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Genesis and Revelation form the greatest testimony to the Sovereign hand of God in the entire Bible. Taken apart they give the clearest pictures possible of the beginning and ending of planet earth. Taken together, they form the greatest map of God's Plan unfolding in this universe.

One[1] of the strong evidences of divine inspiration of the Bible (not found in other religious books of either past or present) consists of its hundreds of fulfilled prophecies. These are not vague or ambiguous (as in various occult writings) but are specific and detailed, often made hundreds or thousands of years in advance of the event. Many are being fulfilled today, thereby indicating the probable soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, the most powerful evidence that God wrote the Bible is the phenomenon of fulfilled prophecy. The Bible is unique among all the religious books of mankind in this respect. Some of them contain a few vague forecasts, but nothing comparable to the vast number of specific prophecies found in the Bible.

There has never been any person, angel or demon who could predict specific events and personages that will appear scores or even hundreds of years in the future. Only God can do this, because it is He "who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Ephesians 1:11). Consequently, it is in His Word, the Holy Scriptures, and only there, that prophecies of this sort are found.

TEN KEYS THAT UNLOCK THE FUTURE[2] GOD HAS MAPPED OUT

Number One: the coming of christ (God picked a Man to reveal His Glory: MESSIANIC PROPHECY)

Number TWO: the nation of ISRAEL (God picked a Nation to show His glory: THE MIRACLE OF ISRAEL)

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TEN KEYS THAT UNLOCK THE FUTURE[3] GOD HAS MAPPED OUT

Number One: the coming of christ (God picked a Man to reveal His Glory: MESSIANIC PROPHECY)

There are hundreds of prophecies fulfilled in connection with the first coming of Christ. There are over ninety such Old Testament Messianic prophecies specifically quoted by New Testament writers. Tonight we will trace only a few of the best-known prophecies.

The family tree of the Messiah was successively prophesied to be:

- First God promised that Messiah would come in the human family, and through a virgin birth (Genesis 3:15),
- Next God narrows the line then through Shem (Genesis 9:26),
- Abraham (Genesis 22:18),
- Isaac (Genesis 26:4),
- Jacob (Genesis 28:14),
- Judah (Genesis 49:10) and, finally,
- David (2 Samuel 7:12-16). The fact that in addition to His human lineage He would also be uniquely the Son of God was predicted in Psalm 2:6,7. He was called "the mighty God" in Isaiah 9:6, "whose goings forth . . . [were] from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

Think about how remarkable the prophecy of Genesis 49:10 really is. Jacob, while dying, predicted that Judah would be the one of his twelve sons who would exercise the rule over his brethren and from whom the Messiah would come. There was nothing in the immediate situation to warrant this prediction, and indeed it did not begin its fulfillment until David was crowned king 600 years later. How did Jacob know? He could, of course, simply have guessed. Since he had twelve sons, he would have had a chance of guessing correctly equal to one out of twelve. If he had tried to reason it out, or to go by his feelings, he would probably have picked either his oldest son, Reuben, or his favorite son, Joseph. Instead he picked Judah.

The coming of the Messiah was successively prophesied to be:

- His virgin birth was clearly prophesied in Isaiah 7:14 and intimated in several other passages.
- His birthplace in Bethlehem was given in Micah 5:2.
- The ministry of His forerunner, John the Baptist, was described in Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1.
- Various aspects of His teaching and healing ministries were given in Isaiah 61:1,2; Isaiah 42:1-4, Isaiah 9:1,2; Psalm 40:7-10, and others.

- His so-called "triumphal entry" as the promised King of Israel, riding upon an ass, was prophesied in Zechariah 9:9,10; the rejection of His coming was prophesied in Psalm 118:22-24.
- The date of His official coming as Judah's promised Prince was clearly spelled out in the great prophecy of the seventy weeks, given in Daniel 9:24-26. Micah predicted it would be in Bethlehem and he made this prediction 700 years before it came to pass (Micah 5:2). He could presumably have guessed the Messiah would be born in the land of Judah, since the kings at that time were descended from David and ruled over the land of Judah. Of course, it would have been quite possible for the coming king to be born anywhere in the world, and still to have been a descendant of Judah, and of David, in view of the extensive world trade carried on by Solomon and his descendants, and in view of the already-prophesied dispersion. It would be reasonable to say he had a one-in-two chance of being correct in assuming the Messiah would be born in the land of Judah. But what about predicting not only the place and the family, but even the time of Messiah's birth? In Daniel 9:24-26, we have just such a prediction. Although there may be some uncertainty about the exact chronology (some scholars have maintained, quite convincingly, that the fulfillment occurred on the precise day indicated by the prophecy), there can be no reasonable question as to, say, at least the century when it was fulfilled.

Seventy weeks ["seventy heptads" or "seven-year periods"] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, . . . from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end wars and desolations are determined.

The starting-point of the prophecy is believed by most conservative scholars to be the date of the decree of Artaxerxes permitting the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8), known from secular history to be approximately 446 B.C. The seventy weeks total 490 years. The first 49 year period was occupied in rebuilding the city and completing the Old Testament Scriptures (the book of Malachi was written about 400 B.C.). The "seven year" periods probably were meant to be understood as seven years of 360 days each, as this was the customary Jewish and prophetic reckoning.

A 434-year period, added to the 49 years, gives 483 years (or $360/365 \times 483 = 476$ years) from the starting date to the coming of Messiah as prince. This comes to about A.D. 30. Christ was actually born about 4 B.C., so that He was 33 years old (His probable age when He was crucified) in about A.D. 30. Note that there was no year "0," so that only one year separated 1 B.C. and A.D. 1.

Although there is some uncertainty about the exact dates involved, it is clear that the prophetic period terminated at very close to the time when Christ officially offered Himself for reception as King of Israel. Instead of being crowned, however, He was crucified, "cut off, but not for Himself."

Sometime after that, "the city and the sanctuary" were destroyed by "the people of the prince that shall come" -- that is, the Roman people, of whom the great anti-Christian prince frequently mentioned in Daniel will eventually come. Furthermore, the "end thereof" was "a flood." This word literally means "overflowing" and can apply both to overflowing waters and to overflowing armies or peoples. In this case it probably refers specifically to the long-prophesied worldwide dispersion of the Jews.

Finally, "unto the end, wars and desolations are determined." Ever since the world (both Jews and Gentiles) rejected and crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, lasting peace has been an unknown.

This great prophecy alone, made hundreds of years before its various fulfillments, is clear and unanswerable proof that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

The sacrificial, substitutionary death of the Messiah was successively prophesied to be:

- Biblical prophecy was focused more clearly and intensively on the crucifixion of Christ than on anything else. The details prophesied include the piercing of His side (Zechariah 12:10), the darkness (Psalm 22:2), the vinegar (Psalm 69:21), the mocking (Psalm 22:6-8), the nakedness (Psalm 22:17), gambling for His vesture (Psalm 22:18), the unbroken bones (Psalm 34:20), the great cry from the cross (Psalm 22:1) and the broken heart (Psalm 22:14).
- The substitutionary and sacrificial nature of His death on the cross was graphically portrayed in Isaiah 53, especially verses 4-6,10 and 12. The shedding of His blood, as an offering for sin, was forecast in all of the Levitical offerings. The burial of Christ in a "rich man's grave," yet in proximity to the "wicked," was prophesied in Isaiah 53:9.
- Finally, the resurrection of Christ from the grave was forecast in Psalm 16:10; Hosea 6:2; Psalm 30:3, 9; Isaiah 53:10; Psalm 40:1,2; and others. His ascension to sit at the right hand of the Father was then described in Psalm 110:1; Psalm 68:18; Proverbs 30:4; Psalm 16:11; Psalm 24:3-10. And still there remain hundreds of fulfilled prophecies we have not even mentioned.

Number TWO: the nation of ISRAEL (God picked a Nation to show His glory: THE MIRACLE OF ISRAEL)

When the nation was first founded, God promised through Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation . . . And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:2,3). Not only did Israel become a great nation under David and Solomon, but it is destined for even greater days in the future. The nations that have befriended the Jews (notably the United States and, to a lesser degree, England, France and others) have indeed been blessed. Those that have persecuted the Jews (Egypt,

Babylon, Assyria, Rome, Spain, Nazi Germany and others -- Russia's time is coming!) have eventually gone down to defeat and humiliation.

The continued existence of the Jews after centuries of dispersal and persecution unique in human history is a mute but eloquent testimony to fulfilled prophecy. The restoration of Israel as a nation among nations in our own generation is merely the most recent in a long line of fulfilled prophecies dealing with the Jewish people.

Through the Holy Scriptures (almost all written by Jews) and through Jesus Christ, the seed of Abraham has indeed become a blessing to all families of the earth. Some from every nation have found salvation and blessing through faith in Him.

Scattered: God promised the children of Israel great blessing in the land of promise if they would remain faithful to Him. He also predicted great suffering, persecution and worldwide dispersion when they forsook Him. These prophecies came to pass. Some of these warnings were as follows:

ü "The LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; . . . And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life" (Deuteronomy 28:64,66).

ü "And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them" (Jeremiah 24:9).

ü "My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto Him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations" (Hosea 9:17).

ü Numerous other such prophecies exist concerning specific judgments and sufferings. But with all this, they would not be like so many other nations of antiquity (indeed like all other nations who were driven from

their homeland). "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee" (Jeremiah 30:11).

Regathered: Even more impossible than the fact that a people could retain its identity without a homeland for two thousand years is the fact that they should then return and establish their ancient nation once again. Yet this is exactly what the Bible had predicted.

ü "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land" (Ezekiel 37:21).

ü And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time [note, the second time -- the first was when He brought them back from the Babylonian captivity] to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, . . . and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isaiah 11:11, 12).

ü The "wandering Jews" were without a national home for "many days" (Hosea 3:4, 5) and it seemed impossible that such prophecies as these could ever be fulfilled.

Even many Bible-believing Christians thought for centuries that God was through with Israel and that all the Old Testament promises to Israel should be spiritualized and applied to the church. But now, with the return of the Jews and the re-establishment of their nation, it is evident in a unique way that God's Word means exactly what it says.

Survival: We have already noted what is probably the most important of these end-time prophecies, namely, the re-establishment of Israel as a nation in its ancient homeland. It is almost impossible that a nation could survive as a distinct nationality, regain its homeland and be recognized as a viable nation once more after being completely destroyed as an organized entity by an invading army (as Israel was by the Romans, in A.D. 70). Its people were either slaughtered or scattered from one end of

the world to the other; its land occupied and ruled by aliens for over 1900 years. Israel's survival is amazing, but even more so is the fact its survival was predicted many centuries earlier.

When Israel, including Judah, first went into captivity, in 588 B.C., the period known as "the times of the Gentiles" began. Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome were successive world empires and their domain included the land of Israel. After Rome destroyed the city and the temple in A.D. 70 (as predicted by Christ Himself in Luke 19:41-44), the people of Israel were scattered "among all people, from the one end of the earth unto the other" (Deuteronomy 28:64).

Future agenda: In this context, we come to a remarkable prophecy made by Jesus Christ: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

Since the word "fulfilled" is the same word in the Greek as "finished," this prophecy clearly means that the times of Gentile world-rule will be ended when Jerusalem is no longer under Gentile control. But this can only be accomplished when Christ returns to banish the Gentile nations from Jerusalem and to establish His own world-kingdom capital there. Thus, the restoration of Jerusalem to the chosen people is necessarily accompanied by the coming of their Messiah to reign there. This is also clearly indicated in Zechariah 12-14 as well as other Scriptures.

The saga of the Jews: The Jews began to return to Palestine in small numbers in the early part of the twentieth century, and then in much larger numbers after World War I and the Balfour Declaration. Jerusalem was still under British rule, however. After World War II, the Israeli nation declared its independence in 1948 and was soon recognized by most of the nations and by the United Nations. The new city of Jerusalem indeed did go back to the Jews at this time. However, the old city, including the

all-important temple site on Mount Moriah, remained in the hands of the Jordanian Arabs.

In the "six-day war" of 1967, Israel finally recaptured the old city of Jerusalem, and the Israelis insist they will never let it go again. At this writing (1995), they have retained possession of all of Jerusalem for twenty-eight long years, and there is no indication at all that the Arabs are going to recapture it.

What is left to happen? Yet, the Lord has not come! The times of the Gentiles are still in full sway, even though Jerusalem has apparently gone back to the Jews. However, there is one exception. This exception makes all the difference and indicates with what fine lines the Holy Spirit inscripturates His Word. Jerusalem is not, in God's judgment, a collection of houses and streets, like other cities. It is a temple where God dwells, where His people approach Him through sacrifice, and where He meets with them.

As Solomon built the temple, God said: "I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there" (2 Chronicles 6:6). But long before this, God had first spoken through Moses: "There shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD" (Deuteronomy 12:11).

This place was not just any place in Jerusalem; it was an exact spot, chosen by God. It was on Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1), the spot which God told David to purchase from Ornan the Jebusite and to set up the altar there (1 Chronicles 21:18). This was the same spot where Abraham had, almost a thousand years before, prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac (Genesis 22:2). It is only a short distance from Calvary itself.

This spot, to the Jews and to God, is Jerusalem! And, amazingly, this one spot is the only spot in Jerusalem still controlled by Gentiles. It is on Mount Moriah that the Arabs have built their famous Dome-of-the-Rock, the second most holy place in the Muslim world. The Jews, for political or other reasons, have not yet dared to expel the Arabs from this site, raze it, and proceed to rebuild their temple, as they surely desire to do.

It is apparently by this exceedingly slender thread, therefore, that the "times of the Gentiles" are still suspended. As the Lord Jesus said, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5:18).

Number three: Fulfilled Prophecy (THE HISTORIES OF NATIONS)

Egypt was, with Babylonia, one of the two greatest nations of antiquity. Noph (Memphis) was the ancient capital of lower Egypt and No (Thebes) the capital of all Egypt. Their grandeur, especially the magnificent temples and images, was tremendous. Yet Jeremiah says, "Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant" (Jeremiah 46:19), and Ezekiel says, "No shall be broken up" (Ezekiel 30:16). The prophecies were fulfilled centuries later. Of Egypt as a whole, Ezekiel says, "It shall be the basest of kingdoms" (Ezekiel 29:15). Egypt continued as a great and powerful nation for many centuries after the prophecy was written, but finally it became a backward, impoverished, weak nation and has remained so ever since. It was not condemned to extinction, however, as were many other ancient nations. Actually, it is amazing that the most ancient of nations, Egypt, is still in existence after over 4000 years. Many Scriptures (for example, Isaiah 19:21,22) indicate prophetically that Egypt is still a nation in the last days.

Edom (Idumea) was a small, but powerful, nation descended from Esau. Its stronghold was in Mt. Seir, and its capital was Petra, the rock-walled city, veritably impregnable, as well as rich. Yet many prophecies had been uttered against it, and all have been fulfilled. Obadiah 18, for example, says, "there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau;

for the LORD hath spoken it." Today, the Edomites are gone without a trace.

The same is true of the Philistines. Though Philistia continued to prosper until about A.D. 1200, Zephaniah says, "the word of the LORD is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant" (Zephaniah 2:5). The Philistines have now long since vanished.

What about Babylonia, the first great world-empire? The Greek historian, Herodotus, had reported that Babylon was 15 miles square, surrounded by walls 350 feet high and 87 feet wide. Its avenues, parks and public buildings were a beautiful sight to behold. Yet Jeremiah prophesied: "The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire" (Jeremiah 51:58). Many other prophecies were directed against her, and eventually they came to pass.

The Assyrian empire, with its great capital of Nineveh, was another colossus of antiquity. But God said, "He will stretch out His hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness" (Zephaniah 2:13). Nothing could have seemed more unlikely than this when Zephaniah wrote, but it has been fully accomplished.

The two great cities of the Phoenicians were Tyre and Sidon. Of Tyre, God said, "They shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea" (Ezekiel 26:4,5). Today, fishermen mend their nets on the barren rock where Tyre once stood. God also said in Ezekiel 26:14, "Thou shalt be built no more." The site of ancient Tyre is quite suitable for habitation, but the prophecy has stood fulfilled now for over 2000 years, and Tyre has never been rebuilt.

Tyre's sister city, Sidon, was the object of a different type of prophecy. "For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side" (Ezekiel 28:23). Although Sidon has continued to exist as a city down even into the present, she has suffered more warfare and bloodshed than almost any other city in history. Sidon has been destroyed and rebuilt many times and still exists today in spite of all her suffering. Tyre, on the other hand, has never been rebuilt, thus confirming the prophecies.

Ashkelon was another great city, the birthplace of Herod the Great. It continued as a great city until finally destroyed in 1270 A.D. For, long before, Zephaniah had prophesied, "Ashkelon shall be a desolation" (Zephaniah 2:4). The same prophecy had also warned of destruction upon two other Philistine cities, Ekron and Gaza. In both cases, the prophecy was fulfilled.

Similar judgments were forecast for Bethel (Amos 3:14, 15), Samaria (Micah 1:6, 7), Jericho (Joshua 6:26) and, in the New Testament, for Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin (Matthew 11:20-23). All have been fulfilled as written.

Many other prophecies dealing with these and other nations have been fulfilled. There are also many other prophecies dealing with individual cities in the nations. Their fulfillment is strong witness to divine inspiration.

THE SEQUENCE OF EMPIRES

A remarkable foreview of world history was given in Daniel 2 in the form of a dream which came to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. As interpreted by Daniel, the metallic image of the dream represented the

entire subsequent course of world history, as influenced by four successive empires. Daniel's interpretation, recorded in Daniel 2:37-45, indicated the first empire was the golden head of the image, Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian empire. The second would be the breast and arms of silver (fulfilled in the Medo-Persian empire) and the third, the mid-section of brass (fulfilled in the Greek empire of Alexander the Great). The fourth was the Roman empire, represented by the iron legs, including the hips.

The order of metallic succession indicates both a successive decrease in value and a successive increase in strength. The former probably refers to the degree of personal control exercised by the emperor over the human and material resources of his kingdom, the latter to the power of his armies and extent of his conquests.

The Roman empire was not only the strongest of all but was to last the longest, as indicated by the greater lengths of the legs of the image. Its eventual twofold split into eastern and western divisions, with capitals at Rome and Constantinople, was pictured by the two legs. The break in continuity at the knees intimates the shift from political to religious unity of the two divisions, as maintained for so long by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches.

Thus, although the Roman empire did not persist indefinitely as a political unit, it still does persist in the present east-west division of the heirs of the Roman empire, western Europe and America in the west, Russia, eastern Europe and the middle eastern states in the east. The legal systems, the educational systems, the military systems, the religious systems, and many other facets of modern society are direct descendants of Rome, still retaining the same spirit and much of the same form.

The feet, however, indicate a decided change in direction, and the mixture of iron and clay clearly speaks of the mixture of Roman-style imperialism with mass revolutionary movements. The final form of this succession is indicated by the ten toes representing ten kingdoms, five in the east and five in the west. These will be destroyed and superseded by the kingdom established by Christ Himself over all the world when He returns.

This remarkable prophecy has been almost completely fulfilled. The sequence of world empires is now undoubtedly in the revolutionary "foot" stage. Next it will assume the "ten-toed" form prior to the establishment of Christ's kingdom.

While the great image prophesied the great sweep of empires throughout history, the prophecies given directly to Daniel himself, in the 8th and 11th chapters, forecast many of the specific details of the development of the Medo-Persian and Greek empires. They also predict numerous events to take place in contacts with Egypt, Syria and Israel. The prophecies in these chapters are so numerous and so specific that they constitute the main reason critics refuse to accept the authenticity of the book of Daniel, insisting it must have been written after the events had taken place.

However, conservative scholars (for example, Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, of Princeton University, in his classic *Studies in the Book of Daniel*) have thoroughly refuted all such critical arguments and confirmed the traditional date of authorship. The one and only reason today for questioning Daniel's genuineness today is the reluctance to believe in fulfilled prophecy. This, of course, is exactly the point. These prophecies confirm clearly and emphatically the fact of divine inspiration.

Number four: global powers

There are many other prophecies dealing with the alignment of the Gentile nations in the last days. The emergence of an alliance of Eastern European and Muslim nations under the leadership and domination of Russia, all arrayed in opposition to Israel and the western nations, is prophesied in Ezekiel 38:1-16. The rise of a vast oriental confederacy of nations is described in Revelation 16:12. The development of a European union of nations comparable to the ancient Roman empire is suggested in Daniel 7:19-24 and other passages.

Number five: global disasters

In response to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3-8), the Lord Jesus answered, "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (or, more accurately, "the first birth pains"). The Hebrew idiom conveys the thought of a worldwide state of war. Thus the prophetic sign entails a world war, accompanied by great physical calamities, as the initial sign that a new world is about to be born. This was clearly fulfilled in the decade from 1914 to 1924, when the first world war, followed by the world's greatest pestilence (the influenza epidemic of 1918), the world's greatest famine (leading to the starvation of hundreds of millions, especially in Russia and China, after the war and the communist revolution), and the world's most calamitous earthquakes (in China in 1920 and Japan in 1923), all took place. The world since that time has continued to experience these "birth pains," with World War II, the Cold War, great numbers of local wars, the Great Depression, continued deadly earthquakes, epidemics of polio, cholera, AIDS, and other diseases, and innumerable other "troubles" (Mark 13:8).

A fulfilled prophecy of an entirely different sort is found in 2 Peter 3:3,4. "There shall come in the last days scoffers, . . . saying, . . . all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Number six: global evolutionism

This is the doctrine of evolutionary uniformitarianism. It professes to explain the origin and development of all things in terms of the uniform operation of the same natural laws and processes which still "continue" today. The rise of this dogma took place in the 19th century and for a hundred years it has been the basic philosophy of the educational and scientific establishments. There was no way that Peter could have foreseen this development, 1800 years in the future, apart from divine inspiration.

Number seven: global technology

In relation to the realm of science and education, it was prophesied in Daniel that, at "the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Daniel 12:4). The Hebrew words imply a vast increase in both frequency and speed of travel, as well as other forms of communication and great advances in science and technology.

Number eight: global exploitation

Conflict in the economic and social realms in the last days is forecast in James 5:1-6. For ages, in all nations, the poor have been exploited by the rich, the working classes by the privileged classes. The uprising of the laborers in the latter days, leading to a "day of slaughter," is not only specifically predicted by James, but also implied in Daniel 2:41-43, Revelation 18:1-19, and other passages. These prophecies have been fulfilled in part, first in the French revolution, later in the Russian revolution and other communist-led upheavals. More is undoubtedly yet to come, especially when the ill-fed, poorly housed masses of the world come to realize that even their own revolutionary movements are financed and controlled in large measure by those "kings and merchants of the earth" who traffic in the "souls of men."

Number nine: global hedonism

Moral conditions of the last days are prophesied to descend into the degradation of the "days of Noah" (Luke 17:26). But perhaps the most striking prediction associated with moral conditions in the last days is

that the characteristics of professing religious people, in the realm of Christendom, will be essentially the same as those of the heathen in the old pagan world. That is, the catalog of the sins of those in the last days who have "a form of godliness" (2 Timothy 3:1-7, especially verse 5), is practically identical with that of the ancient godless rebels of Romans 1:28-31. Again, it seems impossible that Paul could have anticipated such a strange and sad development except by inspiration.

Number ten: global apostasy and global demonism

Religious apostasy in the ranks of professed Christian leaders is also prophesied in other Scriptures. Not only would false teachers deny the second coming of Christ (2 Peter 3:3), they would even "deny the Lord that bought them" (2 Peter 2:1). Not only would they, despite much education ("ever learning"), still never come "to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7), but even "turn away their ears from the truth and be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:4). All of these prophecies are being fulfilled today throughout the "Christian" world.

A particularly ominous form of apostasy is to be found in the rapid rise of demonism in the last days. "In the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1). Jesus said: "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders" (Matthew 24:24). During the great tribulation period of the last days, these trends will culminate in a worldwide return to Satan worship (Revelation 13:4, 8). Before that, they will "worship demons, and idols" (Revelation 9:20) and do so especially in connection with the use of drugs (the word "sorceries," in Revelation 9:21, is a Greek word from which we actually transliterate our English word "pharmaceutical," and means "magical incantations by the ritual use of drugs").

The amazing upsurge of spiritism, astrology, witchcraft and Satanism all over the world in the past few years, along with the tremendous increase of drug use, especially by young people, certainly is an ominous sign of

the imminent advent of the Antichrist. But at the same time it is a striking fulfillment of prophecy. That an age of scientific enlightenment could be followed so quickly by a widespread revival of paganism and occultism would seem paradoxical, but that is exactly what has happened, just as the Bible predicted.

We have only scratched the surface. There are scores of other Biblical prophecies that either have already been fulfilled or are presently in process of fulfillment. There is no other book like the Bible.

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of men: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

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Genesis and Revelation form the greatest testimony to the Sovereign hand of God in the entire Bible. Taken apart they give the clearest pictures possible of the beginning and ending of planet earth. Taken together, they form the greatest map of God's Plan unfolding in this universe.

One [\[1\]](#) of the strong evidences of divine inspiration of the Bible (not found in other religious books of either past or present) consists of its hundreds of fulfilled prophecies. These are not vague or ambiguous (as in various occult writings) but are specific and detailed, often made hundreds or thousands of years in advance of the event. Many are being fulfilled today, thereby indicating the probable soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, the most powerful evidence that God wrote the Bible is the phenomenon of fulfilled prophecy. The Bible is unique among all the religious books of mankind in this respect. Some of them contain a few

vague forecasts, but nothing comparable to the vast number of specific prophecies found in the Bible.

There has never been any person, angel or demon who could predict specific events and personages that will appear scores or even hundreds of years in the future. Only God can do this, because it is He “who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Ephesians 1:11). Consequently, it is in His Word, the Holy Scriptures, and only there, that prophecies of this sort are found.

TEN KEYS THAT UNLOCK THE FUTURE^[2] GOD HAS MAPPED OUT

Number One: the coming of christ (God picked a Man to reveal His Glory: MESSIANIC PROPHECY)

Number TWO: the nation of ISRAEL (God picked a Nation to show His glory: THE MIRACLE OF ISRAEL)

Number three: Fulfilled Prophecy (THE HISTORIES OF NATIONS)

Number four: global powers

Number five: global disasters

Number six: global evolutionism

Number seven: global technology

Number eight: global exploitation

Number nine: global hedonism

Number ten: global apostasy and global demonism

TEN KEYS THAT UNLOCK THE FUTURE^[3] GOD HAS MAPPED OUT

Number One: the coming of christ (God picked a Man to reveal His Glory: MESSIANIC PROPHECY)

There are hundreds of prophecies fulfilled in connection with the first coming of Christ. There are over ninety such Old Testament Messianic prophecies specifically quoted by New Testament writers. Tonight we will trace only a few of the best-known prophecies.

The family tree of the Messiah was successively prophesied to be:

- First God promised that Messiah would come in the human family, and through a virgin birth (Genesis 3:15),
- Next God narrows the line then through Shem (Genesis 9:26),
- Abraham (Genesis 22:18),
- Isaac (Genesis 26:4),
- Jacob (Genesis 28:14),
- Judah (Genesis 49:10) and, finally,
- David (2 Samuel 7:12-16). The fact that in addition to His human lineage He would also be uniquely the Son of God was predicted in Psalm 2:6,7. He was called "the mighty God" in Isaiah 9:6, "whose goings forth . . . [were] from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

Think about how remarkable the prophecy of Genesis 49:10 really is. Jacob, while dying, predicted that Judah would be the one of his twelve sons who would exercise the rule over his brethren and from whom the Messiah would come. There was nothing in the immediate situation to warrant this prediction, and indeed it did not begin its fulfillment until David was crowned king 600 years later. How did Jacob know? He could, of course, simply have guessed. Since he had twelve sons, he would have had a chance of guessing correctly equal to one out of twelve. If he had tried to reason it out, or to go by his feelings, he would

probably have picked either his oldest son, Reuben, or his favorite son, Joseph. Instead he picked Judah.

The coming of the Messiah was successively prophesied to be:

- His virgin birth was clearly prophesied in Isaiah 7:14 and intimated in several other passages.
- His birthplace in Bethlehem was given in Micah 5:2.
- The ministry of His forerunner, John the Baptist, was described in Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1.
- Various aspects of His teaching and healing ministries were given in Isaiah 61:1,2; Isaiah 42:1-4, Isaiah 9:1,2; Psalm 40:7-10, and others.
- His so-called "triumphal entry" as the promised King of Israel, riding upon an ass, was prophesied in Zechariah 9:9,10; the rejection of His coming was prophesied in Psalm 118:22-24.
- The date of His official coming as Judah's promised Prince was clearly spelled out in the great prophecy of the seventy weeks, given in Daniel 9:24-26. Micah predicted it would be in Bethlehem and he made this prediction 700 years before it came to pass (Micah 5:2). He could presumably have guessed the Messiah would be born in the land of Judah, since the kings at that time were descended from David and ruled over the land of Judah. Of course, it would have been quite possible for the coming king to be born anywhere in the world, and still to have been a descendant of Judah, and of David, in view of the extensive world trade carried on by Solomon and his descendants, and in view of the already-prophesied dispersion. It would be reasonable to say he had a one-in-two chance of being correct in assuming the Messiah would be born in the land of Judah. But what about predicting not only the place and the family, but even the time of Messiah's birth? In Daniel 9:24-26, we have just such a prediction. Although there may be some uncertainty about the exact chronology (some scholars have maintained, quite convincingly, that the fulfillment occurred on the precise day indicated by the prophecy), there can be no reasonable question as to, say, at least the century when it was fulfilled.

Seventy weeks ["seventy heptads" or "seven-year periods"] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, . . . from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end wars and desolations are determined.

The starting-point of the prophecy is believed by most conservative scholars to be the date of the decree of Artaxerxes permitting the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8), known from secular history to be approximately 446 B.C. The seventy weeks total 490 years. The first 49 year period was occupied in rebuilding the city and completing the Old Testament Scriptures (the book of Malachi was written about 400 B.C.). The "seven year" periods probably were meant to be understood as seven years of 360 days each, as this was the customary Jewish and prophetic reckoning.

A 434-year period, added to the 49 years, gives 483 years (or $360/365 \times 483 = 476$ years) from the starting date to the coming of Messiah as prince. This comes to about A.D. 30. Christ was actually born about 4 B.C., so that He was 33 years old (His probable age when He was crucified) in about A.D. 30. Note that there was no year "0," so that only one year separated 1 B.C. and A.D. 1.

Although there is some uncertainty about the exact dates involved, it is clear that the prophetic period terminated at very close to the time when Christ officially offered Himself for reception as King of Israel. Instead of being crowned, however, He was crucified, "cut off, but not for Himself."

Sometime after that, "the city and the sanctuary" were destroyed by "the people of the prince that shall come" -- that is, the Roman people, of whom the great anti-Christian prince frequently mentioned in Daniel will eventually come. Furthermore, the "end thereof" was "a flood." This word

literally means "overflowing" and can apply both to overflowing waters and to overflowing armies or peoples. In this case it probably refers specifically to the long-prophesied worldwide dispersion of the Jews.

Finally, "unto the end, wars and desolations are determined." Ever since the world (both Jews and Gentiles) rejected and crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, lasting peace has been an unknown.

This great prophecy alone, made hundreds of years before its various fulfillments, is clear and unanswerable proof that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

The sacrificial, substitutionary death of the Messiah was successively prophesied to be:

- Biblical prophecy was focused more clearly and intensively on the crucifixion of Christ than on anything else. The details prophesied include the piercing of His side (Zechariah 12:10), the darkness (Psalm 22:2), the vinegar (Psalm 69:21), the mocking (Psalm 22:6-8), the nakedness (Psalm 22:17), gambling for His vesture (Psalm 22:18), the unbroken bones (Psalm 34:20), the great cry from the cross (Psalm 22:1) and the broken heart (Psalm 22:14).
- The substitutionary and sacrificial nature of His death on the cross was graphically portrayed in Isaiah 53, especially verses 4-6, 10 and 12. The shedding of His blood, as an offering for sin, was forecast in all of the Levitical offerings. The burial of Christ in a "rich man's grave," yet in proximity to the "wicked," was prophesied in Isaiah 53:9.
- Finally, the resurrection of Christ from the grave was forecast in Psalm 16:10; Hosea 6:2; Psalm 30:3, 9; Isaiah 53:10; Psalm 40:1,2; and others. His ascension to sit at the right hand of the Father was then described in Psalm 110:1; Psalm 68:18; Proverbs 30:4; Psalm 16:11; Psalm 24:3-10. And still there remain hundreds of fulfilled prophecies we have not even mentioned.

Number TWO: the nation of ISRAEL (God picked a Nation to show His glory: THE MIRACLE OF ISRAEL)

When the nation was first founded, God promised through Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation . . . And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:2,3). Not only did Israel become a great nation under David and Solomon, but it is destined for even greater days in the future. The nations that have befriended the Jews (notably the United States and, to a lesser degree, England, France and others) have indeed been blessed. Those that have persecuted the Jews (Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Rome, Spain, Nazi Germany and others -- Russia's time is coming!) have eventually gone down to defeat and humiliation.

The continued existence of the Jews after centuries of dispersal and persecution unique in human history is a mute but eloquent testimony to fulfilled prophecy. The restoration of Israel as a nation among nations in our own generation is merely the most recent in a long line of fulfilled prophecies dealing with the Jewish people.

Through the Holy Scriptures (almost all written by Jews) and through Jesus Christ, the seed of Abraham has indeed become a blessing to all families of the earth. Some from every nation have found salvation and blessing through faith in Him.

Scattered: God promised the children of Israel great blessing in the land of promise if they would remain faithful to Him. He also predicted great suffering, persecution and worldwide dispersion when they forsook Him. These prophecies came to pass. Some of these warnings were as follows:

ü "The LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; . . . And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life" (Deuteronomy 28:64,66).

ü "And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them" (Jeremiah 24:9).

ü "My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto Him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations" (Hosea 9:17).

ü Numerous other such prophecies exist concerning specific judgments and sufferings. But with all this, they would not be like so many other nations of antiquity (indeed like all other nations who were driven from their homeland). "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee" (Jeremiah 30:11).

Regathered: Even more impossible than the fact that a people could retain its identity without a homeland for two thousand years is the fact that they should then return and establish their ancient nation once again. Yet this is exactly what the Bible had predicted.

ü "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land" (Ezekiel 37:21).

ü And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time [note, the second time -- the first was when He brought them back from the Babylonian captivity] to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, . . . and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isaiah 11:11, 12).

ü The "wandering Jews" were without a national home for "many days" (Hosea 3:4, 5) and it seemed impossible that such prophecies as these could ever be fulfilled.

Even many Bible-believing Christians thought for centuries that God was through with Israel and that all the Old Testament promises to Israel should be spiritualized and applied to the church. But now, with the return of the Jews and the re-establishment of their nation, it is evident in a unique way that God's Word means exactly what it says.

Survival: We have already noted what is probably the most important of these end-time prophecies, namely, the re-establishment of Israel as a nation in its ancient homeland. It is almost impossible that a nation could survive as a distinct nationality, regain its homeland and be recognized as a viable nation once more after being completely destroyed as an organized entity by an invading army (as Israel was by the Romans, in A.D. 70). Its people were either slaughtered or scattered from one end of the world to the other; its land occupied and ruled by aliens for over 1900 years. Israel's survival is amazing, but even more so is the fact its survival was predicted many centuries earlier.

When Israel, including Judah, first went into captivity, in 588 B.C., the period known as "the times of the Gentiles" began. Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome were successive world empires and their domain included the land of Israel. After Rome destroyed the city and the temple in A.D. 70 (as predicted by Christ Himself in Luke 19:41-44), the people of Israel were scattered "among all people, from the one end of the earth unto the other" (Deuteronomy 28:64).

Future agenda: In this context, we come to a remarkable prophecy made by Jesus Christ: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

Since the word "fulfilled" is the same word in the Greek as "finished," this prophecy clearly means that the times of Gentile world-rule will be ended when Jerusalem is no longer under Gentile control. But this can only be accomplished when Christ returns to banish the Gentile nations from Jerusalem and to establish His own world-kingdom capital there. Thus, the restoration of Jerusalem to the chosen people is necessarily accompanied by the coming of their Messiah to reign there. This is also clearly indicated in Zechariah 12-14 as well as other Scriptures.

The saga of the Jews: The Jews began to return to Palestine in small numbers in the early part of the twentieth century, and then in much larger numbers after World War I and the Balfour Declaration. Jerusalem was still under British rule, however. After World War II, the Israeli nation declared its independence in 1948 and was soon recognized by most of the nations and by the United Nations. The new city of Jerusalem indeed did go back to the Jews at this time. However, the old city, including the all-important temple site on Mount Moriah, remained in the hands of the Jordanian Arabs.

In the "six-day war" of 1967, Israel finally recaptured the old city of Jerusalem, and the Israelis insist they will never let it go again. At this writing (1995), they have retained possession of all of Jerusalem for twenty-eight long years, and there is no indication at all that the Arabs are going to recapture it.

What is left to happen? Yet, the Lord has not come! The times of the Gentiles are still in full sway, even though Jerusalem has apparently gone back to the Jews. However, there is one exception. This exception makes all the difference and indicates with what fine lines the Holy Spirit inscripturates His Word. Jerusalem is not, in God's judgment, a collection of houses and streets, like other cities. It is a temple where God dwells, where His people approach Him through sacrifice, and where He meets with them.

As Solomon built the temple, God said: "I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there" (2 Chronicles 6:6). But long before this, God had first spoken through Moses: "There shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD" (Deuteronomy 12:11).

This place was not just any place in Jerusalem; it was an exact spot, chosen by God. It was on Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1), the spot which God told David to purchase from Ornan the Jebusite and to set up the altar there (1 Chronicles 21:18). This was the same spot where Abraham had, almost a thousand years before, prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac (Genesis 22:2). It is only a short distance from Calvary itself.

This spot, to the Jews and to God, is Jerusalem! And, amazingly, this one spot is the only spot in Jerusalem still controlled by Gentiles. It is on Mount Moriah that the Arabs have built their famous Dome-of-the-Rock, the second most holy place in the Muslim world. The Jews, for political or other reasons, have not yet dared to expel the Arabs from this site, raze it, and proceed to rebuild their temple, as they surely desire to do.

It is apparently by this exceedingly slender thread, therefore, that the "times of the Gentiles" are still suspended. As the Lord Jesus said, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5:18).

Number three: Fulfilled Prophecy (THE HISTORIES OF NATIONS)

Egypt was, with Babylonia, one of the two greatest nations of antiquity. Noph (Memphis) was the ancient capital of lower Egypt and No (Thebes) the capital of all Egypt. Their grandeur, especially the magnificent temples and images, was tremendous. Yet Jeremiah says, "Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant" (Jeremiah 46:19), and Ezekiel says, "No shall be broken up" (Ezekiel 30:16). The prophecies were fulfilled centuries later. Of Egypt as a whole, Ezekiel says, "It shall be the basest of kingdoms" (Ezekiel 29:15). Egypt continued as a great and powerful nation for many centuries after the prophecy was written, but finally it became a backward, impoverished, weak nation and has remained so ever since. It was not condemned to extinction, however, as were many other ancient nations. Actually, it is amazing that the most ancient of nations, Egypt, is still in existence after over 4000 years. Many

Scriptures (for example, Isaiah 19:21,22) indicate prophetically that Egypt is still a nation in the last days.

Edom (Idumea) was a small, but powerful, nation descended from Esau. Its stronghold was in Mt. Seir, and its capital was Petra, the rock-walled city, veritably impregnable, as well as rich. Yet many prophecies had been uttered against it, and all have been fulfilled. Obadiah 18, for example, says, "there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken it." Today, the Edomites are gone without a trace.

The same is true of the Philistines. Though Philistia continued to prosper until about A.D. 1200, Zephaniah says, "the word of the LORD is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant" (Zephaniah 2:5). The Philistines have now long since vanished.

What about Babylonia, the first great world-empire? The Greek historian, Herodotus, had reported that Babylon was 15 miles square, surrounded by walls 350 feet high and 87 feet wide. Its avenues, parks and public buildings were a beautiful sight to behold. Yet Jeremiah prophesied: "The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire" (Jeremiah 51:58). Many other prophecies were directed against her, and eventually they came to pass.

The Assyrian empire, with its great capital of Nineveh, was another colossus of antiquity. But God said, "He will stretch out His hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness" (Zephaniah 2:13). Nothing could have seemed more unlikely than this when Zephaniah wrote, but it has been fully accomplished.

The two great cities of the Phoenicians were Tyre and Sidon. Of Tyre, God said, "They shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea" (Ezekiel 26:4,5). Today, fishermen mend their nets on the barren rock where Tyre once stood. God also said in Ezekiel 26:14, "Thou shalt be built no more." The site of ancient Tyre is quite suitable for habitation, but the prophecy has stood fulfilled now for over 2000 years, and Tyre has never been rebuilt.

Tyre's sister city, Sidon, was the object of a different type of prophecy. "For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side" (Ezekiel 28:23). Although Sidon has continued to exist as a city down even into the present, she has suffered more warfare and bloodshed than almost any other city in history. Sidon has been destroyed and rebuilt many times and still exists today in spite of all her suffering. Tyre, on the other hand, has never been rebuilt, thus confirming the prophecies.

Ashkelon was another great city, the birthplace of Herod the Great. It continued as a great city until finally destroyed in 1270 A.D. For, long before, Zephaniah had prophesied, "Ashkelon shall be a desolation" (Zephaniah 2:4). The same prophecy had also warned of destruction upon two other Philistine cities, Ekron and Gaza. In both cases, the prophecy was fulfilled.

Similar judgments were forecast for Bethel (Amos 3:14, 15), Samaria (Micah 1:6, 7), Jericho (Joshua 6:26) and, in the New Testament, for Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin (Matthew 11:20-23). All have been fulfilled as written.

Many other prophecies dealing with these and other nations have been fulfilled. There are also many other prophecies dealing with individual cities in the nations. Their fulfillment is strong witness to divine inspiration.

THE SEQUENCE OF EMPIRES

A remarkable foreview of world history was given in Daniel 2 in the form of a dream which came to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. As interpreted by Daniel, the metallic image of the dream represented the entire subsequent course of world history, as influenced by four successive empires. Daniel's interpretation, recorded in Daniel 2:37-45, indicated the first empire was the golden head of the image, Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian empire. The second would be the breast and arms of silver (fulfilled in the Medo-Persian empire) and the third, the mid-section of brass (fulfilled in the Greek empire of Alexander the Great). The fourth was the Roman empire, represented by the iron legs, including the hips.

The order of metallic succession indicates both a successive decrease in value and a successive increase in strength. The former probably refers to the degree of personal control exercised by the emperor over the human and material resources of his kingdom, the latter to the power of his armies and extent of his conquests.

The Roman empire was not only the strongest of all but was to last the longest, as indicated by the greater lengths of the legs of the image. Its eventual twofold split into eastern and western divisions, with capitals at Rome and Constantinople, was pictured by the two legs. The break in continuity at the knees intimates the shift from political to religious unity of the two divisions, as maintained for so long by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches.

Thus, although the Roman empire did not persist indefinitely as a political unit, it still does persist in the present east-west division of the heirs of the Roman empire, western Europe and America in the west, Russia, eastern Europe and the middle eastern states in the east. The legal systems, the educational systems, the military systems, the religious systems, and many other facets of modern society are direct descendants of Rome, still retaining the same spirit and much of the same form.

The feet, however, indicate a decided change in direction, and the mixture of iron and clay clearly speaks of the mixture of Roman-style imperialism with mass revolutionary movements. The final form of this succession is indicated by the ten toes representing ten kingdoms, five in the east and five in the west. These will be destroyed and superseded by the kingdom established by Christ Himself over all the world when He returns.

This remarkable prophecy has been almost completely fulfilled. The sequence of world empires is now undoubtedly in the revolutionary "foot" stage. Next it will assume the "ten-toed" form prior to the establishment of Christ's kingdom.

While the great image prophesied the great sweep of empires throughout history, the prophecies given directly to Daniel himself, in the 8th and 11th chapters, forecast many of the specific details of the development of the Medo-Persian and Greek empires. They also predict numerous events to take place in contacts with Egypt, Syria and Israel. The prophecies in these chapters are so numerous and so specific that they constitute the main reason critics refuse to accept the authenticity of the book of Daniel, insisting it must have been written after the events had taken place.

However, conservative scholars (for example, Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, of Princeton University, in his classic *Studies in the Book of Daniel*) have thoroughly refuted all such critical arguments and confirmed the traditional date of authorship. The one and only reason today for questioning Daniel's genuineness today is the reluctance to believe in fulfilled prophecy. This, of course, is exactly the point. These prophecies confirm clearly and emphatically the fact of divine inspiration.

Number four: global powers

There are many other prophecies dealing with the alignment of the Gentile nations in the last days. The emergence of an alliance of Eastern European and Muslim nations under the leadership and domination of Russia, all arrayed in opposition to Israel and the western nations, is prophesied in Ezekiel 38:1-16. The rise of a vast oriental confederacy of nations is described in Revelation 16:12. The development of a European union of nations comparable to the ancient Roman empire is suggested in Daniel 7:19-24 and other passages.

Number five: global disasters

In response to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3-8), the Lord Jesus answered, "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (or, more accurately, "the first birth pains"). The Hebrew idiom conveys the thought of a worldwide state of war. Thus the prophetic sign entails a world war, accompanied by great physical calamities, as the initial sign that a new world is about to be born. This was clearly fulfilled in the decade from 1914 to 1924, when the first world war, followed by the world's greatest pestilence (the influenza epidemic of 1918), the world's greatest famine (leading to the starvation of hundreds of millions, especially in Russia and China, after the war and the communist revolution), and the world's most calamitous earthquakes (in China in 1920 and Japan in 1923), all took place. The world since that time has continued to experience these "birth pains," with World War II, the Cold War, great numbers of local wars, the Great

Depression, continued deadly earthquakes, epidemics of polio, cholera, AIDS, and other diseases, and innumerable other "troubles" (Mark 13:8).

A fulfilled prophecy of an entirely different sort is found in 2 Peter 3:3,4. "There shall come in the last days scoffers, . . . saying, . . . all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Number six: global evolutionism

This is the doctrine of evolutionary uniformitarianism. It professes to explain the origin and development of all things in terms of the uniform operation of the same natural laws and processes which still "continue" today. The rise of this dogma took place in the 19th century and for a hundred years it has been the basic philosophy of the educational and scientific establishments. There was no way that Peter could have foreseen this development, 1800 years in the future, apart from divine inspiration.

Number seven: global technology

In relation to the realm of science and education, it was prophesied in Daniel that, at "the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Daniel 12:4). The Hebrew words imply a vast increase in both frequency and speed of travel, as well as other forms of communication and great advances in science and technology.

Number eight: global exploitation

Conflict in the economic and social realms in the last days is forecast in James 5:1-6. For ages, in all nations, the poor have been exploited by the rich, the working classes by the privileged classes. The uprising of the laborers in the latter days, leading to a "day of slaughter," is not only specifically predicted by James, but also implied in Daniel 2:41-43, Revelation 18:1-19, and other passages. These prophecies have been fulfilled in part, first in the French revolution, later in the Russian revolution and other communist-led upheavals. More is undoubtedly yet

to come, especially when the ill-fed, poorly housed masses of the world come to realize that even their own revolutionary movements are financed and controlled in large measure by those "kings and merchants of the earth" who traffic in the "souls of men."

Number nine: global hedonism

Moral conditions of the last days are prophesied to descend into the degradation of the "days of Noah" (Luke 17:26). But perhaps the most striking prediction associated with moral conditions in the last days is that the characteristics of professing religious people, in the realm of Christendom, will be essentially the same as those of the heathen in the old pagan world. That is, the catalog of the sins of those in the last days who have "a form of godliness" (2 Timothy 3:1-7, especially verse 5), is practically identical with that of the ancient godless rebels of Romans 1:28-31. Again, it seems impossible that Paul could have anticipated such a strange and sad development except by inspiration.

Number ten: global apostasy and global demonism

Religious apostasy in the ranks of professed Christian leaders is also prophesied in other Scriptures. Not only would false teachers deny the second coming of Christ (2 Peter 3:3), they would even "deny the Lord that bought them" (2 Peter 2:1). Not only would they, despite much education ("ever learning"), still never come "to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7), but even "turn away their ears from the truth and be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:4). All of these prophecies are being fulfilled today throughout the "Christian" world.

A particularly ominous form of apostasy is to be found in the rapid rise of demonism in the last days. "In the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1). Jesus said: "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders" (Matthew 24:24). During the great tribulation period of the last days, these trends will culminate in a worldwide return to Satan worship (Revelation 13:4, 8).

Before that, they will "worship demons, and idols" (Revelation 9:20) and do so especially in connection with the use of drugs (the word "sorceries," in Revelation 9:21, is a Greek word from which we actually transliterate our English word "pharmaceutical," and means "magical incantations by the ritual use of drugs").

The amazing upsurge of spiritism, astrology, witchcraft and Satanism all over the world in the past few years, along with the tremendous increase of drug use, especially by young people, certainly is an ominous sign of the imminent advent of the Antichrist. But at the same time it is a striking fulfillment of prophecy. That an age of scientific enlightenment could be followed so quickly by a widespread revival of paganism and occultism would seem paradoxical, but that is exactly what has happened, just as the Bible predicted.

We have only scratched the surface. There are scores of other Biblical prophecies that either have already been fulfilled or are presently in process of fulfillment. There is no other book like the Bible.

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of men: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).