

OPENING DANIEL'S SEALED PROPHECY FROM BABYLON

# COUNTDOWN TO THE APOCALYPSE

LEARN TO READ THE SIGNS  
THAT THE LAST DAYS  
HAVE BEGUN

GRANT R. JEFFREY

BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF *THE NEXT WORLD WAR*



# COUNTDOWN TO THE APOCALYPSE

LEARN TO READ THE SIGNS THAT  
THE LAST DAYS HAVE BEGUN

GRANT R. JEFFREY



WATERBROOK  
PRESS

COUNTDOWN TO THE APOCALYPSE  
PUBLISHED BY WATERBROOK PRESS  
12265 Oracle Boulevard, Suite 200  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921  
*A division of Random House Inc.*

Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version.

Italics in Scripture quotations indicate the author's added emphasis.

ISBN 978-1-4000-7441-9

Copyright © 2008 by Grant R. Jeffrey

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Published in the United States by WaterBrook Multnomah, an imprint of The Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Random House Inc., New York.

WATERBROOK and its deer colophon are registered trademarks of Random House Inc.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data  
Jeffrey, Grant R.

Countdown to the Apocalypse : learn to read the signs that the last days have begun / Grant R. Jeffrey. — 1st ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p.      ).

ISBN 978-1-4000-7441-9

1. Bible—Prophecies—End of the world. 2. End of the world—Biblical teaching.
  3. Bible—Prophecies—Second Advent. 4. Second Advent—Biblical teaching. I. Title.
- BS649.E63J45 2008  
236'.9—dc22

2008024105

Printed in the United States of America  
2008—First Edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

#### SPECIAL SALES

Most WaterBrook Multnomah books are available in special quantity discounts when purchased in bulk by corporations, organizations, and special interest groups. Custom imprinting or excerpting can also be done to fit special needs. For information, please e-mail [SpecialMarkets@WaterBrookPress.com](mailto:SpecialMarkets@WaterBrookPress.com) or call 1-800-603-7051.

# Contents

Acknowledgments .....	vii
Introduction: The Babylon Prophecy .....	1
1. Opening the Sealed Vision from Babylon .....	9
<i>The Future That Daniel Described Is Now</i>	
2. The Greatest of God's Prophets .....	23
<i>Daniel Described Your Future in Detail</i>	
3. The Babylonian King's Prophetic Dream .....	41
<i>Revealing History's Great Empires—and the Coming Rule of the Antichrist</i>	
4. God's Servants Face a Test .....	63
<i>Daniel and His Friends Risk Their Lives in Devotion to God</i>	
5. Divine Writing on a Palace Wall .....	77
<i>God Reveals the Coming Judgment to Babylon's Pagan Leaders</i>	
6. Daniel Warns Us About the Antichrist .....	93
<i>The Global Dictator Will Arise from the Revived Roman Empire</i>	
7. The Vision of the Ram and the He Goat .....	105
<i>Prophecies of Alexander the Great, Antiochus Epiphanes, and the Final Antichrist</i>	

## Contents

8. Daniel's Time Line for the "Time of the End" . . . . .	117
<i>The Bible's Detailed Description of Events at the End of the Age</i>	
9. An Angel Reveals the Future . . . . .	141
<i>What Lies Ahead for Our Generation?</i>	
10. The Rise of the Antichrist . . . . .	159
<i>The Identifying Traits of Satan's Global Dictator</i>	
11. The Countdown to Armageddon . . . . .	175
<i>The Signs That Point to the Final Battle of This Age</i>	
Appendix A: Answering the Critics of the Book of Daniel . . . . .	195
Appendix B: God Creates and Preserves His Chosen People . . . . .	203
Notes . . . . .	215
Selected Bibliography . . . . .	223

# Acknowledgments

*Countdown to the Apocalypse* is the result of more than four decades of extensive, detailed research into the history, archaeology, and prophecies of the book of Daniel. In my lifelong study of Daniel's prophecies, I have acquired more than three hundred books—written by both Jewish and Christian scholars—that examine Daniel's predictions. Daniel's unique life and blameless character, as well as his unwavering faithfulness to God and His people, have been an inspiration to me.

As this book will demonstrate, we are now witnessing the fulfillment of numerous unique prophecies that are setting the stage for the return of Jesus Christ in our lifetime. Jesus encouraged believers to have no fear but rather to be filled with the hope of our coming redemption when we see the fulfillment of these prophecies. He declared, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

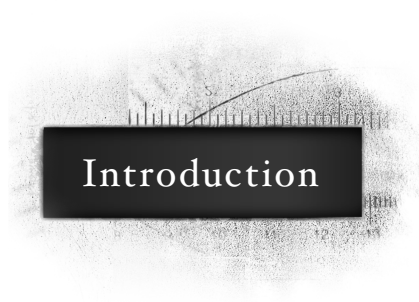
My parents inspired me through their faith, their deep commitment to Jesus Christ, and their lifelong interest in the Scriptures' prophecies of Christ's Second Coming.

I dedicate *Countdown to the Apocalypse* to my loving wife, Kaye. She continues to inspire my writing as well as being my faithful partner in my research, archaeological explorations, and writing ministry. Her constant encouragement and practical assistance enabled me to complete this important manuscript.

## Acknowledgments

I trust that my biblical research will inform, inspire, and encourage you to personally study the deep meaning of the prophecies of Daniel, the greatest prophet of the Old Testament.

Grant R. Jeffrey  
Toronto, Ontario  
February 2008



# The Babylon Prophecy





**B**ABYLON, BOTH AS A LEGENDARY ANCIENT CITY and the first unrivaled world empire, has loomed large in memory throughout human history.

Six hundred years before Jesus came to earth, the Euphrates River Valley was home to the magnificent Babylonian Empire. The Babylonians had conquered the rest of the known world and brought untold numbers of people from the defeated kingdoms to Babylon as slaves.

Among the slaves was a young man who was chosen by God to become one of the greatest of the Hebrew prophets. God gave Daniel visions of the future and the ability to interpret dreams. While living in exile, Daniel recorded prophecies that some twenty-six centuries later give us a highly detailed look at our own future. Daniel saw the unfolding of human history

and the days of Jesus Christ on earth. And as we will read in the chapters that follow, he saw the most detailed visions describing the end of the age—the days that we are about to enter.

We live in prophetic times, so it is not surprising that the land of Babylon—present-day Iraq and parts of present-day Iran—is the focus of international tension and the subject of daily news reports. Iraq is torn by violent insurgencies, armed factions fighting for control of the country, and sectarian violence that continually causes injury and death. Foreign fighters, devoted to the cause of Al Qaeda and radical Islam, enter Iraq to join militant groups, to help train terrorists, to battle against Western allied forces, and to plot the demise of the State of Israel.

## THE POWER OF ANCIENT BABYLON

The name Babylon still evokes a powerful image of the greatest city of the ancient world. The name is derived from *babel*, a Hebrew word meaning “the gate of God.” Located fifty-six miles south of modern-day Baghdad in Iraq, it rapidly grew in power until it became the most important city in the ancient world. Babylon is in an area originally known by the name Sumer, or Shinar, designating the fertile country lying between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The land also was known as Mesopotamia, meaning “the land between the rivers.”

The first mention of Babylon in the Bible reveals that the city of Babel was founded by Nimrod, who was the son of Cush. “Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD.... And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel” (Genesis 10:8–10). This was the site of the first widespread rebellion against God. The men of Babel built an enormous tower in an arrogant attempt to rebel

against God and make themselves famous. “And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth” (Genesis 11:4). God’s response was to “confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech” (Genesis 11:7). In the confusion that resulted, “the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city” (Genesis 11:8). Scientists have verified the dispersion of humanity throughout three continents after the Flood (see Genesis 10:32; 11:8–9).

History records that much later, around 1760 BC, King Hammurabi made Babylon the political and religious capital of his very powerful but small empire. Hammurabi combined astute diplomacy with superb military leadership to defeat the surrounding kingdoms in Mesopotamia. He was the first major king who created a written code of laws, known as the Code of Hammurabi. He became the ruler of the first united Babylonian Empire, which extended from the Persian Gulf to the Habur River more than a millennium before the rise of the Babylonian Empire of Nebuchadnezzar.

In the seventh century BC, under King Nabopolassar and later his famous son, Nebuchadnezzar, the new empire of Babylon waged continuous wars against neighboring kingdoms, laying waste to cities and carrying countless numbers of people into captivity. Most notable among the millions of captives were the Judeans of Israel, who were taken in three phases between 606 BC and 587 BC.

Some historical sources conclude that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah in 605 BC. However, a careful reading of the Scriptures reveals that the correct date is actually 606 BC. The prophet Jeremiah recorded, “The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first

year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon” (Jeremiah 25:1). Jehoiakim’s “fourth year” was 605 BC. However, Daniel declared that Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar’s army a year earlier, in the “third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah” (Daniel 1:1), which was the year 606 BC. The historian Henry Fynes Clinton also confirmed in his exhaustive chronological study of ancient history that Prince Nebuchadnezzar led his army against the kingdom of Judah in the summer of 606 BC.<sup>1</sup>

The Babylonian Empire did not endure for long, however. The Medo-Persian Empire, led by the powerful kings Darius and Cyrus the Great, conquered the empire and the city of Babylon in 538 BC. But in the years that Nebuchadnezzar ruled the known world, God raised up Daniel, one of Israel’s greatest prophets.

## DANIEL’S VISION OF OUR FUTURE

While serving in Babylon’s royal courts, Daniel saw remarkable visions and interpreted inspired dreams. Many of his visions foretold the upheaval in the world that came to pass more than two thousand years ago. In fact, the fulfillment of those prophecies verifies that Daniel was truly God’s prophet. His predictions came true exactly as they were given. However, many of Daniel’s most intriguing prophecies describe events that are still to come. The generation that you and I are part of will see the fulfillment of these last-days prophecies.

In this book we will examine all of Daniel’s prophecies—the ones that were fulfilled long ago and those that are soon to be fulfilled. Our generation will witness the rise of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, the Tribulation period, the Antichrist’s political and military domination of the world, the battle of Armageddon, and the return to earth of Jesus Christ.





*A bas-relief sculpture of King Cyrus the Great of Persia*

Daniel's ancient Babylonian prophecies give us a precise time line that reveals the sequence of events and the amount of time that will separate the major developments of the last days. It is certain that the events Daniel described will occur during the current generation.

If you know what to look for, you will see that signs of the last days are appearing all around us. I invite you to join me in this study of Daniel's prophecies. Together we will discover what the future holds for God's people as well as for those who wage war against God.



## Chapter I

# Opening the Sealed Vision from Babylon

*The Future That Daniel Described Is Now*

But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words,  
and seal the book, even to the time of the end.

—DANIEL 12:4

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear  
the words of this prophecy, and keep those things  
which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

—REVELATION 1:3



JESUS CHRIST, THE GREATEST OF ALL THE PROPHETS, prepared His followers to be able to read the signs of the times. Jesus pointed out that, in the midst of world upheaval, it is necessary to understand the meaning of key developments. Speaking to His disciples, Jesus described the events that would signal the final countdown to the Apocalypse. He wanted His followers to be prepared for the revealing of Christ at the end of the age.

In His own prophecy, Jesus referred to a revelation from Daniel's vision (see Matthew 24:15; Daniel 9:24–27). As we will see later in this chapter, Daniel's words—repeated hundreds of years later by Jesus—serve as a crucial guide as we attempt to understand the signs of our times. Jesus walked the earth some five centuries after Daniel recorded his prophecies. But both



Jesus and Daniel looked ahead through time to our generation as they described the events that will lead to the final battle between God and Satan. Jesus' prophetic message in Matthew 24 had a recurring theme: be prepared!

Jesus was careful to give us the information we need to understand the times we live in and to prepare our hearts for what lies just ahead. He said we should look for certain prophetic developments as they unfold, and He called our attention to Daniel's vision: "When ye therefore see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)" (Matthew 24:15). By quoting Daniel's prophecy about the Antichrist defiling the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem, Jesus gave the Hebrew prophet His divine seal of approval. Second only to Jesus Christ, Daniel stands as God's greatest prophet. His words will guide and enlighten us as we study his prophecies and learn to identify the events that will characterize the end of this age. Jesus points us to Daniel because He wants us to be spiritually prepared for the challenges that lie just ahead.

## THE RISE OF THE ANTICHRIST

As history rushes toward the culmination of the current age, it's important that we recognize the signposts that point to hidden events and trends that are only hinted at in news headlines. Daniel's prophecies show that what is happening in Europe, the Middle East, and parts of Asia today are clear warnings of what will occur tomorrow. Daniel gave us a precise time line that plots the sequence of major end-time developments. Many of the events that are specified on his time line have already occurred.

Daniel foretold the unfolding of ancient human history, including the

four great empires that controlled the known world for more than two thousand years. Daniel's vision of the seventy weeks describes sixty-nine "weeks" of years, leading up to the crucifixion of Christ. The time of Christ's life on earth, and His death and resurrection, is followed by a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of years. It is during this gap that the church has been spreading the Christian faith throughout the world.

Today we are approaching the commencement of the seventieth week of Daniel's vision. In preparation for this final phase of Daniel's prophetic time line, the world witnessed the return of the Jews from thousands of years of exile to their homeland. Prior to 1948, few people believed the Jews would ever realize their dream of once again occupying the Promised Land. After being scattered to the four corners of the earth, the Jews finally reestablished the State of Israel on May 15, 1948. Not only was it an answer to their ancient prayer of "next year in Jerusalem," but the creation of the nation of Israel signaled to those Christians who are familiar with biblical prophecy that Jesus Christ will return to earth in our generation.

The Jews' return to Palestine restarted the clock on the prophetic time line. Using the year 1948 as a critical starting point, we can now look for other major prophetic signs of what is to come. As we study Daniel's prophecies, we will note the end-times developments that are *already* under way in our generation.

Based on the information we have from God's prophets, it is very likely that the figure known as the Antichrist has already been born and is an adult living in Europe. We do not know the name of the Antichrist, but we do know that the name will somehow be connected with the mystical Hebrew/Greek number 666 (see Revelation 13:16–18). He will soon arise and become visible on the global scene. Those who are students of prophecy

will know who he is at that time, because he will gradually position himself as the politically unrivaled leader of the united Europe. Later he will take political control of the entire world. The generation alive today will see all these prophetic events develop. The Antichrist will consolidate all political, economic, and military power on a scale never before seen in human history. He will rise to rule the world through a confederation of European and Mediterranean nations. This is the prophesied revival of the ancient Roman Empire, which Daniel foretold.

Today Daniel's visions take on a much greater immediacy, because he was describing *our own time*, our generation. The future is now.

### GOD IS PREPARING US FOR CHRIST'S RETURN

The Lord God is using Daniel's prophecies to prepare both Jewish and Christian believers for what lies ahead. As Jesus taught in the gospel of Matthew, we all need to be prepared for the future. In this book we will explore Daniel's prophecies that were fulfilled in ancient times, attesting to his credentials as a true prophet of God. We will also look at his prophecies that describe developments that are taking place in our own day and those that will come to pass in the very near future.

Here are just a few of the major developments that God's prophets have revealed will occur in our generation:

- The ancient Roman Empire will be revived in the last days and will become the power base of the kingdom of the Antichrist.
- The Antichrist will launch a political career that grows in influence and power. He will consolidate his economic, political, and military power in Europe, eventually becoming the unrivaled dictator of the world.

- He will make a seven-year treaty (a “covenant”) with Israel, guaranteeing its security. This will prove to be a false treaty—in reality, a covenant with death.
- The Antichrist will be assassinated at the midpoint of the seven-year covenant and then will be brought back to life by the power of Satan. This is a satanic false parallel to the resurrection of Christ, and the satanic resurrection will deceive those who have not studied and understood the revelations of God’s prophets.
- The Antichrist and his partner, the False Prophet, will orchestrate the implementation of the Mark of the Beast, a totalitarian police system whereby every person on earth will be tracked. Through the mechanism of the Mark of the Beast, closely associated with the number 666, every person will lose his or her privacy and personal freedom following the death and resurrection of the Antichrist. Those who accept the mark will acknowledge their spiritual submission to the Antichrist.
- The world will be plunged into a series of wars involving a number of devastating battles that lead to the cataclysmic battle of Armageddon, the war that will end this age.
- In the battle of Armageddon, the western nations of the revived Roman Empire that are loyal to the Antichrist will wage war against the enormous armies of the “kings of the east” (Revelation 16:12). The armies of the Antichrist will occupy Israel and the Middle East with overwhelming numbers of troops and vastly superior weaponry. Then a massive, two-hundred-million-man army will arise from Asia and will invade the Middle East. At that final conflict the battle of Armageddon will be fought in northern Israel in the Valley of Jezreel. The carnage and utter devastation of this war will be unprecedented.



- The battle of Armageddon will conclude with Jesus Christ's return to earth, when He comes to rescue His chosen people. He will defend Israel by defeating both the massive armies of the eastern and western enemy forces that will be arrayed in battle against God's people.
- Jesus Christ will defeat the Antichrist and banish Satan to the bottomless pit for a thousand years. Christ will then establish His messianic kingdom on earth.

### THE EVENT THAT STARTS A NEW COUNTDOWN

For years prophecy teachers have tried to match Daniel's famous vision of the seventy weeks with a time line that adheres to the Western calendar. Such efforts failed to accurately correlate the prophetic time line with the modern system of measuring months and years. Many students of prophecy overlooked a crucial factor: the book of Daniel was written before the current Western calendar was created. In my studies of Daniel, I discovered that to accurately cross-reference his remarkably precise time descriptions with the modern calendar, I had to go back to the Hebrew biblical calendar. First, I used the ancient Hebrew calendar to measure the passage of prophetic years, with each year consisting of 360 days (twelve months of 30 days each). When reading Daniel's prophecy using the 360-day calendar, it is possible to determine the sequence of the major prophetic events during the future seven-year Tribulation period. One can also establish the precise passage of time in between these critical events. We will examine these issues in greater detail in chapter 8.

As we consider the sequence of last-days events that Daniel described,

it's essential to note the one prophetic event that serves as a trigger for all that follows. The Antichrist will draw up a seven-year treaty, and Israel will enter into this covenant with death. Once the treaty is signed, a very specific series of events will unfold during the next seven years. The treaty referred to in Daniel 9:27 marks the beginning of a seven-year countdown to Christ's return, coinciding with the whole Tribulation period. Beginning with the signing of the treaty as day one of the seven-year Tribulation, we can calculate the number of days that will separate each of the major events of the Tribulation. We are able to determine when the Antichrist will put a stop to daily animal sacrifices on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, when the Antichrist will desecrate the Temple, when the Antichrist will be assassinated and subsequently resurrected satanically, and when the final battle of Armageddon will conclude.

### SIGNS OF THE FUTURE YOU CAN READ TODAY

While these events remain in the future, numerous developments are already putting in place the crucial components of the Antichrist's future rule. Daniel's prophecy points to the following developments, which are already under way.

#### *The Revived Roman Empire*

The leaders and bureaucrats of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Germany are working behind the scenes to unify Europe without calling for another vote on a European constitution. They lost the last vote decisively. Since then the political alliances of the elites have continued to advance without the informed approval of the people. The political elites

are maneuvering to create an international coalition that will, in effect, restore the Roman Empire. In the absence of a full public debate, the leaders of key European nations have initiated the political and legal arrangements that will form a European superstate.

This action defies the wishes of a majority of the population in the European Union, in which citizens voting in national referendums rejected a proposed European constitution. However, without the people's informed consent, the elected (and many unelected) leaders of Europe continue to lay the groundwork for the "United States of Europe." To those who doubt that supporters of the new European Union intend to create the world's first superstate in Europe, they should consider the evidence. The enlarged European Union already meets the legal definition of an independent, sovereign state. The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States—a treaty signed at Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1933—established the criteria that identify a sovereign state. The treaty declared that a state possesses these essential characteristics:

- a permanent population
- a defined territory
- a government
- the capacity to enter into relations with other states

The enlarged European Union possesses all these qualifications.

### *An Army Numbering Two Hundred Million Troops*

China, India, and their Asian allies are positioned to raise a two-hundred-million-man army in the near future. This army can be marshaled to form the prophesied pan-Asian military force of the kings of the east, which will wage war in Israel against the armies of the Antichrist. What was impossible at any time in the past is now a real possibility.

### *Drying Up the Euphrates River*

Daniel prophesied that the great Euphrates River (a historic military barrier between the east and the west) will dry up—something that has never happened. However, it is now possible following the construction of the huge Atatürk Dam in Turkey. This massive dam can cut off the flow of the headwaters of the Euphrates in the mountains of Turkey.

### *Advanced Genocidal Weapons Systems*

Several nations now have access to a genetic weapon that kills victims selectively, based on their ethnicity. By acting selectively on a victim's DNA, Arabs, Jews, Asians, or Caucasians could be singled out for death on a massive scale. In a time of battle, or even by targeting certain civilian populations, an enemy force could commit unprecedented ethnic cleansing through the use of advanced genetic weapons.<sup>1</sup>

## APOCALYPTIC WRITINGS

In his book, Daniel reveals that he saw God in an awesome vision. The prophet saw God in His glory as “the Ancient of days,” sitting in judgment on all mankind (7:9). One of Daniel's major prophetic themes is that despite the appearance that evil is triumphing, God will ultimately judge both individual sinners and wicked nations. This certainty that God will set all things right will be crucial to the Tribulation believers who are living under the tyranny of the Antichrist.

The book of Daniel, the writings of Zechariah, the book of Revelation, and a portion of Isaiah's prophecies (chapters 24–27) are described by scholars as an “apocalypse.” The Greek word for *apocalypse* means an “unveiling,” the revelation of something that has previously been hidden.

Throughout the Word of God, the Lord inspired His prophets to create apocalyptic writings using figures of speech and prophetic symbols to reveal the events that will unfold during the climax of history. God has promised that in the last days Jesus will return as the promised Messiah. Only God knows the future and accurately reveals it to us. The Lord has made it clear that accurate prophecy is impossible unless He inspires a person to reveal future events (see Isaiah 46:9–10).

Since ancient times, Daniel has been numbered among the most highly regarded of God's prophets. The early Christian theologian Augustine wrote about "the testimony of the prophet Daniel, who most plainly foretold that the saints should receive the kingdom of the Most High."<sup>2</sup> Further, the Christian writer Jerome (AD 385) wrote of the importance of Daniel's writing, saying, "None of the prophets spoke so plainly of Christ."<sup>3</sup>

### READING THE SIGNS OF YOUR FUTURE

God revealed the future to Daniel in ways that no other prophet was allowed to witness. Babylon had destroyed the kingdom of Judah, yet God chose a young Hebrew captive living in Babylon to observe and record detailed visions of the precise time of the first coming of Israel's Messiah, as well as the events that will lead to the Messiah's return to earth in the years to come.

In Daniel's prophecies, God revealed the precise timing of the key events of the last days. But Daniel's prophecies reveal far more than just the end of the age. The prophet's vision of the seventy weeks is a calendar of God's dealings with humanity, especially Israel, throughout history. Daniel describes the rise and fall of four Gentile empires that successively dominated the world. He also foretold the precise time that the leaders of Israel

would reject their promised Messiah. Daniel prophesied the rise of the revived Roman Empire, which we see developing today. Daniel received astonishing visions from God that describe Satan's all-out war against God and His chosen people. Daniel also saw God's destruction of Satan through the power of His Son, Jesus Christ, the returning Messiah.

I believe that these events, foretold by Daniel more than twenty-five centuries in the past, will occur during our generation. While no one but God knows the actual day and time of Christ's return, God did reveal to the famous prophet of Babylon the signs that would show God's people they are living in the last generation. Those who have seriously studied Daniel's prophecy are now reading those signs.

## THE TIME LINE FOR THE LAST DAYS

The rebirth of Israel in 1948 announced to students of Bible prophecy much more than simply the creation of a new nation. The long-awaited ingathering of Jews from more than seventy nations back to their ancient homeland signaled the start of God's prophetic countdown. Jesus revealed that the generation that was alive to see the rebirth of the nation of Israel would live to witness the final conflict between Jesus Christ and the forces of Satan at the battle of Armageddon (see Matthew 24:32–34).

In the years that have passed since the Jewish exiles returned to Israel, world events have moved rapidly toward the end of the age. Daniel pointed to significant political, military, and technological developments that are setting the stage for Christ's return. I will address these signs of the times in greater detail in chapters 10 and 11. The most evident signs on the world stage are the rebirth of Israel, the reappearance of the ancient Roman Empire, the Islamic and Russian preparations for an unprecedented genocidal



war against Israel, the development of new weapons technology that makes possible the cataclysmic warfare described in Daniel's prophecy, and the development of advanced computer technology and a cashless society that will make it possible for the Antichrist to control not only governments but the lives of billions of individuals.

In chapter 8, we will look at Daniel's remarkable prophecies that were fulfilled to the very day nearly two thousand years ago with the rejection of Jesus Christ as Israel's Messiah. In chapters 3 and 6, we will examine prophecies about the destiny of the four Gentile world empires that have dominated human history for twenty-five hundred years during the "times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). And in chapters 9, 10, and 11, we will study Daniel's prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled, regarding the nature of the Antichrist, the Mark of the Beast, the Tribulation, the unprecedented global war that will destroy the world political system as we know it, and the return of Christ to protect His people and destroy Satan. These are prophecies that will be fulfilled in our generation.

As we cross-reference ancient prophecy with major political-military developments taking place in our world today, two things become evident. First, God has not left biblically aware Christians unprepared. He has provided the necessary prophetic knowledge in advance of the unfolding events. The Lord commanded Daniel to record his visions so Jewish and Christian believers living in the last days would be able to read the signs of the end times. God has provided hope, insight, and encouragement that assure His followers that the troubling events in our days are setting the stage for the long-awaited return of Jesus Christ. Because of Daniel, we know that after the terrible days of the Tribulation period, Christ will return to defeat Satan and his armies. At that time Jesus Christ will establish His millennial rule on earth.