

The Bible- Superstition or Authority?

By Herbert W. Armstrong
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Why is the world's best selling book held in awe by some,
in passive discredit by others, and understood by virtually none?

WHY the Book of mystery nobody seems to know? Why do the many churches of traditional Christianity disagree about what the Bible says?

Have you ever PROVED whether, as the book itself purports, it is the authoritative Word of the Creator God? Rather, have you not simply assumed, from what you have heard, read or been taught, that it is either authentic, or else the religious writing of a small ancient Jewish race, groping in the darkness of human ignorance and of superstition, trying to develop a concept of God?

If you are college or university educated, you have undoubtedly been taught that humanity originated through the theoretical process called evolution. But the educated of this world in nearly all cases have been taught only one side of the subject of origins -- the theory of evolution. On the contrary most of those lacking higher education in the United States "Bible Belt," for example, have been taught only, and accepted without PROOF, the teaching that the Bible is indeed the very Word of God.

A world famous evangelist has confessed publicly that he accepted the authority of the Bible without having seen it proved. Even though he had seen no real proof that the Bible is the authentic word of God, he had decided to accept it as such on sheer faith. But the Bible quotes God as saying: "Prove me now herewith ..." and again: "Prove all things." This evangelist apparently accepted the authority of the Bible because he had "accepted Christ" and at the same time blindly accepted what those humans who led him into the acceptance of Christ themselves accepted.

Isn't it about time -- and the point of rational wisdom, that you PROVE this important question once and for all? Because, IF the Bible is in fact the inspired authentic Word of a living, all knowing, all powerful God, then your eternity will be judged by it.

I Faced This Same Question

In the year of 1926, at age 34, I personally was faced with this question. I was challenged on both evolution and belief in God and the Bible. I was brought to realize that I had simply assumed, without proof, that a Creator God exists and that evolution was not the true explanation of origins. Both my marriage and my business life were at stake.

I realized I had made no in-depth study and research into either side of the question. The stakes were high. I delved into the most serious study and thorough research of my life. First I pursued thoroughly the works of Darwin, Haeckel, Huxley, Vogt and Chamberlin, and even of Lamarck before Darwin. Their works were learned, thought-provoking, although theoretical, and soon my head was swimming. I felt my mental underpinnings slipping away. I was confused. I realized that, though I had been reared in a family that had been of the Protestant faith for generations, I had simply ASSUMED, because of Sunday School upbringing, that God exists. Now it appeared evident, IF evolution be true, the existence of God was a myth. I had to be sure. I could no longer carelessly assume.

On the one hand studies in evolution shook my faith in God and the Bible. But in studying H.G. Wells' book, "The Outline of History", I noticed such statements in accepting the evolutionary theory as, "Scientific men have discussed the possibility of life ..." but they point merely to questionable possibilities.

"They consider" thus and so. "Astronomers give us convincing reasons for supposing ..." "We do not know how life began upon the earth." "Probably the earliest forms of life were ..." "They must have appeared ..." "Speculations about geologic time vary enormously ..." "There seems to be ..." "The first jelly-like beginnings of life must have perished ..."

I was amazed! Here is an accepted book based on evolution. But expressions like "the possibility," "they consider," "convincing reasons for supposing," "we do not know," "probably," "they must have," "speculations about," abound. Mr. Wells and the scientists did not seem to be SURE!

Then I looked into the Bible, discredited as it is by those who believe what they may suppose, what they do not know, what may well have been, etc., And in the Bible I found definite, positive statements expressed as in AUTHORITY. For example, in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." No "may have created." Or "we do not know how the earth came." No "we may well suppose." No theories. Just the authoritative positive statement, "God created" Then verse 3: "And God said, Let there be light, and there was light." Not "perhaps," not "we may well suppose," but " ... there was light." A definite, positive statement of AUTHORITY. All the way through the Bible I found it to be POSITIVE, definite, authoritative! The Bible claims to be the SURE Word of God. It is not unsure! It is not speculative.

Then in its chapter of origins, in Genesis, it explains definitely with authority how man originated, how the first man made a decision on which human civilization has been built -- and it gives the only possible explanation of WHY we live today in a world of awesome materialistic progress and accomplishment, paradoxically with appalling and escalating evils. Evolution has no explanation and no solution to offer. The Bible has both.

Evolution gives no explanation of why humans exist on earth -- of the present paradox of mounting evils accompanying awesome progress -- no hope for the future of a world falling apart, about to destroy itself with the nuclear weapons of mass destruction. No explanation of the cause of the appalling evils and the hopeless future staring so many youths in the face today. The Bible explains it all. It reveals the causes, the present effects, and the tremendous PURPOSE being worked out here below.

Yes, but how do we KNOW, definitely, whether the Bible revelations are in fact TRUE? Personally I had to be SURE. I proved the existence of God to my satisfaction, and I PROVED the authenticity and authority of the Bible. That was satisfying to me beyond words. But YOU! You have a mind of your own. You will be held responsible for how you analyze it. That is YOUR problem and not mine. I can only share with you what I have learned and proved, and you must be responsible for YOUR decisions.

It Dares to Foretell the Future!

Here is a book -- the Holy Bible -- that dares to write out the future history of this world in advance -- that dares to prophesy what is actually going to happen within 15 or 20 years to specific nations, including Russia, the British Commonwealth, China, the United States, Italy, Turkey, Ethiopia, and many others -- most of the major nations of this world.

But would you believe it if I told you what this book predicts? If I told you what it predicts about your nation? Would you believe it?

You know, we have gotten away from believing that the Bible means what it says. We may not be ATHEISTS. We may not ridicule the Holy Bible. But we are living now in an age of SKEPTICISM. We are living in an age of doubt.

Most highly educated people, and men of science, assume that the Bible is not the infallible revelation of a supernatural God, and they assume this WITHOUT THE SCIENTIFIC PROOF that they demand on material questions.

Most fundamentalist believers assume, on sheer faith, never having seen proof, that the Holy Bible is the very Word of God.

Very few people have stopped to prove whether or not the Bible is really the inspired Word of God. Very few people TREMBLE before what it says or regard it as having REAL AUTHORITY.

How Could You Prove It?

Some people seem to think that Jesus' miracles were recorded to prove his divine Messiahship. But the skeptics don't believe those miracles ever occurred.

Some people will say answered prayer is the proof of inspiration. But the skeptic has had no prayers answered. He doesn't believe that anybody ELSE has.

There is, however, one source of irrefutable PROOF! The Bible itself purports to be the infallible, divine revelation of truth, revealed by the very Creator and Divine Ruler of the entire universe. In your Bible, One is quoted, claiming that HE is God, speaking in the first person, saying that he can make and unmake nations, that he can carry out his judgments over millenniums of time, claiming that he can foretell infallibly the future of cities and empires, but that no MAN can.

TAUNTING the Skeptics

WHO IS this, quoted as saying, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand"? One is quoted saying those very words in Isaiah 46:9-10.

Who is this claiming to foretell the future? Is it merely some ignorant, ancient human with no power to make good his boast, who wrote this blistering challenge to the skeptics, recorded in Isaiah 41:21-23? -- "Now, the Eternal cries, bring your case forward, now, Jacob's King cries, state your proofs."

Yes, state your PROOFS! "Let us hear what has happened in the past, that we may ponder it, or show me what is yet to be, that we may watch how it turn out; yes, let us hear what is COMING, that we may be sure that you are gods; come, do something or other that we may marvel at the sight! -- why, you are things of naught, you can do nothing at all!" (Moffatt translation).

There is the taunt of the One quoted as being God, and quoted in the first person, taunting skeptics, saying, "Why, you're nothing at all. Come on! Let's hear your arguments that we may watch whether it turns out. Predict what is going to happen in the future, and let us watch and see whether you can foretell. Have you the power to bring it about? Are you a God? Do you rule the universe? Can you make and unmake nations? Can you pronounce a sentence or a decree on a nation, and bring it to PASS?" That is the taunt of the God of the Bible to the doubter.

Prophecy is a PROOF of God

Prophecy is a proof of divine revelation! If One, in the Bible, speaking and claiming to be God, can make prophecies and tell what is going to happen in the future to nations, to cities, to empires, then if it actually happens in every case, and without a miss, you'll know that was a real God speaking.

But, if it were some person writing this, some human mortal writing in ignorance, groping in superstition, making great boasts, and claiming that he could foretell what was going to happen to proud cities, to nations, to great empires, and then it never happens, you know that that man was merely writing make-believe out of his own imagination.

Yes, prophecy is a proof of God, a proof of the divine revelation of the Bible. Prophecy is a taunting challenge that the skeptic dares not accept!

History shows human civilization started with the development of a few single cities -- Babylon, Nineveh and others. These city-states developed into the earliest nations -- Assyria, Egypt, Israel, Phoenicia, Chaldea, etc. Then, about the 7th century B.C., the first empire over nations was formed by the ancient king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon -- the Chaldean Empire. About 604-585 B.C. the Chaldean armies invaded and took captive the Jews in the land of Judea. Among these Jewish captives, removed from their land and deported to Babylon and Chaldea, was a very brilliant Jewish lad named Daniel.

Prophecy Concerning Judah

There is one prophecy concerning the Jewish people, that they were to be invaded and conquered, driven out of their own land and would be punished for a period of 2,520 years. (See Leviticus 26:14-39 and, for a full explanation, write for our free book "The United States and Britain in Prophecy".) Now, put that together with other prophecies such as Haggai 2:20-22. Exactly 2,520 years from the time that they were invaded and the land of Palestine was given over to King Nebuchadnezzar in 604 B.C. the very nation to whom that land was deeded by God Almighty took possession of it.

That nation was not the Jewish people, but birthright people who descended from Abraham. The birthright means right of birth, and includes the possession of the land, that is, it includes material resources and possessions. The possession of the land that God promised to Abraham was handed on to Isaac, Abraham's son, and then to Jacob. And then Jacob, just before he died, and when his eyes were so dim with age that he couldn't see, reached out and conferred that same birthright, including the possession of the land of Palestine, not upon Judah, the father of the Jews, but upon Ephraim, and together with him his brother Manasseh, both sons of Joseph.

Joseph was one of the 12 sons of the ancient patriarch Jacob, who was renamed Israel. Usually you don't hear of any tribe of Joseph because Joseph was given a double portion. And his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, each became a tribe. And so, rather, you usually read of the tribe of Ephraim and the tribe of Manasseh. When the name Joseph is occasionally used, it includes the two tribes.

How Prophecy Was Fulfilled

Ephraim was made the chief birthright holder. And so, 2,520 years from 604 B.C. Ephraim was to take Palestine again counting 2,520 years from 604 B.C. brings us to A.D. 1917.

When it comes to translating time and getting down to an exact day of the year 2,520 years after Nebuchadnezzar came down to Jerusalem and Palestine was surrendered to him, the Bible gives us the date in terms of the Hebrew calendar. That calendar is set up according to the new moons, with every month being 30 or 29 days. Today we're living under what we call the Roman calendar or, as it was slightly altered by Pope Gregory, the Gregorian calendar. Actually, it is a pagan Roman calendar. The Roman calendar is all that most of us know because we've been born in a world that uses that calendar and no other.

A certain date according to the Hebrew calendar, will coincide with a certain date on the Roman calendar one year, but the next year will be about 11 days earlier, or maybe about 18 days later in the year, because the Hebrew calendar -- sometimes called the sacred calendar, which came from God -- goes according to the moon and runs in 19-year cycles. The Roman calendar by contrast was concocted by men who tried to make it come out right every year, and they've never been able to make it do that!

So, when it comes to translating a certain prophesied date recorded in the Hebrew calendar (in this case the 24th day of the 9th month -- see Haggai 2:20-22) to a date in 1917 according to the Roman calendar, it takes some effort to figure. I found the Hebrew date corresponded to December 9, 1917, which was 2,520 years from the time Nebuchadnezzar accepted the formal surrender of the Jews in 604 B.C.

I looked and found that the Turks, who are gentiles even though they, in part, descend from Esau, Jacob's brother, possessed Palestine in 1917. Esau, remember, anciently possessed the birthright from Abraham through Isaac, but sold it for a bowl of red soup when he was hungry. The Turks surrendered

Palestine to the British, on, what date? I had heard, and it had been published that the date was December 11, 1917. December 11, 1917, I found, on further investigation, was merely the date on which General Allenby and his army made their triumphal march into the city of Jerusalem. But it was two days before, on December 9, that the Turks made the surrender.

That prophecy was fulfilled down to the very day, December 9. And it was on the equivalent date, in 604 B.C., 2,520 years before, six centuries before the birth of Christ, that the Jews formally surrendered Jerusalem and Palestine to the gentiles from Babylon. God Almighty has been able to keep his prophecies.

At this point I want to give you a prophecy from the book of Daniel, which, in itself, is one of the strongest proofs of the inspiration of the Bible.

Revealed to Daniel

This prophecy was written some 500 years before the birth of Christ. Could any man have written this prophecy and made it come to pass? Could any man foresee in advance that the events in this prophecy were going to happen? This prophecy, the longest in all the Bible, begins 500 years before Christ and carries up to our time and into the immediate future. So let us continue with the prophecy.

Daniel was one of four extraordinary, intelligent and brilliant Jewish lads in the Judean captivity. These four men were stationed in the palace of King Nebuchadnezzar of the Chaldean Empire, in training for special responsibilities in the Babylonian government. Daniel was a prophet who had been given special understanding in visions and dreams (Dan. 1:17).

Nebuchadnezzar was the first real world ruler. He had conquered a vast empire, including the nation Judah. This king had a dream so impressive it troubled him -- moved him to tremendous concern. He demanded that his magicians, astrologers and sorcerers tell him both what he had dreamed and what it meant. They could not. They were baffled. Then Daniel was brought before the king.

Daniel disclaimed any more human ability to interpret dreams than the Chaldean magicians, "BUT," he said, "there is a GOD in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" (Dan. 2:28).

First, God's purpose was to reveal to this world-ruling human king that there is a GOD in heaven -- that GOD IS SUPREME RULER over all nations, governments and kings -- that God RULES THE UNIVERSE! It was God who placed the cherub Lucifer on the throne of the earth and Lucifer, who has become Satan the Devil, remains on earth's throne only because God allows it, and only until God sends Jesus Christ to sit on that throne when he removes Satan. This Chaldean king knew only about the many pagan demon gods. He knew nothing of the true living ALMIGHTY God. Like people and rulers, even today, he did not know that God is the living, REAL, active, RULING and GOVERNING PERSONAGE who actually and literally governs not only what is on earth, but the UNIVERSE ENTIRELY!

The whole purpose of this DREAM was to reveal GOD'S GOVERNMENT -- the fact that God RULES -- the truth of THE KINGDOM OF GOD -- the very thing that is the one and only true GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST! And, secondly, to reveal -- preserved in writing for us TODAY -- what is to happen in the latter days -- actually within the next two decades -- THIS LAST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

For US, Today!

This is no dry, dull, dead writing for a people of 2,500 years ago. This is LIVING, TREMENDOUS, BIG NEWS for OUR DAY! It is advance news for us, NOW. News before it happens -- of the most colossal event of all earth's history certain to occur in your lifetime -- during the very next few years!

This is THE TRUE GOSPEL! It is the very gospel Christ preached! It is intended for you and me TODAY! It is vital that you UNDERSTAND!

Read, in your own Bible, Daniel 2, verses 28 through 35. In his dream, this king had seen a vast statue -- larger than any image or statue ever built by man -- so colossal it was terrifying, even in a dream. Its head was of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, legs of solid iron, feet a mixture of iron and clay.

There was a time element. Nebuchadnezzar had viewed it until a supernatural STONE came from heaven, smashing the statue on its feet. Then the whole of the statue broke into small pieces, and was actually blown away by the wind -- it disappeared! Then this STONE expanded miraculously and quickly became a great MOUNTAIN -- so great it filled the whole earth!

What did it mean? Did it have meaning? Yes, because this was God's doing. Unlike ordinary dreams, this one was caused by God to convey the message of God's sovereignty to Nebuchadnezzar -- and, because it is part of the written Word of God, to us today -- to reveal important facts of the TRUE GOSPEL!

"This is the dream," said Daniel (verse 36), "and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king."

This, then, is GOD'S interpretation. It is decidedly not Herbert W. Armstrong's interpretation. Men ought never to interpret the Bible. The Bible gives us GOD'S OWN INTERPRETATION! Here it is:

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings" -- he was the first real WORLD RULER over a world empire! "for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory." God was revealing himself to this human world-dictator as the MOST HIGH Ruler over all.

People today, like this Chaldean king, seem not to think of God as a RULER -- as the Supreme One who GOVERNS -- as the Head of GOVERNMENT. The Eternal was revealing himself through Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar -- and through the Bible to you and to me TODAY -- as a SOVEREIGN, ALL POWERFUL, GOVERNING GOD who is to be obeyed!

"Thou," continued Daniel to this human emperor, "art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another KINGDOM inferior to thee, and another third KINGDOM of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth" (verses 37-39).

What IS a Kingdom?

Notice! This is speaking of KINGDOMS. It is referring to kingdoms that bear rule over the people on earth. It is speaking of GOVERNMENTS! It is not speaking of ethereal sentiments "set up in the hearts of men." It is not speaking of churches. It is speaking of the kind of GOVERNMENTS that bear RULE and AUTHORITY over nations of PEOPLE here on earth. It is literal. It is specific. There is no misunderstanding, here, as to what is meant by the word kingdom.

There is no misunderstanding the interpretation. GOD gives his own interpretation through the prophet Daniel. The great metallic image represented national and international GOVERNMENTS -- real, literal KINGDOMS.

It represented a succession of world-ruling governments. First was the head of gold. That represented Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom -- the Chaldean Empire. After him -- later, in time sequence -- was to come a second, then a third KINGDOM "which shall bear RULE over all the earth" -- world empire!

Then, verse 40, the legs of iron represent a fourth world empire. It was to be strong, even as iron is strong -- stronger militarily than its predecessors. Yet, as silver is less valuable than gold, brass than silver, iron than brass, though each metal was harder and stronger, the succession would deteriorate morally and spiritually. The two legs meant the fourth empire would be divided.

After the Chaldean Empire came the still larger Persian Empire, then Greece the Greco-Macedonian Empire, and fourth, the Roman Empire. It was divided, with capitals at Rome and Constantinople.

Now -- verse 44! Read it! Get your Bible. See it with your own eyes in your own Bible. Here, in PLAIN LANGUAGE, is God's explanation of what the KINGDOM OF GOD IS:

"And in the days of these kings ... " -- it is here speaking of the ten toes, part of iron and part of brittle clay. This, by connecting the prophecy with Daniel 7, and Revelation 13 and 17, is referring to the new UNITED STATES OF EUROPE that is now forming, out of the European Common Market, before your very eyes! Revelation 17:12 makes plain the detail that it shall be a union of TEN KINGS OR KINGDOMS that (Rev. 17:8) shall resurrect the old ROMAN EMPIRE.

So, mark carefully the time element! "In the days of these kings" -- in the days of these ten nations or groups of nations that shall, IN OUR TIME, resurrect briefly the Roman Imprints what shall happen:

"... shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed ... but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever!"

Yes, in OUR TIME!

Now here we have described FOUR universal world empires -- the only four that ever existed! Revelation 13 and 17 show that, after the fall of the original Roman Empire, there would be ten revivals -- SEVEN of which would be ruled over by a gentile CHURCH -- the "daughter" of ancient BABYLON -- a church claiming to be Christian, but actually named by God "MYSTERY, BABYLON the great" -- or, more plainly, BABYLONIAN MYSTERIES!

Six of those have come and gone. The seventh is now forming -- the last, final brief resurrection of the Roman Empire by ten European groups or nations. These are revealed in Daniel 2 as the ten toes of iron and clay mixed.

In their days -- and they shall last but a very short space, possibly no more than two to three-and-a-half years -- shall the GOD OF HEAVEN SET UP A KINGDOM that shall never be destroyed.

This, then, shall be THE KINGDOM OF GOD! That prophecy of Daniel 2, combined with those of Revelation 13 and 17, alone are a convincing PROOF of the existence of God and the authenticity and authority of the Holy Bible.

But there is much more constituting incontrovertible proof.

Longest, Most Detailed Prophecy in the Bible

Next we come to the detailed prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel.

It is one of the most amazing prophecies in the Bible. It is most specific, describing historical events, up to the present, in more detail than any other prophecy. It is the longest prophecy in the Bible.

The prelude is found in the 10th chapter of the book of Daniel. The prophecy came to Daniel in the third year of the reign of Cyrus, king of the Persian Empire (Dan. 10:1). A "man," apparently the archangel Gabriel (Dan. 9:21), appears before Daniel, to make him understand what shall befall God's people in these present "latter days" (10:14).

The first verse of the 11th chapter is a continuation from the last verse of the 10th chapter. The angel says to Daniel, "Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will" (Dan. 11:2-3).

Actually there were 12 more kings in the Persian Empire, but only the first four following Cyrus were of importance for the purpose of this prophecy. They were Cambyses, pseudo-Smerdis, Darius and Xerxes. It was the last, or Xerxes, who was the richest of all and stirred up war with Greece.

Then King Phillip of Macedonia planned a great war to conquer the Persian Empire, with an army made up mostly of Grecians. He died before the plans were completed. But his son, Alexander the Great, took over his plans, and invaded Persia. He met the Persian army at the Battle of Issus, 333 B.C. (Dan. 8:2, 5-6). Then he swept down into Egypt, and then to a final crushing defeat of the Persian Empire at the Battle of Arbella, 331 B.C., after which Alexander marched on a conquest clear to India, sweeping all before him.

Notice now verse 4 of the prophecy: "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those."

How marvelously -- how accurately -- that came to pass. We quote from one of the authoritative English-language histories published in the last century, "A Manual of Ancient History" (Student Series) by Rawlinson: "Cut off unexpectedly in the vigor of early manhood [the 33rd year of his age, June, 323 B.C.], he [Alexander] left no inheritor, either of his power or of his projects" (p. 237). The Empire was left leaderless and in confusion, but out of this emerged, by the year 301 B.C., four divisions, just as prophesied, as a result of a division of the Empire into four divisions by Alexander's generals. They were:

1. Ptolemy (Soter), ruling Egypt, part of Syria and Judea.
2. Seleucus (Nectar), ruling Syria, Babylonia and territory east to India.
3. Lysimachus, ruling Asia Minor.
4. Cassander, ruling Greece and Macedonia.

Thus was the prophecy of verse 4 fulfilled to the letter.

The "King of the North" and the "King of the South"

Now notice what follows. From here the prophecy foretells the activities only of two of these four divisions: Egypt, called "king of the south," because it is south of Jerusalem; and the Syrian kingdom, the king of the north, just north of Judea. It is because the Holy Land passed back and forth between those two divisions, and because their different wars were principally over possession of Judea, that the prophecy is concerned with them. Here is verse 5:

"And the king of the south [Egypt] shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion." In history, we learn that the original Ptolemy I, called Soter, became strong and powerful, developing Egypt beyond the greatest dreams of Alexander. One of his princes, or generals, Seleucus Nicator, also became strong and powerful. And, in 312 B.C., taking advantage of Ptolemy's being tied up in a war, he established himself in Syria, and assumed the diadem as king.

Verse 6 says, "And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement [margin, "rights" or "equitable conditions," or "marriage union"]: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times."

Fulfilled to the Letter!

At the end of 50 years, this occurred exactly as described!

Syria's ruler, the king of the north, at this time was Antiochus II, called Theos. His wife was named Laodice. And, says Rawlinson's Ancient History, page 251, "Her influence ... engaged him in a war with

Ptolemy Philadelphus [king of the south], B.C. 260, which is terminated, B.C. 252, by a marriage between Antiochus and Bernice, Ptolemy's daughter."

The prophecy says "he that begat her" shall be given up. Also that she shall not retain the power of the arm, neither shall the king of the north, whom she married, stand. All three are to come to their end. Notice how accurately this came to pass.

Says Rawlinson's History, page 251 and 252: "On the death of Philadelphus [he that begat her], B.C. 247, Antiochus repudiated Bernice, and took back his former wife, Laodice, who, however, doubtful of his constancy, murdered him to secure the throne for her son Seleucus (II) B.C. 246 ... Bernice ... had been put to death by Laodice."

Nowhere in all the Bible is there so literal a prophecy, giving so many details of future history. And to read an ancient history of these kingdoms is simply to see unfolded before your eyes, step by step, verse by verse, this marvelous prophecy. There can be no doubt of its right application!

The Holy Land Changes Hands

Next let us notice verse 7: "But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate [margin, "in his office"], which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail."

"Out of a branch," or "shoot," of her roots. Her parents were her roots. Hence, this must be her brother, who next should occupy the throne of king of the south and fulfill this prophecy. Now listen to this accurate fulfillment, quoted word for word from the same page of Rawlinson's work (p. 252):

"Ptolemy Euergetes [the III, eldest son of Philadelphus (p. 272) and therefore Bernice's brother, a branch of her roots] invaded Syria, B.C. 245, to avenge the murder of his sister, BerniceIn the war which followed, he carried everything before him."

The eighth verse of Daniel 11 says this king of the south would carry captives and vessels of silver and gold into Egypt, and continue to reign more years than the king of the north, who at that time was Seleucus II, and verse 9 says he (Seleucus II) shall come into Egypt. As verse 7 said he should "enter into the fortress of the king of the north," Ptolemy III did seize the fortress of Syria, Seleucia, the port of Antioch, capital of the kingdom! Then he carried back to Egypt immense booty and 2,500 molten images and idolatrous vessels which, in 526 B.C. Cambyses had carried away from Egypt. He continued to rule until 222 B.C., while the king of the north, Seleucus II, died in 226 B.C.

When he died, his two sons took over the kingdom of the north; first Seleucus III, 226-223 B.C., who ruled only three years, and then his brother Antiochus III, called "the Great," 223-187 B.C. Both of the these two sons of Seleucus II assembled immense forces to war against Egypt, avenge their father, and recover their port and fortress, Seleucia.

And this was accurately prophesied in verse 10: "But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return and be stirred up [margin, "be stirred up again"], even to his fortress."

"And," continues verse 11, "the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand."

In fulfillment of the latter part of verse 10, Antiochus the Great, after 27 years, recovered his fortress, Seleucia, and he also conquered the territory of Syria, as far as Gaza, including Judea. But the young Egyptian king, now Ptolemy IV (Philopator), was roused, and with an army of 20,000 inflicted severe defeat on Antiochus the Great; and fulfilling verse 12, he killed tens of thousands and again annexed Judea to Egypt. But he was not strengthened, for he made a rash and speedy peace with Antiochus, and returned to dissipation, throwing away the fruits of victory. Says verse 12, "And when he hath taken away

the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it ["prevail" -- RAV, RSV]."

"For," as verse 13 continues, "the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches." It was "after certain years," or 12 years later, 205 B.C., that Ptolemy Philopator died, leaving his throne to an infant son, Ptolemy Epiphanies. Then Antiochus assembled a greater army, and won great victories.

He then made a treaty allying Philip of Macedonia with him, and others, against Egypt, and they wrested Phoenicia and southern Syria from the king of the south. In this they were assisted by some of the Jews. Josephus' Jewish history says many Jews helped Antiochus. But notice how accurately Almighty God had foretold this, hundreds of years before it happened! --

"And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall" (v. 14).

Read It in Your Own Bible!

To save space, the reader is asked from this point to read each verse of the prophecy from his own Bible, thus saving us reprinting the prophecy in full here. We give here only the facts in history.

Verses 15-16 -- "the glorious land," of course, refers to Judea, the Holy land. Antiochus the Great besieged and took Sidon from Egypt, ruined the interests of Egypt in Judea at the Battle of Mount Panium, 198 B.C., and then Antiochus took possession of Judea.

Verse 17 -- "upright ones" (see margin) in Hebrew means "equal conditions, or marriage," but the one he marries will not stand on his side. In 198 B.C., Antiochus arranged a marriage between his daughter, Cleopatra (not the Cleopatra of 31 B.C. in Egypt) and young Ptolemy Epiphanes, king of the south, by which he hoped subtly to gain complete possession of Egypt; but the plan failed.

Says Rawlinson, page 254, "Coele-Syria and Palestine promised as a dowry, but not delivered." Cleopatra did not truly stand on the side of Antiochus, for it was only a trick to gain possession of Egypt.

Verse 18 -- and so Antiochus turned his attention in another direction and tried to conquer, 197 to 196 B.C., the islands and coasts of Asia Minor. But the Roman general, Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus, utterly defeated him at the Battle of Magnesia, 190 B.C.

Verse 19 -- Antiochus next turned his attention to the fortresses of his own land, in the east and west. But, attempting to recruit his dissipated wealth by the plunder of the Oriental Temple of Belus, in Elymais, he was killed, 187 B.C.

Verse 20 -- Seleucus IV Philopator (187-176), his son, in an effort to raise money, sent a tax collector, Heliodorus, through Judea. But he reigned only 11 years, when Heliodorus poisoned him.

Verse 21 -- he left no heir. But his brother, a younger son of Antiochus the Great, named Epiphanes (Antiochus IV), a contemptible reprobate, came by surprise and through flattery took the kingdom. To his aid came his assistant, Eumenes. Rawlinson says, page 255, "Antiochus [Epiphanes], assisted by Eumenes, drives out Heliodorus, and obtains the throne, B.C. 176. He astonishes his subjects by an affectation of Roman manners" and "good-natured profuseness [flattery]."

Antiochus Epiphanes

Verse 22 -- "the prince of the covenant" does not refer to Christ. This was the attempt of Antiochus to replace the Jewish high priest by another who would be subservient to him.

Verses 23-24 -- although only a few were with him at first, yet by this "Roman manner," by deceit and flattery, he crept into power and prospered. He also invaded Galilee and Lower Egypt. His fathers, the

former kings of Syria, had favored the Jews, but says Rawlinson, page 255, they "were driven to desperation by the mad project of this self-willed monarch."

Verse 25 -- Rawlinson, pages 255-256, says, "Threatened with war by the ministers of Ptolemy Philometor [now king of the south], who claim Coele-Syria and Palestine as the dowry of Cleopatra, the late queen-mother, Antiochus marches against Egypt ... B.C. 171" (pp. 227-278). But he was met by his nephew, Ptolemy Philometor, king of the south, with another immense army. But the Egyptian king was defeated through the treachery of his own officers and was outwitted by Antiochus.

Verses 26-27 -- continuing in Rawlinson, page 278: "After his victory at Pelusium, Antiochus advanced to Memphis, and having obtained possession of the young king's person [Ptolemy Philometor, king of the south], endeavored to use him as a tool for effecting the entire reduction of the country." In 174 B.C., the uncle of the king of the south sat at a banquet. Antiochus pretended to ally himself with the young Ptolemy, against his brother, Euergetes II, but each was trying to deceive the other.

The Abomination of Desolation

Verse 28 -- in 168 B.C., returning from Egypt with great plunder, Antiochus set himself against the Jews, massacred many, and then returned to Antioch with golden vessels from the Temple at Jerusalem.

Verse 29 -- the same year, he again invaded Egypt, but with none of his former success, because Philometor, king of the south, got help from Rome.

Verse 30 -- the Roman fleet came against Antiochus, he was forced to surrender to the terms of Popilius, commander of the Roman fleet, and retire from Egypt and restore Cyprus to Egypt. Returning through Judea, smarting under the defeat, he vented his exasperation against the Jews, and extended special favors to those Jews who would turn from their religion.

Verse 31 -- then, 167 B.C., the next year, came the climax of the horror. Antiochus sent troops to the Holy Land, who desecrated the Temple and sanctuary, abolished the daily sacrifice (see also Daniel 8:11, 24) and (Kislev 15, Hebrew calendar) placed the abomination -- an imagine the altar in the temple precincts, making it desolate (Rawlinson, p. 255). Many who claim to teach the Bible try to apply the prophecy of this verse to Moslems in the 7th century A.D., building the Dome of the Rock on the supposed site of the ancient Temple at Jerusalem! But every verse of this prophecy, step by step, verse by verse, unfolded in actual history, just as here recounted, so there can be not the slightest shadow of doubt as to this abomination that "maketh desolate" -- it was an idol set up in 167 B.C., by Antiochus Epiphanies.

The Prophecy Comes to Christ and the Apostles

Verse 32 -- Antiochus tried to end the religion of the Jews. He took away the daily sacrifice, forbade the ministrations at the Temple. He perverted by flatteries the Jews who were willing to forsake their religion.

But -- right here, the prophecy cuts off from the continuation of events in the history of those ancient north and south kingdoms. Up to this point, the prophecy was unfolded, step by step, in the actual history of the northern kingdom of the Seleucidae, or Syria, and the southern kingdom of Egypt. But, say most commentaries, all accurate details seem suddenly to stop short with this verse.

Now let us notice verse 32 in detail, and particularly the last part:

"And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries." This, Antiochus Epiphanes did do. But now notice the last part of the verse: "but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

So our question now is, when, beginning with, and following, 167 B.C., did people begin to know God, and to be spiritually strong, and to do exploits in the Lord's service? The answer is, at the time of the

Maccabees, beginning in 166 B.C., and, two centuries later, at the first appearing of Jesus Christ and in the days of the apostles!

Verse 33 -- "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days."

Jesus and the apostles did instruct many. But Jesus was put to death, and history indicates that all the early apostles were martyred, except John. And this continued, many days, even into the Middle Ages, when millions were martyred for their faith.

Verse 34 -- "Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And [verse 35] some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed."

Here is described in general the whole course of God's people, from the days of Christ to the present. Compare with such passages as Rev. 12:6, 11, 13-17. And notice the vision carries on down to this present time of the end.

Verse 36 -- The king of the north -- who is he, now, in the early and middle New Testament times, to which our prophecy has come? In 65 B.C., Syria was swallowed up by the Roman Empire, and became a Roman province. The Roman emperor now controlled Judea, and therefore the king of the north, here referred to, is, at this time, the emperor of the Roman Empire. This verse says he should do according to his will, and he did -- exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and he did; for the Roman emperors required all to worship them and sacrifice to them, as a god. He was as a god. He was to speak against the true God, and he did and persecuted all Christians.

Verse 37 -- his fathers had worshiped idols, but the Roman emperors set themselves up as gods.

Verse 38 -- the Roman emperors honored the god of forces, or (margin) munitions, and developed the greatest war-making power the world ever knew. "And a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things." After setting themselves up as gods, before A.D. 476, the emperors who followed, beginning with Justinian, A.D. 554, began to honor with gold, silver and power a god in a high religious office never known to their fathers. (Compare this prophecy of Daniel with Revelation 17:4, 5 and 18:3, 16.)

Verse 39 -- the emperors did acknowledge the supremacy of religion, increased it with material glory and caused it to rule over many.

Prophecy Skips to Present

Now we come to the very present century.

Verse 40 -- "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him" Who is today the "king of the south"?

It cannot be the king of Egypt, for in 31 B.C. Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire, swallowed up by the king of the north. Today Egypt is a republic ruled by native Arabs. It has no king of its own.

But, in the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes (verse 7), 247-222 B.C., Egypt annexed part of Ethiopia, immediately south of Egypt (Rawlinson, pp. 272, 273). Since that time, the 11th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica says (article "Ethiopia") Egypt and Ethiopia were two or three times under the same government. Thus, the two were as one land. And the only portion of that land of the "king of the south" that remained independent until the 20th century is Ethiopia!

Ethiopia, the King of the South

Ethiopia was the only country in all East Africa that continued independent, and had a government and kingdom dating back before the Roman Empire. It was the southern part of the kingdom of the south. So it is the only possible government that could be the king of the south.

At the time of the end -- our time -- this king of the south was to push at the king of the north, now at Rome!

In 1895 King Menelik, of Ethiopia, sent an army of 9,000 to 10,000 men against General Baratieri's Italian army.

North of Ethiopia was Eritrea, belonging to Italy. And southeast was Italian Somaliland.

In 1896 General Baratieri with 13,000 men tried to defend Eritrea against the Ethiopians. They lost 4,600 whites and 3,000 native troops, and more than 3,500 were taken prisoner.

In a later engagement the Italians were cut to pieces because of their inexperience in fighting in mountainous country and because they were greatly outnumbered. This defeat was disastrous to Italian expansion in Africa.

Ever since, Italy demanded revenge! In 1927 Mussolini set the time, at just 40 years from that defeat, or 1935, when he would be ready "finally to make our voice heard, and see our rights recognized!"

1935 came. The hour struck! Mussolini attacked! Now notice verse 40: " ... and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over."

A whirlwind comes in the air, sweeping all before it. Mussolini did send a great air force into Africa! Also many modern "chariots" -- trucks, tanks, etc. -- and ships, loaded with soldiers. More than 100,000 sailed to Ethiopia.

And, notice it, Mussolini's forces were to pass over -- in the air! It is at this precise point in this astounding prophecy that Mussolini's struggle in Ethiopia and in World War II ended. Mussolini did not finish the prophecy. There is yet another leader to arise in Europe! Notice what will next happen!

Verse 41 -- "He shall enter also into the glorious land ..." -- the Holy Land. This is soon to be fulfilled.

When the coming revival of the Roman Empire takes the Holy Land, then the nations will be plunged into the initial phase of the great, last and final crisis at the close of this age! Other prophecies reveal that this revival of the Roman Empire will bring into subjection the U.S. and Britain! (Request our free book "The United States and Britain in Prophecy".)

"And," continues verse 41, "many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon" -- the modern land of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The coming dictator will unite many others with him -- 10 in all (Rev. 17:12) -- reviving the ancient Roman Empire.

Verse 42 says Egypt shall not escape, proving Egypt is not now the "king of the south."

Verse 43 says the Libyans and Ethiopians (observe that after its conquest by Mussolini, Ethiopia is not again referred to as the king of the south) shall be at his steps -- and he will then control them. Italy lost control of Libya and Ethiopia at the end of the war.

Verse 44 -- but news out of the east and out of the north -- Russia and the Orient -- shall trouble the revived Roman Empire. Russia will enter the war!

Verse 45 -- the coming Roman Empire shall establish its palace, as capital of the revived Roman empire, and eventually its religious headquarters, at Jerusalem! Zechariah 14:2 says the city shall be taken! "Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him"! This language signifies the end of the "beast" and the "false prophet" at the hand of God! You will find this end described in Revelation 19:19-20 and Zechariah 14:12. Write for our free booklet "Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?"

And now what is the time of this end, at the close of this marvelous prophecy? The next verse, Daniel 12:1, says at the time of the resurrection of the just -- at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ!

This prophecy begins with the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, soon after the death of Alexander the Great - - 2,300 years ago. But it ends at the time of the resurrection and the Second Coming of Christ to bring peace at last to the region -- and to the entire world! It is so plain, there can be no doubt of its right application!

A Present Day Proof

There is a present day PROOF of the existence of God and the authenticity of the Bible. It concerns this very booklet before your eyes this minute, and the work that produced it.

The central prophecy given by Jesus Christ himself is found in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. These are three accounts by three inspired writers writing on the same theme.

I refer to Matthew 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." Jesus was speaking.

He was replying to a question by the apostles, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world?" (Verse 3). This is the only place in the Bible where the words "end of the world" appear.

Jesus was speaking to his disciples atop the Mount of Olives, facing Jerusalem from the east. The gospel of Christ, the only gospel he proclaimed and taught, was the kingdom of God. In verse 11 of this same speech Jesus warned them that many false prophets would arise. In verse 4 Jesus warned these apostles: "Take heed that no man deceive you." He was speaking to them. He had preached to and taught them the good news of the kingdom of God. In verse 5, Jesus said to his disciples, "For many shall come in my name," -- every place in the Bible when people came in the name of Christ they were appearing as his representatives or ministers, "saying I [Jesus] am Christ, and shall deceive many."

That happened. Within a very short period after the Church was founded on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 31, a violent controversy arose concerning whether the gospel to be proclaimed was the gospel OF Christ -- Jesus' own gospel that he proclaimed and taught, or a gospel ABOUT Christ. Jesus had come as a messenger bearing a message from God about the kingdom of God. That message was his gospel. But soon many were ignoring Jesus' gospel -- the kingdom of God -- and preaching merely that Jesus was the Christ, preaching about the messenger, ignoring his message or gospel. That is still continuing today. In Galatians 1:5-6 we learn they were, only 20 years after the Church was founded, turning to another gospel than that which Jesus taught.

For 1,900 years this went on. Then, beginning 1934, the true Church of God started the present World Tomorrow program, for the first time in 1,900 years proclaiming the gospel OF THE KINGDOM! Meanwhile, during the years we have been proclaiming this gospel, the weapons of mass destruction have been produced that can erase all humanity. The END OF THE WORLD -- OF THIS AGE -- IS NEAR!

That very fact is another proof of the authority Bible! Yes, IT TRULY IS TIME YOU KNEW THE TRUTH!