

Rabbinic and Biblical Prophecies of the Coming of the Messiah!

What are the “signs” we should look for in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah? What do ancient Rabbis, and the Scriptures themselves, tell us about the End of Days? Here are tell-tale pointers which must come to pass before the return of the King of kings – the Messiah!

William F. Dankenbring

What are the “signs” we should look for in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah? What do ancient Rabbis, and the Scriptures themselves, tell us about the End of Days? Here are tell-tale pointers which must come to pass before the return of the King of kings – the Messiah!

What are the most clear signs that we are living in the ‘End of Days’ – the time just before the return of the Messiah? They are revealed in both Scripture, and in the writings of Jewish sages, Rabbis, and Talmudic rabbis of ancient times.

Let’s notice what the ancient sources say on this question.

The Prophecies of Judah Ben Samuel

Judah Ben Samuel was a legendary and prolific German rabbi of the 12th century who made some astonishing and specific predictions about the future of Jerusalem and Israel that came true.

Judah Ben Samuel, also known as Judah he-Hasid (Judah the Pious), lived and worked from the end of the 12th century until the beginning of the 13th century in Regensburg, authoring a number of books in the German language.

Ludwig Schneider of Israel Today magazine has translated some of his work into English over the last few years, including "The Book of the Pious – Sefer Hasidim" and the "Book of Calculations – Sefer Gematriyot."

Following the Christian crusades to the Holy Land, between 1096-1270, a regular correspondence developed between the Jews in the Holy Land and the Christian West. Thus, for example, the rabbis in Worms and Regensburg in Germany knew that Saladin's Ayyubids had been ruling in the Holy Land since 1187.

At this time, Judah Ben Samuel published the results of his biblical calculations (Gematria) and astrological observations and summarized as follows: "When the Ottomans (Turks) – who were already a power to be reckoned with on the Bosphorus in the time of Judah Ben Samuel – conquer Jerusalem they will rule over Jerusalem for eight jubilees. Afterwards Jerusalem will become no-man's land for one jubilee, and then in the ninth jubilee it will once again come back into the possession of the Jewish nation – which would signify the beginning of the Messianic end time."

One jubilee is 50 years (Leviticus 25). It is the 50th year after seven times seven years, the year in which each person should regain ownership of his or her land. Ben Samuel's calculations were purely theoretical; there was absolutely no sign at that time of their being fulfilled. He himself was not able to experience their fulfillment, for it was only 300 years after his death that the first of his predictions were to come true.

The Mamluks, who had been reigning in Jerusalem since 1250, were conquered in 1517 by the Ottoman Turks. They remained for eight jubilees ($8 \times 50 = 400$ years), that is to say they were in Jerusalem for 400 years. Exactly 400 years later, in 1917, the Ottoman Turks were conquered by the British. The League of Nations conferred the Mandate for the Holy Land and Jerusalem to the British. Thus, from 1917, under international law, Jerusalem was no-man's land. Then, when Israel captured Jerusalem in the Six Day War of 1967, exactly one jubilee (50 years) after 1917, Jerusalem reverted to Jewish-Israeli ownership once again. Thereby, according to the prophecies of Judah Ben Samuel, the Messianic End Times began.

Many scholars have studied and made reference to Judah Ben Samuel's writings in an effort to understand how he reached his conclusions. Among those referencing Ben Samuel were Rabbi Isaac Ben Solomon Luria, a mystic dealing with the messianic world (Jerusalem, 1531-1572, Safed); Joseph Solomon Delmegido (1591 Candia - 1655 Prague), a mathematician and astronomer ("Mazref le-Chochma"), Azulai I (1724-1806), a famed bibliographer; Samuel David Luzzatto (1800-1865), a Bible scholar; historian Heinrich Graetz (1817-1891); and Torah scholar Jacob Epstein (1925-1993).

The secret of how Judah the Pious arrived at such accurate predictions has less to do with the actual calculations than it does with the fact that he had consecrated his life to God. His pupils Rabbi Isaac ben Moses (Vienna), Rabbi Baruch ben Samuel (Mainz) and Rabbi Simcha (Speyer) testify that Ben Samuel was a model of abstinence and selflessness and was awaiting with a burning desire the coming of the Messiah.

Ben Samuel was often called "Light of Israel." Even bishops came to him for advice. If anyone asked him where his wisdom came from he would answer, "The prophet Elijah, who will precede the Messiah, appeared to me and revealed many things

to me and emphasized that the precondition for answered prayer is that it is fueled by enthusiasm and joy for the greatness and holiness of God."

But to recap the astonishing predictions: In AD 1217 this scholarly and pious rabbi prophesied that the Ottoman Turks would rule over the holy city of Jerusalem for eight Jubilees. Now, keep in mind, he made this prediction 300 years before the Ottoman Turks seized control of Jerusalem in 1517. If indeed 1217 and 1517 were jubilee years as Judah Ben Samuel believed, then his prophecy was exactly right, because exactly 400 years after the Turks took control of Jerusalem they were driven out of the city and the holy land in 1917 by the Allied forces under the command of General Edmund Allenby – on Hanukkah, by the way.

But it gets more interesting still.

The rabbi also prophesied that during the ninth Jubilee Jerusalem would be a "no-man's land." This is exactly what happened from 1917 to 1967, due to the fact that the Holy Land was placed under British Mandate in 1917 by the League of Nations and literally "belonged" to no nation.

Even after Israel's war of independence in 1948-49, Jerusalem was still divided by a strip of land running right through the heart of the city, with Jordan controlling the eastern part of the city and Israel controlling the western part of the city. That strip of land was considered and even called "no-man's land" by both the Israelis and the Jordanians.

It was not until the Six Day War in 1967 when the entire West Bank of the Holy Land was conquered by the Israeli army that the whole city of Jerusalem passed back into the possession of Israel. So once again the prophecy made by the rabbi 750 years previously was fulfilled to the letter.

It certainly would be significant if both 1917 and 1967 were Jubilee years, considering the significance of what happened in Jerusalem on those years. But it gets even more interesting, because Judah Ben Samuel also prophesied that during the 10th Jubilee Jerusalem would be under the control of the Jews and the Messianic "end times" would begin. If he's right, the 10th Jubilee began in 1967 and will be concluded in 2017.

Jews Returning to the Holy Land

Perhaps the first and most notable SIGN that the Messiah is coming in OUR generation, is the return of Israel to the Holy Land, and its once again blossoming like a rose!

The prophet Ezekiel wrote, "But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall give your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they will soon be coming" (Ezek.36:8).

Says the ancient Jewish authority, the Talmud, “When this verse is fulfilled, and the mountains of Israel are once again green and yield fruit, you will know that the Messiah is on his way and soon to arrive” (Sanhedrin 98A, p.15).

“As long as the people of Israel are exiled from their land, the Land of Israel will remain desolate and barren of fruit. Thus, there is no clearer sign of the imminence of the final redemption and the people of Israel’s return to its land than the land once again growing its branches and yielding its fruit (*Maharsha*)” (“Notes,” *ibid.*).

Says Rabbi Eliezer, “There is also no sign of the imminence of the Messiah’s arrival more clear than this” – “For before these days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; nor was there peace from the oppressor to him who went out or came in; for I set all men every one against his neighbor” Zech.8:10).

World-wide Trouble and Economic Ruin

Another sign of the impending return of the Messiah is world-wide affliction. World economies are so bad that jobs are scarce and people are hurting. The Scriptures allude to this. Isaiah wrote, “In that day a man will cast away his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which they have made, each for himself to worship, to the mole and bats” (Isaiah 2:20).

Zephaniah states, “Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD’s wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy” (Zeph.1:18).

Says the Talmud: “When you see that nobody can hire himself out for work, nor can he even hire out his animals, you will know that the Messiah is soon to come . . . the Messiah will not arrive until the last coin is gone from the pocket, and people are left entirely empty-handed” (*Talmud*, Sanhedrin 28A).

Roman World Empire

Before the Messiah returns, a new Roman Empire or a world government patterned after the Roman Empire, must be set up among the nations. It is rapidly being cobbled together at this very moment. The New Testament calls this end-time world government “Babylon the Great” (Rev.17-18).. Isaiah the prophet calls it “the daughter of Babylon” (Isaiah 47).

This is another sign of the soon coming of the Messiah. The Jewish Talmud declares: “Rabbi Hama bar Hanina said: The son of David will not come until the despicable *Roman government* will be utterly wiped out from Israel, for the verse states (Isaiah 18:5): ‘For before the harvest, when the blossom is past, and the bud is ripening into young grapes, he shall cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and remove and cut down the branches.’ Rabbi Hana bar Hanina understands the word translated here as

‘sprigs,’ as a reference to the *despicable government of Rome*. *Only after that government is cut off will the final redemption come*, for the verse that follows states (Isaiah 18:7): ‘In that time will a present be brought to the Lord of hosts, by a people tall and smooth.’

“Rabbi Ze’eiri said in the name of Rabbi Hanina: ‘The son of David will not come until the arrogant of spirit are utterly wiped out from Israel, for the verse states (Zephaniah 3:11): ‘On that day you shall not be ashamed for all your doings, in which you have transgressed against me; for then I will take away from your midst those who rejoice in your pride, and you shall no more be haughty in my holy mountain.’ And the next verse states (Zephaniah 3:12): ‘And I will leave in your midst a poor and lowly people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord’” (p.16).

“The despicable government.” This expression is understood as referring to the Roman government that is despicable and despises the people of Israel. “Rashi and Ramah understand the expression to mean ‘sovereignty of little value.’ The Messiah will not come until the last vestiges of sovereignty and self-rule, meager as they might be, are utterly wiped out from Israel” (“Notes,” p.16).

The Talmud relates, “Rabbi Simlai said in the name of Rabbi Elazar the son of Rabbi Shimon: The son of David will not come until all the judges and officers are wiped out from Israel, and the last vestiges of Jewish self-rule disappear.”

Under “Notes” we read, “Some understand that Rabbi Simlai means to say that the Messiah will not come until the wicked judges and officers of Israel are utterly wiped out, for their sins and wicked deeds cause the exile to continue so long.”

Ignorance of Torah

Another sign of the End of this Age is widespread ignorance of the Bible and God’s Law, the Torah. Never has a generation been so ignorant of the Scriptures! Biblical ignorance today is dismal, even in the churches! It seems knowledge of every kind is multiplying, but most people are utterly ignorant of the Bible!

This was foretold by ancient Rabbis themselves, as they poured over the Scriptures.

In the Talmud we read: “Rabbi Yohanan said: When you see a generation declining in learning and knowledge, wait for the Messiah, for he is soon to come, as it is stated (II Samuel 22:28): ‘And the afflicted people you will save.’ Rabbi Yohanan said: When you see a generation inundated with many troubles like a river, wait for the Messiah, for the redemption is soon to come, as the verse states (Isaiah 59:19): ‘So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun; when affliction comes like a river which the wind of the Lord drives forth.’ And juxtaposed to that verse is the verse that states (Isaiah 59:20): ‘But to Zion a redeemer shall come, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob, says the Lord.’”

Can we save ourselves from the sufferings which will come before the advent of the Messiah?

“Rabbi Elazar’s disciples asked him: What can a person do to save himself from the sufferings before the advent of the Messiah? And Rabbi Elazar explained: Let him engage in the study of Torah and the performance of charitable deeds.”

God told Jacob, “And behold, I am with you, and will keep you in all the places to which you shall go” (Gen.28:15). Yet, later, a verse states, “Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed” (Gen.32:7). He saw Esau coming at him with a huge army, and was acutely afraid.

Why?

“If God promised Jacob that He would remain with him, why was he afraid? Rabbi Ya’akov bar Idi explains: Jacob was afraid lest his sins cause that promise to be cancelled” (Sanhedrin 98B, p.22).

Fear can be good if it inspires us to take action to save ourselves from disaster and trouble!

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge” (Prov.1:7). But the world is plunging into horror precisely because its inhabitants do NOT fear the Lord! The apostle Paul wrote, “Their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known.” Why? Because, he says – “There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Romans 3:15-18, NKJV).

The Time of Global Distress

One of the greatest signs that we are approaching the return of the Messiah is the universal increase of world troubles – the exponential rise in worldwide terrorism, hatred, anger between nations, and people.

The prophet Jeremiah states, “Ask now, and see whether a man gives birth; why, then, do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in labor, and all faces are turned green?” (Jer.30:6).

The Jewish Rabbi Ramah suggests that this verse means “that in the period before the Messiah, even the mightiest among men will stand with his hands on his loins, as a woman in labor” (p.23).

Even unbelievers want to know “when will the Messiah come” – not to prepare for Him, but out of mere curiosity, or to ridicule and jeer and heap scorn on the believer, as he goes his way.

A certain heretic said to Rabbi Abbahu: “ ‘When will the Messiah come?’ Rabbi Abbahu said to him: ‘He will come when darkness covers those people,’ people like yourself. The heretic said to Rabbi Abbahu: ‘Why do you curse me for no reason?’ Rabbi Abbahu said to him: ‘It is not I who curse you, for the verse states explicitly (Isaiah 60:2): “For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and fog the peoples; but the Lord shall shine upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you”” (p.26).

The apostle Peter spoke of the same condition in the world in the end times. He wrote, “First of all you must understand this, that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts and saying, ‘Where is the promise of his coming?’ (II Peter 3:3-4, NRSV).

We live in an age of skepticism, scoffing, and disbelief!

Prophetic Dates and Times

There are also cleverly hidden Biblical clues to the time of the End and the return of the Messiah. These clues do not mean we know for certain – but they give us valuable information!

One of the clues is found in the Talmud, Sanhedrin 98A. We read: “It was taught in a Baraita: ‘Rabbi Eliezer says: The Messianic age will last for *forty years*, as the verse states (Psalms 95:10): “Forty years will I loathe the generation”” (p.26-27).

Under “Notes” we read: “It has been argued that the *Messianic age* will serve as a PERIOD OF PREPARATION for Israel and the whole world for life in the World to Come. Hence, the dispute regarding the length of the Messianic age is essentially a dispute about *how long it will take to prepare the world* to rise to that level.”

Where do we get the number “forty years”?

God was angry with the generation of Israel that lost faith and refused to enter the Holy Land, in the days of Moses and Joshua, and punished them for 40 years (Num.14:34).

Is God also angry with this present generation, who captured the Temple Mount in 1967, through a miraculous war, with divine intervention, but refused to return to Him by demolishing the Dome of the Rock, which sits where the ancient Temple stood, and has refused to take sovereignty over the Temple Mount, and to rebuild His Temple? The nation ignored His command, “Build My House” (Haggai 1:8). They suffered, as a result, forty years of struggles with the Palestinians and surrounding Arab states. They showed no faithfulness to God or His laws.

Forty years ago, beginning in 1967, brings us to 2007. In 2007-2008 the United States suffered an incredible economic collapse which almost led to the collapse of the entire world economic and financial system. It was a wake up or warning call,

foreshadowed by the Feast of Trumpets – the annual Feast of God which itself calls upon God’s people to REPENT of their sins and to prepare to be judged for their lives and deeds.

The Feast of Trumpets is ten days before the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, which represents and stands for the Day of Judgment – the day when Christ the Messiah returns to JUDGE the earth and its inhabitants!

From 2007-8, if we add ten years, we come to 2017-2018. These last “ten years” are ten years of warning, of preparation, called The Days of Awe” by the Jewish people – the ten days from Rosh Hoshanah (Trumpets) to Yom Kippur.

Is God giving mankind TEN YEARS to get ready to meet God in judgment?

Many People Despise God’s Word

One of the signs of the End of the Age is that people today “despise” the word of God. They do not count it of any special worth, and do not study it to learn God’s ways. They seek after their pleasures and wickedness, instead.

President Barack Obama himself has shown this attitude when he scorned and scoffed at the Old and New Testament, saying the Old Testament taught slavery, and the New Testament taught turning the other cheek, which no government on earth would find practical – according to his opinion. Scoffing and scorning the Word of God would be commonplace in the end times.

The apostle Paul himself wrote, “For the time will come when men will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned aside to fables” (II Tim.4:3-4).

Numbers 15:30-31 says, “But the person who does anything presumptuously [defiantly, lit. ‘with a high hand’] . . . shall be cut off [put to death] from among his people. Because he has *despised the word of the LORD*, and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be upon him.”

What does it mean, “to despise the word of the Lord”? There are many aspects to this question.

The Rabbis discussed this in the Talmud. “Among those sinners who do not have a portion in the World to Come is someone who says: ‘The Torah was not given from heaven but was written by Moses.’ Our Rabbis taught a related Baraita: ‘The verse that states (Numbers 15:31), “Because he has despised the word of the Lord, and has broken His commandment, that soul shall be utterly cut off,” refers to someone who says that the Torah was not given from Heaven but was written by Moses. According to another

explanation, the words “because he has despised the word of the Lord” refer to an *apikonos*, a heretic who denigrates the Rabbis and their Torah.

According to yet another explanation, the words, “ ‘because he has despised the word of the Lord’ ” refer to someone who acts impudently towards the Torah . . . The verse promises ‘that soul shall be utterly cut off,’ using the double verb form *hikaret tikaret*. That apparent superfluity teaches that the sinner will be cut off in two worlds. He will be ‘cut off’ [*hikaret*] – in this world and die a premature or sudden death; and he will be ‘utterly [*tikaret*] cut off’ – in the World to Come. . . If someone despises holy things, willfully defiling them, or despises the intermediate days of the Festivals, treating them as ordinary days, or breaks the covenant of Abraham, or acts impudently towards the Torah, or puts another person to shame in public, then even if he has to his credit Torah study and the performance of many other good deeds, he still has no share in the World to Come.”

Rambam says, “Someone who says that the Torah was not given by God, referring to the whole Torah, or even a single verse, or even a single word, falls under the category of those who deny the Torah, and does not have a share in the World to Come” (p.32).

Interestingly, Yeshua said much the same thing. He declared of the Word of God: “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, *one jot or one tittle shall by NO MEANS PASS from the law till all is fulfilled*” (Matt.5:17-18).

But merely knowing the truth and keeping the commandments is not enough. We are commanded also to TEACH it to all who will listen, especially our own children!

Study, Learn, Remember, and Teach

In a related Baraita, “Rabbi Meir said: If someone studies Torah, but does not teach it to others, he is included among those referred to by the verse (Numbers 15:31): ‘Because he despised the word of the Lord.’ Since he does not teach others, he does not attach importance to his knowledge.”

Likewise, “Rabbi Nehorai says: “Anyone who is capable of engaging in Torah study, but does not do so, ‘has despised the word of the Lord.’

In another Baraita, “Rabbi Yehoshua ben Korhah says: Anyone who studies Torah, but fails to review what he has learned, is like a person who sows grain and fails to reap it. Rabbi Yehoshua says: Anyone who studies Torah but later forgets it, is like a woman who gives birth, but soon thereafter buries her newborn.” (p.34).

Man was created for toil, or work. Job 5:7 says, “Man is born for toil.” God told Joshua, “This book of the Torah shall not depart out of your mouth” (Joshua 1:8), tells us that man was created for the toil or labor of Torah study.

Says the Talmud, “One cannot acquire Torah knowledge without regular study, as the verse states (Proverbs 22:18): ‘For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them in your belly; let them dwell on your lips’” (p.35).

Hidden Hebrew Revelations

In *The Other Bible Code: Ancient Hebrew Revelations about Events of Our Time*, written by H. M. Davidson, we read, “In the third century, two centuries after the Romans had destroyed the Second Temple, ancient rabbis recorded a belief, transmitted to them from earlier generations, about the Temple Mount’s destiny:

[One sage] said: “The children of Ishmael [i.e. the Arabs] will instigate fifteen things in the Land of Israel in the latter days . . . #15.) *They will construct an edifice on the site of the Temple*”

“The Arabs, warned ancient Rabbis, would one day build an edifice on the Temple Mount.

“In 687, four centuries after these words were committed to writing, they were fulfilled. Under the leadership of Abdel Malik, the Arabs, who had recently conquered the Holy Land, built the Mosque of Omar atop Jerusalem’s Temple Mount” (page 28).

The Mosque of Omar, also called the “Dome of the Rock,” was built in 687 A.D. It is a sacrilegious abomination, defiling the holy ground on which it sits, brazenly and impudently defying the Living God.

Let’s take note of that infamous year, 687 A.D. If we count 1260 days/years from that conspicuous date, notice what happens:

$$\begin{array}{r} 687-88 \text{ A.D.} \\ + 1260 \text{ years} \\ \hline 1947-48 \text{ A.D.} \end{array}$$

1947 was the very year the United Nations voted to create the state of Israel, and 1948 was the very year the modern state of Israel came into existence!

Davidson writes, “Not only will the Arab people and the Jewish people be at each other’s throats at the End of Days over control of the Holy Land. Throughout ancient Jewish texts, the Arabs are depicted as being engaged at the End of Days in a fierce struggle against a civilization which will be the ‘Esau/Edom/Rome’ of its time” (p.37).

Esau, of course, was the brother of Jacob. He hated Jacob fiercely, accusing him of stealing his birthright. This hatred continued down through history, between the descendants of Esau and Jacob.

Who is Esau Today?

Why does Davidson speak of Esau/Edom/Rome? Are they connected?

Louis Ginzberg in his *Legends of the Jews* gives us additional information about Esau, connecting him and his posterity to Rome. According to the traditions Ginzberg relates, Rebekah suffered such severe pain during her pregnancy that she went to Shem and pleaded with him to inquire of God concerning the cause of her distress.

“And Shem replied: ‘My daughter, I confide a secret to thee. See to it that none finds it out. Two nations are in thy womb, and how should thy body contain them, seeing that the whole world will not be large enough for them to exist in it together peaceably? Two nations they are, each owning a world of its own, the one the Torah, the other sin. From the one will spring Solomon, the builder of the Temple, from the other Vespasian, the destroyer thereof” (*Legends*, 1968, vol. 1, page 314)

The Mother and Fountain of all persecution and religious apostasy has its source in Rome, and Roman Catholicism. Rome, also, fulfills the words of Esdras that ‘Esau is the end of this age, and Jacob is the beginning of the one that follows.’

“They [Esau and Jacob] will never be in the same estate. Esau will vaunt lords, while Jacob will have Kings. They, Israel and Rome, are the two nations destined to be hated by all the world. One will exceed the other in strength. First Esau will subjugate the whole world, but in the end Jacob will rule over all” (*Legends*, vol. 1, page 314)

Ginzberg further relates that

“God will call out to the Messiah: ‘Roar at this monster that devours the fat of the nations, that justifies its claims for recognition through being a descendant of Abraham by his grandson Esau, the nation that forgives all for the sake of money [as Luther enumerated in his Bull], that kept Israel back from the study of the Torah, and tempted them to deeds that are in accord with the wishes of Satan”’ (*Legends*, vol. 3, page 167)

Esau was very influential in Rome. No doubt that “Rome” in a very real sense epitomizes the “way of Esau.” In fact, the book of Jasher directly connects Esau’s descendants with the Romans!

“And the children of Chittim [Cyprus, Phoenicia, Rome] saw the valor of Zepho [a valiant descendant of Esau], and the children of Chittim resolved and they made Zepho king over them . . . Zepho reigned over the whole land of Chittim *and over the land of ITALIA* 50 years” (p.186).

So the Rome-Esau connection is verified! The children of EDOM or ESAU intermarried with the Italians, mixed with them, and *they become ONE PEOPLE!* Thus

Esau also stands identified as the people of Italy, the Romans, and the well spring of the Roman Catholic religious apostasy!

“The Age of Esau”

According to prophecy, the rivalry between Esau’s and Jacob’s descendants was to characterize the ongoing relationships of these two people throughout historical time. Finally, the “age of Esau” – this present evil world – will be replaced by the “age of Jacob” or Israel. The book II Esdras in the Apocrypha speaks of this prophecy:

“What will mark the parting of the times? Or when will the end of the first or the beginning of the second be?”

“And he said to me, ‘From Abraham to Abraham, for from him sprang Jacob and Esau, but *Jacob’s hand held Esau’s heel from the beginning. For ESAU IS THE END OF THIS AGE, AND JACOB IS THE BEGINNING OF THE ONE THAT FOLLOWS.* For the beginning of a man is his hand, and the end of a man is his heel” (II Esdras 6:7-10).

Writes Davison, “In many ancient Hebrew and Aramaic writings, Rome – an obscure Italian village which emerged as an early hub of Western civilization and economic power – is identified as an early extension of the Esau/Edom personality” (*The Other Bible Code*, H. M. Davidson, p.6-7). The Babylonian Talmud, a treasure of information, identifies Esau/Rome’s scheming against the sons of Jacob as not just a plot or scheme, “but rather as a country: *Germany*” (Davidson,p.9, Babylonian Talmud, Megillah, 6a).

“Rome” in the End of Days

The civilization of “Rome” is the earliest branch or post-Biblical extension of Esau and his family. If it were compared to a tree, then Esau would be the “root,” and Roman civilization would be a major branch from that tree’s root. It has many branches.

In fact, the eighteenth century Lithuanian rabbinic giant, Elijah ben-Solomon Kramer, known as the “Genius of Vilna,” H. M. Davidson says, “argued *that half of the nations of the contemporary world are branches of the Esau/Edom/Rome tree*” (Davidson, page 37).

The sixteenth century Rabbi Yehuda Lowe, the “Maharal,” argued that characteristics which ancient Jewish writings attribute to Esau/Rome may be used to “identify the contemporary groups of nations which today bear the torch of Esau/Edom/Rome” (*ibid.*).

Thus, “Euro-Western civilization may be regarded as a BRANCH OF THE ESAU/EDOM/ROME TREE”, he explains.

European and Western civilization is the immediate heir of the culture of Rome,

with similar institutions, government, and laws. Also, like ancient Rome, modern Europe/America, and the Western world enjoy largely uncontested military, economic and political dominance over most of the world, and a vastly disproportionate part of the world's wealth.

Says Davidson, "And the *mind*-set of the contemporary West also suggests a kinship with Esau/Edom/Rome."

The West champions democracy, freedom, opportunity. Most people in the Western nations cheer these concepts, but these principles are not of themselves intrinsically good! A society consisting of thieves and crooks, even though it has a "democratic" government, will still be evil. Democracy and decency are not identical. Iraq today has "democracy" but is filled with hatred, conflict, and is on the verge of Civil War due to disagreeing factions of Islam battling each other for supremacy.

Says Davidson, "According to ancient Jewish sages, the essence of Esau/Edom/Rome was its emphasis on *outward form and appearance* over intrinsic goodness. Good manners took precedence over good morals. Etiquette over ethics. Judicial process and procedure over justice. System over substance" (p.39).

New York City and Ancient Rome

Ancient Rome was the hub of civilization during its time – a mega city which was the financial center of the world. Its torch or legacy, today, which would symbolically be called "Rome," would be New York City – a magnet for influential people, wealth, and business.

Davidson goes on, "In today's world, the city of New York has no equal as a financial hub. Many of the world's most influential companies are based in New York and it is in New York that their shares are traded. The adage, 'When Wall Street sneezes, the rest of the world catches the flu,' captures the essence of New York's financial hegemony over the rest of the world" (p.40).

"In addition," he says, "the presence of the United Nations in Manhattan underscores New York City's status as an unparalleled magnet for dignitaries from across the globe, much as Rome was in ancient days."

The Road Map

In Psalm 140:8-9, we read, "Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked man; further not his plotting – lest they be exalted." In the Babylonian Talmud, in a commentary on Psalm 140:8-9, the wicked man in this verse is identified as one of Esau's later day manifestations – namely, Rome. Israel here pleads with God to withhold the desires of "Rome" and to contain Rome's plotting.

Indeed, the world today seems to be plotting against Israel. The so-called "Road

Map to Peace,” which threatens Israel’s very future, is evidence of a vast conspiracy or global plot to ‘contain’ if not eliminate the Jewish state, in favor of Arab oil, on which the world’s economy depends.

In the same passage from the Talmud, Esau/Rome’s plotting is identified with or connected with Germany (Babylonian Talmud, Megilla 6a, H. M. Davidson, page 7).

Germany has been a fore-front of anti-Semitism in the twentieth century. Hitler’s pogroms, and his “final solution,” which led to the deaths of some six million European Jews, was not an isolated episode or anomaly. German resentment and antipathy toward the Jews was historic, and today still remains very strong against the Jewish state of Israel. The Germans, as a leader in the European Union, are strong advocates of the disingenuous “Road Map to Peace.” Germany has long been a powerful advocate of the Arabic lobby and the Palestinians, in their confrontation against Israel.

Says Davidson, “The Talmud continued that Jacob/Israel feared that if Germany and Rome were to end their mutual antagonism (as we see in the world, today, with Germany being a part of the “Western Alliance” and NATO) and combine forces, they would set forth to ‘destroy the world’” (page 8).

God warned the ancient Israelites to never forget the attack of the Amalekites, when they exited from Egypt under Moses. God said, “Remember what Amalek did to you on your journey out of Egypt, how he attacked you on the way, when you were faint and weary, and struck down all who lagged behind you; he did not fear God” (Deut.25:17-18, NRSV).

The Jewish and Israelite struggle against Amalek was not a one-time affair, but was to continue down through history. Amalek was to be blotted out, but it never happened.

A descendant of Amalek rose up to come close to annihilating the Jews during the Persian empire. An Amalekite by the name of Haman, viceroy to the king, sought to kill every Jew in the kingdom of Persia – genocide (Esther 3:13).

Haman and Hitler

Hitler succeeded in annihilating one third of the Jewish race alive at that time. In Jewish thought, there is a definite German-Amalekite connection.

The Talmud warned that another “Haman” would arise in the future. In a section dealing with the End of Days, and the coming of the Messiah, we read: “If the people of Israel fail to repent on their own, the Holy One, blessed be He, will set a king over them *whose decrees are as harsh as those of Haman*, and the people of Israel will repent against their will, and He will restore them to good” (Sanhedrin 97B, vol.21, p.13).

This prophecy was certainly fulfilled by Adolf Hitler, who, like Haman of old,

sought the total extinction of the Jewish race. The Holocaust woke up millions of Jews who during and after World War II sought refuge by fleeing to Palestine, to their original homeland.

Was the Nazi holocaust prophesied? Interestingly, a passage in the book of Esther describes the execution of Haman's "ten sons." A close look at the names of Haman's ten sons reveals a textual anomaly – three Hebrew letters are written very small in the Hebrew text – the Hebrew equivalents of T (tau), Sh (shin), and Z (zayin); and one, the Hebrew equivalent of V (vav), is written exceptionally large! (Esther 9:7-9).

Why was this anciently written this unusual way?

Says Davidson, "Such an oddity should draw attention. The ancient Hebrews understood that an enlargement or contraction of Biblical letters is always significant." In the Hebrew alphabet, every letter has a numerical value. In the case of the text in Esther, the three small letters have the numerical value as follows: T = 400, Sh = 300, Z = 7, for a total of 707. The numerical value of the large letter Vav is 6.

Here is where it gets remarkable – and mysterious! The very date on which Hitler's ten henchmen during World War II were hanged, even as Haman's sons were hanged, was October 16, 1946 – a date that coincided with the 707th year of the *sixth* millennium of the Hebrew calendar – the Hebrew year 5707. Notice – the large "Vav" (5) refers to the Jewish 6th millennium – The "707" refers to the century and year.

The execution date that year fell on the 21st day of Tishri – the day of Hoshana Rabbah, the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles. That date, in Jewish lore, is identified as the one day of the year picturing the "Judgment Day" of the Gentile nations of the world!

A reporter for *Newsweek* magazine, at the time, wrote about the execution of Julius Streicher, one of Hitler's Nazi henchmen. As he faced his own execution, by hanging, we read in *Newsweek*:

"Only Julius Streicher went without dignity. He had to be pushed across the floor, wild-eyed and screaming: 'Heil Hitler!' Mounting the steps, he cried out: 'and now I go to God!' He stared at the witnesses facing the gallows and shouted, 'Purim-fest, 1946!' (*Newsweek*, October 26, 1946, page 45).

The hanging of the ten henchmen of Adolf Hitler in 1946 was an uncanny latter-day replay of the hanging of the ten sons of Haman on the day of Purim, in 510 B.C. Hitler, like Haman, sought to kill and annihilate all Jews. And like him, he died a miserable death, and his ten henchmen were hanged like Haman's sons.

"Confusion of War"

Fast forward to the year 2006 – our day, today. The world is currently engaged in

the beginning stages of World War III – the war which has begun against worldwide Terrorism! It is a war pitting the Muslim world against the Western/Christian world. It involves Muslim terrorist groups and their Arab supporting nations – a Middle Eastern “axis of evil.”

In a prophecy found in Isaiah 21, God condemns the Arab nations for their treachery, perfidy and cruelty. God says, “As whirlwinds in the Negeb sweep on, it comes from the desert, from a terrible land. A stern vision is told to me; the betrayer betrays, and the destroyer destroys” (Isa. 21:1-2, NRSV). It is a scene of awesome destruction. The vision is so appalling, Isaiah cries out, “Therefore my loins are filled with anguish; pangs have seized me, like the pangs of a woman in labor . . . My mind reels, horror has appalled me; the twilight I longed for has turned for me into trembling” (Isa.21:3-4).

It is an oracle concerning the Desert – Arabia – and its inhabitants, the Dedanites, Tema, and the warriors of Kedar (verses 13-16).

Writes Davidson, “An ancient Jewish sage, culling from the insights into this chapter which he had received from earlier generations, states that the Arabs will wage an unprecedentedly heavy ‘*war of confusion*’ in the End of Days – and that the scene of this war will be ‘a great city.’ Furthermore – the ancient sage continues – this episode will trigger events which will lead to the coming of the Messiah and the Final Redemption of the world” (p.41).

A “war of confusion” suggests a war where the enemy is hard to identify – as in terrorists, who disguise themselves, and go underground, and strike by stealth. The term “a great city,” says Davidson, in ancient Hebrew literature, is “almost invariably a coded reference to Rome or its successor” (*ibid.*).

Thus here we are reading about “terrorism,” a war where your enemies are not obvious – and a “great city” – a modern day “Rome.”

Does this not sound like the staggering events of 9-11?

The ancient Zohar, an ancient book of Hebrew commentaries, in its section on the book of Numbers, gives details of devastation which would shake “Rome,” in the End of Days. Says Davidson, “Amplifying the prophecy of Bil’am, the Zohar predicted that on a certain calendar date the future Rome will suffer the tumbling of three high buildings or ‘strongholds’ [Aramaic: *shoorin eelaen*], and that this event will be among the factors triggering the process which will lead ultimately to the coming of the Messiah” p.42).

On 9-11, not only the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center collapsed after being driven into by hijacked airliners, but a third 47-story skyscraper, part of the same complex, also tumbled to the ground, at 5:20 pm, the same day.

The Zohar predicted this tremendous event would occur on the 25th day of the

month of Elul, in its most publicized edition. However, in the 18th century, the Genius of Vilna stated the text was off by two days – that the most correct version of the Zohar reads that this devastation would occur on Elul 23.

Says Davidson, “*September 11, 2001, was the 23rd day of Elul*” (p.42).

The Final War

The same source, the Zohar, also stated that Jewish-Arab struggle over the Middle East would transcend the boundaries of that region and spill over to the whole world, including Esau/Rome, during the End of Days.

Another text, Davidson relates, shows “the world will be plunged into a series of THREE multinational wars as the End of Days approaches. Neither of these first two wars will directly affect Jerusalem, but the third will focus on and include the Holy City” (p.44). (During World War I, General Allenby marched on Jerusalem, but the Turks abandoned the city without defending it!)

The final war will involve a vast invasion of Israel from the north country, Gog and Magog, together with Persia (Iran), and Cush (India), and other nations.

God says, “Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophecy against him” (Ezek.38:1-2, NKJV). Verse 5 says, “Persia [Iran], Ethiopia [Cush, that is, India and Ethiopia]], and Libya [Phut, north Africa] are with them . . . Gomer [China and Southeast Asia?] and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops – many people are with you” (vs.5-6).

This huge host will attack Israel.

The Jerusalem Talmud identifies “Meshech” with “Meesya.” Meesya is also called ‘Moscavi,’ and lies to the extreme north, Ezekiel says. The only city by that name, in that region, which is world renown, is the city of MOSCOW, in RUSSIA – the “land of ROSH.”

Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon says of the word “Meshech” – “Moschi, barbarous people inhabiting the Moschian mountains, between Iberia, Armenia, and Colchis.” He proposes that the Greek name “Moschi,” is the source of the name of the modern Russian city, Moscow.

The attackers’ aim is to annihilate all Israel. They will come in the “latter years,” against the Jews, “those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people” (v.8). Gog and Magog “will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud” (v.9). They will make an evil plan, saying, “I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates” (v.11).

Israel says, “They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. They have said, ‘Come, let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more.’ For they have consulted together with one consent; they form a confederacy [lit., cut a covenant] against You: the tents of EDOM [Rome, western world alliance] and the Ishmaelites [Arab nations]; Moab and the Hagrites [Jordan]; Gebal [Lebanon], Ammon, and AMALEK [the Palestinians]; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre [leading financial/trade center – New York City]; Assyria [Germany] also has joined them” (Psalm 83:3-8).

Says Davidson, “Listed among them are representatives of the EURO-WESTERN BLOC AND THE ARAB BLOC – ‘tents of Edom and Ishmaelites’” (p.48).

Jerusalem – the Central Focus

The focus of this assault will be Jerusalem. Says the prophet Zechariah, “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a vessel of POISON to all the nations surrounding it . . . And on that day I will make Jerusalem a BURDENSOME STONE for all the nations; for all who burden themselves with it will be devastated – and all the peoples of the earth will be gathered against it” (Zech.12:2-3).

The prophet Joel depicted this devastating scene. He wrote, “For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also DIVIDED UP MY LAND” (Joel 3:1-2).

Joel declares, “Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a DESTRUCTION from the Almighty” (Joel 1:15).

“A people come, great and strong, the like of whom has never been; nor will there ever be any such after them, even for many successive generations” (Joel 2:2).

“A fire devours before them, and behind them a flame burns; the land is like the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness” (Joel 2:3).

“DatePalms of Smoke”

“And I [God] will place wonders in the heavens and on the earth: blood, and fire, and *date-palms of smoke*” (Joel 2:30). “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls” (Joel 2:31-32).

The Hebrew word for “pillars” of fire is #8490, *timarah*, and means “a column.” It comes from #8558, *tamar*, meaning “to be erect; a palm tree.”

An erect column of smoke, which looks like a palm tree, is very reminiscent of a nuclear bomb blast – with a mushroom cloud atop a tall column of fire!

Says Davidson, “This heat, envisioned the prophet Joel, will generate date-palm-shaped pillars of smoke. A date-palm has a long, thin trunk and juts out at its top in every direction. Ominously, it is very similar in appearance to a tall mushroom. On that basis, a ‘date-palm of smoke’ would resemble the mushroom cloud phenomenon which appears in the sky in the aftermath of a nuclear blast” (p.54-55).

What effect will this devastation have on the armies attacking Jerusalem? Zechariah tells us: “And this is the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths” (Zechariah 14:12). As a result of this fiery conflagration, “It shall come to pass in that day that a great PANIC from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor, and raise his hand against his neighbor’s hand” (Zech.14:13).

Isaiah writes, “He will kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. So the Light of Israel will be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame; it will burn and devour his thorns and his briars in ONE DAY” (Isa.10:16-17).

“Hasten the Day”

In Isaiah 60:22, God says: “I the Lord will hasten it in its time.” Notice! According to the Talmud Rabbis, “The verse states that redemption will come ‘in its time,’ implying that redemption will only come at its predetermined time. And the same verse states that ‘I will hasten it,’ implying that redemption might come before that time! “Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi explained: If Israel merits it through repentance and good deeds, God will fulfill the promise, ‘I will hasten it,’ and bring redemption before its appointed time. But if Israel does not merit it, God will only bring redemption ‘in its time’” (p.18).

It will occur in its appointed time – and yet it will also be “hastened” – the process will be speeded up! Is this what the Messiah meant when He said, “And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved [alive]; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” Matt.24:22). Paul describes it, “For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because the LORD will make a short work upon the earth” (Romans 9:28).

The final act of the stage play, before the curtain descends upon this world and its gory civilization, will happen very suddenly. Malachi wrote, “And the Lord, whom you seek, will SUDDENLY come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in. Behold, He is coming, says the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 3:1).