



Church of God-21st Century

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A Bitter Family Quarrel...

Solving the *Arab-Israeli* Impasse!

For over 50 years world leaders have encountered many *roadblocks* in their search for a solution to the *Arab-Israeli* problem. Why have they been unable to untangle this very knotty “Palestinian issue”? Does the Bible tell us what is really behind this bitter, yet very *ancient, family quarrel*?

by **Raymond F. McNair**

Since Israel’s birth in May 1948, world leaders have unsuccessfully searched for a *solution* to today’s Arab-Israeli *deadlock* in the Middle East. Regrettably, no proposed solution to this Arab-Israeli impasse has ever been successful! Britain failed to reconcile the differences between the Arabs and Jews when she ruled PALESTINE under a League of Nations mandate from 1922 until she dumped the vexatious *Palestinian problem* into the lap of the United Nations in mid-May 1948. Thus far, no one—neither America, nor the European Union, nor the United Nations—nor any other organization or nation has been successful in resolving the knotty “Palestinian issue.”

In an interview with CNN-TV news correspondent Wolf Blitzer on May 12, 2002, Yasir Arafat repeatedly declared that the Arabs and the Israelis are “cousins.” When asked *if* he would be willing to state publicly that he would welcome a “Jewish state” alongside a “Palestinian state,” Mr. Arafat was *hesitant*, but finally stated that he *would* welcome a *Jewish State of Israel* existing side by side with the Palestinians in their own separate state. Are the Jews and Arabs really *cousins*? This study paper points out that, according to God’s Word, at least six different “families” of “Arab” peoples are *Semitic “cousins” of the Jews*: Those six ancient Semitic families of “Arab” peoples are as follows: *ISHMAELITES, Midianites, Moabites, Ammonites, EDOMITES* and *Amalekites*! The Bible also mentions some of the *ancient struggles* that arose among these related *Semitic peoples*.

It is impossible to understand end-time prophecies without having what Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong called the “vital key” to understanding those prophecies—by which he meant a correct understanding of the true *identity* of the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples as being the descendants of the ancient Patriarch ISRAEL. Likewise, it is impossible to understand certain important end-time

prophecies concerning the Middle East without having the “vital key” that unlocks the true *identity* of the modern-day descendants of the Patriarch ESAU, twin brother of Israel/Jacob. This paper gives biblical and historical proofs showing that today’s “Palestinians” comprise a portion of Esau’s (i.e. Edom’s) modern descendants. Therefore, Israelis and Palestinians are *Semitic cousins!*

Important Population Statistics

Important population figures for Jews and Arabs living in “Israel.” “People: *Population*: 6,433,000.... Ethnic groups: *Jewish* 80%, *Arab* and other 20% (*The World Almanac*, 2004 edition, “Israel”). The JEWS of Israel are supported by approximately 10 million Jews (the *Diaspora*) living *outside* of Israel. And they are staunchly supported by the U.S. There are only about 15,000,000 Jews in the world. America—and to a lesser extent, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand—is one of the comparatively few nations that support the Israeli cause. In May 2002 both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives voted to express America’s solid support for the beleaguered State of Israel.

Palestinians scattered throughout the world. Palestinians living in various nations outside of “Palestine” are as follows: Jordan (2,405,142), Lebanon (443,088), Syria (481,029), Egypt (49,874), Saudi Arabia & the Persian Gulf States (425,004), Iraq (51,500), miscellaneous other *Arab countries* (30,600), the United States (206,641), other *non-Arab countries* (4,692). In addition, Palestinians live in the West Bank (1,873,476), Gaza Strip (1,022,207), and in the Israeli “occupied territories” (953,497). (Source for above population figures: *PCBS, Population, Housing and Establishment Census, Dec. 1997; Pop. Statistics, 1999.*)

The Palestinians (with a worldwide population of about 8.4 million) call themselves “Arabs,” and are supported by 22 *Arab nations* having a combined population of about 280,000,000, nearly all of whom are *ethnic Arabs*. They are also supported by most of the world’s 1.2 billion *Muslims*, and have the moral support of most of the nearly 200 *nations* of this earth, having a worldwide population of over 6 billion. Most of the Palestinians are *Muslims* and call themselves “Arabs.” [Note. The Arabs’ *religion* (most *Palestinian* are *Arabs*, and the *majority* of them are *Muslims*), their *culture*, civic and social *institutions*, their *judicial system* and their *standard of living* are drastically *different* from that of the Jews, whose culture and democratic government *is similar to that of the nations of the Western world*. This helps to explain the giant chasm between the *Palestinians*, and their *Arab-Muslim* supporters in the “Third World,” and the *Israelis*, whose supporters are mainly the English-speaking, democratic, Christian nations of the Western world.]

I. Major Issues Preventing *Mideast Peace!*

Many have asked, “Why is this bitter Arab-Israel dispute so difficult to resolve?” The nations have found it impossible to solve this bitter dispute, partly because they utterly fail to believe God’s Word which tells us precisely what is behind this stubborn *Mideast impasse*. Furthermore, the Bible tells us that no man, nation, or organization (such as the *U.S.*, *U.K.*, *U.N.* or the *E.U.*) will be able to solve this bitter Mideast impasse (Zech. 12:1-3). Only the Prince of Peace (Isa. 2:1-5; 6:6-7) can show the nations the way out of this bitter dispute, which threatens to ignite World War III (Matt. 24:21-22)!

What, then, are the MAJOR ISSUES wrapped up in this intractable dispute? Is the real problem a matter of *religious differences* between Arabs and Israelis? Are *racial tensions* between

Jews and Arabs the main source of the problem? Or, is the main issue rooted in a bitter dispute over *land ownership*—concerning whether God promised the “Promised Land” to the people of Israel, or to the Arab peoples? This includes the bitter dispute over *who* should exercise *political control over the city of Jerusalem*, which is holy to *Jews, Christians and Arabs*—who call it *El Kuds*, meaning “Holy Town.” But, according to the Bible, who are the *rightful inheritors* of the *Holy Land*? Do the *roots* of this Arab-Israeli *dispute* over Palestine go back over 3,500 years to a number of bitter family quarrels that happened in the 1800s-1700s BC—events that are still remembered, and bitterly resented by some Arabs and Jews?

Meaning of the Name “PALESTINE”

Where did the name “Palestine” originate? What does it mean? “PALESTINA and PALESTINE (*land of strangers*). These two forms occur in the *Authorized Version* but four times in all... [as] ‘Philistia’ or ‘Philistines.’ Palestine in the *AV* really means nothing but *Philistia*. The Hebrews signified merely the *long and broad strip of maritime plain* [the ‘Gaza Strip’] inhabited by their encroaching neighbors [the Philistines].... As lying next [to] the sea, and as being also the high road from Egypt to *Phoenicia* and the richer regions north of it, the *Philistine plain* became sooner known to the Western world than the country farther inland, and was called by them *Syria Palestina*—*Philistine Syria*. From thence it was gradually extended to the country farther inland, till in the Roman and later Greek authors... it became the usual appellation for the *whole country* of the Jews, both west [i.e. ‘West Bank’] and east [‘East Bank’] of JORDAN [River].

“The word is *not* so commonly employed in our more familiar language to designate the *whole country of Israel* [as] a general description of the HOLY LAND.... 1. During the patriarchal period, the conquest and the age of the judges [it was called] ‘Canaan,’ or more frequently ‘the land of Canaan,’ meaning thereby the country *west* of the Jordan, as opposed to ‘the land of Gilead,’ on the *east*. 2. During the monarchy the name usually... employed is ‘land of Israel’ ... 3. Between the captivity and the time of our Lord the name ‘JUDEA’ had extended itself from the southern portion to the whole of the country, and even that *beyond* the Jordan.... 4. The Roman division of the country hardly coincided with the biblical one, and it does *not* appear that the Romans had any distinct name for that which we understand by PALESTINE. 5. Soon after the *Christian era* we find the name PALESTINA in possession of the country. 6. The name most frequently used throughout the MIDDLE AGES, and down to our own time, is *Terra Sancta*—HOLY LAND” (*Smith’s Bible Dictionary*, pp. 474-475).

[Note. Does the Bible ever refer to the land that God promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as “Palestine?” The Bible often calls that land the “land of Israel” (Ezek. 21:2-3; Matt. 2:20—21). Today’s Israelis and *Diaspora Jews* strongly object to calling their ancient homeland “Palestine.” In ancient times the *Philistines* (in the Gaza Strip) were one of Israel’s bitterest enemies. Modern Israelis (and also the Jews of the *Diaspora*) call their country *erets Israel*, the “land of ISRAEL.” Today’s “Palestinian” Arabs have *adopted* the name of the ancient “Philistines,” but this does *not* mean that *most* of them are descendants of the *Philistines*, who were closely related to the Egyptians, both being descendants of “Ham” (Gen. 10:13-14). The Philistines are first mentioned in Genesis 10:14. “MIZRAIM begot... *Casluhim* (from whom came the PHILISTINES...)” (v. 14). The Egyptians have descended from MIZRAIM (v. 13). The Philistines’ homeland always consisted of only a small strip of land on the Southeastern coast of the Mediterranean. That is where they still live—in the land called the “GAZA STRIP.” They were a fierce and warlike people who afflicted Israel from the time of the later Judges until the time of King Saul and King David, who finally subdued them (see Joshua, Judges and 1 Samuel). There is nothing to indicate that the Philistines (either anciently or in modern times) were numerous as a people! As this study paper proves elsewhere, the bulk of modern “Palestinians” are descendants of the EDOMITES who formerly lived on the southern border of Judea, and later moved *north* into the more fertile lands of *Judea* and

Samaria—subsequent to the captivity of the Jews in 586BC, and more importantly, *after* the Roman captivity of the Jews during the Roman-Jewish war of 66-70AD.]

The Bible reveals that the real *roots* of today's *Mideast impasse* go back to a number of old *family quarrels*—some of which reach back over 3,500 years into ancient history! The account of these *ancient squabbles* is faithfully recorded in the Word of God. Yet many students of the Bible have themselves somehow failed to see that the Bible alone gives us both the *historical facts* behind the “Palestinian problem,” as well as the real *solution* to this “running sore,” which no one seems able to heal. When we seek the answers to the *prickly Palestinian issue* in God's Word, only then will we discover the true *roots* of the deep-seated *bitterness* of this ancient struggle between the descendants of the Patriarch Abraham, whose blood now flows in the veins of both *Jews* and *Arabs*.

Both Jews and Arabs Are Semites

Who are the “Jews” and the “Arabs”? Historians generally realize that both Jews and Arabs are blood relatives—both being Semites. But who are the “Semites”? Exactly where do they appear in the great “Table of Nations,” given to us by the Prophet Moses in Genesis 10 (see ADDENDA)?

It is not possible to fully understand the real roots to today's Mideast impasse, without looking at both *biblical* and *secular* history. Since *biblical history* antedates any credible accounts found in our secular history books, we are forced to go back to the world's perennial “Best Seller”—the Bible—for solid answers to today's deadlock between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East. The Hebrew Scriptures explain the great *family tree of all nations* which shows that all of today's *6 billion* humans descended from Noah and his three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth (see Gen. 10:1-32). The “Table of Nations” lists *Noah's three sons* (along with all of their grandsons): “Japheth...[and] Ham [and] Shem.... These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood” (v. 32, cf. Deut. 32:8-0). Shem is the ancestor of the Semitic peoples: Hebrews/Jews, Arabs, Phoenicians, Akkadians, etc.

Ever since the *Palestinian problem* thrust itself on the world stage in the late 1940s, that ancient dispute over the world's most-fought-over land has often been *front page news*. Hardly a single year went by during the last 55 years when world leaders did not need to concern themselves with this thorny, intractable “Palestinian problem.”

Furthermore, many world leaders (both *political* and *religious*) look upon the *Palestinian problem* as the most likely *fuse* that could ignite World War III, with its accompanying horrific *chemical, biological* and *NUCLEAR weapons*, which could wipe out whole populations and usher in a new Dark Age that could make the Dark Ages (from 476AD to about 1000AD) seem tame by comparison. Many people believed Saddam Hussein was working feverishly on the development of chemical, biological, and *nuclear* weapons. Israel is reported to have between 100 and 200 NUCLEAR WEAPONS! The Mideast is truly becoming heavily armed, and this volatile area could be the *trigger* that starts World War III!

The Hebrew prophets were inspired to write down a number of *startling prophecies* concerning horrific end-time wars between various peoples living in the Mideast. Those prophecies focus on the nation of “ISRAEL” with its capital city of *Jerusalem*. In fact, when the Bible speaks of *north, south, east* or *west*, it gives directions from the central focal point of JERUSALEM. The Middle East, with *Jerusalem* at the center, is at the convergence of three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa!

The Prophet Zechariah prophesied that *all the nations* that would get deeply involved in the “Jerusalem problem” would be hurt in the process. In the N.T., both *Jesus Christ* (in Matt. 24 & Luke

21) and the *Apostle John* (in Revelation) give us important prophetic details concerning end-time events to occur in the Middle East in the near future. Great Britain was the first great modern nation to find itself embroiled in the Mideast cauldron—trying to solve the difficult problem of how to settle the “Palestinian issue” in a way that would please both Jews and Arabs. *When* did Britain first become enmeshed in the quagmire of Middle East politics?

II. How Did Britain Become Involved in the Vexing “Palestinian Problem”?

The Famous BALFOUR DECLARATION. During WW I British forces, under Field Marshal Sir Edmund Allenby, drove the Muslim *Turks* out of PALESTINE. Allenby’s army captured Jerusalem in 1917, and before the end of 1918 the British had conquered all of Palestine. On November 2, 1917, the British foreign secretary, Arthur James Balfour, wrote a letter to Lord Rothschild in which he declared that “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the *establishment in PALESTINE of a NATIONAL HOME for the JEWISH PEOPLE*, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the *civil and religious* rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.” Unfortunately, British officials had made certain *contradictory promises* to both *Jews* and *Arabs*. This later led to a serious *clash of Israeli-Palestinian interests* which came to known as the “Palestine problem.”

Then, following the formation of the League of Nations in 1919, Britain was given a League of Nations *mandate* to govern “*Palestine*” (the land now called “*Israel*” and “*Jordan*”) in 1922! But the British soon learned that they could please neither Arabs nor Jews. The Arabs were adamant in their *opposition* to the Jews being granted their own State on Palestine’s West Bank (i.e. in *Judea* and *Samaria*); and the Jews were equally determined to *build* their own nation on the West Bank. What was Palestine’s population when Britain occupied it during the First World War? “The *population of Palestine*, predominantly agricultural, was about 690,000 in 1914 (535,000 *Muslims*; 70,000 *Christians*, most of whom were *Arabs*; and 85,000 *Jews*). Population decreased during the war” (*Encyc. Brit.*, 15th ed., vol. 25, “Palestine”). At that time, Muslims outnumbered Jews six to one. Immediately following WW II, a sharp increase in Jewish immigration to Palestine soon enabled the Jews to outnumber the Arabs—thus greatly alarming them.

Since Britain could please neither the Jews nor the Arabs, both the Israelis and the Arabs began attacking British forces in Palestine. Acts of terrorism were committed by both Arabs and Israelis—against the British and against each other. The blowing up of British military and government offices in Jerusalem is just one example of *Jewish opposition* to British policies by which Britain greatly restricted the number of Jews that were legally allowed to immigrate annually into Palestine. On July 22, 1946, Jewish underground forces in Palestine blew up part of the *King David Hotel* which contained British government and military offices. In that attack, 91 lives were lost. By 1947, the British had had enough.

In mid-May of 1948 Britain announced that she would turn the vexatious “Palestinian” problem over to the United Nations. After Britain dumped the “Palestinian problem” into the lap of the United Nations, the UN decided to PARTITION Palestine between a *Jewish State* and a *Palestinian State*, with JERUSALEM to become an “INTERNATIONAL CITY”—a holy city for Muslims, Jews and Christians. Britain, however, was about to learn an important lesson. As Zechariah 12 reveals, any

nation who becomes intricately involved in trying to untangle the “Jerusalem problem” will soon find that it is lifting a very “burdensome stone” which will prove injurious to handle (v. 1-3; cf. Prov. 26:27). Presently, top U.S. officials are trying to deal with this difficult problem. (In fact, some world statesmen are still pushing to have Jerusalem become an *international city*!)

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* describes what happened when British forces *withdrew* from Palestine: “On May 14 [1948] the last British high commissioner, General Sir Alan Cunningham [and the British forces], left Palestine. On the same day the State of Israel was proclaimed and within a few hours won de facto recognition from the U.S. Early on May 15, units of the regular armies of *Syria, Transjordan, Iraq, and Egypt* crossed the frontiers of Palestine. In a series of campaigns alternating with truces between May and December 1948, the Arab units were routed. In spite of bitter fighting in 1948 and 1949, by the summer of that year Israel had concluded armistices with its neighbors. It had also been *recognized* by more than 50 governments throughout the world, had joined the United Nations, and had established its sovereignty over about 8,000 square miles of mandated Palestine West of the Jordan River. The remaining 2,000 squares miles were divided between *Transjordan* and Egypt. *Transjordan* [“Jordan”] retained the lands on the WEST BANK of the Jordan River, including East Jerusalem, which were all formally *annexed* in 1950. The name of the expanded country was changed to the *Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan* [i.e. “Jordan”]. Egypt retained control of, but *did not annex*, the GAZA STRIP. ‘Palestine’ ceased to exist” (15th ed., vol. 25, p. 421). During the 1948-49 Arab-Israeli war, Jordan, Egypt and Israel had all occupied various parts of Palestine which the United Nations had *assigned* to become “Palestine” in 1947.

III. U.S. Presidents Struggle with the Thorny “Palestinian Issue”

All U.S. presidents have been compelled to address the “Palestinian issue” since the United Nations decided in 1947 to *partition Palestine*, thereby creating two states (*Israel* and *Palestine*).

President Harry S. Truman, acting on behalf of the U.S., was quick to take the initiative in May 1948, when he directed the U.S. Government to recognize the State of Israel—only hours after the Jews had declared the State of Israel to be a new nation. The United Nations, Russia, Britain, France and about 50 other nations followed the U.S. lead by recognizing the State of Israel. Unfortunately, at that time, none of the Arab nations was willing to recognize Israel. Instead, they immediately sent their armies across the UN-designated borders of Israel, forcing that nation into an unwanted war. After months of bitter fighting the Israelis won that war, and signed an *armistice* with the Arab nations who had attacked her. It was during the war of 1948-1949 that many Palestinians fled into *Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt*, and other Arab nations as *Palestinian refugees*. In October 1973, President Richard M. Nixon had to authorize a massive U.S. airlift of planes, tanks, guns, and other war materiel to re-supply the Israeli forces which were in danger of being overrun by the combined forces of Egypt and Syria in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. After being re-supplied by the U.S., Israeli forces pushed the Egyptians back across the Suez Canal and drove the Syrians back well into Syrian territory adjacent to Israel’s northern border. Again, Israel won that war—her *fourth war* with the Arabs in modern time, and has retained control over the Gaza Strip and Syria’s Golan Heights ever since the Six-day War of 1967!

And President Jimmy Carter grimly stated, “The Middle East is perhaps the *most volatile* and coveted region in the world, one whose instability is almost certainly the greatest *threat* to world peace” (*The Blood of Abraham*, 1993, p. 4). President Carter also stated that “the basic cause of

continuing *bloodshed* in the region is the *struggle for land*” (p. 10). He also explained that “the Arab-Israeli conflict is a struggle between *two national identities* for control of territory” (p. 106)! Which “*two national identities*” did he refer to? He was speaking of “the *brotherhood of Arab and Jew* and how they are both the sons of Abraham”—both sharing “the blood of Abraham” (pp. 4-5). Mr. Carter then said, “The Palestinians are convinced that all the Arab-Israeli wars have boiled up out of the PALESTINIAN PROBLEM—in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973 and the Lebanese invasions of 1978 and 1982—and...the civil wars of 1970 in *Jordan* and 1975 in Lebanon..... [They] see the restoration of Palestinian rights as the *key to regional tranquility* and, under some circumstances, even of *world peace*” (p. 120).

More recently, President Ronald Reagan, while wrestling with the thorny Arab-Israeli problem, said: “Tragic turmoil in the Middle East runs back to the dawn of history. In our modern day, conflict after conflict has taken its brutal toll there. In an age of nuclear challenge and economic interdependence, such conflicts are a *threat* to all people of the world, not just the Middle East itself. It is time for us all...to call a halt to *conflict, hatred and prejudice*” (President Reagan address, Sept. 2, 1982). President Bill Clinton spent a great deal of time, especially during the last few years of his presidency, wrestling with what President Carter called “the Palestinian problem.” Israel’s Prime Minister Barak, Yasir Arafat and President Clinton spent many days closeted at the presidential retreat at Camp David—in a futile attempt to find a solution to this problem. In fact, the last president to *fail* in his attempt to untie the Mideast’s “Gordian knot” was President Bill Clinton. He spent much time, energy and “political capital” in a vain attempt to bring the Palestinians and Israelis together, so they could conclude an amicable *peace agreement* to end their decades-long *impasse*. After many days at Camp David in an attempt to reach a settlement, all parties called off the talks, declaring that they had reached a *stalemate*.

When George W. Bush became President in January 2001, he fully realized that President Clinton had spent much “political capital” in a vain attempt to help the Israelis and Arabs reach a satisfactory agreement on this difficult Palestinian issue. Mr. Bush was determined *not* to have a repeat of his predecessor’s failed attempt to settle the *Arab-Israeli dispute*. He believed he could put the *boiling Mideast pot* on the *back burner*. Unfortunately, subsequent continued violence in the Middle East forced President Bush and his Cabinet to divert much of their attention from the *war-on-terrorism effort* to the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East. Mr. Bush has repeatedly stated that the United States will *not* allow Israel’s neighbors to “crush” that tiny state! Thus far, President Bush and his Cabinet, like many before them, have been very frustrated in their futile attempts to bring the warring parties to the peace table. Bible prophecy reveals that this Arab-Israeli *impasse* will continue until the entire Middle East eventually *explodes* in a horrific conflict that will eventually terminate in what some mistakenly call the “Battle of Armageddon” (Rev. 16), but which will be the final “Battle of Jerusalem” in which God Almighty will Himself step in and determine its outcome (Zech. 14; Rev. 19:11-21; Joel 3:9-21).

IV. Abraham—Father of *Arabs* and *Jews*

It is generally recognized that Abraham is the ancestor of the Jews. However, millions are not aware that he is also the father of the *ethnic Arabs*. The Patriarch Abraham had a *son, Ishmael*, by his wife’s handmaid, Hagar, an Egyptian. When *friction* later arose between Hagar and Abraham’s wife Sarah (Gen. 15), God told Abraham to do as his wife Sarah advised and send Hagar and her son away (Gen. 21:9-21). A clear grasp of the Arabs’ important role in *world history* is vital, if we are to understand how the ancient peoples mentioned in the Bible became *submerged* under the name of the

“Arabs,” after the *Arab conquests* in the 7th century, and we cannot really understand the Mideast impasse unless and until we first consider the *racial roots* of Israel’s Arab neighbors, including today’s Arabs and “Palestinians.” And we can only understand the *ethnic roots* of the various Arab peoples if we look to the rich historical information contained in the Hebrew Scriptures. God called Abraham out of the “land of the Chaldeans” (Acts 7:4), and told him to migrate to the “land of Canaan” (Gen. 12:1-5), and swore that Abraham’s descendants would possess it some 400 years later: “To your descendants I have given this land, from the *river of Egypt* to the great river, the *River Euphrates*” (Gen. 15:18)

Strife Erupts in Abraham’s Clan

Let us now diligently search the biblical record to see how Abraham’s descendants came into being. Then we will see how the ancient families that descended from Abraham (now known as *Arabs*) became totally *buried* under the process of ARABIZATION, which began in the 7th century, and has continued to this very day. Abraham’s nephew LOT, and his sons MOAB and AMMON, and their descendants, the *MOABITES* and *AMMONITES*, were *distant cousins* of the Israelites. Unfortunately, the *origins* of the descendants of those ancient peoples have also been *obscured* under the general name of “ARABS.” After the Arab conquest of the entire Middle East in the 7th century, the following ancient biblical peoples (*Ishmaelites, Midianites, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Amalekites*), lost their national identities. Note. “*Arabia* [means] ‘Arid’” (T. A. Bryant, *Today’s Dict. of the Bible*, 1982 ed., p. 45).

God called Abraham and his clan out of ancient land of Chaldea, and told Abraham that he was to go to a new land—the “land of Canaan” (Gen. 12). But not long after Abraham’s clan arrived in “Canaan,” discord reared its ugly head. The first account of *strife* arising in Abraham’s “clan” occurred when Lot’s herdsmen (Lot was his *nephew*) and Abraham’s herdsmen began to *quarrel*: “And there was *strife* between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock.... So Abram said to Lot, ‘Please let there be *no strife* between you and me...for we are brethren...’” (13:7-18). Abraham immediately took charge, and insisted that he and his nephew Lot and their households separate *peaceably*. Abraham asked Lot to choose which part of the land he would live in (vv. 8-12).

MOAB and AMMON—sons of the Ancient Patriarch LOT: Some few years after Abraham’s and his nephew Lot’s families had *separated*, Abraham learned that a *confederacy* of kings had taken his nephew Lot captive: “Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit...and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of *Damascus* [in present day Syria]. So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother [*nephew*] Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people” (14:14-16). [Note. Not long after Lot had been rescued by Abraham, Lot fathered *two sons*, *MOAB* and *AMMON* (19:20-38), whose descendants became known as *Moabites* and *Ammonites*. Hundreds of years later, numerous instances occurred in which the Moabites and Ammonites (although *cousins* of the Israelites) aggressively *attacked* the people of Israel. Furthermore various scriptures reveal that modern-day Moabites and Ammonites will display great hostility toward the Israelis at the close of this age (see Psa. 83:1-9).]

Furthermore, Bible prophecy reveals that descendants of *Moab* and *Ammon* still live in the Mideast—on the “East Bank” of the Jordan River—in the modern State of *Jordan*. Interestingly, the capital of Jordan is called “Amman,” after their ancestor “Ammon.” Clearly, *some* of today’s Jordanians (and other “Arabs” in the Mideast) are descendants of Lot’s two sons, Moab and Ammon (see Dan. 11:41). The *83rd Psalm* reveals that some of these descendants of Lot will join in an *unholy coalition* (a *Jihad*) against the people of Israel in the last days! Also take note of the fact that about 60 percent of today’s 5,153,378 Jordanians are Palestinians—who are descendants of Israel’s brother Esau (also known as *Edom*), father of the O.T. *Edomites* (Gen. 36:9; 43), and *Amalakites*, but

by N.T. times they were known as IDUMAEANS (Mark 3:8; cf. Isa 34:5-6; Ezek. 35:15). The N.T. Herodian kings were also of *Idumaeen descent*. “The father of Herod the Great was named Antipater. He was of *Idumaeen blood*. The IDUMAEANS were of the Edomite stock, the descendants from Esau” (*Unger’s Bib. Dict*, 3rd ed., “Herod”). Herod tried to kill Christ, and his son, Herod Antipas, beheaded John the Baptist (Matt. 14:3-12). Further, another of the Herods “killed James the brother of John with the sword” (Acts. 12:1-2).

Abraham—Ancestor of Today’s *Ethnic* “ARABS”

Ethnic Arabs are Arabs by blood, all of them being the descendants of the Patriarch Abraham. Non-ethnic Arabs are those “Arabs” who have become Arabs through the process of ARABIZATION. They have become Arabs by adopting the *language, culture and religion (Islam)* of their Arab masters, following the Arab conquests of the centuries immediately following Mohammed’s death in 632AD. *Ethnic Arabs* include the following ancient peoples, all of whom can trace their descent in the Bible all the way back to ABRAHAM: Ishmaelites-Hagarites, Midianites, Edomites-Amalekites, Moabites-Ammonites. After the Arab conquest these ancient related peoples’ identities all became *submerged and hidden* under the general name of “ARABS”!

Today it is generally recognized that Abraham is the father of the “Jews.” However, many, even among Bible students, fail to recognize that Abraham is also the father of numerous other peoples now living in the Middle East. In fact, most of the Middle Eastern peoples known as “Arabs” are related to the Jews through their common father ABRAHAM. The majority of these *ethnic Arabs* have descended from Abraham through his *firstborn son*, ISHMAEL, whose mother was Sarah’s handmaid, Hagar (Gen. 16:16). Several other branches of these ethnic Arabs (such as the *MIDIANITES*) are also descendants of Abraham’s and his second wife Keturah (Gen. 25:1-4). Still other “Arabs” have descended from various *unnamed* “sons of the concubines” which Abraham had (vv. 5-6). Let us examine certain interesting details of *Abraham’s extended family*, so we can get a clearer picture of why, for thousands of years, there has been so much *strife* between the people of *Israel* and the *Arabs*. All of these peoples (Ishmaelites, Edomites, Moabites, Midianites, etc.) were known by their own ancestral names until after the Arab conquest in the 7th century A.D. Once they had all become “Arabized,” they eventually lost their own identity, and thereafter were called “Arabs.”

A Bitter Rift in Abraham’s Family

Modern Arabs readily admit that they are Abraham’s descendants. Today there are 22 “Arab” nations, consisting primarily of numerous *relatives* of Abraham’s firstborn son *Ishmael*. In fact most of the true *ethnic Arabs* (Arabs by *blood*, not *merely* “Arabs” by *language or culture*), look to *Abraham* as their ancestor. Abraham’s wife Sarah was barren, so Sarah persuaded her husband to have a child by her handmaid Hagar (Gen. 16:1-16). After Abraham and Sarah agreed to send Hagar away, before she gave birth to her child Ishmael, an angel told Hagar, “Behold, you are with child, and you shall bear a son. You shall call his name ISHMAEL.... He shall be A WILD MAN; His hand shall be against every man, and every man’s hand against him” (16:11-12). “Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore *Ishmael* to Abram” (v. 16). [Note. It is interesting to note that, until recent times, the Arabs have been known as *Bedouin* (Arabic *desert dwellers*), who lived off the harsh lands in the deserts of the *Arabian Peninsula*. For thousands of years many of these *Bedouin* continued to live as tent-dwelling nomads. It was only after *rich oil reserves* were discovered and marketed (mostly by the *U.S.* and *British* help) that the Arab nations really began to experience a certain amount of *prosperity*. Only then have they been able to enjoy many of the luxuries of the Western style of life.] Not long after Ishmael’s birth, the LORD granted Abraham and Sarah a child named *ISAAC*, whom God said would become Abraham’s heir—rather than *Ishmael*, who had been born of Sarah’s handmaid (17:16-21). But God assured Abraham, “And as for ISHMAEL [Heb. *God hears*] I have *heard you*. Behold, I have blessed him, and I will make him fruitful, and will multiply him

exceedingly. He shall beget *twelve princes*, and I will make him a GREAT NATION. But My covenant I will establish with ISAAC, whom Sarah shall bear unto you..." (17:20-21).

Note. After bitter *contention* had arisen between Hagar and Sarah, Abraham reluctantly sent Hagar and *Ishmael* (Heb. *God hears*) away, and they "wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba" until they ran out of water, whereupon Hagar (and apparently, *Ishmael*) began weeping. But "an angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, 'What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has *heard* the voice of *the lad* where he is...for I will make him A GREAT NATION.' Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water....So God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer...and his mother took a WIFE for him from the land of EGYPT" (21:14-21). Note. This means that *ethnic Arabs* are descendants of *Abraham* and *Hagar* (who was an *Egyptian*). Furthermore since *Ishmael* married an Egyptian wife, this would mean his *twelve sons* (i.e. "twelve princes," Gen. 25:16) were three-fourths Egyptian. Therefore, *ethnic Arabs* are closely related to the Egyptians! This explains why *Arabs* and *Egyptians* have gotten along fairly well down through the centuries, except for the past *100 years!*

It would appear that ever since the lifetime of ISHMAEL, he, and later, his descendants, *resented* the fact that their father Abraham had sent their ancestors (*Hagar* and her son *Ishmael*) away, thereby excluding *Ishmael* from receiving the *inheritance* that normally went to a *firstborn* son. The Bible and secular history both reveal that there have been numerous occasions when the descendants of Abraham's sons (*Isaac* and *Ishmael*) fought tragic wars. *Strife* still continues between modern *Israelis* and *Arabs* some of whom, to this very day, believe their ancestor *Ishmael* should have been the true inheritor of Abraham's blessings. Even though a few *Ishmaelites* now live in Palestine, most of them live either in the Arabian Peninsula (in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Yemen), or in the Arab States in the Persian Gulf: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. We shall later see that the "core" peoples who comprise modern *PALESTINIANS* have *not* descended from Abraham's son *ISHMAEL*, but have, in fact, descended from Abraham's *grandson ESAU* (or *EDOM*), father of the *EDOMITES!*

And God promised Hagar: "Arise, lift up the lad [*Ishmael*]...for I will make him a GREAT NATION" (Gen. 21:18). God had previously given Abraham a similar promise, "Behold I have blessed him [*Ishmael*], and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget TWELVE PRINCES, and I will make him a *great nation*" (17:20). It is a well-known fact that, like the Jews, many of today's *Arabs* acknowledge that they are also the descendants of Abraham, and that their mother was HAGAR, whose son was ISHMAEL, while ISAAC'S mother was SARAH. History reveals that, between 622 and 732AD, the Arab armies of Mohammed and his successors (comprised primarily of *Ishmaelites*) conquered Arabia, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Palestine, Egypt and all of North Africa, Spain and Portugal—and subdued all of the land from Iran eastward through Afghanistan and Northwest India (now known as Pakistan).

Nelson's *Illustrated Bible Dictionary* makes these interesting comments concerning the *Arabs*: "The people who lived in ARABIA included...the sons of *Abraham* and *Keturah* (Gen. 25:1-6), and *Esau* (Gen. 36). The 'country of the east' (Gen. 25:6) is probably a reference to ARABIA [i.e. the *ISHMAELITES*]" (p. 81). "After Hagar learned that she was pregnant, she grew *proud* and began to *despise Sarah*. Sarah complained to Abraham, who allowed her to discipline Hagar" (ibid. p. 517). "When Abraham died, *Ishmael* returned from exile to help *Isaac* with the burial (Gen. 25:9). As God promised, *Ishmael* became the father of 12 princes (Gen. 25:16), as well as a daughter, *Mahalath*, who later married *ESAU*, son of *Isaac* (Gen. 28:9).... *ISHMAEL* was the father of the *ISHMAELITES*, a nomadic nation which lived in *northern ARABIA*. *Modern-day Arabs claim descent from ISHMAEL*" (ibid. p. 518).

"*ISHMAELITES*—descendants of *ISHMAEL*, Abraham's first son. His mother was Sarah's Egyptian servant, *Hagar*.... The *Ishmaelites* like the *Israelites*... were divided into 12 tribes (Gen.

25:16). Out of respect for Abraham, God made a great nation of the *Ishmaelites*... (Gen. 21:12-13). *Ishmael's 12 sons had many descendants who lived as nomads in the deserts of NORTHERN ARABIA*. The O.T. eventually used the term *Ishmaelite* in a broader sense, referring to all the Arabian merchants (Is. 13:20; Ezek. 27:20-21)... This wider use of *Ishmaelites* is illustrated by an event in the life of Joseph. His older brothers sold him to some caravan traders who were called 'a company of *Ishmaelites*' (Gen. 37:25) as well as 'Midianite' traders (37:28). They were probably a minor clan of the larger *Ishmaelite* tribe. *MOHAMMED claimed ISHMAEL as his ancestor, as do most ARABS*" (*Illustr. Bib. Dict.*, 1986 ed., p. 518)!

History Clearly Identifies the Modern "ISHMAELITES"!

Let us consider a number of "Arab" peoples who, according to the Bible, are blood brothers of the *ISRAELIS: Ishmaelite/Hagarenes, Edomites/Amalekites, Moabites/Ammonites* and *Midianites*. We shall first consider the *ISHMAELITE* "Arabs." The *World Book Encyclopedia* says, "*ISHMAEL* was the elder son of Abraham in the Bible. Ishmael's mother was HAGAR, an Egyptian serving-maid... He [Ishmael] is honored by the Arabs, along with Abraham, as their ancestor" (1972 ed., vol. 10). Further, *Collier's Encyclopedia* states, "*Ishmael* was banished from Abraham's house together with his mother [*Hagar*]... *Ishmael* is the traditional ancestor of the Arab peoples" (1959 ed, vol. 11).

The World's Religions says this regarding *Muslim's pilgrimage* visit (*haijj*) to the black *Ka'aba* stone in Mecca, Arabia: "The pilgrimage begins on the first day at Mecca when the pilgrim walks seven times around the *Ka'aba* (1). Next, the pilgrim runs seven times between two small hills...now enclosed and joined by a walkway (2) it was close to here that *Abraham* was ordered by God to leave his wife *Hagar* and his son *ISHMAEL* and where, in her desperate search for water, *Hagar* ran furiously up and down the hills until she discovered the well of *Zamzam* nearby.... The *haijj* ends with the festival of the sacrifice...when a sheep, goat, cow, or *camel* is sacrificed in remembrance of *Abraham's faith* and obedience when he was told by God first to *sacrifice his son—who, according to Muslims, was ISHMAEL, not ISAAC...*" (Dr. Peter B. Clarke, 1993 ed., p. 89). [Note. The Bible reveals that God commanded Abraham to go to *Mt. Moriah* [at Jerusalem] to offer up *Isaac* (not *Ishmael!*), some time *after* *Hagar* had been sent away into the "Wilderness of Beersheba," in what was later called *Palestine* (Gen. 22:1-18). That event did not take place at Mecca in Saudi Arabia, as the Arabs believe. Today's Arabs don't like to consider their ancestor *Ishmael* as being inferior to Abraham's son *Isaac*, ancestor of the *Israelis*. In the above quote, mention was made of Arabs/Muslims sacrificing a "camel" in connection with their religious devotions at Mecca. But God's people, *Israel*, were expressly *forbidden* to eat or sacrifice *camels* because they were considered "unclean" (Lev. 11:14; Deut. 14:7). Thus it clear that though the Muslims believe in one God, as do the Jews, they have many different customs and laws that they follow. One big difference is their observance is the 6th day (Friday) as their Sabbath, whereas the Jews observe the 7th day.]

Time Inc. published *The World's Great Religions* in 1957, in which we read: "Starting at the Black Stone [the *Kaaba* in Mecca], the pilgrims run around the building three times quickly and four times slowly, pausing on each circuit to kiss the meteorite.... Next comes the Lesser Pilgrimage, in which the pilgrims must trot seven times across the valley between the low hills, *Safa* and *Marwa*, in commemoration of *Hagar's frantic search for water* for her infant son *ISHMAEL*" (p. 105). This book of "Great Religions" then gives the facts concerning Abraham sending *Hagar* and *Ishmael* away (Gen. 21:1-21). We are told that Ishmael's "mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt" (v. 21). This explains why the *Arabs* have been rather close to the *Egyptians* during certain periods of Arab history. Modern Arabs, including the *Egyptians*, have been very supportive of the *Palestinians'* claim that they are the rightful possessors of the West Bank (formerly called "Palestine"). Many Arabs want to deny that the people of *Israel* (the *Jews* in particular) have lived continuously in "Palestine" for over 3000 years!

Who Were the “Nabateans”?

The *NABATEANS*, as well as the prophet Mohammed, were ethnic Arabs: “ISHMAELITE.... A descendant of ISHMAEL, the son of Abraham and Hagar, whom Abraham sent away into the desert after the birth of Isaac (Gen. 21:14-21). The twelve sons of Ishmael and his Egyptian wife became princes and progenitors of [twelve] tribes. They lived in camps in the desert of *NORTHERN ARABIA*, though occasionally some of them, such as the NABATEANS, settled down. Mostly, however, they lived like *Ishmael*, ‘a wild man’ of the desert (16:12);... All Arabs, following Muhammad’s example, claim descent from ISHMAEL” (*The New Intern. Dict. of the Bible*, 1987 ed., p. 475).

The Erdman’s Bible Dictionary says this concerning the Nabateans: “NABATEANS.... An originally nomadic South Semitic people who settled in southwestern Transjordan in the fourth century B.C.... Archaeological evidence from the region some 460 km. (285 mi.) southeast of PETRA suggests that the Nabateans were originally from northwest Arabia. Which is the exact sequence of events remains a mystery, by the second century the Nabateans apparently had made the transition to sedentary life. They controlled Edomite and Moabite territories and the important international trade routes to Arabia, Egypt, Damascus.... Their capital Petra (“the rock”) is situated in the *Wadi Musa* (valley of Moses”) some 80 km. (50 mi.) south of the Dead Sea.... The Herodian dynasty was of Nabatean origin.... In A.D. 106 [the Roman Emperor] Trajan seized Nabatean territory and incorporated it into the province of Arabia” (1987 ed.).

The descendants of Abraham’s *sons*—whom he “sent...*eastward*, away from Isaac his son, to the *country of the east*”—into the Arabian Peninsula, *east* of Palestine—must have heard their ancestors tell sad stories of Abraham sending all of Isaac’s half-brothers away *eastward into Arabia* shortly before his death, after having given “all that he had unto *Isaac*” (Gen. 25:5-6).

What political situation in the Mideast allowed the children of EDOM to move up from the south (called ARABAH) into the more “lush” lands of southern Judah? The Reader’s Digest *Atlas of the Bible* explains how this came about: “To the east, in what had been Edom, people from Northwest Arabia were establishing themselves. Later known as NABATAEANS, they would become one of the great commercial peoples of antiquity.... The Babylonian invasions of the 6th century [c. 586BC] had destroyed effective government in Edom and Moab and allowed these desert nomads to infiltrate and eventually rule an area from southern Syria to Edom as well as much of the Negeb and even western Sinai. From Petra the NABATAEANS eventually controlled the King’s Highway as well as the east-west caravan routes from Arabia through Ezion-Geber to Gaza and Egypt. The heyday of these people would come later, but already they were driving the *Edomites* (later known as IDUMEANS) into the Negeb and what had been SOUTHERN JUDAH. Settling in the desert south of Beer-sheba, the Edomites established themselves in the relatively lush tableland and hills around HEBRON, which became one of their chief cities” (*Atlas of the Bible*, 1981 ed., p. 150). The *Nabataeans* were a branch of *Ishmaelites*, later known as “Arabs.” (*Ishmael* was Abraham’s eldest son, Gen. 16:11-16)

Today, There Are About 280 Million Arabs!

Who are the ancestors of today’s “Arabs”? God had promised that *Ishmael’s* descendants would become “a great nation” (Gen. 16:9; 17:20 21:18). What peoples or nations comprise Ishmael’s descendants today? “ARAB... a: a member of the *Semitic* peoples of the *Arabian Peninsula* [or] b: a member of an Arabic-speaking people” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed.). Some of the “Arabs” living in the 22 Arab nations of the modern world are “Arab” by *blood*, while others are “Arabs” by *language, culture* and *religion* (Islam). Ethnic Arabs live primarily in the countries of the Mideast, whereas some of the “Arabs” of Egypt and North Africa have little or no *Arab blood*. Today’s Arabs (approx. 280 million) only comprise about 23.4

percent of the world’s *1.2 billion Muslims*. Although there are *22 modern Arab nations*, most of today’s Arabs live in the following *17 Arab countries* (listed alphabetically):

Algeria.....	31,736,053
Bahrain.....	645,361
Egypt.....	69,536,644
Iraq.....	23,331,985
Jordan.....	5,153,378
Kuwait.....	2,041,961
Lebanon.....	3,627,774
Libya.....	5,240,599
Morocco.....	30,645,305
Oman.....	2,622,198
Qatar.....	769,152
Saudi Arabia.....	22,757,092
Sudan, Rep. of.....	36,080, 373
Syria.....	16,728,808
Tunisia.....	9,705,102
United Arab Emirates.....	<u>18,078,035</u>
<i>Total population of the major “Arab” nations...</i>	281,107,280

[Note. Most, but not all of, the 281,107,280 million inhabitants living in the *17 Arab nations* listed above are true *ethnic “Arabs.”* It is also true that millions of Arabs live in many other non-Arab nations of the world—countries that are *not* included in the above list of Arab nations.]

Arabs Acknowledge ISHMAEL as Their Ancestor!

But where did the “Arabs” originate? Who are they? “According to ancient tradition, the Arabs are originally descended from *two stocks*. Of these the *first* were believed to have originated in the uplands of the *southwest corner* [i.e. *YEMEN*] of the *Arabian Peninsula*, while the *second* or *northern group* were those located in *northern central ARABIA* and often alleged to be the descendents

of *ISHMAEL*, the son of *Abraham*. To this day almost every Arab tribe claims to be descended from one or other of these *two stocks*" (*Encyc. Brit.* 1970 ed., vol. 2, p. 170-172).

If the *northern Arabians* are, as they claim, descendants of *Ishmael*, son of Abraham—who, then, is the ancestor of the *southern Arabians*, who originated in the "southwest corner of the Arabian Peninsula" (modern *Yemen*). In fact, these people are relatives of Ishmael. As we shall later observe in this study paper, one of Abraham's grandsons was named Esau/Edom. Further, we are told that one of Esau's wives was a daughter of *Ishmael*. "Also Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac. So ESAU went to *Ishmael* and took Mahalath...to be his wife in addition to the [*Canaanite*] wives he had (Gen. 28:8-9). Esau had grieved his parents (Isaac and Rebecca) by taking *Canaanite wives* (27:46; 28:1-9). One of Esau's sons was called TEMAN whom some believe to be the father of the people of "Yemen." Esau's twelve sons included Reuel (ancestor of Moses' father-in-law), *Teman*, *Omar*, *Amalek*, *Bozrah*, *Hadad*—all of which names figure prominently in "Arab" history of the Middle East.]

Today, about 280 million ethnic Arabs now wield a power disproportionate to their numbers, because of their immense *oil wealth*. The U.S. gets about *half* of its oil from Arab states; but Western Europe is even more heavily dependent on Arab oil. That, at least in part, explains why the countries of the European Union have strongly supported the *Palestinians* and opposed the *Israelis* in the "Palestinian dispute." During the recent Israeli destruction of the *terrorist nests* in the city of Jenin, a delegation was sent by the *European Union* to journey to Ramallah in order to speak with Yasir Arafat. But the Israelis refused to allow them to go to Ramallah to hold Arafat's hand and give encouragement to the man whom they sincerely believe to be a notorious *terrorist* with much *Jewish blood* on his hands. [It is also interesting to note that the United Nations nearly always votes in support of the Palestinians and the Arabs, in those matters that come before that international organization. Will the U.N. still be a viable, functioning organization at the time when God says He will "gather ALL THE NATIONS to battle against JERUSALEM" (Zech. 14:1-2)?]

Who Were the Ancient "MIDIANITES"?

One branch of "Arabs," that was known *not* to have descended from Abraham's son *Ishmael*, was the ancient people known as *MIDIANITES*. Is it true that the people known in O.T. times as *Midianites* were in fact descendants of Abraham and his second wife, *Keturah*? Here is a brief description of these ancient Midianite neighbors of Israel: "MIDIANITES. They consisted of *five families*, linked to Abraham through MIDIAN, son of the concubine *Keturah*. Abraham sent them away, with all the other sons by [his] concubines into the E. [East]. Thus the *Midianites* were found inhabiting desert borders in TRANSJORDAN from Moab down past Edom [in N.W. Arabia]" (*The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, vol. 2, art. "Midianites").

Were the Midianites Abraham's Descendants?

On numerous occasions the Midianites warred against Israel in O.T. times. We are also told that Moses' wife was of Midianite descent (Exod. 2:15-21). "MIDIANITES...a race dwelling south and east of Palestine, in the desert *north of the Arabian Peninsula*.... In Gen. 24:1.2 Midian is the fourth son of *Abraham* by *Keturah* [whom he married after Sarah's death, Gen. 27:1-6], and evidently one of those who were sent away into the *east country* with gifts by Abraham during his lifetime.... In the time of Joseph, we find the Midianites associated with Ishmaelites so closely that it is hard to define their relationship: perhaps there was a company of Midianite merchantmen in an Ishmaelite caravan (Gen. 37:25, 27, 28, 36). In all likelihood [some of] the descendants of *Ishmael* and *Midian*, as well as of other exiled children of Abraham, had intermarried" (*Unger's Bible Dict.*, 3rd ed., "Midianites," p. 729).

During Israel's 40-year sojourn in the desert, years before they reached the Promised Land, the peoples of Moab and the Midianites connived to seduce the Israelite men into committing whoredom with their daughters, thereby turning them away from God, so that they would be weakened and could, therefore, be defeated by the Moabites and Midianites (Num. 22-25). Their diabolical stratagem backfired, and they were themselves cursed by God, as a consequence of their treachery. Still later, during the time of the Judges, God used Gideon to deliver the Israelites from their enemies, the *Midianites*, *Amalekites*, and the "children of the east"—certain Arab peoples, which are not identified (Judges 6 & 7). As we have seen, both the *Midianites* and the *Edomites* (some of whom were called *Amalekites*) were descendants of Abraham, and were therefore *cousins* of the Israelite peoples. History and the Bible indicate that some of Abraham's descendants may today live, not only in Arabia, but also in Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. The Bible clearly states that Abraham gave the lion's share of his possessions ("all that he had") unto his son *Isaac* shortly before his death (Gen. 25:5). Also, bear in mind that Isaac's descendants were promised to receive the "Promised Land" as part of their inheritance. Ishmael, Esau, Midian and Abraham's other sons by his "concubines" received lesser inheritances in the less fertile areas adjacent to "Palestine," in the *Arabian Peninsula*, and also in lands south of Judea, known as the *Sinai Peninsula*.

Smith's Bible Dictionary says, "MIDIAN [was] a son of *Abraham and Keturah*, Gen. 25:2; 1 Chron. 1:32; progenitor of the MIDIANITES, or ARABIANS dwelling principally in the DESERT NORTH of the *Peninsula of Arabia*" (p. 404). There are indications that some of the "Arab" peoples of *Yemen* are of *Edomite* descent, although this does not exclude some of them being *Ishmaelites*. There is considerable evidence that some of these Edomites also migrated into the PERSIAN GULF area, establishing colonies there as well as in *Yemen*. Undoubtedly, a number of Iraqis and Syrians are also of Edomite descent. In fact, it was undoubtedly some of Edom's descendants who left their ancient homeland (south of the Dead Sea), where they had an important city called "BOZRAH" (Gen. 36:33), then migrated into southern Iraq, where in 636AD they founded the city of BASRA. "BOZRAH. 1. A city of Edom.... This is the *Bozrah* of Isa. 34:6; 63:1; Jer. 49:13, 22.... It is present Buseirah. Bozrah was the metropolis of N. Edom...and was famous for its dyed garments (Isa. 63:1). 2. A place in *Moab* (Jer. 48:24)" (*Unger's Bible Dict.*, 3rd ed., "Bozrah"). "The original city BOSSORAH...was founded by Caliph Omar I in A.D. 636, about 8 miles from the modern town" (*Encyc. Brit.*, vol. 3, 1970 ed., "BASRA").

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OMAR I, the second of the Muslim caliphs, reigned from 634 to 644. Omar visited Jerusalem (from which Mohammed is said to have ascended to heaven), and supposedly gave orders to build the Mosque of Omar (today known as the *Dome of the Rock*) which most Jews, Arabs and Christians believe stands on the site where Solomon's and Herod's Temples once stood. According to the Hebrew Bible it is believed to be the very spot where Abraham offered up his son Isaac (Gen. 22); however, the Arabs believe it is the spot where Abraham offered up their ancestor, Ishmael!

The “Mosque of Omar” on the Temple Mount

“Caliph Omar I (*UMAR IBN AL-KHATTAB*). After Omar I had conquered Jerusalem in 638AD, he desired to build a mosque to Allah. After being shown where Abraham offered up his son *Isaac* (Arabs believe Abraham offered up *Ishmael*), Omar exclaimed, ‘By Him in whose hands is my soul!—this is the place described to us by the Apostle of Allah. Let us make this the place for a mosque’” (Jerry M. Landay, *Dome of the Rock*, p. 18, pub. by *NEWSWEEK*). *The Dome of the Rock* also describes Mohammed’s “Night Journey to Jerusalem” in the following words: “One night in Mecca... Mohammed mounted his steed *al-Burak*, ‘the Lightning’—a phantasmagorical winged creature with the face of a woman. His escort was the archangel Gabriel, the Messenger of Allah. Together they sped through the sky towards *Jerusalem*, descending briefly at Mount Sinai and Bethlehem, and finally alighting upon the Temple’s SACRED ROCK.

“There they were met by Abraham, Moses, Solomon, Jesus, and other of Allah’s ancient apostles. They prayed together in the grotto... Then Gabriel guided the Prophet to the pinnacle of the rock, which the Arabs call *as-Sakhra*, where a ladder of golden light materialized. On this glittering shaft, Mohammed ascended to the Seventh Heaven... Brought before Allah, Mohammed received injunctions as to the duties his followers were to perform. He then descended to *as-Sakhra*, remounted *al-Burak* and was back in Mecca before the night had waned. And so, near the SACRED ROCK that was sanctified for Moslems by the Vision of the Night Journey, Omar raised his mosque...” (ibid. pp. 18-19).

But that was not the last of the “mosque,” built by Omar I. “And in 687 a successor to the caliphate named Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan replaced Omar’s primitive mosque with a building of incomparable magnificence—the *Kubbat as-Sakhra*, or Dome of the Rock. Its octagonal walls encircled like a diadem the austere jutting crag [i.e. the “SACRED ROCK”] that the Jews had held to be the center of the earth” (ibid., p.21). [The *Britannica* says, “The caliph ‘al-Malik ibn Marwan (685-705) erected the DOME OF THE ROCK in 691 A.D. on the site of the Temple of Solomon, which the Muslims believed had been the halting station of the Prophet on his nocturnal journey to heaven” (*Encyc. Brit.*, vol. 25, 15th ed., p. 416). [Note. Some believe the Muslims built the *DOME OF THE ROCK* to prevent the Jews ever attempting to return to that sacred Temple site in order to build another Temple to *Yahweh* (O.T. “LORD”). There is still much discussion among Jews of them building another temple.]

Jesus had predicted that Jerusalem’s ancient Temple would be desecrated: “And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the TIMES OF THE GENTILES are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24; cf. Matt. 24:1-2, Luke 19:42-44). It is obvious that those “times” are not yet over. When Israel’s present Prime Minister Ariel Sharon visited the Temple Mount in September 2000, Arab Muslims *rioted* in protest of Sharon’s visit. Many believe Sharon’s visit to that ancient “holy place” triggered the “*second Intifada*.”

CNN T.V. reported that the *Temple Mount* “hosts Judaism’s most sacred shrine, the Western Wall, the last remaining segment of the ancient Temple, and is home to two major mosques, *Al Aqsa* and the *Dome of the Rock*. Those sites, making Islam’s third holiest site behind Mecca and Medina, mark the spot where tradition says the prophet Mohammed ascended to heaven...” (CNN.com. Sept. 28, 2000). Israel’s Prime Minister said he went to the Temple Mount with a message of *peace*: “I believe that we can live together with the Palestinians,” Sharon added, “I came here to the holiest place of the Jewish people in order to see what happens here and really to have the feeling of how we need to move forward. There was no provocation here.” Yasir Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority, later said that Sharon’s visit was dangerous and then urged Arab and Islamic nations to *mobilize* in order to protect the shrine. That same CNN report on September 28th also asked, “Who will have *sovereignty* over the HOLY MOUNT [MT. MORIAH] has been a major stumbling block to the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. Deadly clashes erupted twice in the last decade, as *rival claims* to

the site heated up.” Clearly, both Jews and Muslims claim the ancient Temple Mount (area around the Dome of the Rock), as sacred, but they *bitterly disagree* as to whether *Israelis* or *Muslims* should control that holy site.

V. Bitter Strife Erupts Between Brothers—*Esau* and *JACOB—Abraham’s Grandsons*

Today’s struggle in the Mideast between Jews and Arabs is rooted in a bitter dispute over who is the *rightful possessor* of the long-disputed “Promised Land” (Palestine). Did God promise this land to the *Arab* peoples? Or did He promise it to the people of *Israel*? After God brought Abraham and his family out of the land of Chaldea, and into the “land of Canaan,” He made it clear to whom that land would ultimately be given. He told Abraham, “To *your descendants* I have given this land, from the *river of Egypt* to the great river, the *River Euphrates...*” (Gen. 15:18). But since Abraham was the ancestor of the *ethnic Arabs*, as well as the people of *Israel*, did God mean that the “Arabs” would share that land with Israel? As we have seen, Abraham was the ancestor of *Ishmael* and the *Ishmaelites*, the *Midianites*, and other “Arab” peoples now living in the Middle East.

But God did *not* give the “Promised Land” to any of those people. As we are about to see, God later limited His promise to Abraham, making it clear that only Abraham’s grandson ISRAEL would inherit the *Promised Land*. That was the “land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and JACOB [Israel], to give *them*” (Deut. 30:20). The birth of Abraham’s famous grandson Israel/Jacob is described in Genesis 25. In fact, Jacob/Israel was the twin brother of *ESAU*. Later, Esau (the firstborn) lost his birthright by selling it to Jacob (vv. 29-34). The 27th chapter of Genesis gives the details of Isaac giving a blessing to each of his sons, Esau and Jacob, and it is clear that Jacob received a far greater blessing than did Esau (vv. 18-40). It is very important to understand what the Word of God says about the “Promised Land.” To whom does the Bible say God promised this land?

Because Esau (the firstborn) received an *inferior* blessing, he became very *bitter* toward his brother Jacob, and plotted to kill him. “So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him [and he said] “I will kill my brother Jacob” (Gen. 27:41). Jacob’s mother, Rebekah, became alarmed and then warned Jacob to flee for his life: “Surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you by intending to kill you.... Arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran. And stay with him ...until your brother’s fury turns away...” (vv. 42-45). That deep-seated hatred lingered for many years in the heart of Esau (Gen. 32:1-32). Furthermore, that same bitterness toward Israel and his descendants was harbored for generations to come by the *Edomites* (Psa. 38; Isa. 34; Jer. 49; Ezekiel 34; Obadiah 1). In ancient times, Esau’s descendants became known as “Edomites” (Gen. 36:9), but by N.T. times they were known as “Idumaeans” (Isa. 34:5-6). The “Amalekites” were a warlike branch of Edomites who had descended from Esau’s grandson, Amalek (Gen. 36:12). Remember, the Amalekites were the first people to attack the Israelites after they left Egypt (Ex. 17:8-16). Moses said they “attacked [Israel’s] rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary” (Deut. 25:17-19).

Which Peoples Today Represent the “EDOMITES”?

The New Encyclopedia Britannica makes these interesting comments concerning the EDOMITES: “EDOM, ancient land bordering ancient Israel in what is now southwestern JORDAN, between the *Dead Sea* and the *Gulf of Aqaba*. The *Edomites* probably occupied the area about the 13th century BC. Though closely related to the *Israelites* [according to the Bible, they were descendants of *Esau*], they had *frequent conflicts* with them and were probably subject to them at the time of the Israelite Kingdom (11th-10th century)... Edom and Moab were later conquered by the NABATAEANS [Arab descendants of *Ishmael*], and the EDOMITES *migrated to SOUTHERN JUDEA*, where they were known in New Testament times as IDUMAEANS” (vol. 4, p. 373).

Further, we are told that, “The term EDOM...denotes either the *name of ESAU* or the *Edomites collectively*...or the *land* occupied by Esau’s descendants, formerly the LAND OF SEIR.... It stretched from the Wadi Zered to the Gulf of Aqaba for *c. 160 km*, and extended to *both sides* of the ARABAH or wilderness of Edom...the *great depression* connecting the Dead Sea to the Red Sea...” (*The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, vol. 1, “Edom”). Although Edom’s original homeland was in the area described above (between “Judah” and the “Red Sea” south of *Judea*) a number of Edomites migrated from that area and established colonies (in Yemen, the Persian Gulf, Iraq, Syria etc.). Some Bible students believe an Edomite colony was also later established in *Turkey*. In any case, today, the ruling *minority* in Turkey is of “Turkish” descent, and Turks do not consider themselves to be “Arabs.”

East and West Branches of *Edomites*

By putting together all of the biblical and historical accounts, the following picture emerges: The ancient EDOMITESS originally lived on both the E. and W. sides of the ARABAH (i.e. the “*great depression*” between the Dead Sea and Red Sea). The western branch later moved into the partly depopulated territory of *Judea*, after the two main Jewish captivities of 586BC and 70AD. As the descendants of “Israel” now comprise many nations, so is it with the “Edom’s” descendants, who have become several modern nations. In addition, other dispersed Edomites (the *Edomite Diaspora*) are scattered through many different countries where they now form a *minority*, just as they do in the modern State of “Israel.” Here are the two main branches of Edomites that existed in ancient times:

[1] EAST EDOMITES. The majority of the *eastern branch of Edomites* (who had formerly lived east of the *Arabah*, in the Arabian Peninsula) migrated into N.W. Arabia over a period of many centuries. History reveals that some of the Edomites who settled in *N. Arabia*, later migrated to *Syria*, and some settled in present-day *Iraq* and the area around the Persian Gulf. Wicked Haman was an *Amalekite* of Edomite descent, and he served in a high position in the Persian court at the Palace in Shushan, Persia—about 150 miles N. of the Persian Gulf—in the time of Queen Esther (Esth. 3:1).

[2] WEST EDOMITES. Maps of the O. T. place the AMALEKITES (a warlike clan of *Edomites*) on the S. or S. W. border of Judah, and adjacent to both Egypt and Philistia. The western branch of *Edomites* (the main branch) first began their migration into southern JUDEA following the Babylonish captivity of 586BC. A Few centuries before the birth of Christ, they called their newly occupied land, IDUMAEA (Edom’s land). We are told that the main thrust of that western branch of Edomites into Judea followed their expulsion by the *Nabateans* from their old Edomite homeland, which lay south of Judea, with its capital at Petra. [It is interesting to note that ever since most of the Jews were removed to Babylon in 586BC, the Edomites have laid claim to that portion of southern Judea that includes the ancient city of Hebron. Until this very day, Hebron is very strongly “Palestinian” (Edomite) and is famous for containing the tombs of Abraham and Sarah, as well as Isaac and Rebecca. Since today’s *ethnic Arabs* (who are, in the main, descendants of the ancient *Ishmaelites*), claim Abraham as their father, it is quite natural that they venerate the city and the tomb

of this great patriarch. Because both Jews and Arabs revere their ancestors, *Abraham* and *Isaac*, and since many of the “Palestinians” are also descendants of Isaac’s son Esau (or Edom) they could rightly claim both Isaac and Rebecca as their ancestors.] “The pressure of the NABATAEANS forced EDOM to leave its former seats and advance [northward] into the *south of Judah* with HEBRON as the capital. This had been fully accomplished by 312 B.C., but the date of the first occupation [apparently, not long after 586BC] cannot be ascertained from the literary evidence alone. Thus the district in question is Jewish in the time of Nehemiah (Neh. xi.25-30), but it is uncertain whether the Edomite occupation was earlier (a fusion being assumed) or later.... Henceforth the new home of the Edomites is consequently known as IDUMAEA” (*Encyc. Brit.*, 11th ed., vol. IX).

But the largest Edomite migration into Judea/Samaria occurred in the centuries *following* the Roman captivity of the Jews in 70AD. Ezekiel’s prophecy reveals that the *west Edomites* then claimed the “two countries”—i.e. the “two nations” of JUDEA and SAMARIA—as their own land: (Ezek. 35:1-10). And their modern-day descendants, the PALESTINIANS, still think the land of Palestine is rightfully theirs! Much of the Israeli-Arab bitterness and strife during the past fifty-some years is over the question of who, according to the Bible, are the legal inheritors, and therefore the rightful possessors of the Promised Land! Like Esau, the Palestinian Arabs feel the Jews have taken away the “blessing” they had enjoyed in the land of Palestine, where they had lived and formed a *majority* for many centuries., during which time the Jews were a *minority*.

Identifying the People of *Yemen* (“Teman”)

Who are the people that now live in Yemen? And what is the biblical name of their ancient ancestor? Are the Yemeni people descendants of the Abraham and Isaac? Anciently, another group of EDOMITES first moved to the far *south* of Palestine (between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea), then later moved further south into the S. W. corner of the *Arabian Peninsula*, and colonized that area, calling it YEMEN. There are many indications that some of the people of Yemen have descended from “Teman,” one of Esau’s grandsons. “TEMAN. [Heb. the *SOUTH*, or *RIGHT*].... The eldest son of Eliphaz, the son of ESAU (Gen. 36:11; 1 Chron. 1:36). He was a duke (or prince) of the Edomites... and gave his name to the region in which the tribe he founded settled (Gen. 36:34).... The country of the *Temanites*, the southern portion of *Idumaea*” (*Unger’s Biblical Dictionary*, 3rd ed., “Teman”).

Not only did Teman’s descendants live in the southern portion of IDUMAEA, but they were in close contact with present-day *Yemen*, which was in the extreme southern [S.W.] part of the Arabian Peninsula. Apparently “Yemen” means *SOUTH*. The ancient Edomites’ southern position in the Sinai Peninsula also brought them into close contact with the *Ishmaelites* of Arabia. It was quite natural for this branch of Edomites to migrate along the east side of the Gulf of Akaba to present-day Yemen, which lies to the “right” or “south,” when looking east from the focal point of *Jerusalem*: “Directions N. and S. in the ancient Near East were determined by facing E. toward the *sunrising*—so *left* was North and *right* was South” (*Unger’s Bib. Dict.*, 3rd ed., “Benjamin”).

“YEMEN (*Yaman*), a province of Arabia, forming the S.W. corner of the [ARABIAN] PENINSULA.... Ptolemy and the ancient geographers in general include the whole peninsula under the name of *Arabia Felix*, in which sense they translate the Arabic *Yemen*, literally ‘right hand’ [or ‘south’] for all Arabia S. of the Gulf of Akaba was to the RIGHT [*south*] from their standpoint of *Alexandria* [Egypt]” (*Encyc. Brit.* 11th ed., vol. XXVIII). It is interesting to note that *Osama bin Laden*’s family was from *Yemen*. Is it possible that Osama bin Laden’s family is of Edomite descent? Have we Americans forgotten that the *USS Cole*, an expensive, high-tech missile warship, was nearly destroyed in Yemen in October 2000? In that attack 17 sailors were killed and scores were injured. All the evidence indicates that *Osama bin Laden*’s Al-Qaeda terrorists

were responsible for that attack. Have our people forgotten the 241 U.S. marines that were murdered by these Islamic terrorists at the U.S. marine barracks in Beirut in October 1983? Has our nation forgotten that 19 U.S. servicemen were *killed*, and about 500 people, including 372 Americans, were wounded when a Saudi tanker truck exploded on June 25, 1996, nearly demolishing the US military barracks in Dharan, Saudi Arabia? In addition, terrorists have attacked a number of U.S. embassies in East Africa, and have threatened to attack other U.S. facilities around the globe.

Origin of Esau's Deep-seated Bitterness

How did such *bitter enmity* arise between the descendants of *JACOB* (Israel) and *ESAU* (Edom)—*who were Semitic brothers—the grandsons of Abraham*? In order to understand the present *hostility* between Jews and Arabs, we have to go back to God's Word. Only in the Bible do we find the answer to this long-standing *bitterness*. The Hebrew Scriptures tell us who the ancestors of the Jews and Arabs are.

Let us examine the account of the birth of Abraham's twin grandsons, Esau and Jacob, ancestors of both the Israelis and the Palestinians. At the time of their birth God gave this prophecy, "One people [Israel] shall be stronger than the other, and the older [Esau] shall serve the younger [Israel]" (Gen. 25: 23). The 27th chapter of Genesis tells us that Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of soup, then developed a deep-seated hatred for his brother Israel, who later received both the birthright and the chief blessing from his father Jacob—"so Esau HATED Jacob [saying] I will kill my brother Jacob" (vv. 41--41). Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Esau's mother then called his brother Jacob and told him, "Surely your brother Esau comforts himself, concerning you by intending to kill you. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise; flee to my brother Laban in Haran, and stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?" (vv. 42-45).

Esau had become so enraged against his brother Jacob that he seriously intended to *murder* him! That *hatred* turned into a soul-destroying "bitterness," according to Hebrews 12:15-17). Esau's *simmering hatred* towards his brother Jacob/Israel, is further described in the 32nd chapter of Genesis. Many scriptures later speak of the *INTENSE HATRED* which Esau (Edom) and his descendants continued to harbor toward the children of Israel. Bible prophecy predicts that deep-seated bitterness will continue even unto the end of this age. (see Isa. 34; Ezek. 35 & 36; Obadiah, Malachi 1:1-5; Heb. 12:15-17).

Edomites migrate into Judea. What ancient land did the Edomites' originally occupy, and when did they occupy it? The New Encyclopedia Britannica says, "EDOM, ancient land bordering ancient Israel in what is now southwestern JORDAN, between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba. The Edomites probably occupied the area about the 13th century BC. Though closely related to the Israelites (according to the Bible, they were descendants of Esau), they had frequent conflicts with them and were probably subject to them at the time of the Israelite Kingdom (11th-10th century)... Edom and Moab were later conquered by the NABATAEANS [Arab descendants of Ishmael], and the EDMITES migrated to SOUTHERN JUDAEA, where they were known in N.T. times as IDUMAEANS" (15th ed., vol. 4, p. 373).

Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary makes these interesting comments: "Edom the Place of the Nabateans. After the downfall of Judah in 586BC, Edom rejoiced (Ps. 137:7). Edomites settled in southern Judah as far north as Hebron. NABATEANS occupied old Edom beginning in the *third* century B.C., continuing their civilization well into the first century A.D. During the period from about 400-100B.C., Judas Maccabeus subdued the Edomites and John Hyrcanus forced them to be

circumcised.... The Herod family of N. T. times was of Edomite stock” (art. “EDOMITES,” page 321). King Herod and his sons, who later became kings, slaughtered many Jews!

[Note. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* says that “*Antipater*, an EDOMITE, son of the governor of IDUMAEA and father of the future Herod the Great” sided with Hyrcanus II in a dispute he had with his brother Aristobulus II (vol. 25, art. “Palestine,” p. 414). In 37BC Augustus Caesar appointed Herod King over the area of Palestine. It was this Herod, called Herod the Great, who attempted to kill Christ at the time of His birth, and because of his fear of having failed to kill the infant Jesus, Herod proceeded to slaughter many young male Jewish boys in the area of Bethlehem (Matt. 2:1-23). According to Josephus, Herod slaughtered thousands of Jews during his 34-year reign, including his “Jewish” wife. Just before Herod’s death, he had “the most illustrious men of the whole Jewish nation” shut up in the Hippodrome, and ordered that when he died they would be slaughtered, so as to cause all the Jews to *appear to be* mourning for him. His evil son, Herod Antipas, later had John the Baptist beheaded (14:1-12). Another of Herod’s cruel sons “killed James the brother of John.... And because he saw it pleased the Jews...when he had apprehended [Peter], he put him in prison...” (Acts 12:1-4, 6-21; cf. 23:35).]

Israel’s “Traditional Enemy”—the *Amalekites*

Although the nation of Israel in O.T. times fought some wars with the *Ishmaelites* (ancestors of the “*Ishmaelite Arabs*”), the *Moabites* and *Ammonites* (all distant cousins of Israel) and the *Philistines* (“Arabs” in the Gaza Strip)—nonetheless, it was Esau’s descendants, the warlike EDOMITES who remained Israel’s most implacable foe! Let us observe some of the many places where *Edomite-Amalekite cruelty* and hatred was vented against Israel. Which Edomites were O.T. Israel’s “traditional enemy”? *The Encyclopedia Americana* says: “AMALEKITES...an ancient wandering and *warlike tribe* belonging to the Bedouin group, frequently mentioned in the O.T. at the time of the Exodus in the wilderness between Egypt and Palestine. They appear as *a branch of the Edomites*. When the Israelites journeyed from Egypt to Canaan the Amalekites are said to have harassed them and because of this *hostility* it was divinely ordered that their memory should be blotted out (Deut. 25:17-19)... The spirit of *hostility* is shown also in Balaam’s prophecy (Num. 24:20). Even in the Psalms (number 83:7) AMALEK is cited as the TRADITIONAL ENEMY of Israel; later in the Book of Esther, Haman, the archenemy of Israel, is termed the ‘Agagite,’ emphasizing his descent from AGAG, king of the hated race, and is opposed to Mordecai the Benjamite [Jew]” (1960 ed., vol. 1, art. “Amalekites,” p. 461).

The Cruel *HYKSOS* Were *Amalekites*

The Egyptian rulers, known as HYKSOS (called “Shepherd Kings”), were AMALEKITES. (The word *Hyksos* means “foreign rulers”). Dr. Herman L. Hoeh’s *Compendium of World History* states that the *HYKSOS* who once ruled Egypt were “Edomite Amalekites.” The Egyptian historian *Manetho* speaks of the cruel Hyksos’ invasion of Egypt. *Manetho* says, “... for what cause I know not, *a blast of God* smote us [the Ten Plagues] and unexpectedly, from the regions of the East, invaders of obscure race marched in confidence of victory.... By main force they easily seized it...and having overpowered the rulers of the land, *they burned our cities ruthlessly*, razed to the ground the temples of the gods, and treated all the natives with a CRUEL HOSTILITY, massacring some and leading into slavery the wives and children of others” (*Against Apion*, bk. I, chap. 14, parts 73-92). This cruelty was typical of the Edomite-Amalekites mentioned in the Bible. Dr. Hoeh also says, “The name *Salitis* [name of the Hyksos’ leader] comes from a Semitic root meaning *prince*.... These invaders came from the East. They must have passed to Egypt from Sinai. They made Egyptians slaves. Does the Bible speak of such a people who suddenly gained the dominance of this part of the world? Indeed, the EDOMITE AMALEKITES” (*Compendium*, vol. 1, 1962 ed., pp. 100-101).

Note. In spite of the false prophet Balaam's perverseness, God's Spirit forced him to *bless* Israel, rather than curse them. Balaam said, "And Edom shall be a possession...while Israel does valiantly...." Then he [Balaam] looked on AMALEK and he took up his oracle and said: 'Amalek was FIRST AMONG THE NATIONS, but shall be last until he perishes'" (Num. 24:18-20). In what way was Amalek "first among the nations"? Many nations existed at the time Amalek was born over 3,500 years ago; so this statement can't possibly mean that Amalek was the first nation established on this earth. Dr. Hoeh says, "The first of the nations,' is not a matter of *time*, but of *position* and rank. The Amalekites were a nation late to arrive, since they stemmed from Esau. But they were suddenly plummeted to greatness by seizing the Delta at the Exodus" (vol. 1, p. 101). The Amalekites' cruel, warlike nature had catapulted them into the top-rank position of the world's greatest nation—Egypt. How did they get control of Egypt? After most of Egypt had been desolated during the Ten Plagues (Exodus, chapters 7-13), and after Pharaoh and his army were destroyed in the Red Sea (chap. 14), Egypt lay wide open for invasion by foreigners. It was after Egypt had been greatly weakened that the warlike people called "Amalekites" invaded Egypt and quickly gained mastery over that unfortunate country. According to ancient historical accounts, the Amalekite invaders, known as the "HYKSOS" (*Shepherd Kings*) ruled Egypt for many years (Herman L. Hoeh, *Compendium*, vol. 1, chap. 4 & 5).

Further, the Bible tells us that the Amalekites also attacked their Israelite cousins shortly after they crossed the Red Sea and trekked into the Sinai. In fact, the first enemy to attack Israel after their Exodus from Egypt was these same people, the Amalekites, who were the most warlike branch of Edomites. Esau/Edom was the brother of Jacob/Israel, which means that the *Edomites* were close *blood relatives* of the *Israelites*. Remember, Esau's father Isaac had prophesied that his son *ESAU* (also called *Edom*, meaning "red") *would LIVE BY HIS SWORD* (Gen. 27:4). This shows that the Edomites would be a very ruthless, *warlike people*. They would not only wage war with other "Gentile" nations, but they would repeatedly invade, attack and plunder other branches of Abraham's descendants, including their Israelite cousins. The Prophet Joel says, "And Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, because of violence against the children of Judah, and they have shed innocent blood in their land" (Joel 3:19).

Here is a chronological account (from the *Old Testament*) of some of the many *struggles* between the people of Israel and their *cousins*, the people of EDOM, who were also called IDUMAEANS in the New Testament:

[1] Fierce historic AMALEKITE warriors were Edomites. Amalek was a descendant of Edom—therefore his descendants were called "Amalekites" (Gen. 36:12). Shortly after the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, they were attacked by the fiercest branch of the Edomites, then known as "Amalekites," whom they defeated under the leadership of Moses and Joshua (Exodus 17:8-16). After defeating the Amalekites, Moses told Israel, "Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the *stragglers* at your rear, when you were *tired* and weary; and he did *not* fear God" (Deut. 25:17-29). Note that the treacherous *Amalekites* did not do battle with the fighting *men* of Israel, but came up stealthily behind the Israelites in order to kill the weak and the elderly people of Israel. Isn't that like what the modern *Palestinians* have been doing in recent decades—attacking women and children in restaurants and cafes, busses, markets, places of worship (like the observance of the Jewish Seder in 2002) and other places where terrorists can blow up women and children and other innocent victims?

[2] In Numbers 14:45 we have another instance of the "Amalekites" allying themselves with some of the "Canaanites" and savagely attacking the Israelites, inflicting many casualties: "Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites came down and attacked them [Israel], and drove them back as far as Hormah."

[3] Many years after the Israelites later occupied “Palestine” under Joshua’s leadership, the Israelites were attacked by the “MIDIANITES and AMALEKITES, all the people of the East [i.e. other “Arab” peoples]...as numerous as locusts,” but they were defeated under the able leadership of *Joshua* (Josh. 7:1-25).

[4] In about 1000BC, God commanded Israel’s King Saul to exterminate the blood-thirsty *Amalekites* (1 Sam. 15). When Saul spared the Amalekite king AGAG, God inspired the Prophet Samuel to see that he was put to death: “But Samuel said [to Agag], ‘As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless....’ And Samuel hacked Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal” (v. 33). [This *Amalekite* King AGAG had children, one of which was the ancestor of the wicked “Haman... the Agagite” (Esth. 3:1), who plotted to slaughter the Jews throughout the Persian Empire (vv. 8-15).]

[5] Furthermore, when mentally disturbed King Saul (1 Sam. 16:14; 18:6-13) commanded some of his “guards who stood about him, ‘Turn and kill the priests of the LORD...’” they refused to slay God’s priests, but an *Edomite* was willing to butcher them. “And [Saul] said to Doeg, ‘You turn and kill the priests!’ So *Doeg the EDMITE* turned and struck the priests, and killed on that day eighty-five men who wore a linen ephod. Also Nob, the city of the priests, he struck with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and nursing infants...” (1 Sam. 22:17-19).

[6] Later, we are told that when David saw that “the *Amalekites* had invaded the South and Ziklag [in the land of Judah] and had burned it with fire,” he gained a victory over them (1 Sam. 30). And still later, we are informed that, after “David had returned from the slaughter of the *Amalekites*,” a man who had slain Israel’s King Saul, told David, “I am an *Amalekite*,” and then he proudly proclaimed that he had killed David’s enemy, God’s anointed, King, Saul. David promptly executed him (2 Sam. 1:1-17).

[7] After the Jews were taken captive to Babylon in 586 BC, a high Persian official at the Persian court (“Haman...the AGAGITE—a descendant of “Agag”) got authority from the Persian king “to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old in one day...” throughout the vast Persian Empire (Esth. 3:13). For many generations Amalekite kings of Edom had used the dynastic name “Agag” (1 Sam. 15:1-33). This Edomite official was named “Haman...the Agagite” (Esther, chap. 3-9). Eventually the king’s order was reversed and wicked Haman was hanged on the gallows he had built to hang Mordecai (7:5-10). Haman lived in the Palace at Shushan, about 150 miles N. of the Persian Gulf.

Who Were the Warlike *IDUMAEANS*?

[8] The 1st century A.D. Jewish historian, *Flavius Josephus*, tells us that the HERODIAN KINGS OF JUDEA were Edomites (then known as IDUMAEANS). In the New Testament, we find ample evidence that the Idumaeans (the Herodian kings) were mortal enemies of the Jews. The *Encyclopedia Americana* says, “EDOM...or SEIR (in New Testament, IDUMAEA), in ancient times a country lying south of the Dead Sea. Its boundaries varied with its fortunes, but during most of the period covered by the O.T. it extended to the Gulf of ‘Aqaba’ and included mountains and plateaus on both sides of the Wadi el ‘Arabah’. The Edomites are said in Genesis 36:8-9 to be the *descendants of Esau* (q.v.). They were regarded as *kin* by the Israelites, but became their *enemies* and were subdued by Saul (1 Samuel 14:47) and David (II Samuel 8:14). After the separation of the 10 tribes [c. 930B.C.] *Edomites* remained subject to the Kingdom of Judah until the reign of Jehoram, when they revolted and secured their independence for a time. They again were subdued by Amaziah (II Chron. 25:11-12). During the time of Nebuchadnezzar they were attacked by the Babylonians, and later, after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., their fortunes were merged by the Romans in those of ARABIA. The Edomite Capital was Sela, later called PETRA (q.v.)” (1960 ed., vol. 9, art. “Edom,” p. 591). They then became ARABIZED.

Furthermore, *Unger's Bible Dictionary* gives an interesting insight into the history of the Idumaeans (Edomites): "IDUMAEA...(Gr. *pertaining to Edom*). This is a term employed by Greeks and Romans in a slightly different spelling for the country of Edom.... After the Fall of Jerusalem (B.C. 587) the Edomites began to advance northward (Ezek. 36:5). By B.C. 312 the Nabataeans, who established themselves in [the land of] Edom, drove them from Petra. The Edomites were gradually pushed into the southern half of Judea, including the region around Hebron, an area which the Greeks later called IDUMAEA.... Julius Caesar in 47 B.C. appointed an Idumaeans, Antipater, procurator of Judea, Samaria and Galilee. Herod, son of Antipater, was crowned king of the Jews in 37 B.C.... Josephus says that 20,000 Idumaeans were admitted as defenders of the Holy City (against Rome in 70AD). Once within, they proceeded to rob and kill, but these traitors received the same fate as the few surviving Jews when Rome took over Jerusalem. Idumaea or Edom, ceased to be" (1969 edition, article "Idumaea").

The Macmillan Bible Atlas says this of the Jew's conquest of Edom, under their Maccabean leader John Hyrcanus, who invaded and completely subdued Idumaea (c. 125 B.C.). "Hyrcanus next [waged war against] the Samaritans and the IDUMEANS. The *latter* had previously lived in southern Transjordan, but were drawn to the fertile parts of SOUTHERN JUDEA following the *depopulation* brought about by the exile under Nebuchadnezzar [in 586BC]. These Idumeans had lost contact with their Arab neighbors and offered little resistance.... Consistent with Maccabean policy, which was intended to ensure the loyalty of occupied areas, the Idumeans were forced to accept the Jewish religion, and within a few generations they were integrated into the Jewish nation, as witnessed by their great bravery in the war against the Romans. The conquest of Idumaea extended the borders of Judea to Beersheba and Orda" (revised edition of 1968, p. 130). This same *Bible Atlas* also mentions that the *Book of Judith* says that when Nebuchadnezzar fought against the Jews (c. 586BC), "He sent troops of the 'Sons of Esau' [Edomites] and Ammonites" to fight against the Jewish defenders of Judea (ibid., p. 132).

Josephus' Account of the Idumaeans

Josephus' Vivid Account of the Blood-thirsty Idumaeans. When a faction of the Jews *invited* 20,000 Edomites to join them in their war against the Romans (not long before Jerusalem fell in 70AD), and gave them entrance into Jerusalem, great slaughter ensued. Here is Josephus's account of that event. He says that the Jews "knew well enough that *these* [Idumaeans] would immediately comply with their desires, as being ever a *tumultuous and disorderly nation*, always on the watch upon every motion, delighting in mutations; and upon your flattering them ever so little, and petitioning them, they soon take their arms, and put themselves into motion, and make haste to a battle, as if it were to a feast.... And *twenty thousand of them were put into battle array, and came to Jerusalem...*" (Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, chap. iv). In CHAPTER V, Josephus then describes the "cruelty of the Idumaeans, when they were gotten into the Temple," saying that the Idumaeans slaughtered many *priests*. Josephus also says, "*nor did the Idumaeans spare anybody*; for as they are naturally a barbarous and bloody nation...they ran those through with their swords who desired them to remember the relation there was between them [Jews and Edomites], and begged them to have regard to their common temple.... And now the outer temple was all of it overflowed with blood; and that day, as it came on, saw eight thousand five hundred dead bodies there." Josephus then says an additional *12,000 were slaughtered* by the bloodthirsty Edomites before their lust for blood was satisfied.

Clearly, Josephus' account of the *Idumaeans' rampage* in the city of Jerusalem is very similar to numerous biblical accounts of this branch of bloodthirsty "Edomites," whose ancient ancestor Isaac had said, "BY YOUR SWORD YOU SHALL LIVE" (Gen. 27:39). This wanton disregard for the lives of even innocent civilians, women and children included, is still being practiced by some of Edom's modern descendants, the "Palestinians," in their "suicide bombings."

[9] Modern Palestinian “Edomites.” Many believe that the many brutal acts of terrorism, committed by some of the Palestinians, is another indication of the long-continued *hatred* that the Palestinian branch of “Arabs” still harbors toward their *Israeli cousins*. During the last 50 years they have blown up airliners, busses, cars, restaurants, shops, hotels, homes, markets, the Twin Towers in N. Y. City, and have wantonly slaughtered many hundreds of innocent civilian victims in the streets. Some Bible students see the same cold-blooded heartlessness exhibited by some of today’s Palestinians that was shown by the ancient AMALEKITE-Edomites, when they attacked the *enfeebled Israelites* as they marched through the Desert of Sinai (Exod. 17:8-16). God told Moses, “Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, how he met you...and attacked your rear ranks, all the *stragglers* at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God.... Therefore...you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Deut. 25:17-19) The “Amalekites” later harassed the people of Israel in the time of Samuel, King Saul and King David. More recently, the wanton injury and death of over one thousand in the destruction of the Twin Towers is a modern example of the *simmering hatred* of the descendants of Israel’s brother, Edom/Esau!

[10] God’s Word reveals that, after a prolonged period of eye-for-eye bloodletting by the Palestinian terrorists, the peoples of *Israel* and *Esau* will eventually learn to live in peace and harmony in the soon-coming Millennium. At that time, both the *Israelis* and the *Arabs* will learn to respect, love and help each other (Zech. 8:20-23)!

Through diligent study of *history* and *biblical prophecy* we can clearly prove that the “core” peoples that comprise modern-day Palestinians are, in the main, the descendants of the ancient *Edomite peoples*. Esau/Edom harbored an ancient grudge and enmity against his brother Jacob: “So *Esau HATED Jacob*...and said in his heart, ‘The days of mourning for my father are at hand: then I will *KILL* my brother Jacob” (Gen. 27:41; cf. Heb. 12:15-17). In biblical times, the Edomites attacked and slaughtered the Israelites more than any other people (cf. Deut. 25:17-19). The *intense hatred* which the Palestinians bear toward the Israelis is but a *continuation* of this “ancient enmity” which the Edomites bore toward God’s covenant people in O.T. times.

[Note. This text may help explain the unnatural, inhuman phenomenon of Palestinian ‘*suicide bombers*’ (more properly called homicide bombers) slaughtering not only men, but also killing *innocent women and children*. At the Munich Olympic games in September 1972 a PLO faction called *Black September* massacred 11 Israeli Olympic athletes. Five terrorists and one German policeman were also killed in that bloody shoot-out. Later an Israeli Counter-Terrorist Team hunted down and killed 8 of the 11 Palestinian terrorists, whom the Germans permitted to escape to another country. Of the 3 surviving Palestinian terrorists, two were assassinated (it isn’t certain whether they were killed by Israeli agents), and only one died a natural death. Further, on March 31, 2000, a Palestinian suicide bomber killed 25 Israelis in cold blood—as they observed their Passover Seder in *Netanya*, Israel! And who can ever forget that over 3000 men, women and children died in the September 2001 terrorist attack against the Twin Towers and the Pentagon?]

Arabs’ “Bottomless Hatred” of the Israelis

Many scriptures speak of the *unbridled hatred of the Edomites* (includes modern *Palestinians*) toward the *Israelis* in Israel, as well as murdering Jews living outside of Israel (cf. Isa. 34; Ezekiel 35; Obadiah 1; Psalm 83 etc.). Both when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 586BC, and when the Roman destroyed Jerusalem in 70AD, the *Idumaeans* (Edomites) greatly rejoiced. The following Psalm expresses Edom’s glee at seeing calamity overtake the Jews: “Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom THE DAY OF JERUSALEM, who said, ‘Raze it, raze it, to its very foundation!’” (Psa. 137:7). This is similar to what the Palestinians (modern Edomites) did when they *cheered* and *danced* in the streets of Palestinian cities on the West Bank

when they saw the images of the Twin Towers collapsing, where over one thousand Americans and many foreigners died almost instantly!

An Interesting Advertisement. In recent years the following advertisement has been widely published in a number of U.S. magazines and newspapers, and is currently found on the internet:

“The Unrelenting and Virulent *Hatred* of the Arabs: After over fifty years of statehood, Israel is a lone outpost of Western civilization and its values. The Arab nations surrounding it are a swamp of terrorism, corruption, dictatorship, and human enslavement. But the *hatred* of the Arabs against Israel and against all Jews is so abiding and so virulent that peace, at least for the foreseeable future seems to be most unlikely. What are the facts?

“No ‘Sacrifice’ Will Overcome the *Hatred*: Many still believe that the conflict between the Arabs and the Jews could be settled if the Israelis were willing to bring greater ‘sacrifices for peace.’ Such ‘sacrifices’ would include relinquishing ever-larger portions of their tiny country (less than half the size of San Bernardino County in California) to the Palestinians, dismantling the ‘settlements’ in Judea/Samaria (the ‘West Bank’), handing the Golan Heights to Syria, and allowing the ‘return of the refugees’ a group that has grown miraculously from about 500,000 to somewhere around 5 million....

“Mortal *Hatred* and the ‘Big Lie,’ invented by the notorious Joseph Goebbels of Nazi infamy, is a mainstay of Arab *hatred* and propaganda.... *Mortal hatred* against Israel and against the Jews is taught to Arab children from the very first grade. Children are encouraged to sacrifice themselves as martyrs and suicide missiles, with promises that Paradise with unimaginable pleasures awaits those who sacrifice themselves in the *holy cause of killing Jews the bottomless hatred*, a *hatred* that pervades the Arab world in all strata of society and is incessantly fomented by Arab governments, including those supposed to be ‘at peace’ with Israel, cannot be assuaged by *negotiation* or by making any further ‘sacrifices for peace.’ Nothing will suffice, except the destruction, the complete disappearance of Israel.

“The Arab states having been unable in over fifty years and in many wars to defeat and exterminate *the hated Jews*, are now feverishly arming themselves with ‘conventional weapons...and are ardently pursuing the development of WEAPONS OF MASS ANNIHILATION. Just as the suicide bombers do not vacillate to sacrifice themselves, no one can safely expect that, once in possession of such weapons, the Arabs will not hesitate to sacrifice millions of their own people in order to *destroy Israel*. Israel’s only course in the face of this almost certain prospect is to assume its previous stance of *unflinching deterrence* and, as it once did in the destruction of the Iraqi atomic reactor at Osirak in 1981, not to be inhibited by ‘international opinion’ to preempt resolutely if it appears necessary to assure survival of the country” (*FLAME* Facts and Logic About the Middle East), pub. in San Francisco, Ca.).

The Old Testament prophets repeatedly speak of the Edomites’ deep-seated “hatred” toward Israel (Gen. 27:41-45; Isa. 34; Ezek. 35:5-11; Obadiah, Psalm 83; 137; cf. Isa. 11:11-14 & Hebrews 12:14-17)! Again, it is well to remember that the peoples of Edom showed more hostility and warred more with their Israelite cousins than did any other of their Semitic relatives, many of whose descendants are now called “Arabs.” [Note. The U.S. Government has already given numerous *warnings* to Americans, saying that Osama bin Laden’s Al-Quaeda is planning to terrorize American cities and targets of all kinds. There have already been warnings that “dirty nukes” (using conventional bombs to scatter radioactive material) may be unleashed on U.S. cities at any time. And Saddam Hussein is seeking the missiles and nukes with which to attack America! If, however, President George W. Bush remains firm in his determination, America (and perhaps a few of her allies), appear fully determined to make certain that such evil men as Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein don’t ever get possession of weapons of *mass destruction* with which they can terrorize much of the world!]

VI. Bible Prophecy Reveals Ancient Arab Bitterness and Hatred of the Israelis!

The Bible clearly identifies a number of Middle Eastern nations that will wage holy war (*Jihad*) against the *Israelis*—as well as against the British-descended English-Speaking peoples—at the close of this age, as this earth becomes convulsed in horrific wars of annihilation. The *83rd Psalm* clearly identifies a number of Arab peoples, showing that they will play a big part in the slaughter of God’s people, the end-time descendants of *Israel*. This list of belligerents includes the nations adjacent to Israel that will be involved in this prophesied bloody struggle. Furthermore, the prophecies also reveal that not only the Jews, but also the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples of Europe, N. America, Australia and New Zealand will be deeply involved in the climactic battles that precede the final Armageddon—the final battle to be fought at the city of Jerusalem (Zech. 14; Joel 3).

Daniel 11 also mentions some of the Mideast peoples who will be involved in that struggle among the nations at the close of this age. The belligerents will include the “King of the North,” the leader of the European Union (or its final outgrowth, called the “Beast”). The “King of the South” (an *Islamic leader*—apparently from Egypt some other *Muslim state*) is also referred to. The following lands/peoples are specifically mentioned: Egypt, the Holy Land (*Israel/Palestine*), the Ethiopians (modern *Cushites*, south of Egypt), Libya, Edom, Moab and Ammon. Many descendants of the ancient peoples known as Edomites or Idumeans now live in the West Bank, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Arabia, Yemen, the Persian Gulf states, etc. Bible prophecy clearly reveals that, at the time of the end, the descendants of both Egypt and Edom will fight against the Jews. The prophecies also reveal that the people of Edom will play a leading role in the end-time struggle between the Arab nations and the *U.S.-Israel*. The prophet Joel explains the outcome of that struggle: “Egypt shall be a desolation, and EDOM a desolate wilderness, because of *violence* against the people of Judah, for they have *shed innocent blood* in their land. But Judah shall abide forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation” (Joel 3:19-20).

The Psalmists’ Dire Prophecy Against “Edom”

Numerous important prophecies reveal that the EDOMITE PEOPLES will become the special object of *God’s wrath* during the end-time DAY OF THE LORD: The 83rd Psalm mentions several specific peoples living in the Middle East as enemies of God’s people Israel at the end of this age: “Do not keep silent, O God! ...For behold, *Your enemies* make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head. They have taken crafty counsel against *Your people*, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. They have said, ‘Come and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of ISRAEL may be remembered no more’” (Psa. 83:1-4). [Note. There are two modern nations whom many of the *Muslims* (including millions of *Arabs*) hate more than any other people on earth: *Israel* and *America*. And many of them have vowed to destroy both Israel and the U.S.—if they can find a way to do so!]

Which nations will take part in this *unholy coalition* (which Muslims call *Jihad*), intending to destroy both the modern State of Israel and the U.S.? God’s Word names those aggressive nations: [1] “The tents [dwellings] of EDOM [This includes the *Palestinians* and other “Arabs” in Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and other Arab nations scattered through much of the Mideast], [2] and the

ISHMAELITES [the *ethnic ARABS* in the Arabian Peninsula]; [3] MOAB and the HAGARITES [Arab descendants of Sarah's handmaid, *Hagar*]; [4] GEBAL [peoples of north LEBANON], [5] AMMON and AMALEK [people of JORDAN and PALESTINE]; [6] PHILISTIA [those *Palestinians* living in the GAZA STRIP, ancient home of the *Philistines*] with the [7] inhabitants of TYRE [people of LEBANON]; [8] ASSYRIA is joined with them [modern-day *Assyrians* include some of the peoples who settled in GERMANY, as well as the 4.5 million "Assyrians" now living as minorities in Iraq, Syria and other nations of the world.]; [9] They [the *Assyrians*] have helped the children of LOT [i.e. MOABITES and AMMONITES in JORDAN]" (vv. 6-8).

[Note. Who were the ancient people that founded the city of "Gebal"? "GEBAL. 1. A very ancient Phoenician trading city of the Mediterranean twenty-five miles N. of Beirut (Josh. 13)... The Greeks called the city *Byblos*, meaning 'book,' because here 'paper' was made.... The *Phoenicians of Gebal* (Gebalites or Geblites, Josh 13:5) were also famous for their shipbuilding.... 2. [a city in] N.E. Edom, known also as TEMAN (Psa. 83:7), allied itself with Moabites and Arabians against Israel" (*Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed., "Gebal," p. 393). Was there a connection between the inhabitants of the ancient city of "Gebal" that lay to the N. or Beirut, an ancient city of the same name that was in N.E. Edom, not many miles south of the Dead Sea? It appears that some Edomites migrated to northern Phoenicia in ancient times! Note that all of the above peoples (except the "Assyrians") are today known as "Arabs." Further, note the fact that the peoples whom the Psalmist calls "*Edom*" and "*Amalek*" are both descendants of Esau/Edom. The "*Ishmaelites*" and the "*Hagrites*" ['Hagarenes' KJV] are the same people. *Ishmael* was the *father* of the *Ishmaelite Arab* and *Hagar* was their *mother*. This *83rd Psalm* also mentions *Moab*, *Ammon*, and the "children of Lot," all of whom refer to the same people!]

Are the "Turks" who today live in TURKEY descendants of the ancient EDOMITES? Some students of Bible prophecy have thought that some of the people of Edom today live in "TURKEY." Is there anything in the *Bible* or *history* to substantiate this view? Some Edomites apparently now live in Turkey. This view has been propagated by some of the "British Israel" people in their literature. [Note. The members of the Churches of God reject the *British Israel idea* that modern Jews are descendants of Esau-Edom. Such a misguided belief, even *if* well-intentioned, is in fact a form of *anti-Semitism!* A correct reading of either the Bible or secular history does not support such a belief!]

It is true that *Turkish cruelty* toward the *Armenians* (many of whom they *slaughtered* during WW I) may have led some to believe that the *Turks* inherited Edom's propensity for *hatred and violence*. But the descendants of the ancient peoples of Edom were not the *only* violent, blood-thirsty people on earth. We can't prove who the modern Edomites are by judging solely by *acts of cruelty*. Further research may enable us to discover more historical information concerning the *ancient roots* of the Turkish peoples, showing more evidence that they are indeed the descendants of "Edom" (Esau), as some claim.

The coalition of nations mentioned in *Psalms 83* is clearly intended as an *end-time prophecy*, that shows which nations will wage war against the modern-day descendants of Israel, and this includes the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic, English-Speaking peoples. What is *yet* prophesied to happen is *reminiscent* of what *did* happen, both in 586BC and later in 70AD—when the nation of *Judah* (or *Judea*) was destroyed along with its ancient capital city, Jerusalem, and its beautiful Temple. In regard to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586BC and in 70AD, the Psalmist lamented, "Remember, O LORD, against the *sons of EDOM* the DAY OF JERUSALEM, who said, 'Raze it, raze it, to its foundation!'" (Psa. 137:7).

The Edomites rejoiced at the time when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in 586BC, and when the Romans later destroyed Jerusalem in 70AD. This rejoicing was similar to the way *some Arabs* (the PALESTINIANS in particular) rejoiced when terrorists destroyed the Twin Towers and

badly damaged the Pentagon in September 2001. Few people realize that the ancient exclamation “HEP, HEP, HURRAY!” refers to what the Jews’ enemies (the Romans) said when they saw Jerusalem destroyed. The letters “HEP” represent Latin words meaning *Jerusalem is lost!* “In Germany in 1819...during the *Hep Hep riots* (a Latin acronym for ‘Jerusalem is lost’) mobs attacked Jews who again felt themselves outsiders” (*The World’s Religions*, 1993 ed., p. 36, pub. by Reader’s Digest’s).

VII. Isaiah’s Prophecy Against “EDOM”

Now that we know the ancient *biblical names* of some of the peoples who will be the main players on the Mideast scene, we can examine those prophecies that explain the major events yet to happen in the troubled Middle East in the near future. Modern *Israel’s* contiguous Arab neighbor states and their *populations* are as follows: Syria (16,728,808), *Egypt* (69,536,644), *Jordan* (5,153,378) and *Lebanon* (3,627,774). Other non-contiguous “Arab” nations that will undoubtedly play an important role during the fulfillment of end-time events in the Middle East are: *Saudi Arabia* (22,757,092), *Iraq* (23,331,985), *Yemen* (18,078,035), *Libya* (5,240,599), *Tunisia* (9,705,102), *Algeria* (31,736,053) and *Morocco* (30,645,305). Even though the Muslim nation of IRAN (with a population of 66,128,965), has *few Arabs*, her radicalized, anti-Western population will ensure that Iran continues to play a major, sinister role in Mideast struggles during the critical years ahead (Rev. 9:13-18; 16:12-14). In recent years, *Iran* has been a main supporter of *terrorism* against the U.S. and the ISRAELIS!

We have observed that Abraham’s son, *Ishmael*, is the ancestor of the *ethnic Arabs*. Further, we have also noted that *Israel* (father of today’s Jews) was a grandson of Abraham. And we saw that *Israel’s* twin brother *Esau* is the ancestor of some of those *Arabs* who call themselves “Palestinians,” as well as some of the Arab peoples living in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and in numerous Arab nations in the Arabian Peninsula. God’s Word tells us that “ESAU was the father of the EDOMITES” (Gen. 36:43). In New Testament times some of the *Edomites* were known as *Idumaeans* (Herod was of Idumaeen stock). Also, in O.T. times the most warlike branch of the *Edomites* was the Amalekites. Both the Bible and secular history tell us that the Edomites were the southern neighbors of the Jews. The original home of the Edomites was on both sides of the ARABAH (i.e. a depression) that runs south from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea (Gulf of Aqaba).

Let us see what the Prophet Isaiah had to say about the modern-day EDOMITES—the *PALESTINIANS*, and other Middle Eastern “Edomites” who call themselves “Arabs,” now living in Palestine (West Bank), Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Yemen, etc.: “Come near, you nations, to hear;... For the *indignation of the LORD* is against all nations, and His fury against all their armies;... For My sword...shall come down on EDOM, and on the people of *My curse* for judgment. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood.... For the LORD has a sacrifice in BOZRA [apparently, this refers to the modern city of BASRA in S. Iraq], and a great slaughter in the land of EDOM [in the Mideast].... For it is the day of *the LORD’S vengeance*, the year of recompense for the cause of Zion. It’s streams shall be turned into PITCH [“tar,” from oil fields?], and its dust into *brimstone*; Its land shall become BURNING PITCH. It shall not be quenched night or day; Its smoke shall ascend forever [Heb. *olam*], from generation to generation it shall lie waste” (Isa. 34:1-10).

[Note. The dictionary defines “pitch” as follows: “PITCH...a black or dark viscous substance obtained as a residue in the distillation of organic materials and esp. *TARS...any of various BITUMINOUS SUBSTANCES*” (*Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed.”). This same dictionary also says this of the word “bitumen”: “BITUMEN...an ASPHALT of Asia Minor used in

ancient times as a cement and mortar...any of various mixtures of *hydrocarbons* (as tar) often refining together with their nonmetallic derivatives that *occur naturally* [as in *oil wells*] or are obtained as residues after *heat-refining* natural substances (as PETROLEUM)...” Here we see that “PITCH” is defined as “BITUMINOUS SUBSTANCE” and we are told that “BITUMEN” is “obtained as residue after heating natural substances (as PETROLEUM).”]

Isaiah’s prophecy of “burning pitch” (tar) apparently refers to the great fires that would result from widespread *burning of oil fields*, such as exist in great numbers in many areas of the Middle East, where about two-thirds of the world’s proven *petroleum* is known to exist. Have we forgotten that Saddam Hussein set on fire over 1000 oil wells in Kuwait, just before his forces were driven out of Kuwait during the Gulf War in 1991? Ominously, IRAN recently threatened to attack the Mideast oil fields, setting them *ablaze*, if the U.S. were to threaten their national interests! And, reportedly, the Saudi Arabians have placed *explosives* in all their oil fields, just in case they should be threatened.

Is it possible that Isaiah’s prophecy points to a *gigantic conflagration* that could be the result of coming Mideast wars—in the very area where some modern Edomites live, such as southern Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and the Persian Gulf states? It is interesting to note that many Palestinian Arabs have secured important positions in the *oil fields* of the Middle East. And there are many indications that some of the Arabs in Palestine and other countries of the Middle East and Central Asia have a certain amount of Edomite blood flowing in their veins. God Almighty says He will yet use the “HOUSE OF JOSEPH” to consume, as with a *flame* the “HOUSE OF ESAU” (Obadiah 17)! It does not appear that this prophecy will be fulfilled *during the Millennium*. Rather, it appears that Obadiah’s prophecy against EDOM must come to pass *before* the Prince of Peace brings peace to all nations (Isa. 2:1-5)! It is clear from history that there is nothing in recorded history which shows where the people of the ancient “House of Joseph” (ancestors of the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples) ever fulfilled such a prophecy in regard to Edom’s descendants! In Bible times, it was the *Jews* (not the *House of Joseph*), who had numerous wars with the Edomites, As we have seen demonstrated in this paper, the warlike *Idumeans*/Edomites lived on Judah’s southern border. Also, centuries *after* the Ten Tribes of Israel were taken into captivity in 721BC, the Jews had a number of wars with their ancient foes, the “IDUMAEAS.”

VIII. Jeremiah Foretells EDOM’S Doom!

The prophet Jeremiah also gives further details concerning God’s judgment on Edom. Although some of Jeremiah’s prophecy may have been fulfilled when the ancient kingdom of Edom fell before the Nabateans (*Ishmaelites*) a few centuries before Christ, nonetheless it is certain that some of Jeremiah’s prophecies re Edom can only apply at the end of this age, which God’s prophets had predicted long ago. (Obadiah tells us that the time of Edom’s punishment will be at the “the Day of the LORD” (Obadiah 15).

The forty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah says: “AGAINST EDOM. Thus says the LORD of hosts: ...I will bring the calamity of ESAU upon him, the time that I will *punish him*.... But I have made Esau bare; I have uncovered his SECRET PLACES [his “clefts” or “caves,” v.16], and he shall not be able to *hide* himself....’ For thus says the LORD ‘Behold, those whose judgment was not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunk.... *You shall not go unpunished*, but you shall surely drink of it. For I have sworn by Myself,’ says the LORD, ‘That BOZRAH [modern BASRA in S. Iraq] shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse. And all its cities shall be perpetual wastes.... I have

heard a message from the LORD, and an *Ambassador* has been sent to the nations: ‘Gather together, come against *her* [i.e. EDOM], and rise up to battle! For indeed, I will make you *small* among the nations, *despised* among men. Your *fierceness* has deceived you, the *pride* of your heart, O you who dwell in the CLEFTS [“CAVES”] OF THE ROCK. Who hold the height of the hill...Edom also shall be an astonishment.... As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah....’ Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD that He has taken against EDOM.... Surely He shall make their dwelling places *desolate* with them. The earth shakes at the noise of *their fall*; At the cry its noise is heard at the Red Sea. Behold, He [God] shall come up and fly like the eagle, and spread His wings over BOZRAH [BASRA]; The heart of the mighty men of EDOM in that day shall be like the heart of a woman in birth pangs” (Jer. 49:7-22). [Note. The ancient Edomite city of “Bozrah,” which was located some miles south of the Dead Sea, no longer exists. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* says this of the Iraqi city of BASRA, “The original city, Bassorah was founded by Caliph Omar I in A.D. 636 at *Az Zubayr*, about 8 miles from the modern town [of Basra]...” (vol. 3, 1970 ed, “BASRA”). Bear in mind that the biblical city of BOZRAH was destroyed in ancient times, but the modern city of BASRA was founded in 636AD. Basra, Iraq’s second largest city and her Iraq’s only seaport, is a very important city in building her economy and her very survival!]

Also note the way the *New International Version* of the Bible translates key statements in this 49th chapter of Jeremiah. “**Concerning EDOM:** Turn and flee, hide in the *DEEP CAVES*...for I will bring disaster on Esau at the time I punish him.... An *envoy* [“ambassador” KJV] was sent to the nations to say, ‘Assemble yourselves to attack it [Edom]! Rise up for battle!’ Now I will make you *small* among the nations, despised among men. The terror you inspire and the pride of your heart have deceived you, you who live in the CLEFTS of the ROCKS [“caves”]...from there I will bring you down, Edom will become an object of horror” (vv. 7-17). It would appear that some of Edom’s descendants have settled in Central Asia, including Afghanistan! Is it possible that the “Ambassador” (other versions have “Envoy” or “messenger”) which God sent to the “nations” was the “envoy” that God sent from the nation of AMERICA (the “HOUSE OF JOSEPH”), which God’s Word predicts will be the nation that He will use to destroy the “House of Esau”? Obadiah tells us that during the general time frame of the end-time “DAY OF THE LORD,” God will use Joseph to punish Edom: “The HOUSE OF JACOB shall be a *FIRE*, and the HOUSE OF JOSEPH [the U.S. and Britain] a *FLAME*; But the HOUSE OF ESAU shall be *STUBBLE*; They [the “House of Joseph”] shall kindle them and *devour them* [i.e. *Esau*], and no survivor [of their *armies*] shall remain of the HOUSE OF ESAU” (Obad. 18). The ancient Edomites lived in elaborate rock-hewn dwellings in the rose-red city of Petra, which still contains many caves.

God’s people clearly understand which people/nations the “House of Joseph” refers to, but few if any have come to understand that the modern people of Edom are now scattered through much of the Middle East: among the Palestinians of the W. Bank, among the peoples of Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, Yemen and Afghanistan. Interestingly, in 1990, Secretary of State Dick Cheney was sent the Mideast to garner support for a coalition of nations to drive Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait (which was accomplished in 1991)? And isn’t it also rather interesting that, early in 1002, Vice President Cheney was again sent to speak to the leaders of the Arab nations in the Mideast in order to get their support for a military operation to “take out” Iraq’s President Saddam? And let us not forget that God used the U.S. and Great Britain (with minimal support from others) to drive Bin Laden and other militant leaders of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda out of Afghanistan.

It is clear that during the Millennium, there will be great *peace* in the earth, as the nations beat their swords into plowshares (Isa. 2:1-4). It seems certain that numerous O.T. prophecies concerning the *destruction of EDOM* at the end of this age must yet be fulfilled sometime *before* Jesus Christ establishes *worldwide peace* on this earth. We are plainly told that the people of Israel (Joseph in particular) will destroy the power of “Edom” in the general time frame just *before* or *during* the “Day of the LORD.” A study of many prophecies concerning the DAY OF THE LORD clearly reveals that God will use various nations and their armies to accomplish much of what He says will happen during that *awful time* (Rev. 8-16). These end-time prophecies regarding the destruction of

Edom clearly show that the Anglo-Americans will be the main players, militarily speaking, in removing such evil men as Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein and their threats to weaponize bombs and missiles with nuclear, chemical and/or biological warheads in order to further *terrorize* the Israel, the U.S. and the civilized world? Remember, God’s awful judgments on nations have often been administered through human instruments—such as *Assyria, Babylonia, Rome, the Axis Powers*, etc.—by which He sometimes chastises His people! A careful study of God’s prophesied end-time judgments upon various nations is nearly always accomplished through God using various nations as His instruments—as tools which He uses to punish nations which are exceedingly wicked in His sight. Such an example of God using other nations to punish wicked nations is found in the first two chapters of Amos. God says He will punish certain nations: “Damascus...Gaza...Tyrus [Tyre]...Edom...Ammon [and] Moab [modern Jordan]...Judah [modern state of Israel]...Israel [dispersed peoples of the *Ten Tribes*]...Egypt...” (Amos 1:3-15; 2:1-16). Even though Amos’ prophecies may have been *partly fulfilled*, there is a much greater *future fulfillment* of these yet to occur! This two-fold or *duality principle* is often found in Bible prophecy!

IX. Ezekiel’s Bitter Denunciation of “Edom”

Notice Ezekiel’s end-time denunciation of the Edomites. One of the biblical proofs that many “Palestinians” are descendants of the ancient “Edomites,” is that, according to Ezekiel’s prophecies, the ancient descendants of Esau/Edom (the *Edomites*) would lay *claim* to the tribal territories once inhabited by the peoples of *Israel and Judah*, anciently called “Samaria” and “Judea.”

“Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, ‘Son of man, set your face against *MOUNT SEIR* [i.e. Edom] and prophesy against it, and say to it, “Thus says the LORD GOD: Behold, O Mount Seir, I am against you; I will stretch out My hand against you, and make you most desolate; and I will lay your cities waste.... Because you have had an ANCIENT HATRED, and have shed the blood of the children of Israel by the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, when their iniquity came to an end [This refers to the Edomites’ treatment of the Jews at the time of their captivities—in 586BC and in 70AD.], therefore, as I live,” says the LORD GOD, “ I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you have not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue you. Thus I will make Mount Seir [Edom’s land] most desolate.... And I will fill its mountains with the slain.... Because you have said, ‘These TWO NATIONS [*Israel and Judah*] and these TWO COUNTRIES [*Samaria and Judea*] shall be mine, and WE [the *Edomite-Palestinians*, who did, in fact, claim *Palestine* as “theirs”] will possess them,’ although the LORD was there [Christ Himself lived and taught in Samaria and Judea], “therefore as I live,” says the Lord GOD, “I will do according to your *ANGER* and according to the *ENVY* in your *HATRED* against them; and I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, I have heard all your blasphemies which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, ‘*They are desolate* [*Samaria and Judea*]; *they are given to US* to consume.’ Thus with your mouth you have *boasted* against Me and multiplied your words against Me; I have heard them. Thus says the Lord GOD: “The whole earth will rejoice, *when I make you desolate*. As you rejoiced because the inheritance of the HOUSE OF ISRAEL [*Samaria and Judea*] was desolate, so I will do to you; you shall be desolate, O MOUNT SEIR, as well as *all of EDOM*—all of it! Then they shall know that I am the LORD” (Ezek. 35:1-15). God also says, “Surely I have spoken against the rest of the nations and against EDOM, who gave MY LAND to *themselves* as a possession, with wholehearted joy and spiteful minds [‘scorning souls’]” (36:5).

Ezekiel’s foregoing prophecy tells us precisely what happened after God drove most of the people of Israel out of the Promised Land (in the captivities of 721BC, 586BC and 70AD). Many of

the Edomite branch of “Arabs” migrated *northward*, first into the land of JUDAH (*Judea*), then they later proceeded further north to occupy much of the land of ancient SAMARIA. The Edomites (i.e. ancestors of today’s *Palestinians*) claimed *Judea* and *Samaria* as their own land. Even though God punished His people Israel for their sins, yet a loving God promised that these people would *return* to their ancient homeland in the latter days. Furthermore, the last chapters of Ezekiel, as well as numerous other O.T. prophecies, predict that Israel would re-occupy the Promised Land in the last days; and God also describes a beautiful Temple that will be built in Jerusalem at that time.

The Prophet Ezekiel also depicts a bubbling, life-sustaining river of water that will flow out *eastward* from that Temple and go into the Dead Sea; and some of its water will also flow *westward* into the Mediterranean Sea (Ezek. 47:1-12; cf. Zech. 14:8-11). [Note. The following words of Israel’s Prime Minister Ariel Sharon are very interesting in regard to finding a solution to the “water problem” in the modern State of Israel. Prime Minister Sharon says: “We [Israelis] in fact did start something of that nature in 1981 [that is, building a *canal*]]—the Mediterranean-Dead Sea Canal. We raised a hundred million dollars for it and got it off the ground. The project could have opened up the Negev [desert] with lakes and tourism and industry. Unfortunately, in 1984 when the new government came in, the canal was halted” (Sharon’s autobiography, *Ariel Sharon Warrior*, pub. in 1989 by Simon and Schuster, p. 542). According to Ezekiel, during the Millennium, God will cause a river to flow *westward* from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean Sea, while some of that same river will flow *eastward* to the *Dead Sea*, thus healing those salty waters! At that time, the *Prince of Peace* will then let all nations know that the “Promised Land” was given by Him to the sons of Israel/Jacob—*not* to the sons of either *Ishmael* or *Edom/Esau*—Deut. 30:19-20; 32:8-11!]

Nonetheless, in O.T. times, God always permitted “Gentile” peoples to live among the Israelites, if they would worship and serve the true God *Yahweh*—and if they would live in *peace* and harmony with their Israelite neighbors. The Palestinians now claim that “Palestine” is “their land,” and assert that the Jews had no right to buy up and re-occupy their ancient homeland. It is a fact that, during the 1948 and 1967 wars many of the Palestinians, due to Arab propaganda, voluntarily chose to flee from the West Bank into the surrounding Arab nations, leaving their homes behind. Arab leaders had assured them they would be able to return later to their lands and live there after they “crushed Zionist Israel”!]

X. *Obadiah’s* Dire Prophecy Against the End-time Peoples of “Edom”

The Prophet Obadiah also gives a rather detailed prophecy concerning what God will do unto the modern Edomites (including *Palestinians*) because of their bitter hatred against their *cousins*, the descendants of Israel. And this definitely includes the *Israelis* living in Israel. But it also includes the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples (the English-speaking peoples):

“The vision of *Obadiah*. Thus says the Lord GOD concerning EDOM (We have heard a report from the LORD, and a MESSENGER [“ambassador” KJV, “envoy” NIV] has been sent among the nations, saying, ‘Arise, and let us rise up against her [EDOM] for battle’: Behold, I will make you *small* among the nations; You shall be greatly *despised*. The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who dwell in the CLEFTS of the ROCK [i.e. the CAVES], whose habitation is high....” (Obad. 1-3). The *New International Version* [Note. The ancient Edomites made “Petra” (“Sela”) their capital city. Their dwellings were high up in the “Rose Red City” of ancient Edom, until the NABATEANS (sons of

Ishmael) drove them out of *Petra* a few centuries before the birth of Christ. As mentioned earlier, some *Edomites* have lived in Palestine since the majority of the Jews were driven out in 586BC and in 70AD, but many of the Edomites migrated into *Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen*; and there are numerous indications that some of them now live in such countries as Afghanistan, and other Muslim nations of Central Asia.

[Note. All the world now knows about the famous “CAVES” of AFGHANISTAN, in which the Taliban, and Osama bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda soldiers (*jihadist* terrorists), thought they were impregnable. But God has sent the *sons of Joseph* (the *U.S.* and *Britain*) into that country to clear the *terrorists* out of their caves, high up in the mountains of Central Asia. What is the meaning of “cleft” as used in Obadiah 3 and Jeremiah 49:16? The Hebrew word “CHAGAV...[is] from an unused *root* meaning to take *REFUGE*; a *rift* in rocks:—cleft” (*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*, # 2288, “cleft”). The ancient *Edomites* once inhabited Petra, the rose-red, rock-hewn city of CAVES, the remains of which are in modern Jordan. But the ancient Edomites have moved from that area, and many of them now live in *Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the West Bank* and *Yemen*. It believed that some Edomites also live in certain regions of the high mountains of Central Asia, including *Afghanistan*.]

Obadiah continues his end-time prophetic denunciation of the people of Edom/Esau: “‘Oh, how *Esau* shall be searched out! How his hidden treasures shall be sought after. All the men in your confederacy shall force you to the *border* [of Afghanistan/Pakistan?].... Will I not in that day,’ says the LORD, ‘even destroy the wise men of Edom...from the mountains of Esau [some Edomites live in the “mountains” of Central Asia]? Then your mighty men, O TEMEN [a grandson of Esau, and ancestor of the people of YEMEN], shall be dismayed, to the end that everyone from the *mountains of Esau* may be cut off by slaughter. For the *violence* against your *brother Jacob*, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever. In the day that you stood on the other side—in the day that strangers carried captive his forces [Jews carried captive in 70AD], when foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for *Jerusalem*—even you were as one of them. Arch-terrorist Bin Laden’s family is from Yemen, and it is highly possible that both he and Saddam Hussein are from the ancient family of Esau/Edom! [The first century Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, says 20,000 Edomite soldiers entered Jerusalem when the Romans besieged that city and slaughtered many Jews, during the Roman siege]. But you should not have gazed on the day of *your brother*, in the day of his captivity [by the *Babylonians*, and later by the cruel *Romans*]; Nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of *their destruction*... nor laid hands on *their substance* in the day of their calamity. You should not have...cut off those among them who escaped” (vv. 6-14).

“House of Joseph” Will Destroy the “House of Edom”!

What awful *penalty* that the modern-day Edomites will have to pay because of the *innocent blood* of Israel that they have shed down through the centuries?

God’s Prophet Obadiah continues with God’s stern warning to the Edomites: “‘For the DAY OF THE LORD upon *all the nations* is near; as you [Edom] have done, it shall be done to you; Your reprisal shall return upon your own head. For as you drank on My HOLY MOUNTAIN [for over 2,000 years!] so shall all the nations drink continually...and they shall be as though they had never been. But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance.... The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions [in the Promised Land]. The HOUSE OF JACOB shall be a *FIRE*, and the HOUSE OF JOSEPH [America & Britain] a *FLAME*; But the HOUSE OF ESAU shall be *STUBBLE*; They [“house of Joseph”] shall kindle them and devour them [Edom], and *no survivor* shall remain of the HOUSE OF ESAU,’ for the LORD has spoken” (vv. 15-18)!

Note. History indicates that some of Esau's descendants have migrated into Central Asia (into AFGHANISTAN and adjacent nations), Ishmaelite and Edomite names are frequently found in those Muslim nations. And history shows that shortly after Mohammed's death in 632AD, "Arab" armies—which must have included various branches of the "Arab" peoples—conquered the entire Middle East, and also subdued the peoples eastward into what is now Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Muslim peoples of Central Asia and have long prided themselves in being *invincible* in their mountainous strongholds, with their endless caves in which to hide, then they would come out to *harass* any enemy who dared to venture into the mountain fastness of their seemingly *impregnable* retreats. Remember, the British lost hundreds of troops killed by the Afghans at the Khyber Pass in the 1800s; and the Russians suffered great losses, both in soldiers and in military hardware, before they were driven out by the Afghans in 1989. Now the *Afghan Taliban* has taken on the United States; but thus far their CAVES have proven very vulnerable in the face of American technology and military might.

Also, remember that Saddam Hussein (the "Butcher of Baghdad"), said America's endeavor to drive his army out of Kuwait would be the "mother of all battles." But his crushing defeat (with an estimated 100,000 Iraqi battle deaths) proved to be the "mother of all defeats" for Saddam. Furthermore, America support from her allies before "taking out Saddam" and his brutal regime, in a bold effort to prevent him from getting his hands on chemical, biological and NUCLEAR weapons. Will God again use the "House of Joseph" (America and Britain) to *totally destroy* the military power of the modern Edomites in the Middle East, including Syria? U.S. economic and military support has already helped Israel to destroy much of the power of the "Palestinians" living on the West Bank.

What does God's Word mean when it says, "The HOUSE OF JACOB shall be a *FIRE*, and the HOUSE OF JOSEPH a *FLAME*; But the HOUSE OF ESAU shall be *stubble*; They ["]Joseph"] shall kindle them and devour them, and no survivor [among their *military men*] shall remain of the HOUSE OF ESAU, for the LORD has spoken" (Obad. 18)? Neither the Bible nor secular history can show where the HOUSE OF JOSEPH has ever fulfilled this prophecy mentioned in Obadiah. And America and Britain and their allies did destroy Saddam Hussein's military might in the Gulf War of 1990-1991 and in the recent overthrow of Saddam's regime in Iraq. But do the prophecies in Obadiah reveal that the U.S. and Britain yet have quite a *big job* to do in order to fulfill those specific prophecies?

The Word of God then makes this bold prediction: "The South [Heb. Negev] shall possess the mountains of ESAU [the land between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea, is now possessed by the Jews], and the Lowland shall possess PHILISTIA [the Gaza Strip, only partly possessed by the Jews]" (v. 19). The Jews have possessed the "mountains of Esau" since they became a nation in 1948. They have not yet taken fully possession of all of the land of the Philistines, but are now in possession of over half of the land once occupied by those peoples. Ancient *Philistia* [i.e. the GAZA STRIP] was about 50 miles long and about 15 miles wide, but today's Gaza Strip is only about 25 miles long and 6 to 8 miles wide—just half its original size. Continuing in v. 19: "They [the *Israelites*] shall possess the fields of *EPHRAIM* and the fields of *SAMARIA*. Benjamin shall possess *GILEAD* [land east of the Jordan River]" (v. 19).

This ancient tribal territory of "Benjamin" and "Samaria" was assigned by the United Nations (in its PARTITION OF PALESTINE in 1947) to the PALESTINIANS, as part of their State. But during the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948-49 and 1967, the Jews repossessed ("occupied," according to the Palestinians), the ancient tribal area of *Benjamin*, as well as the ancient area of *Samaria*, which had been the heart of the territory held anciently by the Kingdom of Israel (i.e. the Ten Tribes). The land of PHILISTIA and the "South" (*Negev*) are on the West Bank. However, notice that verse 19 also says that the people of "BENJAMIN shall possess GILEAD." The land of "Gilead" is located on the East Bank of the Jordan River, in modern JORDAN. Even though the Israelis have occupied the entire West

Bank (including Philistia/Gaza Strip, the lands of BENJAMIN and SAMARIA), they have not yet taken possession of any land on the East Bank. Therefore this part of this prophecy is *yet to be fulfilled*.

Benjamin's Ancient Tribal Inheritance

Note. A study of Israel's ancient history reveals that the city of JERUSALEM (which King David conquered circa 1000BC, and made it his capital—2 Sam. 5) was part of the tribal inheritance allotted to the *Benjamites*. When the Ten Tribes seceded from the House of David and the Kingdom of Judah, in about 930BC, the tribe of BENJAMIN, and most of the tribe of LEVI (i.e. the priests and Levites), remained loyal to the House of Judah (1 Kings 11:29-36; 12:16-23). "And when Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled all the *house of JUDAH* with the *tribe of BENJAMIN* to fight against the house of Israel, that he might restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon..." (v. 21). Recall that when wicked King Herod slew many of "infants," in Bethlehem, those infants were "Benjamites," because the Bible reveals that they were the descendants of "Rachel." "A voice was heard in Rama [near Bethlehem], lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, RACHEL weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more"(Matt. 2:16-18; see Jer. 31:15). Rachel was the mother of "Benjamin" (Gen. 35:16-18).

"Rama of BENJAMIN, one of the cities allotted to the tribe of Benjamin, mentioned with Gibeon and Beeroth, and in the same group with JERUSALEM (Josh. 18:25)" (*Unger's Bible Dict.*, 3rd, "Ramah"). It is also important to remember that at least one of the apostles was a *Benjamite*: The Apostle Paul said, "For I also am an *Israelite*, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of BENJAMIN" (Rom. 11:1). Even though it is believed that, sometime after Christ's ministry, many of the Benjamites separated from the Jews, nonetheless there are numerous indications that a number of Benjamites have to this day remained among the Jewish people, and are therefore known as "Jews," even though they are "Benjamites." When Zechariah says, "Benjamin shall possess Gilead," it is clear that, this part of the prophecy has not *yet* been fulfilled. No "Jews" (or Israelites of any of the 12 tribes of Israel) have yet claimed possession of any of Israel's ancient land on the East Bank of the Jordan River, in the land of "Gilead," which now forms part of the Kingdom of *Jordan*. Therefore this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled. But when will that take place? The Bible does not always give us the specific prophetic "times and seasons" of its prophecies (Acts 1:7-8).

XI. Zechariah's Prophecy: "Jerusalem [to become a] Burdensome Stone"!

All world leaders who have wrestled with the "Palestinian problem" realize that one of the main sticking points concerns Jerusalem—which Jews, Christians, and Muslims consider a "Holy City." The United Nations had decreed that Jerusalem was to be an INTERNATIONAL CITY. Some world statesmen still think Jerusalem ought to become an international city. Others strenuously object to such a "solution," remembering that when the Allies divided the city of Berlin, this caused no end of problems during the early part of the Cold War, and brought the Communists and Democracies to the brink of NUCLEAR WAR! What to do with Jerusalem—that is, who shall have sovereignty over that Holy City—is still a big stumbling stone which no one seems to know how to get around!

In the 12th chapter of Zechariah, God's prophet gives us some of the most graphic and detailed prophecies concerning events which are about to occur in the Middle East: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem *a cup of drunkenness* to all the surrounding people, when they lay siege against *Judah* and *Jerusalem*. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very HEAVY STONE for all people; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.... And the *governors* of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God. In that day I will make the *governors of Judah* like a firepan in the woodpile, and like *a fiery torch* in the sheaves; *they shall* devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem.... It shall be in that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them. It shall in that day that I will seek to *destroy* all the nations that come against Jerusalem" (Zech. 12:2-9 NKJV).

The RSV says, "The word of the LORD concerning *Israel*: Thus says the LORD.... Lo I am about to make Jerusalem a *cup of reeling* [*"cup of trembling"* KJV] to all peoples round about; it will be *against Judah* also in the siege *against Jerusalem*. On that day I will make Jerusalem a HEAVY STONE for all the peoples; all who lift it shall *grievously hurt* themselves. And all the nations of the earth will come together against it" (Zech. 12:2-3 RSV). Interestingly, it is well known that the *United Nations* and the *European Union* always side with the *Palestinians* and oppose *Israel* in all matters pertaining to the "Palestinian issue." In fact, the U.S. is one of the few nations which has stood staunchly by Israel since its inception in 1948. The Palestinians, and most of the Arab leaders, have repeatedly spoken of *annihilating* the State of Israel! That is still their goal, according to Bible prophecy (Psa. 83:1-8). Do Zechariah's prophecies of end-time Jerusalem tell us that no nation or humanly devised organization will have the *wisdom* to know how to handle this thorny "Palestinian problem"—this "burdensome stone"? Note that Zechariah's prophecies do *not* explain the *deep-seated causes* of this "running sore," which stubbornly refuses to heal. Only the Word of God can clearly explain *why*, for over half a century, many great world leaders have sought in vain to find a *workable solution* to today's Arab-Israeli deadlock. Why has this thorny "Palestinian problem" defied every solution that has been proffered by the leaders of many *nations* and *organizations*? And why does every nation or organization that involves itself in the *bitter dispute* between the Jews and Arabs find that it gets caught up in the *crossfire* between these two antagonists? Will *any human leader or any nation* ever be able to broker a *viable peace arrangement* between the Israelis and the Palestinians? Or will mankind continue to see the "Palestinian problem," like a festering sore, demanding the attention and the sacrifices of the whole world? Will this stubborn "Palestinian problem" yet lead the world to the very brink of ARARMAGEDDON?

XII. A Brief Summary of the Main Points:

Here are some of the *main points* which should be borne in mind: Today's Mideast strife and warfare have *modern roots* (so far as Jew-Arab grievances are concerned), but more importantly the Bible reveals that the "Palestinian problem" has very *deep roots* which go back into *ancient history*. Some of today's enmity toward *Israel* has roots going all the way back to several *branches* of Abraham's "extended family," who are today known as "Arabs." Why does virtually no one know where the ancient *Edomites* now live? Why do so few understand the *ancient names* by which their ancestors were known? One reason for virtually no one knowing where the "Edomites" of the Bible now live in the Middle East, is due to the Arab's conquest in

the 700s A.D. Most of the peoples in the Mideast lost their identity when the Arabs conquered that area between, 636-638 A.D.

This conquest by the Arabs resulted in what is called the ARABIZATION and ISLAMIZATION of the entire Middle East. That Arabization commenced with the Arab-Islamic conquests that began shortly after the death of the Prophet Mohammed in 632AD, and continued until the Arab-Muslim armies had conquered all the lands stretching from *India* in the East, across South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, the Spanish Peninsula, and north into *France* in the West. This meant that the Middle East and all these other areas came under the heel of *Arab-Islamic* conquerors. Furthermore, after all of the peoples of the Mideast were subjugated by the Arabs, the conquered peoples then adopted the Arab's language, culture, and religion (Islam), causing them to lose *their national identities*. Among those who lost their identities due to ARABIZATION were the following Mideast peoples: Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, Midianites, Philistines and other peoples who once lived *in or near* the "land of Israel," anciently known as the "land of Canaan." This study paper explains how the national identities of all those peoples became submerged among the sea of Mideast peoples who became ARABIZED, following the Islamic conquest shortly after Mohammed's death in 632AD.

The Bible reveals that the Patriarch Abraham had *many children* by the following women: [1] Abraham's first wife, Sarah, [2] Sarah's handmaid, Hagar, [3] Abraham's second wife, Keturah, which he took after Sarah's death (Gen. 23; 25:1-4), [4] and a number of "concubines," by which he had numerous "sons" (vv. 5-7). Unfortunately—as often happens in the case of siblings born to several different parents—a great deal of *envy* and *jealousy*, *enmity* and *outright bitterness*, and other "negative" emotions sprang up amongst the many siblings in *Abraham's extended family*.

A Brief Sketch of Arab Origins. Not long after Abraham's clan arrived in the "land of Canaan," over 3,500 years ago, strife soon flared up between Abraham's and Lot's households. (Lot was Abraham's nephew). Abraham saw to it that the two households *parted in peace*, to insure that strife would end (Gen. 13:1-18). Later, envy and strife again raised its ugly head when Abraham's firstborn son Ishmael (by Sarah's maid) began to have envy and enmity toward his half-brother Isaac (21:1-21). Eventually Abraham and Sarah agreed that the two families could not continue to dwell together in peace and harmony. God told Abraham to obey his wife Sarah's wishes in the matter, and he sent *his firstborn son Ishmael* and his mother *Hagar* away. That caused Abraham considerable grief, since he was a man of great integrity. Nonetheless, just before Abraham died, he gave all that he had to Isaac, after first having presented *gifts* to Keturah's children, as well as gifts to his concubines' children (Gen. 25:1-7). Abraham wisely understood that strife and enmity would naturally result if his children by these women were allowed to continue dwelling together.

But a far more difficult situation later arose in Abraham's *extended family* when his son Isaac fathered twin boys, named Esau and Jacob. Events recorded in the Bible reveal that the elder twin, Esau, felt *cheated* out of the *birthright* and its accompanying *blessing*, which he had expected to receive from his father Isaac. Esau's brother *Jacob* (Heb. *supplanter*) had supplanted him, thereby obtaining what Esau himself believed was his *right by birth*. Furthermore, Esau became *very enraged* toward his brother Jacob, and vowed to kill him. Realizing the gravity of the situation, Isaac and Rebecca then told Jacob to go and live for a time with his uncle Laban. Years later, after Jacob returned to Isaac's household, he and his brother Esau became partly reconciled—but Esau never *forgot* what his brother Jacob had done, and apparently never *forgave* him. Undoubtedly, *Esau* must have mentioned to his twelve sons what their *uncle Jacob* had done.

The Bible indicates that Esau's descendants never forgot, nor forgave, Jacob for what he had done to their father. The Bible reveals that Esau was a "profane" person who sold his birthright for a mere bowl of lentil soup. Jacob took advantage of Esau's weakness and bought Esau's birthright from him. Later, after Jacob used trickery to deceive his father Isaac into giving him the blessing, this caused great anguish to his brother Esau. After purchasing the *birthright*, Jacob believed that any *blessing* that belonged to that birthright was rightly his (see Gen. 27). God knew that Esau did *not* deserve the birthright for having treated it so lightly (Heb. 12:15-17). Nonetheless *Esau felt cheated* and bitter over losing the birthright and blessing that went with it. The Bible shows that from that day forward Esau's bitterness led to much bloodshed. Some of his descendants have continued to display hatred toward Israel during past millennia.

In fact, the Edomites (the *Amalekite* branch of Edomites in particular) became the Israelites' bitterest foes. The Amalekites were the most warlike branch of Edom's family. Furthermore, several Bible prophecies predicted that Esau's descendants would continue to have a "perpetual hatred" toward the descendants of Israel/Jacob (Ezek. 34:5, 11; Obadiah 8-18; Amos 1:11-12). Numerous prophecies reveal that during the close of this age the people of Esau would war against the sons of Israel, and would bring about great slaughter and sorrow. Those same prophecies also reveal that in this end-of-the-age struggle between the descendants of these *two brothers* (Esau and Israel), the descendants of Israel would win out. In fact, the Prophet Obadiah reveals that, in the near future, the people of "Israel"—the "House of Joseph" in particular—were to be like a blazing flame that will "consume" those Edomite enemies who try to destroy them (vv. 15-18). Much of today's bitterness between the Jews and the Arabs can be traced back to an ancient enmity that arose over 3,500 years ago in the land of "Canaan"—which God promised to Isaac's and Jacob's descendants, rather than to Ishmael's or Esau's offspring. The "core peoples" who today comprise the "Palestinians" comprise a major portion of the descendants of the ancient Edomites. They believe that they, as descendants of Isaac, have a right to possess the Holy Land (Ezek. 35:10). But the Israelis believe God gave it to their ancestors, to be later inherited by their descendants throughout all ages (Deut. 30:19-20). God gave the Promised Land to *all twelve* of the tribes of Israel—not just to the Jews of the tribe of *Judah!* God gave the Edomites the land located south of Judah (Deut. 2:1-12).

No human, no nation or organization will ever be able to settle this *bitter dispute* by any human wisdom. Why can't puny humans bring about a solution to this thorny "Palestinian problem"? Firstly, they don't realize what is behind this *ancient animosity* between the Jews and the Arabs—who freely acknowledge each other as *blood relatives*—as cousins! Secondly, the leaders of the nations of this world utterly fail to realize that the Creator who made the earth can give it to whom He chooses (Acts 17:26; Deut. 32:3). And God's word plainly reveals that He gave the Promised Land to the descendants of "Israel" (Deut. 30:19-20). But His Word also says that God gave Esau/Edom a different inheritance, which lay between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea (Deut. 2:1-12). Edom's inheritance in "Mount Seir" lay immediately south of Judah's tribal inheritance!

KEEP THESE *IMPORTANT POINTS* IN MIND:

[1] Just as it is impossible to understand many of the end-time prophecies without understanding the "vital key" of the *national identity* of *AMERICA AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY*, likewise it is vital that we understand who the people of Jacob's brother Edom are, and where they live, if we are to be able to understand a number of important end-of-the-age prophecies.

[2] Another important key to remember is that Esau's descendants were prophesied to LIVE BY "THE SWORD," meaning that they would be a very aggressive, warlike people (Gen. 27:40)!

[3] Furthermore, we saw that God's Word reveals that the Edomites (including the Amalekites) became Israel's bitterest foes during Bible times. They harbored what the prophets called a "PERPETUAL HATRED" toward their Israelite brethren, and often slaughtered them in battle, sometimes as allies of other tribes, and at other times on their own initiative (Obad. 9-18).

[4] We observed that both the Bible and secular history reveal that Edomites-Amalakites (who lived on the southern border of Judah) were the *most hostile* all of Israel's ancient neighbors. The Edomites moved *northward* into Judea, after many of the Jews had been driven into captivity in 586BC: "The central highlands of JUDAH...were denuded of their populations, and the Babylonians did *not* bring new settlers here to fill the void. These areas were gradually seized by the Edomites—who were crowded by the pressure of Arabian tribes—and the southern Judean hills to the region of Beth-zur now became 'IDUMEA'" (*The Macmillan Bible Atlas*, 1968 ed., 106). And after the Roman's conquered Judea in 70AD, not many Jews were left in the land of Judea. The Edomites were then known as "Idumeans," meaning "people of Edom." In fact, they took over the southern half of Judea, including the important city of Hebron, where Abraham had lived until his death. Even today it is the "Palestinians" (whose core peoples are of *Edomite descent*) who live in and control Hebron. The 35th chapter of Ezekiel reveals that it the Idumeans who would claim to be the rightful possessors of both JUDEA and SAMARIA: "These TWO NATIONS and these TWO COUNTRIES shall be mine, and we will possess them," said the Edomites (Ezek. 35:10)! The "Palestinians" have made such a claim, therefore the "core" peoples among the Palestinians must be *Edomites*. Although we see historical evidence that the Idumeans moved northward into the Promised Land and claimed it, there is no such record of the *Ishmaelites, Moabites, Ammonites, Midianites, or the Philistines* claiming possession of Israel's land.

[5] Further, we noticed that the true identity of the ancient Edomites is obscured under two modern names: *Arabs* and *Philistines*. The PALESTINIANS call themselves both "Arabs" and "Palestinians." Furthermore, the Romans and Greeks called all the peoples living in the "Promised Land" *Philistines*. In time, all of the people who lived on the West Bank in particular became known as Palestinians. It was not until *after* the Muslim conquest of Palestine in 636-638AD that the Palestinians on the West Bank (in what is now "Israel") also began to be called "Arabs." The *true Ishmaelite Arabs* had come from the *Arabian Peninsula*, not from the *Sinai Peninsula*, where many of the ancient *Edomites* had lived. Most "Arabs" of the Arabian Peninsula are descendants of Abraham—either through *Sarah, Hagar, Keturah* or Abraham's unnamed *concubines*.

[6] We noted that an important ancient city of the Edomite peoples was called BOZRAH. And we also saw that some "Arabs" (undoubtedly of *Edomite blood, or connections*) moved into what is now southern Iraq and founded the city of BASRA in 636 AD (see Gen. 36:33). Numerous prophecies reveal that God will cause a great "sacrifice" at Bozrah/Basra at the end of this age (Isa. 34:6, 63:9; Jer. 48:24; 49:23, 22). It would appear that this is an end-time prophecy regarding a slaughter of Edomites in the area of modern BASRA, Iraq's second largest city, and her only port city.

[7] The Prophet Obadiah also predicted that the "House of Joseph" (Britain and the U.S.) will "consume" the "House of Esau"—like a flame consumes dry chaff. That prophecy is yet to be fulfilled. Will Obadiah's prophecy (vv. 15-18) be fulfilled immediately *before* the "Day of the LORD" (v. 15)? Or, will it be fulfilled *during* the Day of the Lord, between the time of Christ's Second Coming, Satan's banishment, and the actual setting up of God's world-ruling Kingdom (Rev. 20:1; Zech. 14:1-9).

[8] Even though the Bible and secular history reveal that the "core" peoples now known as "Palestinians" are *Edomites*, nonetheless, this does *not* mean that the 8,400,000 Palestinians represent

all of the modern descendants of Esau/Edom. We observed that the descendants of *Ishmael* and *Keturah* (and perhaps of Abraham's "concubines") inhabited the NORTHERN portion of the Arabian Peninsula, but that the southern part of that peninsula was inhabited by *a different people*. We noticed that the descendants of Esau's grandson "Teman" settled the *southern* (or S.W.) part of the Arabian Peninsula. "Teman" means "south," and alludes to the fact that Teman's descendants would go to the *south*, in what we now call "YEMEN"! There are indications that some of Esau's descendants migrated to southern Iraq, Syria, and apparently some moved further eastward into *Central Asia*—to the general area east of the Caspian Sea. Some Bible students also think that some Edomites also settled in *Turkey*? Clearly, history indicates that some of Esau's people settled in Afghanistan and other Central Asian countries. Both prophecy and history indicates that the descendants of the ancient *Patriarch Esau* are now relatively numerous, just as the descendants of modern "Israel" now number a few hundred millions!

CONCLUSION: If we are to understand the importance of the end-time prophecies concerning "Edom," then we must know precisely *who* they are. It is beyond dispute that many of today's Palestinians are of Edomite descent. But there are many other Edomites in Jordan, Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Central Asia, etc. many of whom are *not* called "Palestinians," but are nonetheless ESAU'S DESCENDANTS!

XIV. When Will Jews and Arabs Embrace?

Will Arab-Israeli enmity soon vanish from this war-torn planet? When the Jews and Arabs finally awaken to see the truth concerning what the Word of God says, will they begin to simmer down and accept God's decision? Will they accept Christ's decision re who should possess the Promised Land? Yes, they will then come to accept the Messiah's decision—that He gave the Promised Land to the descendants of JACOB, and that includes all of the land between the Euphrates River and the River of Egypt (apparently the *Wady al Arish*). God did *not* give "Palestine" to any of the other families that sprang from Abraham, peoples whom we today know as "ARABS." However, God did give them some important areas of this globe as their inheritance. In fact, the Arabs have inherited well over half of the world's proven oil reserves—giving them the means to produce much wealth for their people—if they will wisely use their oil revenues. God loves all peoples, and this includes both *Arabs* and *Jews*! God's Word assures says the time is soon coming when the Jews and the Arabs will come to *love* and *embrace* each other as true *blood cousins* (Zech. 8:20-23)!

The Prophet Obadiah explains Edom's awful fate during the end-time Day of the Lord. "For the DAY OF THE LORD upon all the nations is near; as you have done, it shall be done to you; Your reprisal shall return upon your own head. For as you drank on My holy Mountain [at Jerusalem], so shall all the nations drink continually;... But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; The HOUSE OF JACOB shall possess their possessions. The HOUSE OF JACOB shall be a *FIRE*, and the HOUSE OF JOSEPH a *flame*; But the HOUSE OF ESAU shall be *stubble*; They shall kindle them and devour them, and no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau,' for the LORD has spoken. 'The South [the Jews] shall possess the mountains of Esau [the Jews now possess the Edomites' ancient homeland], and the Lowland [Jews] shall possess *Philistia* [the Gaza Strip]. They shall possess the fields of EPHRAIM and the fields of SAMARIA... And the captives [the Diaspora] of this host of the *children of Israel* shall possess the *land of the Canaanites* [which God promised Israel—Gen. 15:18-20] as far as *Zarephat*. The

captives of Jerusalem who are in Sephard shall possess the cities of the South. Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge the mountains [i.e. *nations*] of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S" (vv. 15-21).

God Almighty will provide "saviors" (rulers) to rule over the people of Edom during the wonderful Millennium (Obad. 21). Edom's rulers will no longer be ruthless, blood-thirsty men, such as the notorious *Herodian* kings who ruled the Jews for 80 years; instead, the born-again *sons of God* will be their wise, just, loving rulers—to show them the true way. Then the "Arabs" and the other Muslims will come to see they had all been *deceived* by false teachings. They will repent and then go up to Jerusalem to worship the true God (Isa. 65:23-24; Zech. 14:9-11, 16-21)! At last, *anti-Semitism* will vanish from the earth, and all peoples will learn to respect and love one another!

"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Peoples shall yet come, inhabitants of many cities; The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, "Let us continue to go and pray before the LORD, and seek the LORD of hosts. I myself will go also." Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in JERUSALEM, and to pray before the LORD.' Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you"'" (Zech. 8:20-23). The *Prophet Isaiah* also says, "And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, says, the LORD [*Yahweh*]" (Isa. 66:23-24). Will Jerusalem continue to be a "burdensome stone" that no nation can shoulder? Will the intractable "Palestinian problem" continue to bedevil the nations, keeping them from enjoying the fruits of *worldwide peace* and prosperity? Jerusalem will yet become the *Capital City* of the world, the city from which the Prince of Peace will dispense Truth and peace to all nations? What a beautiful Utopian picture God revealed to the Prophet Isaiah—"concerning JUDAH and JERUSALEM."

Isaiah gives us a wonderful picture of Utopian peace radiating out from Jerusalem into all the world" "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from JERUSALEM. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isa. 2:-14). Jerusalem shall be the capital of the world, with the Messiah (Jesus Christ), ruling the entire earth from that "City of Peace." Isaiah tells us, "And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem" (Zech. 2:12). The *Prophet Jeremiah* also says, "At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem.... In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together...to the land that I have given as an inheritance to your fathers" (3:17-18).

Then will be fulfilled Zechariah's wonderful millennial prophecy: "Thus says the LORD: 'I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of JERUSALEM. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, the Mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain.' Thus says the LORD OF HOSTS: 'Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with his staff in his hand because of great age. The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets'" (Zech. 8:3-5). The cities of Jerusalem will then be safe. Peace and stability will then radiate from the City of Peace into all nations and cities around the entire world!

ADDENDUM I

Arabia and the “Arabs”

The Boundaries and Meaning of Arabia. ARABIA—*arid*—an extensive region in the Southwest of Asia. It is bounded on the *west* by the Isthmus of Suez and the Red Sea, on the *south* by the Indian Ocean, and on the *east* by the Persian Gulf and the Euphrates. Arabia extends far into the *north* in barren deserts, meeting those of Syria and Mesopotamia. It is one of the few countries of the world from which the *original inhabitants* have never been expelled.... This country was, however, divided by modern geographers into (1) Arabia Proper, or the Arabian Peninsula; (2) Northern Arabia, or the Arabian Desert: and (3) Western Arabia, which includes the peninsula of Sinai and the Desert of Petra, originally inhabited by the Horites (Gen. 14:6), etc.), but in later times by the descendants of ESAU and known as the LAND OF EDOM or IDUMEA, also as the DESERT OF SEIR or MOUNT SEIR” (T. A. Bryant, *Today’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 1982 ed., p. 45).

ADDENDUM II

Are the Turks Edomites?

Some members of the “Churches of God” (including Mr. H.W. Armstrong and others in the WCG) believed that the TURKS were the descendants of “ESAU” or “EDOM, yet it is difficult to find much historical support ever quoted in WCG writings. Although it is difficult to trace the origin of the Turks with any certainty—other than back to Central Asia—this does *not* necessarily mean, however, that the Turks *originated* in Central Asia—just as we cannot assume that the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples originated in the Caspian Sea-Black Sea area, because that is where their ancestors once lived. We now know that before they lived in that part of S.W. Asia, they had previously spent over 750 years in the Promised Land (in the “land of *Israel*”). Is it likewise possible that even though our first historical references to the “Turks” place them in Central Asia (East of the Caspian Sea), it may be that they had previously lived in a land quite *distant* from the Eastern Caspian region?

This study paper reveals that a number of Esau’s descendants once lived in their ancient homeland south of Judah (between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea). Nonetheless, we have shown that in ancient times some of them migrated into Yemen, Iraq, Syria, and the lands around the Persian Gulf. And there are some indications that other Edomites migrated into Central Asia, where we today find men named “Isu” (Esau) and *Ismail* (Ishmael). So this might indicate that when the Arabs conquered the Middle East—shortly after *Mohammed’s death* in 732BC, as well as conquering the lands between the Persian Gulf and India—a number of Ishmaelites and Edomites migrated into Central Asia as a result of the Arab conquests of the 700s A.D.

Some students of biblical prophecy have assumed that the “Turks” may be descendants of Esau because one of Esau’s sons was named “Teman,” and they connect that name with “Ottoman” (used by the OTTOMAN TURKS). But is the name “Ottoman” to be derived from *TEMAN*, or some other person? “OTTOMAN EMPIRE, the empire of OTTOMAN TURKS, which was founded by Osman (Othman) I (d. 1326. Constantly varying in extent it included at different epochs: Asia Minor, and beyond the Caspian Sea; the Balkan states, Greece, Crete and Cyprus; parts of Hungary, Austria and southern Russia; Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Egypt; North Africa as far west as Algeria; and parts of Arabia. The period of the Empire ended when Sultan Mohammed VI fled from Turkey on Nov. 17, 1922” (*Encyc. Brit.* 1970 ed., vol. 16, “Ottoman Empire,” p. 1162). Thus we see that the name

Ottoman” is not derived *directly* from Esau’s son “Teman,” but derives from a 14th century Turk named “OSMAN,” also known as “OTHMAN.” Was this merely a linguistic variation of the name TEMAN, a descendant of Esau/Edom?

Are the Turks descendants of Esau/Edom? We must wait for more historical evidence before we can say with certainty that they are, or are not, Esau’s descendants. Some of the “British Israel” people have also believed that the Turks were Edomites, and have mentioned this in their literature. But they have not given historical proof of the veracity of their statements. It is not clear where Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong received his view that the “Turks” are the descendants of the ancient Patriarch ESAU. Further research will undoubtedly shed more light on the historical connections between Esau and Turkey.

ADDENDUM III

Zephaniah’s Prophecy Against the “Philistines”

Since ancient times the Philistines lived in what we now call GAZA or the GAZA STRIP, which is a small strip of land with a length of about 50 miles and a width of about 25 miles. The land in which they lived was called PHILISTIA. Zephaniah’s prophecies re the *PHILISTINES* are clearly intended for the *last days*—“The great DAY OF THE LORD” (Zeph. 1:14). In chapter 2, God tells the nations, “Gather yourselves together, yes, gather together, O undesirable nation [the Philistine people]...before the LORD’S fierce anger comes upon you, before the DAY OF THE LORD’S anger comes upon you!... For *GAZA* shall be forsaken, and *Ashkelon* desolate; They shall drive out *Ashdod* at noonday, and *Ekron* shall be uprooted. Woe to the inhabitants of the SEACOAST [the Gaza Strip].... The word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan, land of the PHILISTINES: ‘I will destroy you: So there shall be no inhabitant.’ The seacoast [Gaza Strip] shall be pastures, with shelters for shepherds and folds for flocks. The COAST shall be for the *remnant of the HOUSE OF JUDAH*.... For the LORD their God will intervene for them and *return their captives*” (Zeph. 2:1-7). [Note. Millions of Jews were held “captive” during WW II, then, after that war ended, hundreds of thousands of Jewish captives (victims of Hitler’s notorious *death camps*) immigrated to the land of Israel, and occupied about *half of the ancient “land of the Philistines,”* which today is called the Gaza Strip. Modern GAZA includes only about half the ancient land of the Philistines. Will *militant Islamic acts of violence against Judah* (the *Israelis*) eventually cause them to decide that it is vital that they reoccupy Gaza for national security reasons?]

Will the Israelis yet take possession of the entire *coastal strip* of the Philistines, including the “Gaza Strip”? Modern Gaza’s “core peoples” are undoubtedly of ancient *Philistine stock*. Nonetheless, mixed among them are a number of “Canaanites,” “Ishmaelites,” “Edomites,” etc. All of God’s prophecies re GAZA have *not* yet been fulfilled. As Jesus Christ commanded, we must “watch” the fulfillment of these prophesied events as they unfold before our very eyes!

Facts re Gaza. “The GAZA STRIP, also known as GAZA, extends NE from the Sinai Peninsula for 40 km (25 mi), with the Mediterranean Sea to the W. and Israel to the E. The Palestinian Authority [under *Yasir Arafat*] is responsible for *civil government*, but Israel retains control over *security*. Nearly all of the inhabitants are *Palestinian Arabs*, more than 35% of whom live in refugee camps. Population (2001 est.): 1,178,119. Area: 140 square miles” (*The World Almanac*, 2002 ed., “Gaza”). And, reportedly, between 70 and 80 percent of the

Palestinians in Gaza fully support *militant Islam*, including the use of *suicide bombings*, to gain their political ends.

After Joshua had conquered much of the Promised Land (in about 1300 B.C.), God said to him, “You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very *much land* yet to be possessed. This is *the land* that yet remains [to be possessed by Israel]; all the territory of the *Philistines* [including] the *five lords of the Philistines*—the GAZAites, the ASHDODites, the ASHKELONites, the GITTites, and the EKRONites...[and all the land northward] that belongs to the SIDONians...the land of the GEBALites and all LEBANON...as far as the entrance to HAMATH [in Syria]” (Joshua 13:1-5). God then told Joshua that all of *that land* was to be given “to Israel as an inheritance, as I have commanded you. Now...*divide this land* as an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh [Gad, Ruben and half of Manasseh inherited lands East of the Jordan River]” (vv. 6-7).

This makes it very clear that God commanded Joshua to tell the Israelites that He had given them the lands then inhabited by the *Philistines* and the *Lebanonese* peoples. Again, we must ask, “Did God give the “land of Canaan” (i.e. *Palestine*) to the *Arabs*, or to the people of *Israel*? Here is Joshua’s answer: “I call heaven and earth as witnesses today...that you may love the LORD your God...obey His voice...cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you *may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to ABRAHAM, ISAAC, and JACOB, to give THEM*” (Deut. 30:19-20). Clearly, this verse does *not* say that God gave “the land” (meaning “land of Canaan”—Gen. 12 & 15) to “Ishamael’s” or “Esau’s” descendants.

Almighty God warned the Israelites that, *if* they did not drive out the pagan nations living in Palestine, as God had commanded, they would surely suffer *harassment* as a result: “But if you do *not* drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let *remain* shall be *irritants* in your eyes and *thorns* in your sides, and they shall *harass* you in the land where you dwell” (Num. 33:55). The Israelites were to “dispossess the inhabitants of the land and dwell in it, for I have given you the land to possess” (v. 53). It is descendants of these same peoples (including the *Philistines* of Gaza) that are greatly *harassing* the people of Israel *today!*

ADDENDUM IV

Three Main Racial Groups

God Almighty purposefully created various races because He wanted a variety of racial types with different racial features and characteristics. He had a wonderful purpose in creating great *variety* in the *flora* and *fauna* kingdoms that He designed! Noah had *three sons*—Shem, Ham and Japheth—ancestors of the THREE MAIN BRANCHES of humanity:

SHEM is the father of most of the *light-skinned* Semitic peoples, known as *Caucasians* or CAUCASOIDS: “CAUCASIAN...of or relating to the Caucasians or its inhabitants...of or relating to the *white race* of humankind as classified according to physical features” (*Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dict.*, 10th ed.). This same dictionary also defines “Semite” as follows: “SEMITE...F[rench] *semite*, fr. *Sem* Shem, fr. LL., fr. Gk *Sem*, fr. *Heb.* Shem]... A member of any of a number of peoples of ancient southwestern Asia including the *Akkadians*, *Phoenicians*, *HEBREWS*, and *ARABS*... [or] a descendant of these peoples.” Shem’s descendants today inhabit

Europe, W. Asia, North America, Australia, New Zealand and parts of South America. Shem (*Sem*) is the ancestor of all the Semites: *Jews, Arabs, etc.*

HAM is the ancestor of the *black* peoples, known as NEGROIDS: NEGROID...of, resembling, related to, or characteristic of the *Negro race*" (*ibid.*). Ham's descendants have inhabited the continents of Africa, Australia (the aborigines), India, and many of the islands of *Oceania*.

JAPHETH is the progenitor of the *yellow* and *brown* races, known as MONGOLOIDS or *Oriental* peoples: "MONGOLOID...of, constituting, or characteristic of a major racial stock native to Asia as classified according to physical features (as the presence of an *epicanthic fold*) that includes peoples of northern and eastern *Asia, Malaysians, Eskimos*, and often *American Indians*" (*ibid.*).

[Note. The LORD (*Yahweh*) created the various "races," and all were made in the "image of God" (Gen. 1:26). All humans have God-like potential, and all are beautiful and talented in the eyes of their Creator. Nonetheless, both physical and mental differences are found among the three races: black, white and yellow-brown. The LORD separated the races that descended from Noah's three sons shortly after the Great Flood (Gen. 10 & 11): "God, who made the world.... And He has made from *one blood* every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings" (Acts. 17:24-26). "The Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples..." (Deut. 32:8). Historians and modern commentators are well aware that the Arabs are *cousins* of the Jews—both being *Semites*. U.S. President *Jimmy Carter*, who wrestled with this Jew-Arab problem, wrote a book titled, *The Blood of Abraham*, in which he showed that Israelis and Arabs both share the blood of the Patriarch Abraham. Many ask, "Why then can't these *blood relatives* get along?" This paper explains a little-known reason behind the *ancient enmities* between the Israelis and the Arabs.]

ADDENDUM V

Millions of "Assyrians" Still Live in the Mideast!

Many are amazed to learn that there are millions of people now living in the Middle East who claim to be descendants of the ancient Assyrians. Some historians believe that the great mass of "Assyrians" migrated in ancient times out of the land of Assyria in S.W. Asia, and moved westward over a period of many centuries, finally settling in Central Europe, *Germany* and *Austria* in particular. Worldwide, *today there are about 4.5 five million "Assyrians"* who know themselves to be *descendants* of the ancient Assyrians:

Note carefully the following information taken from the Internet: "The [modern-day] Assyrians are the indigenous people of Mesopotamia and have a history spanning over 6700 years. Today, the Assyrians are the descendants of the ancient Assyrian Empire and one of the earliest civilizations emerging in Mesopotamia. Although the Assyrian Empire ended in 612 B.C., history is replete with recorded details of the continuous persistence of the Assyrian people till the present time.... *The heartland of Assyria lies in present-day Northern IRAQ.* The remains of the ancient capital of Assyria, Nineveh, lie next to Mosul in N. Iraq. The world's 4.5 million ASSYRIANS are currently dispersed with members of the Diaspora comprising nearly one-third of the population. Most of the Assyrians in the *Diaspora* live in *North America, Europe*, and *Australia*—with the others residing primarily in *IRAQ, Syria, Iran, Lebanon, and Turkey*, etc.

"The Assyrians are *not Arabs*, but rather have maintained a continuous and separate identity, language, and culture that pre-dates the *Arabization* of the Near East. Until today, the Assyrians

speaking a distinct language, Syriac, the language spoken by Jesus Christ. As a Semitic language, the Assyrian language is related to Hebrew and Arabic but predates both” (*Internet*, www.aina.org/assyrians.html).

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* says: “Anti-British feeling [during WW II] gained ground during this period, largely by natural reaction against former control and through the *Iraqi* view of events in PALESTINE. Admiration of Hitler’s Germany was shown in close contact with the country and significant Nazi-type youth movements in Baghdad.... German victories and the fall of France seriously affected the attitude of the dominant army officers...; a pro-German party, civil and military, formed and consolidated, while increased army pressure bore on successive civilian cabinets. [After *Nazi failures* to successfully assist the pro-German forces in Iraq] light British forces reached the scene of action from PALESTINE, and others landed from India at *Basra*” and turned the tide so that British forces were victorious in the end (*Encyc. Brit.*, 1970 ed., vol. 12, art. ‘Iraq’).

In 1933, the Iraqis massacred many *Assyrians*: “A saddening, indeed shocking, episode...was the *massacre of over 300 Assyrian villagers*...in northern IRAQ, by an [Iraqi] army unit in August 1933, an episode applauded by most opinion [presumably, this *massacre* was applauded by the majority of Arab Iraqis], and never punished. It was followed by the departure of a large part of the hapless Assyrian community to Syria” (*Encyc. Brit.* vol. 12, “Iraq” p. 531).

During the World War II, the *Iraqis* were quite friendly with *Nazi Germany*; during that war, many Iraqis willingly supported the Nazis. Is it possible that, in the difficult years ahead, some Iraqis will join with the nations and leaders of the EUROPEAN UNION (or its outgrowth, the biblical “Beast”) at the close of this age, thereby helping to bring about the *downfall* of the Israelis and their allies: *America, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand*, etc.? God reveals that modern “Babylon” (*Rome* and its political consort, the Seventh Head of the a revived Roman Empire, which is *now forming*, will put a grievous “yoke” on the necks of *modern-day Israelites* at the end of this age—shortly before the *Messiah* destroys this whole Babylonian system, whose architect is the Devil (Isa. 47:1-15; Rev. 18:1-1-24)!

Note. History clearly reveals that most of the peoples of N.W. Europe are the descendants of the so-called “Lost Ten Tribes of Israel”—who were deported by the Assyrians to the shores of the Caspian Sea in S. W. Asia in about 721BC. From there they migrated (over a period of many centuries) into Northern and Western Europe, and from there many of their descendants later went to *North America, Australia and New Zealand*, colonizing those areas. Read the fascinating history of how these interesting events unfolded in history, by accessing our Website (cog21.org). Be sure and “click” onto the link titled, *America and Britain in Prophecy*. You will, I am sure, find that book fascinating to read! It includes both *biblical* and *historical* proofs for its assertions!

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