

Dragon

The dragon represents a power from which come forth unclean teachings at the time of the end: "And I saw three unclean spirits like **frogs** come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the **beast**, and out of the mouth of the **false prophet**" (Rev. 16:13). The dragon first appears in Revelation 12: "And there appeared another wonder in **heaven**; and behold a great red dragon, having **seven heads** and **ten horns**, and seven crowns upon his heads" (v. 3). In Revelation 12 the dragon represents pagan **Rome**, with the **seven heads** relating to the seven hills of **Rome** (17:9) and the **horns** representing countries over which **Rome** ruled.

In Ezekiel 29 Pharaoh is likened to a dragon: "Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of **Egypt**, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself" (v. 3). It may well be that the crocodile is the particular creature being referred to in this passage, an animal which formed the basis for one of the Egyptian gods. Previously the Egyptians had sought to kill the Israelite male children at birth (Ex. 1:16). This is similar to the way the dragon seeks to destroy a child at birth in Revelation 12: "and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born" (v. 4), signifying the way the pagan rulers tried to prevent the 'Christian' Constantine becoming emperor. This similarity between **Egypt** and pagan **Rome** is no doubt one reason why pagan **Rome** is symbolised by a creature previously used of **Egypt**.

With the accession of the 'Christian' Emperor Constantine, the pagan dragon was thrown out of the political **heavens** (v. 9). In Revelation 13 the dragon comes to signify the secular military power in the eastern part of the empire, based around **Constantinople**, which gives support to

the western part of the empire centred around **Rome**, symbolised by a **beast**: "And the **beast** which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority" (v. 2).

Using Revelation 13 as a pattern, Revelation 16 uses the dragon to represent a power at the time of the end whose territory will match much of the old part of the Eastern Roman Empire, including **Istanbul (Constantinople)**. It will be military in character, in contrast to the religious character of the **beast**. Its political and diplomatic rhetoric, signified by the "unclean spirits like **frogs**" (16:13), will be humanistic, with roots going back to the teachings of the French Revolution.

As **Gog** invades south it will take on the role of the dragon. Fittingly, it will get as far as **Egypt**, the spiritual home of the dragon (Dan. 11:42). In fact, when the **king of the north** reaches **Egypt**, he will explicitly behave in a dragonlike manner. In Daniel 11 it is written: "But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many" (v. 44). The word translated "fury" is the same word used in Deuteronomy for the poison of dragons: "their wine is the *poison* of dragons" (32:33). **Gog** will storm out of **Egypt** like a crocodile in fury.

Whether symbolising ancient **Egypt**, pagan **Rome**, the secular and military aspect of the Eastern Roman Empire or the Gogian power at the time of the end, a common denominator linking all these powers is the way in which man joins together in an organised way to oppose the things of God. They are political manifestations of "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 Jno. 2:16). During the millennial reign of Christ man will not be allowed to organise himself in this way. This is symbolised by the dragon being bound (Rev. 20:2). (**Refs. 10, 26**)

E

Earthquake

Earthquakes in Bible prophecy can be both literal geophysical earthquakes and also political earthquakes. Earthquakes were one of the natural disasters which the Lord Jesus said would come upon the earth in the years leading up to

the scattering of the **Jews** by the Romans around A.D. 70: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places" (Mt. 24:7; cf. Lk. 21:11). Fulfillments of this verse included the famine in the days of Claudius Caesar (Acts 11:28) and the earthquake

at Philippi (16:26). Whilst these words primarily apply to the first century, they may also apply to the last days of the Gentiles. This would be in keeping with other prophecies that seem to apply to both periods (for example, Psalm 2 and Joel 2).

The US Geological Survey estimates that there are several million earthquakes in the earth each year (see <http://neic.usgs.gov/neis/eqlists/eqstats.html>). Most of these are not detected, either because they are very weak or because they occur in remote areas. The number of earthquakes recorded has increased over the years, but this is primarily due to the increased number of seismographs being set up around the world. According to the US Geological Survey, the number of earthquakes of a large magnitude remained relatively constant during the 1990s. In any case, in the Olivet Prophecy it is the diversity of places, not the number, which is mentioned. We should be looking for earthquakes in places which rarely have earthquakes or which occur at a time and place which causes maximum psychological impact. Earthquakes are one of the things “on the earth” which will cause men’s hearts to fail prior to the coming of Christ (Lk. 21:26).

When Christ returns there will be both a geophysical and a political earthquake. The geophysical earthquake will be centred in the land of **Israel**: “For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of **Israel**” (Ezek. 38:19). This earthquake will take place when Christ stands upon the **Mount of Olives**: “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the **mount of Olives**, which is before **Jerusalem** on the east, and the **mount of Olives** shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of **Judah**: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the **saints** with thee” (Zech. 14:4,5).

The effects of this earthquake will be felt well beyond **Israel**: “so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at My presence, and the

mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground” (Ezek. 38:20). The fact that the “fishes of the sea” will “shake” indicates that the oceans will also be affected. This could result from massive landslips into the sea of the type spoken of in Psalm 46: “Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the **mountains** be carried into the midst of the sea” (v. 2).

The earthquake will also cause waters to go from **Jerusalem** down into the Dead Sea and also into the **Mediterranean** (Ezek. 47:8; Zech. 14:8). **Israel** is located at the juncture of the Arabian and African tectonic plates. The Jordan Valley, including the Dead Sea, is part of a rift valley system which goes down into East Africa. The Jordan Valley is one of the most seismically active regions in the Middle East. It is well known that a geological fault is present under the **Mount of Olives**. It may be that we should be looking for increased concern amongst seismologists about the potential for major seismic events in the area.

In Revelation an earthquake is used to signify the end of pagan **Rome** (6:12; 8:5) and the French Revolution (11:13). The overthrowing of the governments of the world by Christ and the **saints** is also described in Revelation as a political earthquake: “And the temple of God was opened in **heaven**, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail” (v. 19); “And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great” (16:18). In Ezekiel 37 a political earthquake also takes place as part of the vision of the valley of **bones**: “So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone” (v. 7). Whilst this earthquake may relate ultimately to events at Christ’s return, perhaps events such as the two world wars should be regarded as initial seismic events which are precursors to the main earthquake. ([Refs. 2, 8](#))

Edom

Edom was a country whose western borders began south of the Dead Sea and stretched southwards to Elath on the Red Sea, being dominated by a range of uplands known as Mount Seir. The

country was inhabited by the descendants of Esau. By the time of Christ the land was known as Idumea (Mk. 3:8), a name occasionally used in the AV of the Old Testament to render the Hebrew for Edom (Isa. 34:5,6; Ezek. 35:15; 36:5).

When the Babylonians invaded **Judah** some **Jews** sought to flee eastwards. For example, King Zedekiah reached as far as the area of Jericho: "And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him" (2 Kgs. 25:5). It seems that other **Jews** who fled eastwards were hindered by the Edomites. Obadiah spoke of this: "neither shouldst thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldst thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress" (v. 14). In the wake of the Babylonian invasion the Edomites captured some Jewish towns, including Hebron, as Obadiah wrote: "Thou shouldst not have entered into the gate of My people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldst not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity" (v. 13).

The hatred of Edom towards **Israel** would eventually lead to its punishment and destruction. As Obadiah wrote: "Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? And thy mighty men, O **Temán**, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter" (vv. 8,9).

The prophecy that "every one" of the Edomites would be destroyed fits with other prophecies which speak of the total destruction of this people. As Jeremiah wrote: "Also Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it" (49:17,18). Countries such as **Ammon** (v. 6) and **Moab** (48:47) would have their captivity reversed in the last days, but Edom would never again exist. The Edomites came to an end as a result of incursions by, for example, the Nabateans and also by the Jewish Maccabees led by John Hyrcanus.

However, just as **Babylon** no longer exists but nevertheless is used in Bible prophecy to represent Roman Catholicism, so too Edom is used to typify a power at the time of the end, in



The ruins of Petra, ancient capital of the Nabateans, who occupied the area of Edom

this case the Gentile nations as a whole. A hint of this is seen later on in Obadiah: "For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head" (v. 15). The phrase "all the heathen" moves the emphasis from Edom in particular to the nations as a whole.

In Amos 9 it is written: ". . . that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by My name, saith the LORD That doeth this" (v. 12). In Acts 15 James quotes from this verse, but replaces "Edom" with "men": ". . . that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, Who doeth all these things" (v. 17). This helps to confirm that passages which relate to the people of Edom at the time of the end actually speak of men as a whole who oppose the people of God.

What happened to Edom in the four centuries before Christ is a type of what will happen to the nations at the time of the end. In Obadiah verse 18, which clearly speaks of the time of the end, the "house of Esau" signifies men in general:

“And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken it”. The original “house of Esau” has long since been destroyed, but its latter-day manifestation, manifest in all those who hate **Israel** and who will rejoice when **Gog** invades, will also be destroyed when Christ returns.

The term ‘Edom’ is also used in prophecy to refer to the specific geographical location where the Edomites dwelt. For example, in Isaiah 34 “all nations” (v. 2) will be gathered to “a great slaughter in the land of Idumea [Edom]” (v. 6), and in Isaiah 63 we read of Christ and the **saints** marching from the direction of Edom: “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from **Bozrah**? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save” (v. 1). In Daniel 11 we see that the land of Edom is “delivered” out of the hand of the invader (v. 41, RV). ([Ref. 17](#))

Egypt

Egypt occupies the northeast corner of Africa. It is dominated by the River Nile. Over ninety per cent of the population live in the Nile river valley and delta. The country is the second most populous country in Africa, with only Nigeria having more people.

The Egyptians were descended from Mizraim (the Hebrew word for Egypt), who was a son of Ham: “And the sons of Ham; **Cush**, and Mizraim, and **Phut**, and Canaan” (Gen. 10:6). Egypt developed into a great ancient power, but its greatness was already in decline by the time the Israelites fled from Egypt under Moses.

It was the invasion by Nebuchadnezzar which, from a Biblical perspective, marked a turning point in the history of Egypt. Ezekiel, in a series of seven prophecies (chapters 29–32), spoke about the punishment of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar. In one of these prophecies he also spoke about the status of Egypt after the invasion and captivity had finished: “and I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall

no more rule over the nations” (29:14,15). History testifies to the truth of this prophecy, and it is a key to understanding the role of Egypt in the last days. Egypt has never been able to recapture the greatness of its ancient past.

From the sixteenth century onwards this “base” nation came under the sway of the Ottoman Empire. In 1882 Egypt effectively became part of the British Empire. This was part of the “ransom” given by God to **Britain** for the future role it was initially to play in the furthering of the return of the **Jews** to **Palestine** (Isa. 43:3). In 1914 Egypt was declared a protectorate by the British, who used it as a base for attacks against the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. Egypt was granted independence in 1922 and became a monarchy, but British influence remained strong. After the Second World War, nationalism increased, and in 1952 the army seized power, the then King Farouk abdicated, and Egypt became a republic. Nasser became president in 1954. In 1956 Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal, and **Britain**, **France** and **Israel** invaded, only to withdraw under international pressure.

Nasser cultivated strong ties with the Soviet Union, and consequently Egypt received massive military aid from **Russia**. Despite this, Egypt was defeated in the Six-Day War in 1967. Nasser died in 1970 and was replaced by Anwar al Sadat. In 1972 Sadat expelled thousands of Soviet military advisers from Egypt. In 1973 the Egyptians and Syrians attacked **Israel**, triggering the so-called Yom Kippur War. Although Egypt was defeated, the fact that they had crossed the Suez Canal and inflicted losses on **Israel** improved their bargaining position for peace negotiations later that decade. In 1977 Sadat visited **Jerusalem** and addressed the Knesset, and in 1979 a peace treaty was signed with **Israel** following talks at Camp David in **America**.

In Isaiah 19 the conquering of Egypt by a “cruel lord” is described: “And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts” (v. 4). This prophecy had a primary fulfilment in the invasions of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 43:10-12). In the latter part of Isaiah 19, however, there are aspects of the prophecy which clearly relate to the time of the end, and the early part of Isaiah 19 appears to have a fulfilment in the latter days as well. The invasion by **Babylon** of Egypt is a foreshadowing of the invasion to take place by **Gog**, the

Russian **king of the north**, as spoken of in Daniel 11: “He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps” (vv. 42,43).

The invasion by **Russia** will not be the end for Egypt. Having been smitten by the “cruel lord”, it will then be healed: “And the LORD shall smite Egypt: He shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the LORD, and He shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them” (Isa. 19:22). Egypt will be delivered by a “saviour” (v. 20), the Lord Jesus Christ and the **saints**. Egypt will be brought into the new covenant and counted as God’s people (v. 25).

In Daniel 11 the “**king of the south**” is, for the most part, the Ptolemaic Empire, and its base is shown to be Egypt (v. 8). The **king of the south**, however, will also exist at the time of the end (v. 40). This power cannot be Egypt itself, for Egypt will always be a “base” nation. The foreign power having a dominant influence to the south of **Israel** at the time of the end is **Tarshish** (Ezek. 38:13). We would therefore expect **Britain** once more to have a strong influence within Egypt at the time of the end.

In Revelation 11 **Rome** is likened to Egypt: “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified” (v. 8). The “dead bodies” in this verse represent those who witnessed against the evils of the Roman Catholic Church over the centuries and were killed as a result. The persecution by the Catholic Church is similar to the way the Egyptians persecuted the Hebrews while they were there in bondage. Egypt was called an “iron furnace” (Deut. 4:20) and was also renowned for its worldly wisdom (1 Kgs. 4:30). Both these attributes can be accurately ascribed to the Roman Catholic Church. Significantly, the punishments brought upon the Catholic Church in the nineteenth century as a consequence of the French Revolution are described in Revelation 16 using symbols reminiscent of the plagues brought upon Egypt. The use of the **dragon** symbol in Revelation also alludes to Egypt, as this symbol is used of Egypt in the Old Testament. ([Refs. 17, 22](#))

- **1869** Suez Canal opened
- **1902** Aswan Dam completed
- **1956** Suez Crisis

- **1967** Six-Day War
- **1970** Aswan High Dam completed
- **1972** Soviet Advisors expelled
- **1973** Yom Kippur War
- **1977** Sadat visits **Jerusalem**.

Elam

Elam was one of the sons of Shem: “The children of Shem; Elam, and **Asshur**, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram” (Gen. 10:22). From him a nation developed, and in the time of Abraham, under Chedorlaomer, it was one of the nations involved in the kidnapping of Lot (14:9). Elamite history is usually divided into the Early (c. 2000–c. 1300), Middle (c. 1300–1130) and Late (c. 1000–640) periods. It was at its zenith during the middle period. Elam later became a province of the Persian Empire, and its city Shushan was the location of a palace of the Persian king: “And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai” (Dan. 8:2); “. . . that in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace . . .” (Est. 1:2).

The downfall of Elam was prophesied by Jeremiah: “And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come” (49:36). This came to pass when the Persian Empire was overthrown by **Greece**. However, Jeremiah also prophesied that Elam would re-emerge in the latter days: “But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD” (v. 39). The fulfilment of this prophecy could be equated with the development of modern **Iran**. However, it may be that it should be more specifically related to the area of Khuzestan in southwestern **Iran** where the ancient province of Elam was based. It may be that this area will emerge as a distinct power within **Iran** itself.

Elam will be one of the areas from where **Jews** will be gathered when Christ is King: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from **Assyria**, and from **Egypt**, and from Pathros, and from **Cush**, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea” (Isa. 11:11).

Ephraim

Ephraim was one of the sons of Joseph. Although Manasseh his brother was the elder, Ephraim was blessed by Jacob as the first-born: "And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall **Israel** bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh" (Gen. 48:20). As such, Ephraim is a type of spiritual **Israel** and Manasseh is a type of natural **Israel**. Later, the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh developed into two separate tribes, although together they constituted the tribe of Joseph. During the reign of Rehoboam, ten of the tribes, including Ephraim and Manasseh, went over to Jeroboam (1 Kgs. 12:20). These ten tribes formed the northern kingdom. Sometimes in Scripture this kingdom is referred to as '**Israel**' and also as 'Ephraim'. As a man of God said to Amaziah: "O king, let not the army of **Israel** go with thee; for the LORD is not with **Israel**, to wit, with all the children of Ephraim" (2 Chron. 25:7).

Eventually, in 720 B.C., the northern tribes were taken into captivity: "In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of **Assyria** took Samaria, and carried **Israel** away into **Assyria**, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes" (2 Kgs. 17:6). In 586 B.C. the kingdom of **Judah** was taken into captivity by the Babylonians. This captivity was later reversed by the decree of Cyrus (2 Chron. 36:23). Some individuals from the ten tribes would have been involved in the captivity of **Judah** and the return to the Land. For example, some from the northern tribes joined the kingdom of **Judah** during the reign of Asa (15:9) and during the reign of Hezekiah (30:11). Also, it seems that all twelve tribes were represented in the Land by the time of Ezra (Ezra 8:35).

However, no specific reversal of the captivity of the ten tribes as a whole took place. Therefore, in Bible prophecy about the last days, Ephraim represents the **Jews** that are scattered throughout the world as opposed to the **Jews** present in the land of **Israel**. Jeremiah 31 provides an example of this: "Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead

them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to **Israel**, and Ephraim is My firstborn" (vv. 8,9). Again, in Zechariah 10 we read: "And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD. I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased" (vv. 7,8).

In Ezekiel 37 the parable of the two sticks is used to show that when Christ is King there will once more be one kingdom when the **Jews** scattered throughout the world are brought together with the **Jews** in the Land: "say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of **Israel** his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of **Judah**, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in Mine hand" (v. 19).

Ethiopia

The origins of Ethiopia lie in the ancient kingdom of Aksum, which developed in the early centuries after Christ. In modern times, apart from Italian occupation between 1936 and 1941, Ethiopia has remained free from colonial rule. In 1974 the Emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown by a military junta, which formed a socialist state. The régime was eventually toppled by rebel forces in 1991, the country having been previously weakened by drought and refugee crises. Multiparty elections took place in 1995. War with Eritrea broke out in the late 1990s but ended in 2000.

Within Ethiopia are a group of people who claim to be of Jewish descent, tracing their ancestry back to the time of Solomon. They call themselves *Beta Israel* (the house of **Israel**) and are known by others as *Falashas*. They observe many Jewish practices, such as circumcision, the sabbath and dietary laws. They have their own translation of the Old Testament. In 1975 the Ethiopian **Jews** were recognised by Israeli law. Between 1977 and 1984 approximately 8,000 **Jews** were brought by covert action from Ethiopia to **Israel**. From November 1984 to January 1985 6,500 Ethiopian **Jews** were flown in secret by the Israelis from **Sudan** to **Israel**, an airlift called Operation Moses. A follow-up mission that year, called Operation Joshua and sponsored by the

CIA, brought another 800 Ethiopian Jews to Israel. In May 1991, 14,324 Jews were rescued in Operation Solomon in the space of thirty-six hours, with Israel using thirty-four El Al jets during the operation.

In the Old Testament the name 'Ethiopia' translates the word **Cush**, and this relates primarily to the country today known as **Sudan**. This is clearly seen in Daniel 11, for example, where "Ethiopia" is said to border **Egypt** (v. 43). A prophecy of particular relevance to modern-day Ethiopia may be Zephaniah 3:10: "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My suppliants, even the daughter of My dispersed, shall bring Mine offering". If "Ethiopia" is taken as referring to **Sudan** then the immediate area "beyond the rivers of Ethiopia [that is, **Sudan**]" would be in modern-day Ethiopia. The Falasha Jews still present in Ethiopia at the return of Christ may be part of the "dispersed" of this prophecy.

- 1930 Haile Selassie becomes emperor
- 1935 Italy invades
- 1941 Haile Selassie resumes the throne
- 1974 Military junta overthrows Haile Selassie
- 1984-5 Operation Moses
- 1985 Operation Joshua
- 1991 Operation Solomon.

Euphrates

The source of the River Euphrates lies far to the north of **Israel**, in the modern country of **Turkey**. Around eighty-nine per cent of its water enters the river in **Turkey**. In Revelation this Turkish river is mentioned twice. In 9:14 it is the site where four angels were bound and then loosed. These represent four waves of attack which swept across the Euphrates westward against the Byzantine Empire: the Seljuks, the Mongols led by Ghengis Khan, the Mongols led by Timur, and the Ottomans, culminating in the fall of **Constantinople** at the hands of the Ottomans in 1453. The Ottoman Empire which developed held sway for several centuries. But in Revelation 16 the total end of this Euphratean power is predicted: "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the **kings of the east** might be prepared" (v. 12). The country of **Turkey** is the only remaining vestige of this once great empire (see map).

The city of **Babylon** was originally built on the Euphrates. The city was captured by the Persian Cyrus by redirecting the river's flow so that soldiers could enter the city via the riverbed: "... That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry



up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure” (Isa. 44:27,28). This provides a type for the last days. For many centuries the Ottoman Empire dominated the eastern **Mediterranean** and blocked the way between the Promised Land and **Rome**, the latter-day **Babylon**. The removal of this empire was an important part in the preparation of the nations for that time when Christ and the **saints** will set out from **Israel** to conquer **Europe**. They will march across the dry riverbed of the old Ottoman Empire and enter into the heart of spiritual **Babylon**. ([Refs. 10, 26](#))

Europe

Europe, although usually regarded as a separate continent, is essentially a peninsula of the Eurasian landmass. It is bounded on three sides by water: the Barents Sea and Arctic Ocean in the north, the Atlantic Ocean in the west and the **Mediterranean Sea** in the south. In the east the traditional boundary is taken as being the Ural Mountains, which run south through **Russia** from the Arctic Ocean to the Caspian Sea. However, this boundary is arbitrary and the Urals do not play a significant boundary role within **Russia**. The ‘boundary’ then runs westwards through the Caucasus Mountains and across the Black Sea.

Europe is better viewed, not geographically, but as a distinct cultural entity with its roots in the Roman, Greek and earlier empires of the past. The cultures of the former Greek and Roman empires were embedded into the European culture. The original Roman Empire included Europe, and the Romans in turn had been influenced by the Greeks and earlier empires. The Holy Roman Empire explicitly sought to imitate the original Roman Empire. From the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries the Renaissance cemented the link with the former empires still further. This cultural movement began in **Italy** and saw a revived interest in the classical literature of **Greece** and **Rome**. Europe was scoured for these works and copyists reproduced them. Pope Nicholas V (1397–1455) was a particularly keen sponsor of the Renaissance, and ensured that the Vatican played a prominent role in the movement. The Renaissance was the phase which saw the Europe of the Middle Ages develop into the Europe of modern times, a phase which involved drawing on the classical past, as well as developing humanism.

In many ways modern Europe is thus an amalgamation of previous empires. The word ‘Europe’ itself derives from Europa, a female character from Greek mythology. Bible prophecy emphasises this amalgamation. For example, in Revelation 13:2 the **beast** includes elements of a leopard, bear and lion. In Daniel 7 these represent **Greece**, Medo-Persia and **Babylon** respectively. In Daniel 2, as well as representing the separate empires, the **image** as a whole represents a power that will exist when Christ returns, complete with elements of bygone empires.

In Bible prophecy the ten **horns** represent the countries of Europe and the **beast** represents Europe as a whole. The European countries will unite together and give their “strength” to the European ideal (Rev. 17:13). They will have a unified approach and will oppose Christ at his return (v. 14). We can therefore expect a federal Europe to develop in which individual countries are prepared to sacrifice national privileges and identity in order that Europe as a whole is empowered. The development of the **European Union** since the Second World War has played a key role in this respect. ([Ref. 5](#))

European Union (EU)

The European Union (EU) is an organisation set up to facilitate economic and political cooperation between its members. It began with six countries, Belgium, **France**, **Germany**, **Italy**, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, forming the European Economic Community (EEC). The aim of the EEC was to abolish tariffs and trade restrictions between member countries. The treaties for this were signed in **Rome** in 1957 and they came into force in 1958.

By 1992, when the Treaty on the European Union (EU) was signed in Maastricht, the number of member states had increased to twelve. Following Maastricht the EEC became known as the EU.

The EU consists of three main so-called ‘pillars’: the European Community, the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and Justice and Home Affairs. The EU has five main objectives. It seeks to promote economic and social progress, assert the identity of the EU internationally, introduce European citizenship, develop an area of freedom, security and justice, and maintain and build on EU law. The executive body of the EU is the European Commission.

The difference between the EU and the EEC is that the EU is much more wide-ranging. It is concerned with further developing not only economic but also political union, not least through the European currency and the European Central Bank. It is also seeking to harmonise defence, foreign and social policies of member states. In Revelation 17 **Europe** as a whole is symbolised by the **beast of the abyss**, and the individual countries are symbolised by the ten **horns**. Of these **horns** it is written: "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength

unto the **beast**" (v. 13). The way in which member states are prepared to give up aspects of their autonomy for the furtherance of the EU is an initial fulfilment of this verse.

- **1957** Treaty of **Rome** signed
- **1958** EEC comes into being
- **1992** Treaty on the European Union signed in Maastricht
- **1993** Single European Market enters into force
- **1999** Euro launched.

F

False prophet

An example of a false prophet in the first century was Bar-jesus: "And when they had gone through the isle [Cyprus] unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus" (Acts 13:6). This false prophet was against the one faith: "But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith" (v. 8). The Apostle Paul was unequivocal in his condemnation of this false prophet: "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (v. 10).

By the time John wrote his first epistle there were many false prophets: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (4:1). In Revelation there is one false prophet in particular. A clue to the identity of this individual is given in the description of the final judgement: "And the **beast** was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the **beast**, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (19:20).

This verse shows that the false prophet is closely associated with the **beast**. The **beast** represents **Europe** dominated by the influence of **Rome**. The false prophet associated with **Rome** is the **papacy**. In 1 John 4:1 it says that the false prophets had "gone out". They went out from inside the ecclesia. Likewise the **papacy** can be

traced back to the ecclesia. A false prophet claims to be speaking from within the ecclesia when in fact he is without. As Paul said of the "**man of sin**", he would develop only after there had been a "falling away", that is, from the Truth (2 Thess. 2:3).

The false prophet is mentioned in Revelation 16: "And I saw three unclean spirits like **frogs** come out of the mouth of the **dragon**, and out of the mouth of the **beast**, and out of the mouth of the false prophet" (v. 13). The "unclean spirits like **frogs**" signify the humanistic teaching of the **papacy**, with roots going back to the teachings of the French Revolution. (**Refs. 1, 10, 26**)

France

During the twentieth century France suffered great loss to its empire and resources as a consequence of the two world wars, despite being on the victorious side on both occasions. Nevertheless, in recent years France has become one of the leading countries in **Europe**. It has sought to improve cooperation with **Germany**, and this has played a major part in the economic integration of **Europe**.

In Revelation 11 a specific reference to France is found, where it is identified as a "street" of Roman Catholic **Europe**: "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and **Egypt**, where also our Lord was crucified" (v. 8). Here the "great city" is **Rome** and the countries held in its thrall. The "dead bodies" refer to protestant groups such as the Huguenots, who were persecuted in France. At this time the Holy Roman Empire held sway, just as the original pagan