

Tarshish tests command and control in Qatar

Nigel Bernard

AT THE TIME of the end, when Armageddon takes place, there will be two major powers north and south of Israel. Towards the north will be the power led by Gog: "And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army" (Ezek. 38:15). In the south there will be a power that is a combination of indigenous local forces and a power from elsewhere that has established itself in that region: "Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?" (v. 13).

Sheba and Dedan relate to the indigenous peoples in the Arabian Peninsula to the south of Israel. Tarshish and the young lions relate to the British power together with its allies. We should therefore be looking for evidence that the forces of Tarshish are developing to the south of Israel. Recent events in this area provide such evidence.

Jutting out into the Persian Gulf is the small country of Qatar. Unlike its larger neighbour Saudi Arabia, this country has not wavered in its willingness to cooperate with American and British military forces in the area. Its current ruler, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, is "a strong believer in the American security umbrella as protection in what is a volatile region".¹

Putting this into Biblical terms, it is the Tarshish powers which are a "security umbrella" for Sheba and Dedan. The Tarshish connection is cemented by the fact that the Sheikh was given military training at the British Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. He has been keen to encourage American and British forces to use his country. To this end he spent £600 million building an airbase at Al Udeid, twenty miles from the capital Doha. The US has dozens of aircraft and 3,200 men based there.

In December 2002 the Americans held a military exercise at As Sayliyah, another base in

Qatar. Prior to the exercise, code-named Internal Look, a Pentagon official described it as follows:

"Exercise Internal Look is designed to exercise the command, control and communications ability of Central Command Headquarters and all of our different component commands who are spread throughout our AOR (area of responsibility) in other parts of the world. What this exercise is going to do is test and exercise our ability to communicate on the modern battlefield. This exercise is going to be a very complex computer-based and assisted exercise that will not involve combat forces".²

Although not involving combat troops, 600 war planners from Central Command (Centcom) in Tampa, Florida, went to Qatar. There were also 375 British officers involved in the exercise in Qatar itself, with 400 other British officers involved in Britain, the Gulf and the US.

Exercise Internal Look is a biennial exercise which was first held in 1990. What makes the 2002 exercise different from the previous exercises is that this is the first time it has been held outside the US. The heightened tension in the region associated with Iraq is seen as a prime factor in the decision to hold the exercise in Qatar. It is anticipated that some of the facilities and staff positioned in Qatar for the exercise will remain there once the exercise has finished. Indeed, even prior to the exercise the US were already using As Sayliyah for the storage of tanks and other equipment.

In another move which will see more Tarshish forces heading to the area of Sheba and Dedan, the British Royal Navy plans to send a naval task force to the Gulf in January 2003.³ The official reason for this task force being sent is

1. Sherwell, P. (2002), "British forces on security alert as US stages wargames in Gulf", *Sunday Telegraph*, 8 Dec., p. 26.
2. http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Dec2002/t12042002_t204cent.html
3. Elliott, F. (2002), "Navy sends 2,600-man task force to the Gulf", *Sunday Telegraph*, 15 Dec., p. 1.

that it will be on its way to a long-planned training event in Malaysian waters, code-named Exercise Flying Fish, to be held in June 2003. However there is little doubt that in the meantime it will have a role to play in the Gulf. The force will consist of the aircraft carrier *Ark Royal*, a Type 42 destroyer, a frigate, two supply vessels and a submarine. The *Ark Royal*, in addition to its 685-man crew, will have 600 Royal Marines and 366 aircrew on board.

The military buildup in the Middle East continues to provide evidence that the pieces of the prophetic jigsaw are fitting into place. Although such events may seem small compared with the

overall picture, they should not be despised, and they are there for our warning. They provide evidence of the nations being gathered into the Middle East and into the areas predicted by prophecy. It is during this process that Christ will return:

“For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame” (Rev. 16: 14,15).



Correspondence

Comments on articles appearing in the magazine are always welcome, and should be addressed to the editor in whose section the article appears.

Ezekiel’s visions of the Millennium

The size and shape of the temple

In reply to Brother Carlo Barbaresi’s letter defending Brother Henry Sulley’s interpretation of Ezekiel 40–48 as applying to a large circular temple (Dec. 2002, p. 446), it was not the intention when writing the original series of articles to comment on the ideas put forward by Brother Henry Sulley on this subject, but this has now become necessary. All correspondents are in agreement that there will be a temple built at Jerusalem in the Kingdom age, and that animal sacrifices will be made in it to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. This letter looks at the size and shape of that temple.

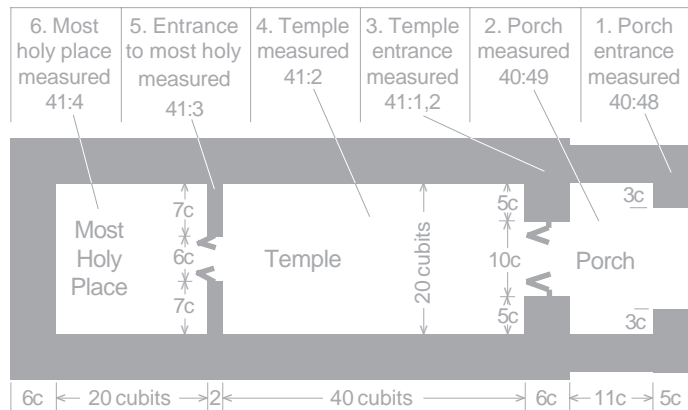
Square or circular?

The main evidence given from Scripture by Brother Sulley for the circular concept comes from the dimensions given in Ezekiel 41:3. A careful reading of Ezekiel 40:48–41:4 reveals the following sequence:

- 1 Ezekiel is brought to the porch of the temple; the entrance is measured (40:48).

- 2 The porch is measured (v. 49).
- 3 Ezekiel is taken into the temple; the entrance is measured (41:1,2).
- 4 The temple is measured at forty by twenty cubits (v. 2).
- 5 The angel enters the most holy place; the entrance is measured (v. 3).
- 6 The most holy place is measured at twenty by twenty cubits (v. 4).

The diagram gives the details of what Ezekiel is shown.



The two dimensions Brother Sulley uses to support his idea that the temple is circular are the six cubits and seven cubits of 41:3. He applies the seven cubits to the temple entrance and the six cubits to what he shows as the exit to the temple. These two dimensions must apply to the entrance to the most holy, for the verse begins,