

# **THE PROPHETIC WORD IN CRISIS DAYS**

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by

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## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **THE PROPHETIC WORD AND EUROPE**

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Europe has been the center of world power for more than two thousand years of history. This began with the great military genius, Alexander the Great and the ensuing spread of Greek civilization all across southern Europe, northern Africa, reaching from the shores of India to the coast of Spain. This particular civilization finally passed to the Romans and it continued there for more than five hundred years before that empire supposedly passed away. The empire of Charlemagne succeeded that, and successively there has followed the dominant roles of the Spanish Empire, the French Empire, the Empire of Great Britain and also that of Germany. World History is the record of the prominence of western civilization and especially that of Europe.

Now every student of history knows that little or nothing has been written or studied of the history of non-western areas in the world. In a few paragraphs or perhaps a chapter at most on world history, all the rest of the world could be dismissed. Russia and India and China and Japan and Africa and Australia and South America were almost totally ignored until within the present century. It might amaze one if he were to examine the books on world history today that are used in the average college and university. This lies in the fact that Europe, for the most part, has commanded the attention of mankind.

Furthermore, it is interesting to know that the prophetic Scriptures declare that Europe is to play a prominent part in the history of the end time. One cannot mistake this if he follows carefully the movement of prophecy in the Word of God. There is evidence that there is unfolding before our eyes in our times in the movements among the nations of Europe that which will eventually develop into conditions foretold in the Scriptures. The internal conditions among these nations, their political philosophies and ideologies, their geographical locations, their military future all purport to answer to the pattern of prophetic truth.

The prophetic Scriptures in relation to the nations of Europe is the theme of this discussion. In its broad outlines there is no question as to the place these nations are playing in the unfolding of prophecy.

In the more minute details, the place of these nations will become more evident as the days come and go. Read the newspapers! Interpret them in the light of the prophetic Word, and you may be amazed at what you see appearing on the front pages of those newspapers in the months and years that lie immediately ahead. That there is a shaping of events for the end time seems ever so clear, especially as these nations chart their own course in relation to the rest of the world.

For a few moments, permit me to call to your attention five leading lines of thought. I shall unfold this theme progressively as it appears in the prophetic Scriptures.

## **I. A REVIVAL OF THE OLD ROMAN EMPIRE**

The first thing that I want to call to your attention is this: The prophetic Scriptures teach that there will be a revival of the Old Roman Empire. I am not going to discuss that in its minute details. I simply want to throw on the screen here for a moment the larger details in which will be couched what I have to say. I have used the word revival; obviously the word revival always means that there is life, but that life needs to be given new movement and energy. Using it in that sense, it must be said that some feel that the Old Roman Empire passed out of existence altogether, and therefore there must of necessity be a revival of that empire in the end time in the sense of bringing that empire back into existence. But it is my feeling that it is not necessary to argue that this empire passed out of existence.

It is then correct to assume that this empire continued to exist in the nations that have sprung from it and will be recast essentially over the same pattern in the future.

On the basis of this, notice the following thing from the Word of God. Certainly the prophetic Scriptures teach that a world empire is to come to our attention in the end time, and that this world empire is a part of the entire chart of World Empire set forth in the book of Daniel.

In chapter 2 of the book of Daniel we get a look at the chart of World Empire as it appears from the human viewpoint. Several passages in this chapter must be called to your attention:

First, verse 33; it reads as follows: **“His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.”**

Verse 34: **“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.”**

And vs. 40: **“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.”**

The thing I want you to see is that there was a great image; this image appeared in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar. This undoubtedly was a construction of his own mind, permitted of God and used of God to teach a great truth. As it was produced by human nature, it is what empire looks like to human nature. This is a human viewpoint, — the great image with a head of gold, with breast and arms of silver, with belly and thighs of brass, with legs and feet and toes of iron and clay.

But there is another view of empire in the book of Daniel; it appears in the seventh chapter; and this is empire as it is viewed from the divine viewpoint.

In Daniel 7:3-7 God gives a dream to a man called Daniel, to a holy man, and as he looked at empire, it was not the glorious, magnificent image of a man with shining head of gold, and deteriorating metals to the very bottom; but as though it were four wild beasts. Look at verse 3:

**“And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, . . .”** (vs. 5), **“And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, . . .”** and vs. 6: **“After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard,”** vs. 7: **“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.”**

It is impossible for me to deal with all of the verses here, but in both of these chapters (Daniel 2 and 7), one sees the progress of empire from the days of Babylon to the very end, when the stone falls upon the feet of the image, that stone being the Lord Jesus Christ, which finally enlarges into the Messianic Kingdom of the end time.

The same thing is true in the record of the four beasts, until finally the fourth beast passes away and the Messianic Kingdom supplants it, and continues forever. All I want you to see is that the prophetic history of World Empire is recorded here in the book of Daniel.

Now the continuity of the Roman Empire is rather clearly set forth in the image and history which follows. There is no break in that image of man; there is no break between the belly and thighs of brass with that which follows, namely, the legs which are of iron and clay. And also there is no break between the feet and toes.

The image is a continuous image from the head right down through the toes. All the elements of man continue and find their fulfillment in this final form.

The fall of the Roman Empire, as we think of it in history, came in 476 A.D., but this did not end the empire. It continued in divided kingdoms of the east and the west; it was carried on in the west in the holy Roman Empire; and following this was perpetuated in the several nations and empires of that area.

All this leads me to say that it will finally develop into a united empire in the end which will consist of the revival of the greatness of that former empire. And I hasten to say that this revived empire, or this continued empire of the end, need not be over the exact boundaries of the former. It may rather be the resuscitation over the pattern of the empire that was embodied in the first. That is all that is necessary as far as the demands of the Scripture are concerned.

## **II. A CONFEDERATION OF TEN KINGS**

I now come to the second main line of thought. The prophetic Scriptures teach that this revived empire will consist of ten kings in confederation under one great leader. It is correct to assert that there is probably no item of prophecy that is so clearly set forth as this particular fact. You will find that both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament this same great truth is clearly indicated.

The prophecy of Daniel clearly sets forth the ten kings under two different figures, one in the second chapter, the other in the seventh chapter. Looking first at chapter 2, vs. 41, 44:

**“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.”**

At the point where it is talking about the feet and the toes, the text goes on to say, **“In the days of these kings,”** which must indicate that those toes symbolize kings.

A glance at chapter seven reveals that this is even more clearly indicated (Daniel 7:7, 8, 24): **“And after this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast,”** and then the last of vs. 7 — **“and it had ten horns.”**

Now vs. 8: **“I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.”**

And vs. 24: **“And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.”**

What it is necessary to see is that in both of these chapters, quite evidently in respect to this fourth and final kingdom, there is a very clear unity of teaching — there are ten toes that mark the end, there are ten horns that mark the end, and there are ten kings that rise up within this kingdom.

These ten kings and kingdoms had areas of strength and they also had areas of weakness. That must be what was in the mind of Daniel as he unfolded prophetically the significance of this image according to the second chapter, and verse 33: **“His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.”**

I think this must indicate the fact that there is a mingling of strength and weakness. Look at vss. 41 and following in this same chapter:

**“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”**

Such is the picture before us. Of course there is a great deal of questioning as to the full significance of the iron and the clay, but obviously the first import is of strength and weakness — the iron indicating that which is strong, the clay marking that which is “brittle”, something that doesn't cohere easily, that breaks off, which therefore suggests the idea of weakness.

It suggests here that that which is strong mingles with that which is the seed of man. Could it be, therefore, that he is trying to set forth the fact that this kingdom, in its final form, is going to mark out something of autocracy and democracy mingling together?

There is a third thing on this point.

These ten kings finally face a situation which forces them into a confederation under one great leader. It would seem from Daniel 7, vs. 24, that one king in this area establishes his superiority over the ten kings among whom he appears. The 24th verse would seem to indicate that he rises up above them, and that he subdues three kings.

Then, all ten of these kings, therefore, viewing their situation in relation to the appearance of this one, and recognizing his superiority over at least three of them, voluntarily decide to throw their combined weight and combined power into one kingdom headed by this one great leader.

The counter part of this prophecy in Daniel is in the book of the Revelation. In chapter 17, vs. 12 and 13, there is clearly set forth the same pattern as in Daniel 7. Look at vs. 12 and 13: **“And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.”**

May I suggest to you that in this connection you read vs. 17 as well: **“For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will and to agree and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.”**

The conclusion is this, namely, they face a situation which could mean possible extermination. Frantically as they look about, they see one rise up in the midst of them, in this area, whose superiority is demonstrated. He subdues at least three among them, and they see that probably the only method for survival is the voluntary surrender of their kingdoms to him, and the becoming of vassal subjects of this one great leader in this area.

Probably there will be economic, cultural, ideological, and I am almost given to coin a word here, omniological reasons for their doing such a thing. I mean to say it is probably impossible to pick out any one area and say this explains basically the motive for such a confederation of kingdoms into one. There probably are many things; all thrown together, that compel the kings to do this thing at this time.

### **III. THE REVIVED ROMAN EMPIRE LOCATED IN THE WEST**

Let me move to the third line of truth. The prophetic Word teaches that the revived Roman Empire will be located in the west. It is this concentration of kings and kingdoms that produces this one end-time power and this power will be located in the west.

For instance, the prophetic Scriptures teach that there will be four great end time kings and powers.

In Daniel, chapter 11, beginning with vs. 36, these four powers are introduced. There is really one great king under consideration, one great end time power being emphasized in this passage. He is introduced in vs. 36 as the king.

The reason it isn't necessary to tell more about him is that already he and his kingdom have been variously presented in at least three different chapters of the book of Daniel (chapters 2, 7, and 8).

In Daniel 7 and 8 he is presented as the little horn. We finally meet him as the king.

Then he is set forth in relationship to other end time powers, three of them in fact. In vs. 40 of Daniel 11, it reads: “**And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him:**” there is one power, the southern power; “**and the king of the north shall come at him like a whirlwind, with chariots and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.**” This is the second end time power. Then if you will look at vs. 44, it says: “**But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him:**” and there is the third end-time power. Corroboration comes in Revelation 16:12, where it speaks of the drying up of the river Euphrates for the purpose of making way for the kings of the east.

This means, then, that there is just one other power. It is a western power, and is undoubtedly the power that is the special emphasis of this portion of the prophecy of Daniel. There is just one great power left then; it is in the west, and this passage of Scripture is especially devoted to the king of the west. He is here called the king.

Some natural and powerful movings must bring this fourth end time power into existence. For instance, in the east there are the yellow and the dark skins. They seem to fall into one natural block of power.

- There are the black skins of Africa, and it is advisable and convenient for them to seek protection for themselves in one block.
- There is the totalitarian powers of the north that seem to stand best in a block by themselves, and then
- There are the democratic powers of the west.

They seem to find their best interests served by alliance, for protection against differing ideologies. These nations confederate under one great leader of the end time. Now that leads to the fourth movement of thought in this message.

#### **IV. THE REVIVED ROMAN EMPIRE WILL CENTER IN EUROPE**

The prophetic Scriptures teach that this revived Roman Empire will center in Europe. The Scriptures teach that the people of the prince that shall come destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

Permit me to take you to the prophecy of the seventy weeks, and call your attention to Daniel 9:26:

**“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.”**

There is almost universal agreement among scholars of the prophetic Word as to the significance of vs. 26, at least a part of that verse, namely, that the destruction of Jerusalem was carried out by the Roman power in 70 A.D.

Now the prince of which it speaks here is the prince that shall come; and that takes us down across the years of the future to the end time. It was his people, the people that belonged to his kingdom 1900 years ago, that destroyed Jerusalem.

All I want you to notice is the connection. It is impossible to mistake the location and the direction of the power that destroyed Jerusalem 1900 years ago. These are said to be the people of the prince that is to come in the future. This location was certainly and definitely in Europe.

How could one miss it? Let me say that the Scriptures teach that the ten toes will arise in Europe; at least this will be the center and the strength of that power. Look again at Daniel 2:44: **“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed:”**

That must mean that these kings are kings of the empire, because they are going to be supplanted by the Messianic kingdom, and the Messianic kingdom is the final one. These ten kings belong to that final power from which the prince shall come who will be the great leader of the end time.

Daniel 7:24 speaks exactly the same way; and if one goes to Revelation 17:12-14, he will find precisely the same teaching in that passage.

It is, therefore, in order to point out that the Scriptures teach that it is this power that will finally become the universal power. I mean to say, this final kingdom in its continued and resuscitated form will be the final kingdom in the history of sinful human empire before the Messianic kingdom is set up, and this kingdom will be universal in scope.

Permit me to point you again to the book of the Revelation, chapter 13:7, **“And it was given unto him,”** and the him of this verse is the beast, the king of this final empire, **“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.”**



Now the point at issue — **“and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”**

This is another way of stating the fact that his authority has become universal. But let me take you also to chapter 17 and read vs. 17 and 18: **“For God hath put in their hearts,”** (that is, these ten kings), **“to fulfill His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”**

That city is Babylon. Here it is pictured with its power of reaching out finally to cover universally the whole earth. This must mean that though this kingdom begins in Europe, it is going to expand to the north, it is going to reach out to the east, it is going to finally envelop the south, thus becoming the final empire that is world-wide, the last empire in the course of human, sinful empire. It is this world-wide power, the last Gentile power of earth to be dominated by sinful mankind that will be destroyed by the coming of the Lord in His glory.

This kingdom will be supplanted by the kingdom that our blessed Lord Himself will establish. Everything in this message up to this point was to lay the foundation for this final movement of thought.

## **V. PROPHECY FULFILLED IN COUNCIL OF NATIONS**

The prophetic Scriptures are being fulfilled in the emergence of the council of nations in Europe.

Basically there is a way of life that is cherished by these nations that places them in opposition with all of the other powers of the earth. Generally, this is called democracy. In some nations it is more pronounced than it is in others.

In Germany, England, France, Switzerland, and as we think of the extension of these nations across the waters, Canada and the United States, we have the outstanding countries where democracy is in operation. But there is still something of this in the other nations that involve this block of nations of which we are speaking; however, there is also something of the iron of autocracy that runs its course through them, deeply imbedded in the life of these nations.

These two things undoubtedly come together to provide us with that ideology, those philosophies, that way of life, that mark out a western power.

Common interests and ways of living throw nations together, and certainly these lines of coherence draw them together as nations.

But another matter should be pointed out; namely, the weaknesses of these nations in the face of the solid fronts that are presented by other world powers. There is really no complete oneness of purpose exhibited by these nations. That is one of the problems that is being faced today in these nations that are called the NATO nations. This is exhibited by the changing moods of government in England, France, Belgium, Germany, and in others.

One republic after another has fallen swiftly in the course of the nation of France during the last several decades. Recent events mark out these weaknesses more clearly than ever.

In almost every situation where NATO has joined to take a stand, these nations have lacked real unity; as in Laos, they declared that there was to be no retreat, but they retreated. Then the weakness in military commitment, — the quotas of armaments and men are not being fulfilled.

They are allowing the United States to provide the men and material and pay the bills and such like. Britain has abolished the draft; France is involved in internal strife; and the western forces are a hodgepodge of men and arms and equipment, and, worst of all, purpose. One does not see that in the eastern powers, the northern powers, nor in the southern powers.

Finally, observe a number of things.

The threat of war from enemy powers is forcing these nations together. It was this threat that brought about the formation of the North Atlantic Pact, which was signed in Washington on April 4, 1949, so soon after the end of the Second World War.

In that group of nations there was the United States and Canada, England, France, Holland, Luxemburg, Italy, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, and Portugal. This pact was a mutual agreement to protect one another.

It is rather interesting when one examines the countries that made up the old Roman Empire to see how closely those nations fall within the pattern of the nations that are in the western block. Hungary did not belong to the old Roman Empire. How significant that it does not belong to the western block of nations today. That is all of tremendous interest to us.

A month after that pact was signed a very significant statement came out in the newspapers — TEN NATIONS SPEED COUNCIL OF EUROPE. This was signed in London and called the Parliament of Democratic Nations. These are not mere coincidences, my friends, these things indicate a trend; they indicate an unfolding of prophetic truth in the providential movement of the nations of the west. When these trends culminate in the final fixed form at the end you will discover they will fulfill to the letter the prophetic utterances of the Word of God.

Here is another thing that came about in 1957.

An economic pact of six nations was signed; this consisted of West Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg. It was an amazing statement; six European countries had decided to work out a plan for economic unity that statesmen had dreamed of for many years. The Prime Ministers of France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg agreed to establish a customs union which they hope eventually will lead to a virtual merger of their economies. That is striking in the light of the prophecy cited in the book of Daniel.

They also agreed to establish a pool for use in atomic power for peaceful purposes. This was heralded as a major step toward a United Europe. Chancellor Conrad Adenauer said after meeting with the Premiers in Paris, "Negotiations for the Customs Union took twenty months to complete. These negotiations were, however, the fruit of a plan that dates back to the end of World War I. If the present plan works out, the countries, extending from Iceland to Turkey."

The new plan cannot compete for headlines with more dramatic developments in world politics; its complexity is shown by the fact that it will not be put into effect until January 1, (that was of 1958) and it will probably take twelve to fifteen years to reach its culminating stage. But assuming that the plan works, and the countries involved seem determined to make it work, it is one of the most important moves in years in international cooperation.

Eventually it is hoped that the whole farming and industrial products of participating countries will be merged.

But I say to you, — under just such moves like that, on the surface not seeming to have any significance beyond the countries that are immediately affected, finally the merger of that ten-toed kingdom, under the leadership of one great leader, is going to emerge and it is going to be in the countries of Europe.

Now, another thing, on May 11, 1961, fifteen NATO nations pledged defense of all global areas threatened by the Soviet bloc. The newspapers carried it after this significant fashion: It means NATO has recognized the total diplomacy conducted by the Soviet bloc on all of the fronts, east and west. Cold war can best be countered by the west's own total diplomacy. The menace which drew them together, (that is, the allies) is now not only military, but also has worldwide political, economic, scientific, and psychological aspects, the communiqué indicated.

All of this, dear people, in my judgment, is an unfolding of the prophetic truth that we have before us in Daniel and Revelation.

And so far as I am able to see there is just one thing that stands in the way for this to flower out into full and final bloom in Europe, and that is the catching away of the Church. For that little horn, that beast, the Antichrist, will then be immediately manifest in his gradual rise to power in the western part of the world.

There is one more thing to which I must call your attention.

Two years ago it was my privilege, as one of the educators in the State of Indiana and as representative of our own educational institution, to attend a conference of educators convened at Indiana University. There were representatives from the great universities from all over the United States. There were representatives of other organizations of large significance; there were governmental representatives present upon this occasion, and that conference had a very highly academic title. It had to do with non-western studies in undergraduate education.

The point of the conference was this: namely, that for several centuries in the west, in world history, the study has been almost wholly confined to the nations of Europe and the United States. Nothing about Russia, Siberia, India, Japan, the Far East, the Near East, Africa, Australia, Central America, and South America has been included.

Any of you who have done any studying in history know what I am saying is true. Suddenly we have awakened to the fact that there has been a shift in the center of world power. It has shifted from the west to the east. Now we are thinking in terms of Moscow and China. Educators have become concerned but their concern was camouflaged under a very academic title. It finally developed in the conference that they weren't so much concerned about the history and the language of these nations as they were survival.

It was then that I pricked up my ears. I began to listen to them, not merely in the terms of academic twentieth century university learning. I began to listen to them in terms of the prophetic Scriptures.

But, friends just one thing — the west that includes the United States but most certainly involves Europe, in its relationship to the other powers of the earth, is facing peril of tremendous significance in the days that lie ahead. It looks to me as though the very words of Scripture are coming out on the pages of our newspapers and in the movements of the nations today. Even the terms that are being used follow that course. This is true of directions. When directions of the Word of God are pointed out, they are always in relationship to the land of Palestine.

If you will examine Ezekiel 38:12, in speaking of the little land of Palestine, it is described as being in the midst of the land, or better, the navel, of the earth; and all directions in the Word of God are from that vantage point.

So north is north from there, and south is south from that point and east is east from that point, and west is west.

Perhaps the United States doesn't necessarily figure in that except as it is related to Europe. But Europe is the west; and certainly because of our close relationship to Europe, we will probably be identified with the west. The newspapers talk about the north and the south and the east and the west in the same terms as the Word of God.

Since this is true, the thing I am concerned about in this message is to point out that the movements in the countries of Europe cannot be lightly set aside. They point to one thing, — the things that are one day going to come to their fulfillment in that western kingdom which finally becomes the last great power of the end time.

Permit me to call to your attention the practical value of prophecy as set forth in II Peter 3:14, 17, 18: **“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that you look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”** Vs. 17, **“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”**

~ end of chapter 8 ~

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