kingdom that was torn apart into two kingdoms – one large kingdom in the north, still called Israel (or Ephraim), and one smaller kingdom in the south called Judah. This was because the royal throne was at Jerusalem which was where the royal tribe of Judah and the smaller border tribe of Benjamin resided.

This is how the division came about. First of all we need to remember there had only been two kings before Solomon and now he was told that because of his disobedience in marrying foreign wives and worshipping their gods he would lose the kingdom. The biblical and historical record of these events is given in I Kings 11:11-13: *“Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done unto thee, and thou has not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from*

thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.”

When we review the overall design of God's great plan for His Kingdom we see:

- Abraham was called to be the father of a great nation which would be a blessing to “all the families of the earth.” This was an “everlasting covenant” made with his literal descendants.
- Isaac, father of twin sons Jacob and Esau – Jacob inheriting the promises when Esau sold the Birthright to him.
- Jacob taking his 12 sons and their families into Egypt, where Joseph had become prime minister under Pharaoh.
- The growth of the Israelites into a large number of people and their enslavement by the Egyptians.
- The Exodus under Moses and the giving of the Law to shape them into a nation under God.
- Life in the Promised Land under the 13 Judges – the apostasies as well as the times of peace and obedience.
- The people ask for a king to be like the other nations – they get Saul who is *their* choice.
- Then David, God's choice, who was the father of Solomon.

There was trouble for Solomon from other nations during all of his reign, but there arose trouble within as well. This was a time when civil war among the Twelve Tribes *could have erupted* to destroy the nation under God's command. Jeroboam was the man who became the leader of the opposition – first to King Solomon and then to his son, Rehoboam. It threatened severe national conflict. Solomon, as a strategy, decided to use Jeroboam to keep him under control so he put him in command of the house of Joseph (also called Ephraim). Jerobo-



The prophet Ahijah rips his garment to foretell Jeroboam's rise to power over the ten northern tribes of Israel

am is described as “a mighty man of valour” so he was undoubtedly very useful to the king.

It was at this time that the prophet Ahijah could see what was about to happen and on a certain day, wearing a new cloak, he went out into the fields to find Jeroboam. The two men were alone in the field. What happened next must have surprised if not stunned Jeroboam. Ahijah removed his new cloak and proceeded to rip it up into twelve pieces. Ahijah then said to Jeroboam: “*Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten pieces to thee*” (I Kings 11:31).

The major portion of the Kingdom was thus to be removed from Crown authority, which at face value appears as a total contradiction of the overall design for God’s great plan, outlined above.

Then Ahijah said that for the sake of King David’s memory, the rest of the kingdom, centred upon Jerusalem and represented by the other two pieces of the cloak, would remain with Solomon, which was soon to come under King Rehoboam of Judah, Solomon’s successor. Clearly Solomon heard about this encounter as he tried to kill Jeroboam who fled to Egypt for safety. Later, when Solomon died and was succeeded by Rehoboam his son, Jeroboam’s friends were prompted to call him back from Egypt to rule over the northern kingdom.

When he reorganised the kingdom after David, Solomon had repressed tribal loyalties – except for those of his own tribe of Judah – and had neglected the priestly tribe of Levi. Long pent-up resentment erupted shortly after Solomon’s death, and the tribal leaders insisted that Rehoboam be crowned in the ancient northern city of Shechem rather than in Jerusalem, whose grandiose structures could only remind them of the forced labour that had built them.

Jeroboam and the congregation of Israel came to the new king Rehoboam. They said that if in this new reign he treated them better than they had been treated under Solomon then they would serve him in a united kingdom. However, Rehoboam determined to follow the advice of his younger contemporaries and announced he would impose an even heavier burden upon them, as recorded in I Kings 12:14: “*And [Rehoboam] spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I*

will chastise you with scorpions.”

It is essential however to notice the reference to God’s prophetic plan in the following verse 15: “*Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake unto Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.*”

This naturally made the northern part of Israel furious and they decided to separate from the house of David. Ignoring the advice of the older men and responding to the urgings of the younger men with whom he had grown up, Rehoboam decided to impose a united order between the two Houses of the Kingdom. He sent his father’s head of forced labour, Adoram, up to the northern House of Israel where he was promptly

“For this thing
is from me”
I Kings 12:24

stoned to death. Rehoboam then formed a new army drawn from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. By this time the northern tribes had crowned Jeroboam as ruler of the secessionist kingdom of Israel.

The climax to this story comes when the prophet Shemaiah warns Rehoboam not to resist the insurgency of the northern tribes of Israel because the revolt was God’s will. The significant and immortal words were: “*Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me*” (I Kings 12:24).

The force Rehoboam had mustered was stood down and civil war was averted. There were years of border dispute and conflict between Judah and Israel, the two parts of the divided kingdom. It is generally assumed by theological students – as well as by historical ‘experts’ – that all that then followed was entirely destructive to the elimination of God’s plan for His literal kingdom upon earth.

Most certainly the negative in this story is that the covenant nation of Israel proved unfaithful to the great trust that God placed in her. As generation followed generation, God’s Law was gradually forgotten and eventually, as a result of continued disobe-

dience, the kingdom ceased to function and the righteousness which it had provided became but a memory.

How then could all this be a positive process in the construction of God’s kingdom among the nations, except, as we will now consider, that a greater and long-term process was being initiated? The answer here clearly lies in God’s foreknowledge. It was a very great negative at the time, yet a *far greater* literal kingdom and a **positive**, was under construction than could ever be imagined. The Kingdom was divided, not to be totally destroyed, *but actually to expand and this on a global scale.*

In the great national destiny of God’s *continuing* kingdom upon earth, the decision to divide the kingdom was as profound as it was prophetic. The revolt and the division on the surface appeared a disaster, leading as it did to the Assyrian captivity of Israel as well as the major part of Judah – four-fifths of the Hebrew race – yet it is described as God’s will Who says through the prophet that “*this thing is from me.*” Following the Assyrian captivity, it is evidentially provable that these vast numbers of people **never** returned to their original homeland, but moved out under Assyrian and other names into the Caucasus mountains region, through the Dariel Pass, around the Black Sea and on into Europe, later to form the great Christian nations of the West.

It is at the moment that a cell divides in the womb, that growth and expansion begin. In effect this is what took place at the division of the Kingdom of Israel. If we concentrate only upon the Messianic line of descent coming down from Judah, we miss the clear Scriptural confirmation in I *Chronicles* 5:1-2 that while the “chief ruler,” or the Messiah, would come from Judah, the literal **Birthright** blessing would continue through Joseph.

The prophecy of the torn cloak began a journey for the Kingdom of God upon earth that needs to be understood to prove the faithfulness of God’s covenant promises to His People. God is indeed *still* working His purpose out among the nations in the twenty-first century!

MICHAEL A CLARK

For further reading, the free booklet *The Continuing Kingdom of God upon Earth* is available from BIWF and gives a much more detailed explanation of the Kingdom and its unique destiny as *The Greatest Love Story of All Time.*

WHICH WAY DID THEY GO?



The Black Obelisk of Shalmanezzer

It has been asserted, by many historians over a period of several centuries, that the royal House of David was transplanted to the 'Isles of the sea,' meaning Britain. If this be true, we are faced with some interesting questions. . .

Why there? Why would God move David's Throne, an Israelite Throne, to the British Isles? What possible reason could He have for doing such a thing? Is it even feasible? David's descendants were to rule over the House of Israel (Jeremiah 33:17; also Isaiah 9:7; Luke 1:32, 33).

But just where was Israel in the time of Jeremiah? In II Samuel 7:10, in the time

of David (quite some time before the time of Jeremiah), the Lord said, "*I will appoint a place for my people Israel . . . and will plant them [in that place].*" The Israelites were *already in Palestine* when this promise was made, so this indicates that the place where the Lord would plant his people Israel was a place other than Palestine. Another 'Promised Land,' if you will.

But where was this place? And how would Israel get to that place from their home in Palestine? And what would cause them to move in the first place?

When a family relocates today, there could be a variety of reasons. Our job may move

us, health reasons may warrant a change of climate, or you may just like to travel. But back then, as a general rule, people did not jump around like we do today. And this prophecy is not talking about just one family, or even a number of families; we are talking about the relocating of an *entire nation!*

How would God move His Israel to this new place?

In the eighth century before Christ, God began to chastise His beloved people for their awful disobedience in serving other gods; first with the Assyrian Captivity of Israel, and later with the Babylonian Captivity of Judah. The Assyrian Captivity, which is what we will deal with here, came in waves beginning around 771 BC, and coming to a climax with the siege of Samaria, 723-721 BC. Samaria was the capital of the kingdom of Israel (I Kings 16:23, 24).

In 721 BC, Israel was taken captive into the land of Assyria by Shalmanezzer. We read about it as follows, "*And it came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah [king of Judah], which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, that Shalmanezzer king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: because they obeyed not the Voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed His covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded and would not hear them, nor do them*" (II Kings 18:9-12).

Again we read, "*In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria [Shalmanezzer] took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes . . . For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria . . .*" (II Kings 17:6, 22-23).

The Israelites had heroically withstood

Shalmanezar three years, but it was now God's plan to turn them over captive to Assyria. So the entire ten-tribed nation of Israel (along with 200,150 of the people of Judah a few years later) was moved from their own land into Assyria because of their disgraceful wickedness and disobedience toward God. They were used by the Assyrians as a 'buffer' around their kingdom against any outside attacks. *God had begun the moving of His people.*

But they did not stay in Assyria. After their captivity, the Israelites left Assyria. They could not go back to their own land, however, because when the King of Assyria took Israel away captive, he filled the area where the Israelites had dwelt with the heathen. We read, *"And the King of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria and dwelt in the cities thereof"* (II Kings 17:24).

So where did the Israelites go?

Scholars are variously divided on this question. There is such controversy over this issue, that the people of this Assyrian Captivity (all of the House and Kingdom of Israel, along with a great portion of the House and Kingdom of Judah) are called the *"Lost Tribes of Israel."*

They are believed by many to be gone forever, having become amalgamated together with the people of Assyria, and mongrelized. *But I do not believe this to be the case.*

The Lord had said of the northern ten tribes (those thought to be 'lost') and their kingdom, *"Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom [the northern kingdom – Israel], and I will destroy it [the kingdom, not the people] from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth"* (Amos 9:8-9).

He also said, *"I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me ..."* (Hosea 5:3); and that *"... the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice or sacred pillar, without an ephod or teraphim: [but] afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and*

shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days" (Hosea 3:4-5).

There are numerous prophecies, yet to be fulfilled, which include *each* of the twelve tribes. What about these prophecies? If these people are truly 'lost' forever, how can these prophecies be fulfilled? They *can't* be fulfilled! *But the veracity of God's Holy Word demands that these tribes do exist.* The book of *James*, written eight centuries after the Assyrian captivity, is addressed to *"the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad."* So they have got to be out there somewhere! I *refuse* to believe the scholars who say that these ten [plus] tribes were *lost!*

They may be lost to the world, lost to the present day Jews, and even lost to their own selves (for *"blind is my servant"*), but I

**"I will not utterly destroy
the house of Jacob, saith the
LORD" Amos 9:8**

believe God when He says that *He will not 'lose' His people.* No, they are not lost. God knows where they are, for He has guided their path and fed them all these many years! And if we will look, and study history and the Scriptures, *we will know where they are too!*

Josephus, writing in the first century AD, knew where his kindred were. He wrote: *"...there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates [west from Palestine] till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers"* (*Antiquities* Bk. 11, ch. 5, 2).

So they have still got to be out there somewhere! And they have got to be a great people!

The prophet Ezra writes more specifically, *"And whereas thou sawest that He gathered another peaceable multitude unto Him; those are the ten tribes, which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of Osea [Hoshea] the king, whom Salmanasar the king of Assyria led away captive, and he 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, that*

they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land. And they entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river. For the most High then shewed signs for them, and held still the flood, till they were passed over. For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half: and the same region is called Arsareth" (II Esdras 13:39-45).

The area referred to is near the headwaters of the Euphrates, in the Caucasian Mountains, between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. That area has a ravine or 'gate,' if you will, called *"the pass of Israel"* in early writings.

The fascinating thing is that according to classical history, this was the point of origin of the *Kimmerians*, or *Cimmerians*; and the area referred to as Arsareth is the same area where the *Scythians* emerge on the scene of history.

Who were these Cimmerians and Scythians? There stands in the British Museum an Assyrian monument called the *Black Obelisk*. This monument refers to the Assyrian Captivity of Israel, but does not call the Israelites 'Israelites.' The Black Obelisk refers to the Israelites, whom the Assyrians had taken captive, as *"Bit Khumri,"* meaning *"House of Omri."*

Among the many variations of this name, Khumri, we find *Kimmerians*, *Kymry*, *Gimmiri*. The *Kimmerians*, or *Cimmerians*, were also called *Sakai*. But these same *Sakai* are also called *Scythians*. This fact is established by the best known inscriptions which have furnished the key to Assyriology.

So we see that the vast majority of Israel became 'lost' to her original identity and became known as the *Cimmerians*, *Scythians*, *Kymry*, *Gimmiri*, *Sakai* etc. These peoples were all the *same people* in reality (Israelites), but were known by historians at different periods by *different names*. Archaeology and anthropology bear this out. *These people went northward and westward and later in history became known as the Celts, Vikings, Angles, Normans and Saxons of history.* And they were already in the *"Isles of the Sea"* (Isaiah 24:14-15; 49:1; 51:4-5; Jeremiah 31:10) in large numbers by Jeremiah's time.

REV KEN KEMBLE

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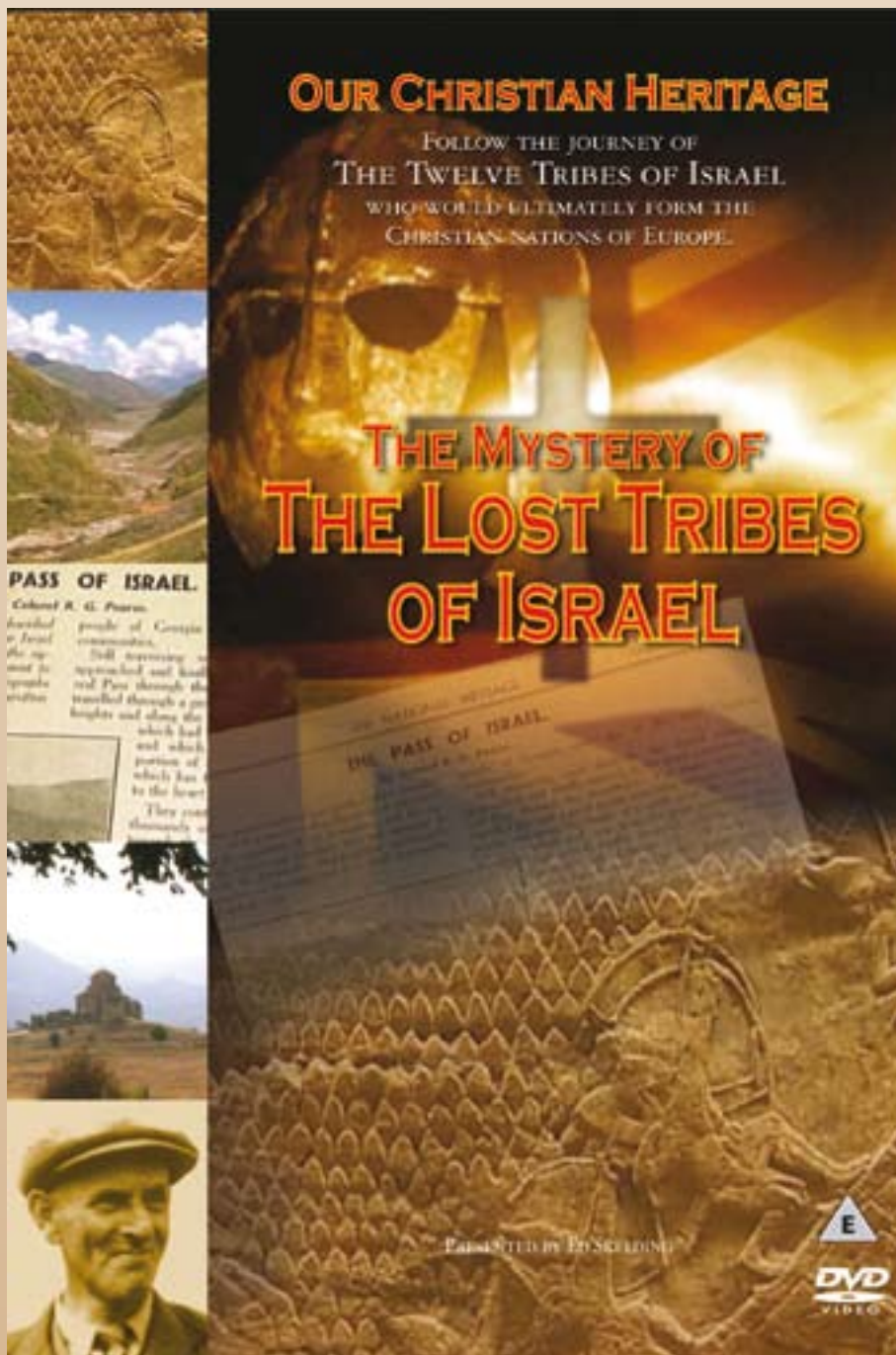
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For the very first time this documentary film brings together the Scriptures, history and archaeology to tell the exciting story of events which have been obscured for far too long. As the narrator, Ed Skelding, says, "The history of our world is all too often defined by conflict. There have been many examples of invasions, conquests and captivities. Nowhere has this been more apparent than in Northern Israel. ... This resulted in the subjugation and deportation of virtually the entire Israelite population into Assyria."

Filmed on locations where the movements of these people can be traced as they moved out of Assyria following the collapse of the Assyrian Empire, original footage of scenes and artefacts brings to life the immense scale of time and place.

The première of the film was the highlight of the recent BIWF Summer Convention held in July at Hothorpe Hall. It follows *Our Christian Heritage* which was made in 2009 and shown around the world on some of the Christian TV channels. Both films are available on DVD from The Covenant Publishing Co Ltd.

A people who forget where they came from can have little idea of where they are going. This film provides the evidence for the origins of the Christian nations of the West and reasons for upholding that heritage today against the onslaughts of secularism and false religions.



THE ORIGINS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

The English are a peculiar nation. What is more odd than to want the Scriptures in the language of the people? But the Venerable Bede was working on a translation of St John's Gospel into Anglo-Saxon when he died in AD 735. The Viking raids put paid to any such project, but even at this early date, we find one key element: **desire**.

Could Anglo-Saxon have been a **language** capable of rendering the Scriptures, for that is the vital element: a language must be sufficiently developed to contain the meanings, and will itself develop in the process. The question was made redundant by the Norman Conquest. 1066 and all that made England a trilingual nation – Anglo-Saxon for the lower ranks, Norman French for the landowners and Latin for the clergy (who included Italians and Germans as well as English and Normans). When I was working on the Whitby Cartulary, I came across a document dated about 1340 which was threefold – in Latin, Norman French and Old English. Fast forward fifty years, and what a transformation! The poet Thomas Usk writes "Let us show our fantasies in such words as we learned from our mother's tongue," and there is a famous painting of Geoffrey Chaucer reading his poems at the court of Edward III. The Hundred Years' War (1340-1453), despite its glory days of Crècy and Poitiers, was a monumental waste of manpower and resources, but it made the English a nation and gave us a common language. Since the mid-century, criticism of the church had grown, and it is against this background that John Wycliffe (d. 1384) produced the first English translation of the Bible. But he too had to invent new words, notably 'charity' (as in I *Corinthians* 13) and 'at-one-ment,' to convey the truths of Scripture.

Wycliffe was fortunate to have the protection of John of Gaunt (d. 1399). That same year saw an infamous compact. The House of Lancaster, which had usurped the throne, sought the backing of the Church, which in turn sought the power of the Crown to suppress its critics. The Act for the burning of heretics was passed in 1401, and even to possess a copy of the Wycliffe Bible incurred suspicion of heresy. It is notable that Reginald Pecock, Bishop of Chichester (1450-7), a critic of the Papacy and in favour of translating the Scriptures, was deprived of his bishopric and confined to a remote monastery in the Fens.

So ended the first attempt at an English

Bible. The process had to begin again on a new tack, and this involved learning a new skill. Wycliffe had translated from the Latin Vulgate. What of the original Greek? In 1453, that year of the fall of empires, Constantinople was finally taken by the Turks. Before and after the event, scholars fled, mostly to Italy. Notable among them was John Argyropoulos who taught at Florence. Among his pupils was Marsilio Ficino, who corresponded with our own John Colet, Dean of St Paul's. Colet, and the royal physician Linacre were among the English scholars who travelled to Italy to learn Greek. Early in the 1500s the great Dutch scholar Erasmus came to England and became the first Lady Margaret Professor of Greek and New Testament (the combination is significant) at Cambridge. By the 1510s, Greek was being studied, albeit by only a few scholars, at both Oxford and Cambridge. By the early 1520s, two men with reforming ideas were already at work – William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale. Both had to flee to the continent. While Cardinal Wolsey (1514-29) and Thomas More (1529-32) were in charge, England was not the place for biblical translation.

But what was the **text** that they were to translate? The greatest contribution made by Erasmus was the publication of the *Textus Receptus* or Received Text, the Greek New Testament which had been preserved at Constantinople. Comparison with the Latin Vulgate showed up many deviations in the latter, which had led to errors in the medieval church. Less well known was a polyglot Bible produced by Cardinal Ximenez, Archbishop of Toledo, with the Old Testament in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and the New Testament in Greek and Latin. This was overshadowed by Erasmus' work, which was published earlier. When the knowledge of Hebrew spread, it was to the Massoretic Text in that language that scholars turned. The question seems hardly to have been asked, though it should have been, whether to follow that or the Greek Septuagint used by the Orthodox Church which is in fact much older. Most of the O.T. books in the Septuagint appear as the Apocrypha, to be used for edification but not for doctrine.

Opportunity for a full English Bible at last came with the hey-day of Henry VIII's reformation when Thomas Cromwell ran the state and Thomas Cranmer the Church. The Great Bible of 1539 was chiefly the work of Miles Coverdale (in favour at last) building on the work of Tyndale, Luther and many

others. A copy was to be placed in every parish church where it was available to be read. This would not have happened without the approval of Henry VIII – conservative in many of his views, but sharing ideas with the humanists of the time.

The Great Bible, however, did not always use the best texts, and rival versions followed. The Geneva Bible (1560) was more accurate, but biased in a Calvinist direction. The Anglican hierarchy replied with the Bishops' Bible (1568). The Douai Bible was an English translation acceptable to the Roman Catholic Church. The New Testament was published in 1582, the Old Testament followed in 1609.

The one great achievement of the Hampton Court Conference was agreement to work together for a translation on which Anglicans and Puritans would concur. The best scholars on both sides worked hard for seven years to produce 'the only masterpiece written by a committee' – the King James Bible. Is it the most accurate translation? Arguably not. Is it the most satisfying? To many, to this day, yes, because it had that extra quality, **inspiration**. It was written at a time when the English language reached its height and the scholars who worked on it captured the power, the beauty and the richness of our native tongue. No translation of the Scriptures can ever be perfect because we are dealing not with something written in stone but with the living Word of God which is there to challenge, to inspire and to quicken us in its turn.

REV BARRIE WILLIAMS



The lectern in Emmanuel Church, Morecambe.



DAILY BREAD

“Man shall not live by bread alone” Luke 4:4

These powerful words of Our Lord have always been a reminder that our bodies need to be fed as much spiritually as physically. There is no life within us without the “*Word of God*.” Further on in the same gospel, in chapter 11, He is teaching His disciples how to pray and from the context the words in verse 3, “*Give us day by day our daily bread,*” seem to be both a request for spiritual and for physical food. In verses 11-13 the spiritual aspect of food and being fed is reinforced by these words: “*If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? ... How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*”

Some of the missing words in the quote above are: “*If ye then, being evil, know*

how to give good gifts unto your children:” which are very poignant when the evidence of today is that this wicked and sinful generation barely knows how to give good things of bodily nourishment to its children let alone any good spiritual food. Both physical and spiritual malnutrition are seen everywhere. This does not necessarily mean starvation – malnutrition or ‘faulty nutrition’ can and does result in all sorts of problems including obesity, diabetes and osteoporosis. Many people have a much distorted relationship with food which is clearly seen in the topics of discussion in the media and on social networking sites. All sorts of chronic conditions as well as mental health problems abound. The pursuit of physical perfection through any means, however unnatural, does not lead to contentment. Similarly the spiritual famine

results from the restless search for self-fulfilment and peace from false teachers, religions and cults of all kinds. When they are exposed in their emptiness the disillusion is great and often leads to the total rejection of any search for God.

The fathers of our faith had a better perspective as is shown in the General Confession in the *Book of Common Prayer*: “... there is no health in us.” No spiritual health; no physical health; but always a ceaseless striving after both with very little success. Few people turn to their Creator for guidance and for help even though, as with everything, He has prepared a way for us from the beginning.

In the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve were free to eat of the perfection He created; after

the Fall they were given further instruction and then the time came when God formed the children of Israel into His nation and kingdom for His purpose. The Israelites had suffered so many years of slavery in Egypt that they no longer knew how to organize themselves as a community. They needed to learn how to live in relationship to God, how to live in relationship to each other and how to set up a society which would enable everyone to lead a godly righteous life.

The commandments, statutes and judgments were given to Moses and they covered every aspect of life, spiritual and physical, both for individuals and for the community. Down the long centuries since that time the Israelites repeatedly failed to live according to those standards. Our Lord Himself criticised the leaders of His time in unmistakable terms: “*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!*” (Luke 11:44). Now the moral and physical decline of the covenant nations is far advanced. They need to repent and turn to the God of our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Both spiritually and physically we need to nurse ourselves back to health. This cannot be done very quickly, but a good place to start is to return to God’s teaching on food.

In the beginning man was instructed as follows: “*And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat*” (Genesis 1:29). This was the perfect food for living in the perfect environment. The green herbs were given to the beasts, fowls and creeping things. But following the Fall and the expulsion from the Garden of Eden there is the terrible judgment upon Adam and Eve given in Genesis 3:16-19 with verse 18 stating: “*Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.*” Thus began the decline in longevity and the spread of wickedness in the earth.

After the cleansing of the world by the Flood, Noah was given new instructions: “*Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat*” (Genesis 9:3-4). It is interesting to note that even before this happened Noah was aware of the difference between clean and unclean animals (Genesis 7:2-9).

Mankind is now permitted to eat flesh and herbs. So God’s plan advances to the point described earlier where His people are be-

ing formed into a kingdom as a servant people to the Lord God of Israel. They are given detailed commandments. *Leviticus* 11 and *Deuteronomy* 14 are the two chapters which specify which animals, fowl and fish are safe to eat and in *Deuteronomy* 14:2 it is made clear how important this process is: “*For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.*” Some of these words are taken up by Peter in his first epistle, I *Peter* 2:9.

There is also the direct commandment: “*It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood*” (*Leviticus* 3:17), this is reinforced in *Leviticus* 7:23-27, Noah having already been instructed in this as above. So it is very clear – eat what

“Therefore choose life” *Deuteronomy* 30:19

is permitted and do not eat that which is forbidden. Fat and blood have special significance in the sacrificial rites and generally the scavengers of the animal kingdom are unwholesome. This is not given to us as any form of punishment or penalty – it is very straightforward that eating as God permits is part of following the whole Law that we might have health and not disease.

As in many things, modern society has its thinking back-to-front over health. There are some commendable campaigns giving advice on healthy living but greater praise is given to more spending on new drugs, on new surgical procedures and in building new hospitals. More doctors, more nurses and other health care professionals for both mental and physical conditions are seen as indicators that this is a civilised twenty-first century society. But where is prevention? What about never being ill in the first place? Is it not actually a disgrace that millions of pounds are spent on drugs every year? Surely the aim should be the elimination of all diseases and the total eradication of every ailment – for man and for animals? Health care would be easily affordable if only small units for maternity and for trauma were all that were required.

As a small step towards restoring the health of the covenant nations each and every one of us could follow the food Laws. At

least what we eat is under our own control whereas most of the other Laws of economics, agriculture and so on, are beyond us. Our Lord in His ministry endorsed the Law when He said: “*Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled*” (*Matthew* 5:18). He fulfilled perfectly the sacrificial law and by His atonement opened the way to God: “*For by grace are ye saved by faith*” (*Ephesians* 2:8) but we still live in the fallen physical world where we need to follow His commandments for our moral and spiritual health.

The words of Moses at the end of *Deuteronomy* 30 sum it all up, verse 19: “*I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.*”

PHILIPPA CLARK



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*“Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon, and he shaved himself and changed his raiment and came in unto Pharaoh”
(Genesis 41:14).*

When Joseph, the prison-garbed, unshaven victim of a fateful term of imprisonment, naturally enough thought to effect his own liberation indirectly through the Court butler, he little thought such deliverance would come directly from God, and be interestedly expedited by mighty Pharaoh himself. In this,

as in other designedly typical details, the fascinating story of God-protected Joseph, who started life as a wronged convict in Egypt, is stranger far than fiction.

With a sire compounded of a far-seeing “Jacob,” and a regenerated “Israel” of the Distinguished Service Order, it was but

fitting that, albeit in reverse order, Joseph should duly be proved capable alike of prevailing with God, and of organising with men the most colossal “corner in wheat” upon record.

Thus does Joseph provide an age-lasting concrete example of what God had in con-



temptation when He said, “*them that honour me I will honour*” (1 Samuel 2:30).

As ever from first to last choosing the most suitable instrument available for the execution of His eternal counsel concerning our earth, God from the beginning had earmarked honour and blessing in abundance for Joseph personally as physically and morally “separate from his brethren.” In pursuance of that purpose, it was the calmly-dying father of a long-exalted Egyptian Premier whom God inspired to prophetically say of him:

“*Joseph is the son of a fruitful tree, a fruitful bough by a fountain; his branches [marg. “daughters”] run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and persecuted him. But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong, by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (by the name of the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), even by the God of thy father who shall help thee, with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that coucheth beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of thy father have prevailed over the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that is prince among his brethren*” (Genesis 49:22-26, R.V.).

These inspired words of Jacob clearly show that his blessings, which prevailed above the prior covenantal blessings of Abraham and Isaac, fell to the now ancient and then divinely-established House of Joseph and Sons. For them, in “*the latter days*” of Genesis 49:1 (R.V.) are foreshadowed superlative blessings of a material, observable character in the shape of abounding population, in turn producing offshoot boughs or “daughters,” never disjoined from their parent-stem, however far they go over the orchard wall, climatic advantages conducive of such offshooting productivity, the harvest of the sea, mineral wealth of hill and reef, the whole for assured reversion and possession in no circumscribed corner of a continent, but expansively “unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills” – a universal empire, if words have any meaning.

But human nature in “the peoples” being such as it ever has been since the tragedy of Abel, we can readily understand that such inalienable pre-eminence for Joseph’s afterseed must inevitably result in the most determined of efforts by various enemies to alter such an invidious ordering of “welt

politiks.” Consequently, there are most intelligible reasons why chagrined “archers” should to this hour sorely, yet futilely, grieve, shoot at, and maliciously persecute lineal descendants of Joseph. The hereditary Josephian archers probably never have been so resolute and resourceful in their shooting as they will be found in these latter days.

Furthermore, Joseph’s blessings, “separate from his brethren,” are entirely compatible with such blessings remaining divinely linked with the after destinies of those brethren whom God symbolised by sheaves which did obeisance to the sheaf of Joseph. Of Joseph, the founder of the house, we know that in course of nature his personal share in the shaping of its career ended in Egypt, and that all necessarily became passed on to his sons, for:

“*By faith Joseph when he died made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones.*”

Since every prediction concerning Joseph was of divine inspiration, and as ours are the identical “latter days” which are to witness their fulfilment, the all-important question which arises is: Where are Ephraim and Manasseh to-day? That this is vastly more than an ordinary ethnological question is evident from the thirty-seventh chapter of the Book of *Ezekiel’s* prophecies. With a promise to reunite the two separate sticks of Ephraim and Judah, God goes on to say:

“*Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land, and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel. . . And the nations shall know that I am the LORD that sanctify Israel when My sanctuary is in the midst of them for evermore*” (verses 21, 22, 28).

In respect of their coming “by observation” of the nations, these being still future events, therefore hitherto disguised Ephraim and never hidden Judah must to-day be rubbing shoulders without being aware of their relationship, for is it not the case, as predicted, that:

“*The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and they that vex Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim*” (Isaiah 11:13).

In face of such prophetic Scriptures it is nothing short of a direct challenge of

God’s veracity to tell us that (unspiritualisable Jews alone excepted) Joseph and the several brethren bracketed along with him in Genesis 49, because of their sin, have become “wiped out,” and so are non est. Were that possible, then must it have been a very bad faith indeed by which “*Jacob when he was a dying blessed the two sons of Joseph,*” saying concerning them:

“*The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which hath fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which hath redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads, and let my name [Israel] be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham [father of many nations] and Isaac [laughter], and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth*” (Genesis 48:15, 16).

Furthermore, if Jews and Levites alone in these latter days survive of the twelve sons of Jacob, he misled them when with his dying breath he said to them, “*Gather yourselves together that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the latter days*” (Genesis 49:1, R.V.).

Those who study the prophetic disclosures of these diverse destinies for the separate Houses of Judah and Israel will see with noonday clearness that God’s Word would be demonstrably falsified had not the Ten Tribes of Ephraim-Israel duly become as completely concealed in some multitudinous “nation and company of nations” and another distinct “great people,” both together answering to the Ephraim and Manasseh of that fate-laden forty-eighth chapter of Genesis, as, contrarywise, have the Jews ever been known and recognised.

It would puzzle man to hide in earth’s midst a great and powerful nation having daughter nations and a kindred yet entirely separate great people in these latter days of intercommunication, but God has done it! Yes, and He means in His own time to make the fact patent to all nations, for so the purpose runs:

“*And the nations shall know that I am the Lord that sanctify [set apart] Israel,*” &c. As exemplified in Joseph and Moses this, as all the prophets tell us, must be preceded by a long course of divine training and testing discipline.

THOMAS DYKES
Banner of Israel - January 1916

MOSES THE ECONOMIST

In the struggle to make sense of the confusion and disorder which are so evident in every part of the modern world few commentators turn to the Scriptures. This book, *Moses the Economist* by C F Parker, was first published more than 60 years ago but its message is timeless. Thoroughly grounded on the Word of God the author sets out how the principles of Mosaic economics can be applied to modern life. As he says in his opening paragraphs: "It is unlikely that any future existence, however advanced or intricate, could in any way strain the system's mechanism." It is interesting to read his words with our world in mind and to see how accurate he is in his assessment.

These two extracts demonstrate clearly how the book approaches the subject.

From the Introduction:

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"Such should be the state of our ultimate society – not bounded by money, but a truly freely-giving society – travelling, not like our train on its track of restrictions, but like a plane, moving far above the petty restrictions through unlimited space, yet not moving without laws, but moving in accordance with what Paul terms the law of love as contrasted with the law of death. Moses sought to abolish poverty by laying down compulsory regulations and exhorting sinful men to exceed their requirements. Until Christ, no man had fully demonstrated the practice of Moses' theory. Christ showed the way, and whereas the old law said "Love thy neighbour as thyself," as the required minimum, Christ showed a love greater than we can show, so that the new standard is now "Love one another even as I have loved you" as the ultimate maximum contribution. Here is a standard ever above us; this is the only new law that Christ added to those of Moses; yet even then it was more of an amplification and intensification of the law than a new one."

This is not the first time that *The Covenant Nations* has covered this topic. In Volume 1 Number 6 the article "The Divine Econ-

The Covenant Nations

omy" by Dr Paul Mills described the "radical 'Third Way' that is genuinely different from capitalism and socialism." The footnotes attached gave extensive references to other modern writers on the subject.

The poverty and suffering experienced by so many in every country throughout the world is troubling to behold. Even in the wealthy Western world there are huge numbers of people struggling under the burden of debt imposed upon them by a godless financial system. This book must be widely read and studied. The covenant nations have a heavy responsibility to bring the

Kingdom of God to a fallen world.

Moses said to our forefathers: "Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19).

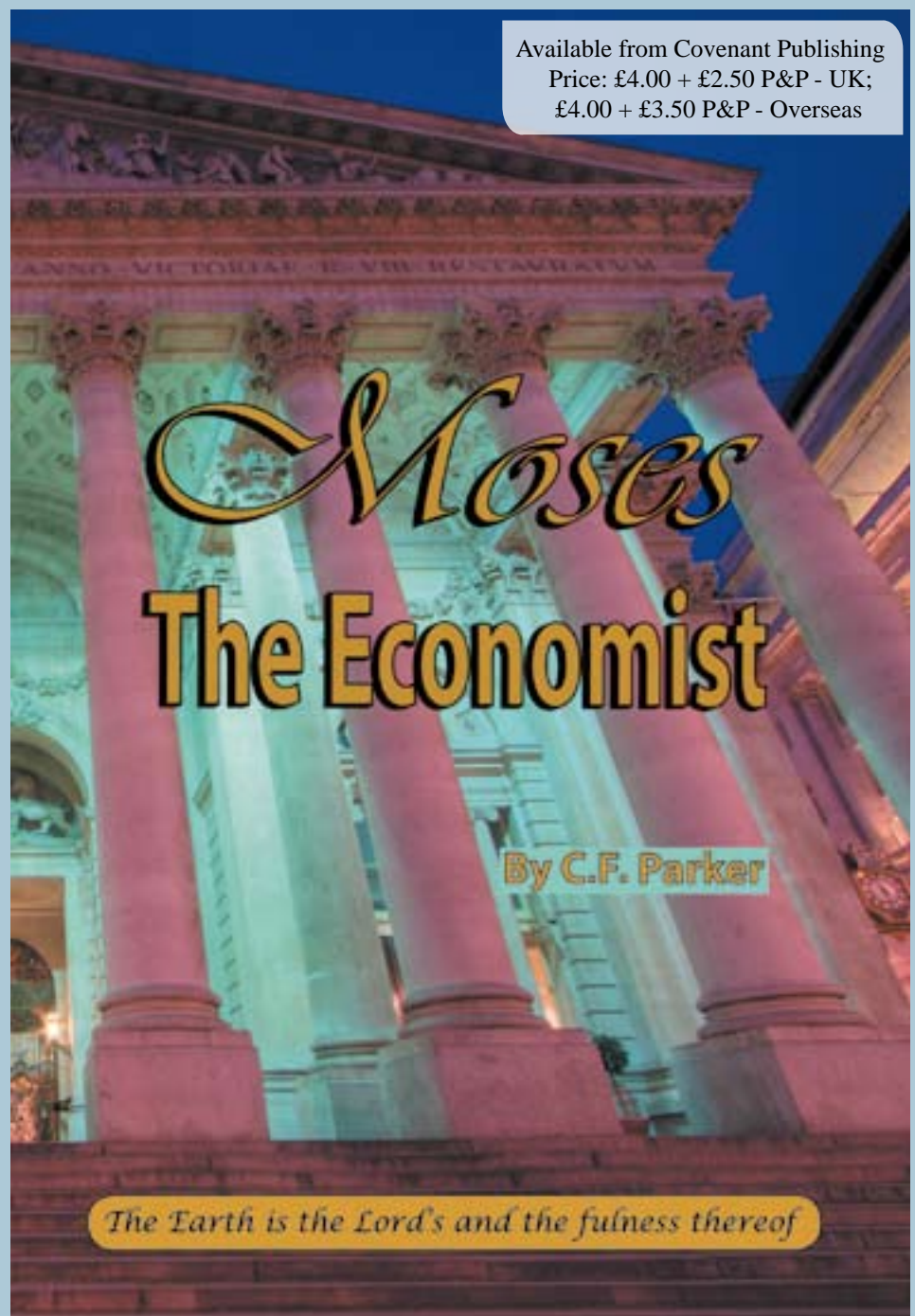
PHILIPPA CLARK

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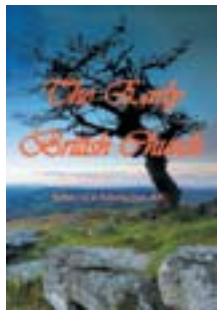
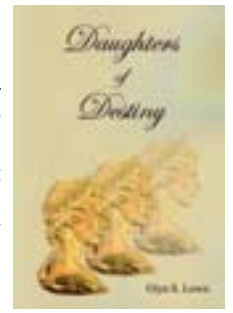
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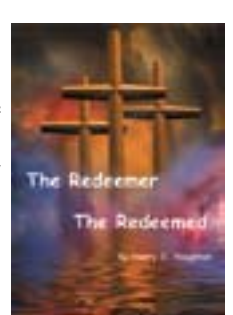
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*“I am the living bread which came
down from heaven: if any man eat
of this bread, he shall live for ever.”*

John 6:51



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