(Part 1, Part 2, Part 3, Part 4)

3-A: *"Vile Person"* Arrives on the Scene (11:21-23)
3-B: Rise to Power of a Modern *"King of the North"* (11:24-25)
3-C: Who Are the Kings of the North and South?
3-D: Setback to America (11:26-27)
3-E: Setback to *"King of the North"* and Turning Point (11:28-30)
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3-G: Nature of the anti-Christ *"King of the North"* (11:36-37)
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3-I: Among the Nations, Earth's Final War (11:40-45)

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3-E: Setback to *"King of the North"* and Turning Point (11:28-30)

11:28 **"While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage and return to his own land.**
11:29 **"At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter.**
11:30 **"For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage. So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant."**

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With great riches (11:28)

It seems the peace agreement (in verse 27) will have paid off in giving the *"king of the North"* access to great storehouses of wealth. This we could infer has something to do with gaining access to Mid East oil.

A passage in Ezekiel 38 also mentions this acquisition of wealth: *"Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions will*

***say to you* [*"Gog"* the Antichrist]*, 'Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder?'"* (38:13)**

Without getting into all the details, that passage points to Saudi Arabia and surrounding oil-wealthy states and the Western powers of the U.S. and Britain, who will protest against what they suspect are the Antichrist Gog's motives for entering the Mid East – namely, *"to take great plunder"* (of oil wealth). (See Post "Role of America and Britain" for more information.) So what we read here in verse 28 confirms that the taking of *"great plunder"* was a motive for the king of the North's Mid East meddling and conflict with the *"king of the South".*

The two chapters, Ezekiel 38 and Daniel 11 about the invasion of Israel in the *Latter Days,* are closely linked in various ways. As a result in Ezekiel 38, the *"Gog"* figure (who is clearly from Russia) can be identified with the *"king of the North"* figure in this chapter of Daniel 11. (See Post "Who Are the Kings of the North and South?" for more information.) And so, we may conclude that, as Gabriel's prophecy telescopes into the End Time, the *"king of the North"* term refers, not to the Syrian kingdom only, but can be expanded to include the northern "king" from Russia.

And who knows? The two nations may in the future become such strong allies that they could more easily be categorized as one power known as the *"king of the North".*

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The holy covenant (11:28, 30)

The *"covenant"* is again mentioned. The angel is talking as if Daniel (and we readers) already know about it – since it was mentioned previously in verse 22 (and in 23 as the *"league"*), and in his message to Daniel three or four years earlier: *"he* (the Antichrist) *shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease…"* (9:27, KJV) So Gabriel is about to elaborate on these previous statements.

The use of the word *"holy"* here (and in verse 30) serves to fine-tune our understanding about the *"covenant"*; it easily links us back to the *"covenant"* described in Daniel 9:27, which appears to be an agreement to allow the Israelis to carry on with their religious worship (the *"sacrifice and offering"* mentioned in that verse) in their *"holy place"* (the phrase Jesus used in Matthew 24:15). It is called a *"holy covenant"* because it happens to deal with the issue of religious freedom. (And by extension, if the Antichrist allows religious freedom for the Israelis, then he is obliged to allow it to other peoples throughout the world as well.)

In the beginning it starts off as an agreement between nations and groups of human beings: *"a covenant with many"* (9:27), *"the league"* (11:23). *"Many"* implies a larger group than just a smaller remnant of faithful followers of God. And the word *"league"* tells us that it is not an agreement between God and human beings, but between two groups of (warring) human beings.

This covenant could be compared to the *"abomination of desolation"*, which is an invention of the secular world. But the moment it enters the *"holy place",* it transforms from secular to religious abomination/desecration. Likewise, the *"covenant"* starts off as a secular peace treaty, a *"league",* whose purpose is to protect the Israelis; and that would include allowing them to conduct their worship in that religiously volatile city of Jerusalem.

But the moment the *"king of the North"* in *"his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant",* then the covenant takes on this added dimension of a challenge to the Almighty. (11:28) It transforms into an agreement between God and humankind.

In those future days it would appear that "religion" will have become a major political issue. We can see the seeds of it being sown nowadays, unwittingly, by religious organizations themselves – whether it be Judaism's oppression of its nation's minorities, terrorism by Islamic fanatics, warmongering stance of some Christian fundamentalists, mob fury of Hindu extremism, Buddhist ethnic cleansing. Very likely, the Antichrist will capitalize on these foolish antics of certain fringe groups as he campaigns to stamp out the true worship of God in the Earth. And we can guess that things will head in this direction by certain Scriptures:

> ***"That horn*** **[symbolic of the Antichrist]…** ***spoke pompous words… and the same horn was making war against the saints… He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High."*** **(Daniel 7:20-21, 25)**
>
> ***"And he*** **[the*****"beast"*** **symbolic of the Antichrist]** ***was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies… Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them… the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed."*** **(Revelation 13:5-7, 15)**

"Religion" will have become a major issue in tomorrow's world: should religious practices be allowed to continue, or should the secular worldview be allowed to prevail? The Antichrist will argue forcibly in favor of ridding the world of "religion", on which he will try to blame all the world's troubles. Of course, he will ignore all the good works and benefits brought to society by men and women of faith.

Throughout the ages conscientious people have greatly benefited the world of humankind. Their reverence for God prompted them to introduce useful inventions, charitable organizations for the poor, educational institutions, wise governance, peacemaking in politics, and the list could on and on. But it seems that, at this point in future history, all that will be forgotten. There will be a great need then to stem the tide of anti-religious feeling that the False Prophet and Antichrist will try to stir up.

Against this kind of cultural background, the *"holy covenant"* is brought before the world and before the *"king of the North"*, this anti-Christ *Gog* figure, as a way to protect those who wish to practice their faith from those who would outlaw all forms of religion.

So this *"holy covenant"*, although technically an earthly agreement between groups of people, nevertheless, because it does involve those who are under God's jurisdiction (or claim to be at least) rather than under state jurisdiction only, then it will have transformed into an agreement between the secular world and the Kingdom of God. The *"holy covenant"* may well be the last restraining force to prevent the forces of

Darkness from unleashing their desired destruction upon the Earth and its inhabitants.

Regarding this *"covenant"*, there does exist some confusion as to when it occurs. Study Bibles and commentaries of the past generally interpret the *"covenant"* in the context of ancient history. Unfortunately, these viewpoints have carried over into the Bibles and commentaries of the present. These old viewpoints were made originally because certain events of ancient history did seem to fit (to some extent) what these verses are describing. Well, that should not be too surprising. History does repeat itself. But these ancient events should be understood as secondary fulfillments of the words of the angel (Gabriel most likely). (See Appendix 1: Covenant, at the End of the Age?)

And these "secondary fulfillments" were dramatic events in ancient history: persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes, his desecration of the Jewish temple, the Jews' fierce and bold struggle against the anti-Christ ruler of that period in ancient history, and the rise of the Roman superpower. These events are worth our consideration as they serve as a sort of backdrop to what will happen in modern times

Since history repeats itself, they can shed some light on how to understand the prophecy's primary application to the soon-coming events of the future. In fact, the wording in verses 27 and 35 suggests that the End of the Age events described in them (peace treaties and persecution) are merely the last in a long line of similar events that have recurred throughout history. (More detailed explanation here in Post 3D.)

Gabriel's words here in verses 28-31 focus quite a bit on this future event, the breaking of the covenant. For it is no small thing – that calamitous event which will kick off the last period of persecution and the final period of our present Age of history just prior to the Return of Christ to rescue His people and the world from total destruction.

Now, to provide some more background to the religious aspect of the *"holy covenant"*, some recent events seem to confirm that, besides politics, religion will play a pivotal role in future Mid East agreements, as brought out in the following news excerpt:

Vatican Hails U.N. Palestine Vote, Wants Guarantees for Jerusalem
***Reuters* – November 29, 2012**

"The Holy See welcomes with favor the decision of the General Assembly by which Palestine has become a Non-member Observer State of the United Nations," a statement said…

Thursday's statement called for "an internationally guaranteed special statute" for Jerusalem, aimed at "safeguarding the freedom of religion and of conscience, the identity and sacred character of Jerusalem as a Holy City, (and) respect for, and freedom of, access to its holy places."

The Vatican's re-stating of its position on Jerusalem, which has remained mostly dormant for years, was bound to irk Israel…

It has been some time since the Vatican re-stated its position on the city so forcefully, and Thursday's statement was bound to be received negatively by Israel…

From the above article, we learn that the plan to internationalize Jerusalem has been around for some time and has received new impetus now as a result of the UN vote and the Vatican's recent statements; both Israel and Palestine want Jerusalem for their capital, and the best solution to break the deadlock is to give it to neither side. Instead, Jerusalem can be put under UN supervision as a sacred site where the three religions of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism may have their guarantee of freedom to worship.

Whether or not things will actually work out this way, of course, remains to be seen. Anyway, since it is referred to as a *"holy covenant"* (in verses 28 and 30), then it might have something to do with the kind of arrangements in the city of Jerusalem that the Vatican has been trying to promote for many years. So that's the religious angle.

Now it might help to look again at the situation from the political angle. The above news article came out in 2012. Now in 2018 the issue of Jerusalem's status has swung towards the city becoming an exclusive Israeli capital – as a result of the U.S. decision in 2017 to move its embassy to Jerusalem and the President's recognition of it as the capital city. How this new state of affairs will play out, we don't know. A majority of the world's leaders have rejected the President's decision, as have 14 of the 15 members of the U.N. Security Council. So it's quite possible the

situation could swing back in the other direction at some time in the future.

Whatever the case, as far as the *Covenant* goes, it may well be designed in such a way as to guarantee protection for Israel against the military advances of the *"king of the North"*. It could be that, by the time the *Covenant* is made, the Antichrist will have already established a formidable presence in the Mid East region – which could be why Daniel 9:27 states that he *"shall confirm a covenant"*. That is, his position and authority, and the world's respect for him, have advanced to the point where the *"covenant"* cannot be drafted without his consent, and probably his input as well.

And so, a major purpose for the *Covenant* may be simply to protect Israel from the Antichrist. Of course, Israel will have to make concessions, which might include internationalizing Jerusalem, guaranteeing religious freedom for all faiths to worship there, or returning land to the Palestinians. And as mentioned before, probably another major purpose for the *"covenant"* will be to protect the world from the ominous threat of nuclear war.

But *"his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant"*. What has caused the *"king of the North"* to have this change of heart, we are not told. Perhaps the peace conference in verse 27 has upset him in some way. Both sides *"shall be bent on evil"* and will have spoken *"lies at the same table".* (11:27) So neither side is going to be happy about the promises made by the other side. Even though he is *"returning to his land with great riches"*, yet somehow he is not satisfied.

One guess might be that the Israelis will not be cooperating or abiding by the stipulations in the *Covenant*. In very recent events we have caught a glimpse of how intransigent the Israelis can be in their land disputes with the Palestinians. If this pattern continues and if they keep on in defiance of world opinion, it would be just the kind of provocative behavior that will cause the Antichrist *"king of the North"* to *"be moved against the holy covenant".* Perhaps something along these lines will take place to provide the excuse needed to break the covenant; or it may be some other incident, or series of incidents.



Whatever the case will be, it might help to review what happened recently when the United Nations voted to recognize Palestine within the 1967 borders as a non-member state with observer status. The following news excerpts could provide a useful jumping off point for us to project what may happen in the future.

> **In historic vote, Palestine becomes non-member UN state with observer status**
> ***Haaretz* – Nov 29, 2012**
>
> **In a historic session of the United Nations in New York Thursday, exactly 65 years after passing the Partition Plan for Palestine, the General Assembly voted by a huge majority to recognize Palestine within the 1967 borders as a non-member state with observer status in the organization…**
>
> **The Palestinian Authority chairman said "The moment has arrived for the world to say clearly: Enough of aggression, settlements and occupation…**
>
> **"The world is being asked today to undertake a significant step**

in the process of rectifying the unprecedented historical injustice inflicted on the Palestinian people since Al-Nakba of 1948.

"The General Assembly is called upon today to issue a birth certificate of the reality of the State of Palestine," Abbas said. He concluded his speech to a standing ovation.

PM: UN can't force Israel to compromise on security
***The Jerusalem Post* – November 29, 2012**

[Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel stated] "It does not matter how many will vote against us, there is no force in the world that will cause me to compromise on Israeli security and there is no force in the world able to sever the thousands year connection between the people of Israel and the Land of Israel."

Israel Pushing Controversial Settlements After U.N. Vote
***The New York Times* – November 30, 2012**
JERUSALEM — Israel is moving forward with development of Jewish settlements in a contentious area east of Jerusalem, defying the United States by advancing a project that has long been condemned by international leaders as effectively dooming any prospect of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict…

Clearly, Palestine's 2012 landslide victory in the U.N. to grant it observer status as a non-member state shows that the majority of the world favors the creation of a Palestinian state and the end of Israel's occupation of what is supposed to belong to Palestine. Originally, the UN formally approved the creation of separate Israeli and Palestinian states way back in 1948 (Resolution 181). This resulted in a civil war and the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank by Egypt and Jordan respectively who wanted to safeguard the rights of the Palestinians.

In the 1967 Six Day War, Israel drove out the Egyptians and Jordanians. Again a UN Resolution (282) was passed the same year, calling on Israel to withdraw and grant sovereignty to the Palestinians. Since then however, the Israelis have acted as if the land belongs only to them and are doing everything in their power to make life difficult for their Palestinian neighbors. The world community sees what is going on and knows that the proper and fair solution is simply to grant nationhood to the people of Palestine.

However, Israel's intransigence and defiance of the UN irritated the international community, including even present and former U.S. Presidents. (See news article in Appendix 2 about how the climate of world opinion has changed even more in the wake of Israel's 2014 war on Gaza.)

So if a nation which is less committed than the U.S.A. to protecting the Jewish people – like Russia, or many other nations of the world – should decide finally to do something about the situation (with the UN's blessing or even a UN mandate), there won't be much the U.S. can do to prevent it. Whether or not such a scenario will come to pass is difficult to say at this point, but it seems a possibility; the international agreement of the *"covenant"* may be the solution brought up that will aim to balance the Mideast equation with fair boundaries and just political arrangements in the land of Israel.

But it seems, judging by the phrase, *"his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant"*, that as far as the Antichrist is concerned, the covenant has become an obstacle to his own plans. For him it may have been nothing more than an appeasement to the Israelis that he felt coerced into, or perhaps a delaying tactic that he doesn't need anymore, or a guarantee of protection for religious freedom that he no longer wishes to honor – or a combination of these.

That he did not, even in the beginning, take the covenant very seriously seems evident from verse 23: *"and after the league is made with him he shall work deceitfully".* At any rate, since the events have not happened yet, right now it is mostly a matter of guesswork as to how these Scriptures will manifest in historical reality.

Regarding the situation with the UN and the Palestinians, it really does appear that Israel is living in its own world, oblivious to international concerns. And part of the cause for such blinkered vision is the mistaken belief that their actions have God's approval. It may be true that God did seek to bless the Jewish people after their suffering in World War II and allow them to return to Israel.

But the conditions for their return are stated clearly in the Book of Ezekiel:

> ***"It shall be that you will divide it*** **(the land)** ***by lot as an inheritance for yourselves, and for the strangers who dwell among you and who bear children among you. They shall be to you as native-born among the tribes of Israel. And it shall be that in whatever tribe the stranger dwells, there you shall give him his inheritance, says the Lord God."*** **(47:22-23)**

Clearly, the Israeli nation is not yet ready to live up to God's standards for a wise and benevolent ruling power; it will take the heavy hand of Antichrist persecution to bring about such a change… and the Return of Christ, at which time it seems that Israel will have forsaken the arrogance that has marred her present regimes; and then finally, she will be allowed to expand her borders, as suggested by verses 15-20 in Ezekiel 47.

It is difficult to see how Israel's present approach can be tolerated for much longer, and so all that Israel can expect now is international condemnation. Inevitably, this will grow beyond words and diplomatic protests (which is the stage where things are at now); eventually, we might foresee that Israel will find herself under strict enforcement of UN guidelines. In fact, it may go well beyond that. As American influence in the world declines, Israel's protection against the enemies that she has made over several decades, will also decline. A nation reaps what it sows.

And so the recent news events mentioned above could mark an important shift in the struggle of the Palestinians. It is as if the ball has been tossed out of the Israeli-Palestinian court into the international court. Sadly for Israel, she seems rather oblivious to how the winds of change have been shifting against her.

But it is not all a matter of politics. Getting back to the religious aspect of the *"covenant"*, we understand, of course, that the Dark Forces will be working hard to influence the Antichrist to turn away from allowing religious freedom; the False Prophet, the one who *"causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast* **(the Antichrist)** ***"*** **will certainly be trying to influence the course of events, and the Antichrist, in that direction… and towards the worship of Materialism, his religion that features the *"mark of the beast"*. (Revelation 13:16-17). And so the False Prophet may capitalize on the policy blunders of the Israelis and other religious groups and use them to turn the Antichrist's heart against**

"religion", and consequently, against the *"holy covenant"*.

The descriptive word *"holy"* in these last two references to the *"covenant"* in verses 28 and 30 were not used in previous references to the *"covenant"*. We might guess that the angel's use of the word here was meant to emphasize the fact that the religious aspect will have become a much bigger issue and major obsession with the Antichrist. And in this he resembles the ancient ruler Antiochus Epiphanes, whom Gabriel uses as the historical example that best illustrates what the final anti-God ruler will be like.

It is not enough for the Antichrist to have gained great wealth and power, but in addition to military and economic dominance, he and the False Prophet wish to achieve spiritual dominance in the world. So for them at this point the *"holy covenant"* is just getting in the way of their plans that they (and the powers of Darkness) are aiming towards. And…

*

***While returning to his land… so he shall do damage* (11:28)**

In the original Hebrew the word *"damage"* is not there. It might have been the correct word to use anyway. But strictly speaking, the passage just says, *"so shall he do"*, as if to say "he shall do accordingly", or "his actions will be guided accordingly". How the Antichrist's change of heart will manifest at this point we don't know. It could result in *"damage"* in the form of military strikes, or it could mean he will work intensely behind the scenes to undermine the covenant. Right now we don't really know.

A little side-note: The translation in the NKJV, *"while returning"*, suggests that on his way back home the *"king of the North"* will do his *"damage".* Probably the passage was translated this way so as to fit it in with certain ancient historical events: Antiochus Epiphanes, on his way back to Syria after meeting with the Egyptian king, got upset with the Israelis and caused a great deal of havoc in Israel.

Most translations, however, merely say, *"and he shall return"* or *"then he shall return"*. More likely these versions are correct: it would certainly fit better the modern situation. That is, he can return to his land and then

launch his missiles or send in his forces by airplane. He won't be travelling by ship or by land with his troops, but returning quickly by airplane.

*

At the appointed time (11:29)

Although it might sound like it, this *"appointed time"* of another warlike expedition against the south does not refer to the End for these reasons: 1) it does not bring the final deciding of the war with the south (which doesn't come until verse 40); 2) it does not bring the end of the oppression of the people of God; it is only the time determined for the second aggression against the south, not the Time of the End; 3) the word *End* (*qets* in Hebrew) is not used.

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He shall return and go toward the south (11:29)

After his great victory over the *"king of the South"* (in verses 25-26), the *"king of the North"* may want to extend his already broad reach to make a full conquest over the Middle East. This then could be his motive for returning *"toward the south"*. The main thing standing in his way at this point is the *"holy covenant"* – which the western powers, especially the U.S. and Britain, will insist on upholding. So, besides the religious aspect of the *"holy covenant"*, there will also be these political considerations (which probably has something to do with why it is described as a *"league"* in verse 23).

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But it shall not be like the former or the latter (11:29)

Here we seem to get an indication of the angel's ability to view the broad panorama of history. The *"former"* return to the south probably refers to the previous victorious conquest in verses 25-26. Or it may even refer to the ancient *"king of the North"*, Antiochus III the Great, and his expedition against Egypt, by which ancient Syria gained possession of the Holy Land (Battle of Panium in 198 B.C.). (11:16)

The "*latter*" return to the south probably refers to the final great conquest over the *"king of the South"* when the *"king of the North… shall do according to his own will"* and *"shall also enter the Glorious Land… and the land of Egypt shall not escape"*. (11:36, 41-42)

But at this point in time the Antichrist is not able to *"do according to his own will",* and instead of some glorious victory, he suffers some kind of humiliating defeat and has to make a temporary retreat. His planned invasion is thwarted, as we learn in the next verse. It doesn't pan out, unlike the triumphant former and latter conquests described in verse 25 (or verses 15-16) and verses 41-42.

*

***For ships from Cyprus shall come against him* (11:30)**

This section of the prophetic message (verses 30-35) outlines that most crucial moment in human history – the event that kicks off the last 3½ years of Great Tribulation, coming immediately before the Return of Christ. And the signpost to tell us when this will happen is written: *"even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed."* (11:35)

But history repeats itself, not just in forward time, but in this case, if we go backward in time, history repeats itself. What these verses say about the near future finds an echo in ancient events – in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. Back in 168 B.C., when Antiochus tried for the last time to invade Egypt, he suffered, after his previous victories, a humiliating setback; he was not able to *"do according to his own will".* Instead he was compelled to retire by the Roman envoy, C. Popillius Laenas.

It was an historic scene: the Roman drew a circle in the sand about the king and demanded, before he stepped out of it, his answer to their question: would he withdraw from Egypt? This humiliating experience aroused Antiochus' fury, which he took out on the Jewish people. Not surprisingly, most commentaries on this verse interpret it as having been fulfilled in this particular ancient historical event.

Truly enough, it was an outstanding incident and does seem to fit into

what this verse says – except for the fact that the *"ships"* come from Cyprus and not from Rome (via Cyprus). But recent historical developments seem to point towards a more complete fulfillment coming in events of the near future. And these modern developments fit rather well the details of this Scripture. And, of course, we shouldn't forget that, according to the overall context of these verses, only future events (of the End Time) would fit as the primary, most accurate fulfillment of them. Still, it is remarkable how the prophetic message applies so easily to two personages: one from the distant past and the other to come in the near future.

So although this incident from ancient times fits remarkably close to what Scripture says, it should be kept in mind that the ancient event is more like a backdrop or setting for what is to come; mainly, it serves to point us towards understanding that the *"king of the North"* will suffer some sort of humiliating defeat that will arouse his anger against the *"holy covenant"*. In the ancient time that confrontation came in the form of a diplomatic mission; but the phrase *"ships from Cyprus shall come against him"* suggests that what is about to happen in the future is actually a military confrontation.

We shall have to see, of course, what happens in that future time before drawing any firm conclusions. But it does seem a good possibility that the ancient event, although it was a remarkably accurate fulfillment of what the passage foretells, still it was only a precursor to an even more accurate fulfillment that is to come.

How then might we apply this verse to the near future? It would seem that, at some point during his campaign to renew and finish off the war with the *"king of the south"* and/or with Israel, he will be forced to back off when *"ships from Cyprus shall come against him".* These *"ships"* could include "air ships" or warplanes, as well as modern destroyers, submarines, and aircraft carriers.

On the island of Cyprus are stationed nowadays two huge military bases (that occupy 3% of its land area). Because of their strategic importance, the British held on to these bases despite the end of Britain's colonial empire, and despite Cyprus' entrance into the European Union. Not surprisingly, the U.S. has pretty much free access to these bases,

which were used by her during the Afghanistan and Iraq wars of recent history. And now that Britain has exited the European Union, she has no obligation to abide by any rules or policy restrictions of the EU – that group of nations who may not be so keen on trying to wage war against the rising tide of Eurasian power from the east.

The U.N. also maintains a strong presence there – with its "buffer zone" between the Greek and Turkish divisions of the island. Likely, U.N. forces too will engage in this intervention against the *"king of the North"*. Since probably it has played a major role in brokering the *"covenant"*, then this international government of the U.N. will feel responsible to uphold it.

And of course, the American superpower will be more than happy to find whatever good reason it can for the opportunity to curb the rising power and popularity of the Russian *"king of the North"* and to protect its main ally in the Middle East, Israel.



In a wider sense, as some Bible scholars have thought, *"Cyprus"* could be understood as including the islands and coasts of the Mediterranean Sea under Roman domination. Although this wider viewpoint is thought to be symbolic of ancient Rome, this could be understood as representing the military power proceeding from some of America's Mediterranean <u>naval</u> bases – of which there are three (two in Italy and one near Gibraltar, Spain); there are also three <u>air force</u> bases, not far from Cyprus (in Italy, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and in SE Turkey).

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***He shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage* (11:30)**

Although this expedition of *"the ships of Cyprus"* will appear to succeed in putting a halt to the Antichrist's rise to supremacy in the Middle East, in actual fact it will have the opposite effect. For this humiliating experience will be the spark that ignites the Antichrist's fury.

Prior to this, his heart was only *"moved against the covenant"*. (verse 28) Now he is *grieved"* and wants to *"return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage"*. The *"do damage"* phrase is a repetition of the same from verse 28. And like the previous phrase, the word *"damage"* was not there in the original Hebrew. Nevertheless it was probably right to use it in the translation, for in the next verse we learn about the king of the North's brutal desecration of the *"sanctuary fortress"* (or *"holy place"* as Jesus called it in Matthew 24:15).

*

***So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant* (11:30)**

There will be plenty of power-brokers who will dislike the *"holy covenant"* and all that it stands for – especially the False Prophet and all those associated with him. To these wealthy, powerful, and secular individuals, the religious aspect of the covenant will mean nothing.

These people could be compared to the Hellenizers in ancient Israel who were attracted to Greek paganism and culture. Their skepticism and inclinations towards the Dark Realm carried them to the extreme of rejecting faith in the true God, which eventually brought no end of trouble. They put their hope in the Greek-Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes, a man who was obsessed with wiping out the Jewish religion back in those days. Like these Hellenistic Jews, the modern secularists surrounding the Antichrist will put their hope in the rising figure of the new demagogue.

Many secularists and skeptics nowadays see the empty traditionalism and mindless hypocrisy in established religion, and "throw the baby out

with the bathwater", as the saying goes. Add to this, the Jewish, even Christian, fundamentalism that has fueled the Gaza catastrophe – and various massacres in nations where Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu religions prevail – and the Dark forces have gained just the recipe they need to foment their war against any belief system that promotes faith in the supernatural Supreme Being, whom they will accuse of doing a bad job of things.

In ancient times, the Hellenizers, thinking the Syrians were their friends, began to subvert the regime of their Ptolemaic Egyptian rulers. This paved the way for the Syrian regime, with its strong Hellenization program, to take over. But then, what the Jewish Hellenizers thought was a good thing, some kind of step of progress, soon backfired and turned into a campaign of brutal repression under Antiochus Epiphanes.

Similar to how Antiochus Epiphanes tried to change the world with his Hellenization program, the Antichrist, with the help of his friend and backer, the False Prophet, will also set out to paganize the world – but in the modern fashion – turning it away from the true God into worship of the new gods of Materialism and Demagoguery. In the end, he also will invade the *"holy place"* in Jerusalem and desecrate it with his *"abomination of desolation"* (as we know from verse 31).

Looking again at the *"covenant"* from the political viewpoint, to the Antichrist and False Prophet's way of thinking, the covenant may seem little more than a tool that America and Israel are using to hold on to power in the Middle East – a continuation of the pattern that America has pursued for many years already of supporting and protecting Israel regardless of all other concerns.

In the beginning the covenant may have been useful for the Antichrist and False Prophet – a compromise that helped to propel them into a position of greater authority in the world, a sort of continuation of their coming-in-peaceably strategy (of verses 21 and 24). ◊ But at this point, as far as the new rising power of the Antichrist-False Prophet combine is concerned, the covenant is just getting in the way of their plans for achieving supremacy in the world.

As a result they and their supporters *"show regard for those who*

forsake the holy covenant." **(11:30) Later in verse 32, mention is made once more of these people, this time in more drastic terms, as *"those who do wickedly against the covenant".***

We can see then the steady downward spiral: it started with acting *"deceitfully"*, then being *"moved against the holy covenant"*, then being *"grieved"* with and having *"rage against"* it, then forsaking the covenant, and finally it ends with doing *"wickedly against"* it – by invading the temple sanctuary with the *"abomination of desolation".* (11:23,28,30-32)

> **◊ Regarding this idea of the covenant as a "compromise" that will help to catapult the Antichrist and False Prophet into a position of greater power, there is an interesting historical example that can shed some light on this question. In the 1930s the British statesman, Winston Churchill, had become a political outcast. This situation had arisen as the result of his outspoken opposition against the Zionist quest to establish a Jewish homeland. Because of their influence – in media circles mainly – Jewish powerbrokers were able to engineer this downward spiral in Churchill's political career.**
>
> **Finally in 1939, Churchill made a "compromise" and spoke out in favor of the Zionist cause. The resulting favorable media coverage gave Churchill the backing he needed for his political re-birth. It may be argued as to who outfoxed whom in this political sidestep of Churchill's. At any rate the incident does reveal how important it can be – for those who wish to gain prominence on the stage of world politics – that they join, or appear to join, the side of those promoting Israel's cause.**

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Outline of Verses 11:2-45 to 12:13

- **Verses 11:2-21 summarize the rise of Medo-Persia and Greece, then trace in some detail the wars between two of the Greek empires that followed Alexander – Egypt and Syria – each of whom were trying to gain control over the land that lay between them (Israel). This section ends with the rise of the Antichrist-like king, Antiochus Epiphanes.**

- **Verses 11:21-30. Antiochus Epiphanes takes on a sort of dual identity in verses 21-22 as both the ancient and modern *"king of the North".* The rest of the passage focuses on the modern Antichrist's rise to dominance in the Middle East and includes the run-up events leading to that fateful day when he breaks the covenant. Secondary fulfillments may be seen also in this passage (and in verses 31-35) and applied to the activities of the ancient king.**
- **Verses 31-45 describe the final invasion of the Middle East, which includes the conquest of Israel and Egypt. There are different facets to the invasion that happen closely together or even simultaneously, and the passage here in this final section of Daniel 11 (verses 30-45) can be divided into about three different parts:**

    1. **Verses 31-35 focus on the persecution aspect of the invasion, which is kicked off with the arrival of the *"abomination of desolation"* into the *"sanctuary"*; from there the verses describe the role that God's people will play at this time.**
    2. **Verses 36-39 focus on the Antichrist's spiritual state that motivates him to destroy and wreak havoc both in Israel and throughout the world.**
    3. **Verses 40-45 focus on the invasion of the Middle East and Israel.**

- **Verses 12:1-13 focus on the era of the Great Tribulation and the Resurrection that follows it and informs us as to the exact time spans for the final persecution against God's people.**

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Many details of future history are mentioned in these verses. Having studied the very detailed prophetic message in verses 2-20 that was fulfilled so accurately in ancient times, this serves to authenticate the many predictions in the rest of this lengthy prophetic message about our soon-coming future history; we have reasonable evidence to believe that they also will see their fulfillment.

Things may not happen exactly as interpreted in this study. Right now our estimations have to be a little vague and leave some room for error. But once the events have occurred, then we can look back and marvel at

God's amazing foresight into the future (which by then will have become the past).

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Continue to Part 3F: The Great Tribulation

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Appendix 1: Covenant, in the Time of the End?

A question that may come to mind: how can we be sure that the *"covenant"* happens at the End of the Age, and not in the distant past – a view held by some Bible commentators? This question was addressed to some extent earlier (in Post 3A), but here are some other pertinent facts to consider:

The *"covenant"* ties in with the *"abomination of desolation"*: this is an obvious clue. For example, in chapter 11 we read these passages about the *"covenant"*:

> ***"His [Antichrist's] heart shall be against the holy covenant… he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant… and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant… And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries."* (11:28,30,32)**

And sandwiched between these verses, we read,

> ***"they shall place the abomination that makes desolate."* (11:31)**

It's as plain as can be that there can be no *"abomination"* without the existence of the *"covenant"*. So to think there is no future covenant, then it means thinking there can be no future abomination… followed by the absurd conclusion that Jesus didn't quite know what He was talking about in Matthew 24 and Mark 13 when He foretold that His Second Coming would be preceded by the entry into the *"holy place"* of the *"abomination of desolation"*, the one *"spoken of by Daniel the prophet"*. (Matthew 24:15, Mark 13:14)

Christ earmarked this as the specific sign, the key event, that would signal the start of the Great Tribulation, which will run for 3½ years until Christ's Second Coming and the *"end of the age"*. (Matthew 24:3,15,21) And of course, if the dramatic appearance of the *"abomination"* brings a sudden end to the *"covenant",* then the *"covenant"* must be in effect at this time.

Plainly, the *"covenant"* is an agreement made in the End Time, not the ancient past. The *"70th week" o*f Daniel's *"70 weeks"* revelation in chapter 9 cannot be relegated to the past but was meant to outline the last seven years of human history.)

What other *"covenant"* could it possibly be referring to other than the one that is to take place in the Time of the very End, that time when the *"abomination of desolation"* will *"defile the sanctuary"* – that ominous event which Jesus pointed out would be a sign to look for just before His Second Coming?

In Daniel 9:27 (KJV) the phrase *"overspreading of abominations"* (or "military invasion of abominations") by which the Antichrist *"shall make desolate* (violently)*"* is a way of describing in the ancient language the practice of modern warfare. The *"abominations"* are the vehicles and weapons of war that are so prevalent in modern warfare. (Again this is a big subject covered more thoroughly in the post, "Unraveling the Mystery of the Abomination".)

So here we have another small clue that should help us to understand that this *"covenant"* (made near the time when these peculiar desolating abominations will be attacking Jerusalem) is not an event of the distant past, but is a modern one.

The context of these verses 28-30, and the linkages with other verses in the New Testament about the *"abomination of desolation"*, point to them as describing End Time events – namely, the Antichrist's dissatisfaction with the *"holy covenant"* and the run-up process to the breaking of the covenant with the *"abomination of desolation"…* in modern times, not ancient times.

As a little side-note here, context is very important in understanding

ancient Hebrew. Ancient languages, with their smaller vocabularies, naturally lack the precision of more developed modern ones, so to gauge the meaning of a word or phrase or sentence or group of sentences, context and comparison with other passages often have to be the deciding factors.

Without giving consideration to the context, it becomes very easy to "make" the interpretation/translation fit with or say whatever seems most convenient to one's own particular slant, theory, or preconceived notion. It is a pitfall that scholars can fall into – to get *"obsessed with disputes and arguments over words."* (1Timothy 6:4)

Judging then by the context and linkages with other passages, especially those about the *"abomination of desolation",* it should be clear enough that these references in Daniel 9 and 11 about the *"covenant"* do not deal with past ancient events – such as the bargaining that went on between Antiochus Epiphanes and the Egyptian king Ptolemy. That was a political, dowry arrangement between Syria and Egypt and had nothing to do with religious matters or the state of Israel, which is what the term *"holy covenant"* is referring to.

The only link to the past is the historical fact that Antiochus Epiphanes persecuted the Jews for their religion; and Gabriel seems to have used this ancient king as his jumping off point into the End Time – mainly because his reign of terror served to highlight, as far as God's people are concerned, an important feature of the final Antichrist's reign – religious persecution. As it was for Antiochus Epiphanes, so for the Antichrist the big issue will be "religion"; and therefore, the *"holy covenant"* must have something to do with that issue.

A common idea held by some scholars is that the last seven years happened during Christ's earthly ministry, which included the bringing in of the *"new covenant"*, or New Testament. The weaknesses with this point of view stem from the following considerations:

1) The covenant, as described in Daniel 9 and 11, is designated as a political/religious agreement amongst people on the earthly plane; it does not pertain to the spiritual plane, the covenant between God and man. The Hebrew word used here – *berith* – was often used for

agreements between groups of people; so there is no need to insist, as many scholars do, that it applies only to God's covenant with the Jewish people of the Old Testament.

It can easily refer to agreements between warring political factions. And it seems natural, in the context of the passage (and the use of the word *"league"* to describe the covenant), that this should be a down-to-earth agreement between two worldy figures – the *"king of the North"* and the *"king of the South"*.

2) There is no clear record of any such *"covenant"* and 7-year time period in Biblical or secular history. Historical hindsight makes it easy to identify how prophecies have been fulfilled. If it's difficult to identify the fulfillment of a prophecy, especially for an important one like this, that probably means it hasn't happened yet.

3) As outlined already, the *"abomination of desolation"* is depicted as the instrument that the Antichrist uses to break the *"covenant"*. If the *"abomination"* is something that Jesus Himself said would happen shortly before His Second Coming, then so also is the *"covenant"*, since it is linked so closely with the *"abomination"*. This *"covenant"* did not happen in ancient times, not at the end of Christ's First Coming. The Scriptures foretell clearly that it is to come in the future just before His Second Coming.

4) In all the passages where the word "covenant" appears (Daniel 9:27 and 11:22,28,30,32), there is no definite article in the ancient Hebrew – which is why the majority of translations render the opening of Daniel 9:27 thus: *"he shall confirm A covenant".* The indefiniteness here doesn't point well to the kind of covenant that would exist between God and humankind. Not until verse 11:23, which uses a different Hebrew word for *"covenant"* does the definite article appear. This word, translated as "league" (KJV), refers exclusively to covenants on the earthly level between individuals or groups of human beings.

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Appendix 2: World Opinion Post-2014 War – News article

Better A Hundred Palestinians Killed Than One Israeli Soldier

By Uri Avnery,
Information Clearing House **– October 21, 2014**

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Was it [recognition of the State of Palestine by the British Parliament] a negligible event? In a strictly procedural sense it was. In a broader sense, far from it. For the Israeli leadership, it is the harbinger of very bad news.

A few days before, a similar news item came from Sweden. The newly elected leftist prime minister announced that his government was considering the recognition of the State of Palestine in the near future.

Sweden, like Britain, was always considered a "pro-Israeli" country, loyally voting against "anti-Israel" resolutions in the UN. If such important Western nations are reconsidering their attitudes towards the policy of Israel, what does it mean?

….

In South America, public opinion has already shifted markedly against Israel. The recognition of Palestine is gaining ground in official circles, too. Even in the US, unconditional support for the Israeli government seems to be wavering.

What the hell is going on?

What is going on is a profound, perhaps tectonic change in the public attitude towards Israel.

For years now, Israel has been appearing in world media mainly as a country that occupies the Palestinian lands. Press photos of Israelis almost always show heavily armed and armored soldiers confronting protesting Palestinians, often children. Few of these pictures have had an immediate dramatic impact, but the cumulative, incremental effect should not have been underestimated.

….

This ongoing process reached a higher pitch with the recent Gaza war…

For a month and a half, day after day, people around the world were bombarded with pictures of killed human beings, maimed children, crying mothers, destroyed apartment buildings, damaged hospitals and schools, masses of homeless refugees. Thanks to Iron Dome, no destroyed Israeli buildings could be seen, nor hardly any dead Israeli civilians.

An ordinary decent person, whether in Stockholm or Seattle or

Singapore, cannot be exposed to such a steady stream of horrible images without being affected—first unconsciously, then consciously. The picture of "The Israeli" in the mind's eye changes slowly, almost imperceptibly. The brave pioneer standing up to the savages around him mutates into an ugly bully terrorizing a helpless population.

Why do Israelis not realize this? Because We Are Always Right.

It has often been said before: the main danger of propaganda, any propaganda, is that its first victim is the propagandist himself. It convinces him, rather than his audience. If you twist a fact and repeat it a hundred times, you are bound to believe it.

…Kindergartens, schools, hospitals and mosques were targeted by our artillery, planes, drones and warships. 99% of Israelis believe that this was necessary. They were shocked when the UN General Secretary, Ban Ki-moon, who visited Gaza this week, claimed that this was totally inadmissible.

Doesn't the General Secretary know that ours is the Most Moral Army in the World?

….

In the eyes of the average Israeli, the extensive killing and destruction during the recent campaign was completely justified. He is quite incapable of understanding the worldwide outrage. For lack of another reason, he attributes it to anti-Semitism.

….

Most Jewish Israelis are former soldiers. Most officers, who leave the army in their mid-40s, spread out in the administrative, economic, political and academic elite. The result is that the military mindset is dominant in Israel.

This being so, Israelis are quite unable to comprehend the turn of world public opinion…

….

World public opinion is important. More than that, it is vital. The British Parliament's resolution may be non-binding, but it expresses public opinion, which will sooner or later decide government action on arms sales, Security Council resolutions, European Union decisions and what not. As Thomas Jefferson said: "If the people lead, then eventually the leaders will follow."

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Continue to Part 3F: The Great Tribulation