

[Blue text = my highlight. Don.] 15-12-20

Bible Magazine Winter 2020/1

As 2020 draws to a close, with a host of unprecedented happenings, we can lift up our heads and rejoice! It is a year that has brought constant confirmation that our God is an All Powerful and All-Knowing God, who has graciously revealed to His servants His plans for the earth. He has given His servants a description of the Latter-days before His Son's return, that we have seen being worked out in the past twelve months. Who among us can doubt that in the midst of great distress to the nations of the world, our God's Hand can be clearly discerned!

What a strengthening of our faith this is. Coming at a time when our Ecclesial life in many countries has been severely disrupted, we recognise God's Goodness to His servants. With His testing comes faith building evidence. Without the personal after meeting chats, it is so easy to slip into isolation. It is wonderful to briefly see brethren and sisters around the world able to link in to Zoom events, but the strength of fellowship that comes from physically meeting and embracing and mutual support has gone for the present, for many of us. Yet, to help us through, we have such wonderful signs.

- Britain's struggles to break away from Europe.
- The growing number of nations wanting to sign Peace Accords with Israel.
- The way Britain and the Commonwealth countries are being pushed to work together as they seek to find alternative markets to China.
- Britain signs Defence Agreement with Israel
- Russia's continuing footsteps into the Middle East.
- Iran's raised rhetoric against Israel.
- The EU and the Vatican continue to support the Palestinians against Israel.
- The growing talk of unity between the Vatican and the Orthodox churches.
- As well as the fear that Covid has brought to the world.

These are signs that *watchmen on Zion's walls* have long been waiting to see, and now faith is turning to sight! We have been privileged to see so much happening in 2020.

Brexit trade talks to continue until New Year's Eve as latest deadline is missed

We can only cover a few of the above and will start with Brexit. The UK left the EU on January 31 2020 and entered an eleven-month period of being tied to the EU's rules without having any say in the running of the EU. She had also to continue with her annual payments to the EU budgets, which have risen to record amounts, partly to pay towards Covid costs, but also because of the adjustment in sterling's value against the euro. All countries have to pay their dues in euros, so a weaker pound bumps up the cost—but it does make UK exports cheaper. This period until the year end was designed to be a time to hammer out the terms upon which the UK would trade with the EU. The ideal would have been to roll over the existing terms, so that there would be no change or disruption. Indeed, this is the position that UK has been able to take with many countries, Israel being one of the first, so that she continues to trade with them under the same terms as when an EU member.

What we have to remember is that the EU is not a single country like Israel or Japan, for example. It is a collection of 27 member countries, each with their agenda and aspirations. They have voluntarily given up their individual freedoms in order to be sheltered under the umbrella of a much larger and more powerful organisation. The downside is that it is a committee-led organisation. Often one member can prevent an action, though increasingly most decisions have been moved to only needing a majority agreement. Decision making is slow, as internal squabbles hinder rapid progress. The EU has a religious basis, modelled upon the Holy Roman Empire, with its delight in laws to cover every aspect of life, in order to bind disparate peoples together. Hence the UK's desire to leave the unit is looked upon with dismay by those running it. Certainly, breaking free is not to be encouraged, as it rocks the EU boat. It was never going to be a straightforward move for Britain to leave. As we have witnessed, every opportunity has been taken to try to ensure that she continues to be enmeshed in the EU's tentacles.

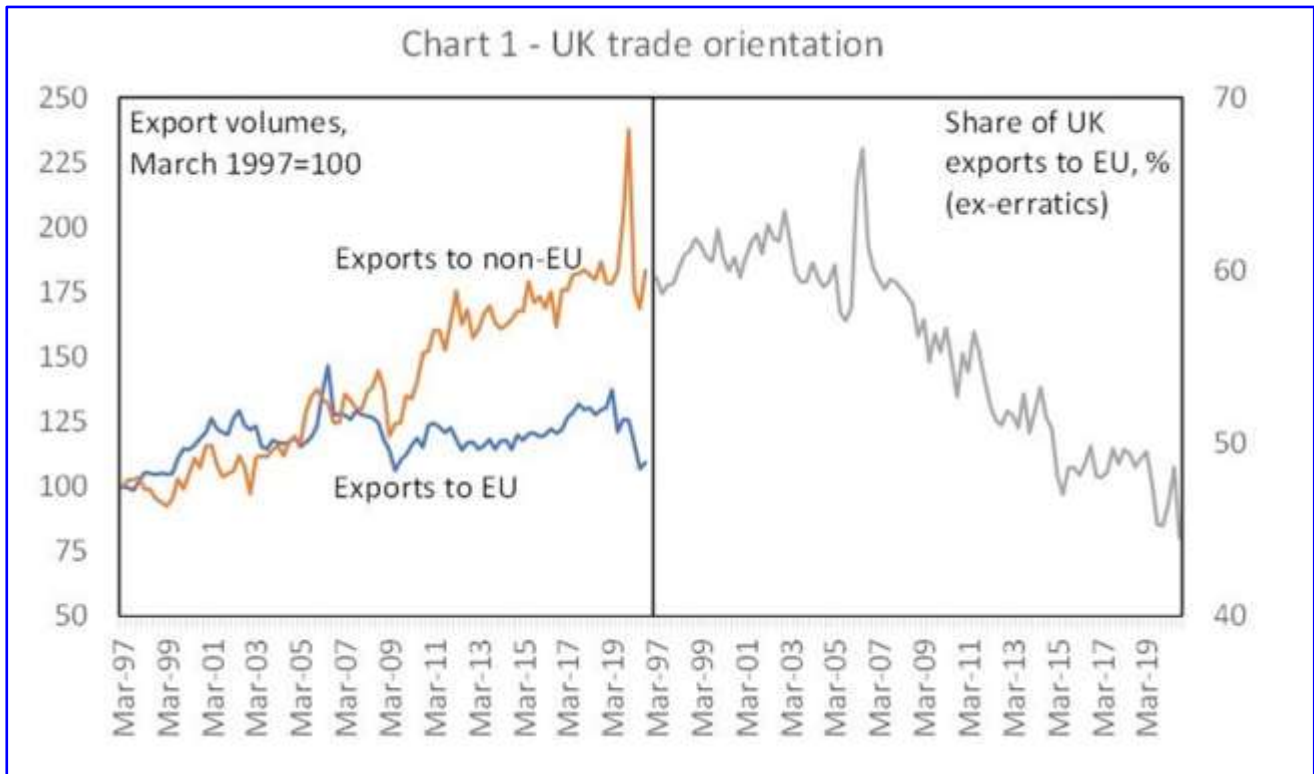
Brexit talks have dragged on and on. Deadline after deadline being reached and then left behind. As I write in mid-December, yesterday was to be the final deciding day. Except it was not. Although an Agreement between the UK and the EU over future trade terms seems ever more remote, there may be an Agreement made by the end of the month. Britain leaving Europe is not dependent on there being an Agreement. Whether January 1 2021 marks a turbulent period for EU trade or a smoother transition, doesn't change the fact that Britain will be free to pursue her own pathway in the world. The only fear is of Britain buckling at the last moment and remaining partially entangled with Europe by giving up total independence in exchange for a smoother deal. Boris Johnson has made his stand; Britain will become an independent sovereign nation after December 31 2020, hopefully he stands firm.

No deal better than a deal

For the UK, departing without a deal is far better than being tied to the EU. Britain's trade with the EU has been

declining quite sharply

It is not widely known that UK goods exports to the EU have been stagnant, in volume terms, for nearly two decades, while UK exports of goods to the rest of the world have risen by 75% (see Chart 1).



Nor is it understood that the steady decline in the EU's share of UK trade is going to continue, and probably accelerate, over the next two decades. This will be the result of higher trade barriers with the EU but much more importantly, of markets in the rest of the world growing far faster than EU markets. The EU will account for just 5-6% of world growth to 2040. The share of UK goods exports going to the EU may be as low as 30% by then, despite geographical proximity.

Moreover, with services now over half of UK exports and even less bound by economic geography (over 60% of UK services exports are already to non-EU destinations), the share of total UK exports of goods and services to the EU will be even lower. Note any UK trade deal with the EU is likely to do very little for services over and above WTO rules.

The EU's key aim is to maintain as much economic and political control over the UK as possible. Anyone thinking a free trade deal will see the EU allowing abandoning this aim and allowing the UK to drift away from its orbit is kidding themselves. The EU will use every possible element of any deal with the UK to harass the UK economically and try to force it back into close economic alignment. Harry Western, *Briefings for Britain* 07-Dec-20

In the situation that Britain does leave without a deal and the EU puts high tariffs on goods entering the UK, Britain will soon find cheaper suppliers, so that it will be the EU who suffers in the longer term, rather than Britain.

Liz Truss is the unsung hero of post-Brexit trade deals — she's sorted out 57 of them

If negotiating a Trade Agreement with the EU has been a story of pain and travail, Britain's success with negotiating with non-EU countries has been a valuable tonic! Those who argued for the UK to remain in the EU, forecast that Britain would have great difficulties in doing deals, after nearly 50 years of not doing such deals whilst an EU member. How wrong were their predictions.

Week in, week out, there she is: putting pen to paper in front of the flags of yet another trade partner at the conclusion of successful talks. In the last week came agreements with Canada, Kenya, Singapore (described as "an outside chance" as recently as last month), Vietnam, Switzerland, Norway, and Iceland, to make a combined total of over 50 such deals.

This breakneck progress means that ahead of the end of the transition period – and regardless of what happens in the talks with Brussels – the **UK has now signed rollover agreements covering over 93 per cent of the value of such trade with non-EU countries.** There may yet be more to come, given that negotiations continue, and considering the energy that Truss and her department have brought to the job.



Liz Truss holding the agreement with Canada (Photo: Gov.uk)

More importantly, it is crucial to realise that these agreements represent the beginning, not the end, of our newly independent trade policy.

The rollover deals are valuable, **but they are not just an end in themselves**. The Department for International Trade has been hiring experts from the private sector and veteran negotiators from abroad. It has been planning, innovating, learning from experience, and developing relationships with negotiators and politicians in valuable markets

The very sight of the UK conducting successful negotiations shows that our country is open for business.

Wholly new agreements are in the pipeline. The latest round of talks with **Australia** finished just over a week ago, discussions with **New Zealand** are under way, relationships are being built with the new **US** administration-elect, and only yesterday the Trade Secretary was conspicuously co-hosting a forum with senior **Indian** business leaders.

As Truss told a City audience last month, **“these agreements are important in themselves, for the economic benefit they bring, but they’re also important because they provide a bridge towards the Trans-Pacific Partnership”**.

Expect to hear those words – or their tongue-twister abbreviation, **the CPTPP** – more in 2021. The Partnership is **not just a large free-trade area, but one covering economies that are set to grow rapidly in the coming years, and the UK has already secured the backing of several key members for its forthcoming application to join**. *Mark Wallace, iNews 14-Dec-20*

The latest deal that the UK has secured with **Singapore** is worth £17bn a year. The earlier deal with **Canada** is worth £20bn, with a more advanced deal promised for 2021.

Negotiations on a deal with **Australia** are progressing well.

Australia is seeking an ambitious and comprehensive FTA with the UK that drives increased trade in goods and services, two-way investment, economic growth, and job creation. An FTA with the UK also signals our shared commitment to open markets, free trade, and the rules-based global trading system. **The UK is one of Australia’s most enduring partners**. We have a shared commitment to the rule of law and to an open and rules-based international trading system. **Our common heritage, values and strategic interests mean that we work closely together across a wide range of international issues**.

In 2018-19, two-way goods and services trade between Australia and the UK was valued at \$30.3 billion, **making the UK Australia’s seventh-largest trading partner. The UK is also Australia’s third-largest services trading partner, and our second-largest source of foreign investment**. *Australian Government Dept Foreign Affairs and Trade web site. Accessed 14-Dec-20*

Boris Johnson to visit India to boost trade ties

Breaking news as I write is that Mr Johnson is visiting one of the great Commonwealth members in early January!

Prime Minister Boris Johnson will travel to **India** in January 2021 to strengthen a **key strategic relationship which supports jobs and investment across the UK**.

This will be the Prime Minister's first major bilateral visit since taking office, and the first since our departure from the EU, and **underlines his commitment to step up the UK's engagement with the Indo-Pacific region**.

The trip in January will kick off a significant year for Global Britain on the world stage. In 2021, the UK will host both the G7 Leaders' Meeting and COP26 Summits, as well as a global education conference aimed at getting girls into school, and an event to mark the first meeting of the UN General Assembly in London in 1946.

The Prime Minister has written to Prime Minister Modi to accept his invitation, and to **invite India** to attend the **UK's G7 Summit** as **one of three guest nations** alongside South Korea and **Australia** – delivering the Prime Minister's ambition to work with a group of **like-minded democracies** to advance shared interests and tackle common challenges.

The UK and India are significant investors and markets for each other's economies and our growing trade and investment relationship is worth around £24 billion a year, supporting more than half a million jobs.

There are 842 Indian companies in the UK with a combined turnover of £41.2 billion, creating jobs in all four corners of the United Kingdom.

“As a key player in the Indo-Pacific region, **India is an increasingly indispensable partner for the United Kingdom** as we work to boost jobs and growth, confront shared threats to our security and protect our planet.”

LondonLovesBusiness 15-Dec-20

Australia, who has been hard hit by tariffs imposed by China in retaliation to Australia wanting to investigate China's part in the spread of Covid-19, is also looking to India as a replacement trade partner. We again see God's Hand working behind the scenes to further His Plans, bringing Commonwealth partners to seek to work together.

Britain tilts towards the Indo-Pacific

Building on Britain's interest in India and the Asian-Pacific countries was an article in an Australian news source, under this headline. It is a theme that has been running for some time and links with the UK's desire to join the CPTPP Free Trade Area as mentioned earlier. This covers Asia and the Pacific area, where many Commonwealth countries are located.

The UK appears set to tilt further 'east of Suez'—British strategic parlance for the Indo-Pacific—a move that has been underway for some time. Since the early 2010s, the UK has deepened its strategic relations with the Gulf states and the countries of Southeast Asia as well as Japan and Australia, while also moving to bolster its 'strategic array' of military facilities throughout the region, including in Bahrain and Oman.

Global Britain' is finally being fleshed out. ... It is therefore in the interests of Britain's regional allies and partners to help draw it towards the Indo-Pacific. *The Strategist (Aust. Strategic Policy Inst.)*, 15-Dec-20

The UK is determined to re-take her role as a world power. This necessitates strong armed forces, especially the navy.

Boris Johnson to end 'era of retreat' with £24bn Armed Forces spending pledge

This was the *Daily Telegraph* 19-Nov-20 headline when Boris Johnson announced a big injection into the military budget. Much was aimed at building naval vessels.

Boris Johnson has promised "an end to the era of retreat" for Britain's Armed Forces with a £24 billion spending increase that marks **the biggest financial boost since the Cold War**.

The Prime Minister pledged to restore the Royal Navy to its position as **Europe's most powerful maritime force** and will invest heavily in drones, cyber warfare, and space programmes.

The article had this chart illustrating how the Royal Navy is planned to grow. The UK has honed her ship-building skills, utilising the fact that she has many smaller ship-building yards. Each one is allocated the construction of a certain part, which are then brought together for final assembly at one yard. Using the latest computer equipment, many of the possible problems are eliminated beforehand. Yards can build up their expertise in a particular field. This pre-construction design and assembly allows greater flexibility, adapting basic designs.

UK And Australia To Work Together On Type 26 Frigate Programme

An article in a UK military newspaper *The Forces 20-Oct-20* detailed how the two countries were cooperating in building frigates for both countries, tapping into the UK's skills and the facilities in Australian boatyards. Yet another fascinating way in which the Commonwealth *young lions* are working with the Mother Lion, the *Tarshish* power of Britain.

Royal Navy Assembles Largest Carrier Strike Group in Decades

The Royal Navy's new Carrier Strike Group has assembled for the first time, marking the beginning of a new era of operations. HMS Queen Elizabeth is at the centre of the group which is the start of joint carrier operations between the navy and its NATO allies.

Nine ships, 15 fighter jets, 11 helicopters and 3,000 personnel from the UK, US and the Netherlands are now carrying out exercises in the North Sea. According to the Royal Navy, the strike group is **the largest and most powerful European-led maritime force in almost 20 years**; it is also the largest carrier strike group fielded by the UK since the 1980s.

"The new UK Carrier Strike

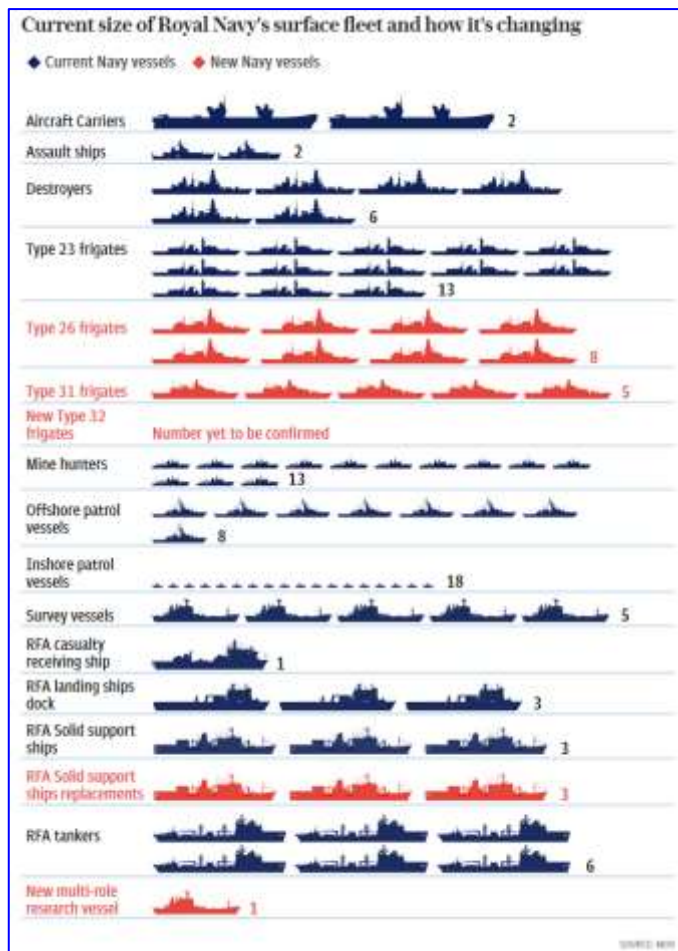
Group is the embodiment of British maritime power, and sits at the heart of a modernised and emboldened Royal Navy," said Commodore Steve Moorhouse, the strike group's commander. *The Maritime Executive* 06-Oct-20

'Forgotten seventy years'

Who can doubt the Hand of God directing the affairs of Britain's politicians in order that she might be ready for her future role as a latter-day naval power, trading with the world.

And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her



The HMS Queen Elizabeth Carrier Strike Group (Courtesy Royal Navy)

merchandise shall be **for them that dwell before the LORD**, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing. Isa. 23:17,18

That period of 70 years is nearly over. It was a period of being *forgotten*!

*And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be **forgotten seventy years**, according to the days of **one king**: after the end of seventy years shall **Tyre sing as an harlot**.* Isa. 23:15

Britain emerged from World War II victorious but broken. She lost her way, seeking strength from the EU, which turned out to be a bruised reed, exploiting her wealth and confining her ambitions. Surely it is significant that there has been one monarch during this period, who has ruled for nearly 70 years, and shows no signs of stepping down! In Feb 2021, the Queen will, in God's Mercy enter her 70th year on the throne, following her father's death in February 1952. Because of her father's illness she and Prince Philip commenced their royal duties in October 1951 with a tour of Canada and the US. So, we are already in the 70th year since then. We expect to see Britain flourishing after a year or so. We have noted before, that the real purpose for the latter-day Tyre's prosperity is in order to be used in the service of God and God's people. We are witnessing steps being taken in preparation for the Kingdom being established. Her submission to Israel's King will see her helping in the work of establishing that kingdom, especially in helping to bring back the scattered Jews. Purging the stain on her earlier behaviour against the Jews seeking refuge in Palestine before the State of Israel was established in 1948. Surely the days of waiting for our Master's Return must be nearly over.

Further preparation for the Kingdom Age!

It is clear from Ezekiel 38:13 that there are a group of nations who are friendly to Israel in the latter-days and will be opposed to the Gogian invasion of Israel. As the power represented by the *merchant of Tarshish* (Eze. 38:13), Britain's policy towards Israel has been largely coloured by the attitude of the EU to Israel. She has mainly toed the official line of supporting the "rights" of the Palestinian people, which, under its Roman Catholic influence, has been the EU's policy. Yet many of the British Cabinet have Jewish blood, Boris Johnson included. There is a growing trading and military alignment with this small, yet powerful nation.

When Boris Johnson won an overwhelming majority in the December 2019 General Election, he chose Dominic Cummins as his closest advisor—effectively his Chief of Staff. He oversaw Britain's Brexit on January 31 2020 and sat at the heart of Johnson's policies. In mid-November he dramatically resigned (or was he sacked?) after a cabinet power-struggle. His replacement takes up his role on January 1 2021.

UK's Johnson taps Jewish charity head as chief of staff after aide's stormy exit



No 10's door closes as Dominic Cummins quits

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday appointed a low-profile former Treasury official as his new chief of staff to steady the Downing Street ship after the stormy exit of his Brexiteer right-hand man.

Since 2016, Rosenfield has been global head of corporate clients for Hakluyt, a London-based strategic advisory firm that was founded by former operatives of Britain's foreign intelligence agency, MI6.

On its LinkedIn site, Hakluyt emphasizes the collegial nature of its office environment and says: "**Sharp elbows and arrogance are simply not tolerated.**"

That stands in contrast to **the notoriously abrasive** Dominic Cummings, who masterminded the "Vote Leave" campaign in Britain's 2016 Brexit referendum. Prior to Hakluyt, Rosenfield was a managing director at Bank of America following 11 years at Britain's Treasury department, including four as a top aide to two finance ministers.

He is also **chairman of World Jewish Relief**, the leading humanitarian charity for Britain's Jewish community. *Agence France-Presse* 26-Nov-20

Born in Manchester, he attended the Shaarei Shalom Synagogue there, and spent a year on a kibbutz on leaving school. He graduated in modern European Studies and later joined the Treasury department.

During that period, around 2007, he met and became friends with his counterpart at the Foreign Office, who became British ambassador to Israel.

He says his friend is "super bright, **he has immense integrity and a real strength of character**. This job is one of almost unique pressure. **There is no crisis that he's not going to have to deal with. But he is supremely**

well qualified for the role". *The Jewish Chronicle* 02-Dec-20

While working for Chancellor George Osborne, he became good friends with a fellow Jew, Lord Finkelstein, who said of his friend's appointment:

Mr Rosenfield "**has all the attributes necessary to do this job: understanding politics and the system, being a nice, civilised human being but also someone who is tough, firm, and can tell your boss the truth** — which I know that he does, because I've seen him do it. He doesn't duck difficult decisions, and he doesn't confuse being nice with being weak". *ibid*

He is active in the Jewish community. Again, we see the Hand of God putting the right people in place at the right time in relation to His Purpose. A steady hand advising Johnson during the turmoil of becoming independent of the EU and surely setting a fairer view of Israel, than the EU's viewpoint. We watch in expectation of strengthening ties with Israel.

UK and Israel sign military cooperation agreement

In another exciting confirmation that our historic understanding of Bible prophecy is standing the test of time, was this announcement in early December.

Israeli Chief of General Staff Aviv Kohavi virtually met with Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter and **signed a joint agreement to "formalise and enhance" military co-operation between the UK and Israel.**

Most of the agreement is highly classified but the cooperation will include defence medical training, organisational design concepts and defence education.

In October it was reported that the **British had been given access to Israel's Rhino mobile headquarters, designed by Elbit Systems.** The British Army said the system helps to "reduce the size of the headquarters, makes it less vulnerable and able to make and communicate decisions faster".

"Military cooperation has been growing over the last decade with the relationship viewed as mutually beneficial." George Allison, *UK Defence Journal* 07-Dec-20



Boris Johnson: My commitment to Israel's security is 'unshakable'

Earlier, in response to the signing of the UAE and Bahrain Peace Accords, the Prime Minister wrote to the Conservative Friends of Israel magazine. He commented:

Recognising the enormous challenges both countries have faced as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the PM also said Israel's recent peace deals with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain were "**extremely welcome developments.**"

Mr Johnson added that he hoped to now see further breakthroughs in Israel's relations with its neighbours **to help secure a more peaceful Middle East.**

"I have always been struck by the ingenuity and fortitude of the Israeli people – and by the great achievements of the State of Israel in the face of ever-present threats and intimidations."

"The United Kingdom has always stood by Israel and its right to live as any nation should be able to do so, in peace and in security.

"Our commitment to Israel's security will be unshakable while I am Prime Minister." *Jewish Chronicle*, 07-Oct-20



God has promised Blessings on those that bless Israel.

Scripture Fulfilling—the Abraham Accords

In this final section we will see the progress that has been made since our Fall Update. Then the UAE and Bahrain had signed up to peace with Israel. We looked at the scriptural basis for believing that there has to be a time of peace and security, prior to Israel's invasion by Gog. Until very recently that seemed an impossibility. Egypt made peace with Israel in 1979 and Jordan in 1994. These were never "warm" peace deals. Now 41 years after the 1st deal, we have had four Arab countries and one non-Arab signing up with enthusiasm and promising very "warm" and rewarding Peace Deals. United Arab Republic (Aug). Bahrain (Sep) and since our last update: Sudan (26-Oct.), Morocco (10 Dec.) and now Bhutan (12 Dec.), a little country between India and China. Already the UAE and Bahrain have made many remarkable deals with Israel.

Why this sudden surge? Again, Scripture tells us that in the Kingdom Age, many Arab nations are at peace with Israel and are Blessed along with Israel. Isaiah 19:21-25 speaks of God healing Egypt after she has been smitten, (by Gog, Dan. 11:42,43). God Blesses both Egypt and Assyria:

*In that day shall **Israel** be the **third** with **Egypt** and with **Assyria**, even a **blessing** in the **midst** of the **land**:*

*Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be **Egypt** my people, and **Assyria** the work of my hands, and **Israel** mine inheritance. Isa. 19:24,25*

Isaiah 60:6,7 lists three sons/grandsons of Abraham by Keturah, and two by Hagar whose offerings will come up acceptably on God's altar and whose gifts, together with other Gentile nations, will be accepted by Christ and used in building Jerusalem's *walls and the house of my glory*. (v7-14)

Other passages indicate that prior to Israel's invasion, while the Elijah work is taking place in Israel to prepare the hearts of the faithful Jews for their imminent fiery trial, there is a parallel work amongst the Arab nations of the Gulf region. Looking to Abraham as their father, practising circumcision, believing in One God, and now friendly to Israel, they will have ready ears to listen to prophets sent to them, amongst whom could be Abraham himself. Several passages seem to indicate a work amongst Arab nations before Armageddon. Isaiah 42:10-12 are set before vs 13-16. Habakkuk 3:7 is set before vs 12,13. Another possible passage is Isaiah 21:11-15. Kedar, Midian, Dedan and Tema referred to in these passages are all descendants of Abraham. Cush is Ham's son and brother to Mizraim (Egypt), Assyria is associated with Ham's grandson Nimrod.

God has promised that those who bless Israel will be blessed. Do we see these Arab countries, turning from their cursing of Israel, to now blessing her, in God's Preparation for the Kingdom? This thought surely sends a tingle down our spines! We must be in the final countdown to our Master's Return!

Aim 4,500 Achieved 4,650