

Is the Bible a message from a God I can't see?

— Accurate long-term predictions (part 2)

The Jews

Before we look at the prophecies, we ought to remind ourselves of what we know about the Jews:

- Disliked by many
- Found in most countries
- Persecuted in the Holocaust
- At the centre of Middle East tensions
- Seem to be different from other people
- Often in the news
- Often found in positions of influence



Jews at the Western Wall in Jerusalem

Many of these facts are a result of the history that the Jews have gone through. Let's just remind ourselves what the Jews have gone through over the last two thousand years.



A brief summary of the Jews' story is as follows:

1. Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70 and many Jews were taken as captives to Rome
2. Following the suppression of Bar Kochba's revolt in AD 135, many more Jews were dispersed from their homeland, which then became desolate
3. They were persecuted by other nations throughout the next 1,900 years
4. During all this time without a homeland, they survived as an identifiable people
5. They returned to their old homeland and became a nation again in 1948, and the land once more became fruitful
6. The modern State of Israel has thrived and become a prominent player in modern politics

Bearing that in mind, we can look at what the Bible says. We have already seen that the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament into Greek was in existence at least 250 years before the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70. So there is no possibility that the Old Testament predictions were written down after the events.

We shall now look at several Bible passages predicting these and other aspects of Jewish history over the past two thousand years.

As we look at these remarkable predictions, we must be careful to keep our own political views out of these considerations. The Bible tells us that some of the predicted events happened because the people concerned were not behaving in the best of ways. We are looking at the fulfilments of the predictions, not the rights and wrongs of the people or the politics involved.

a) Overthrow of the Jewish nation in AD 70

In this section we shall look mainly at the prophecies in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. These books were written at the time the Jewish nation was founded. They include a list of consequences for persistent rebellion against God. The rest of the Old Testament is a record of Israel's continual disobedience to God. If these books come from a power greater than ourselves, we can expect to see the threats become reality.

Some of these threats aptly describe the Romans attacking Jerusalem in AD 70.

The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favour to the young.

Deuteronomy 28 v 49 and 50



Here we see the character of the Romans described:

1. They came from much further away than previous attackers
2. Their language was totally different from Hebrew
3. Their conquests were rapid, and their banner was an eagle
4. They were aggressive and merciless

The Arch of Titus in Rome (left) was built to commemorate the overthrow of Jerusalem in AD 70 by the Roman general Titus. The picture on the right is a close-up of part of the arch

showing the seven-branched lampstand from the temple in Jerusalem being taken by the Romans.





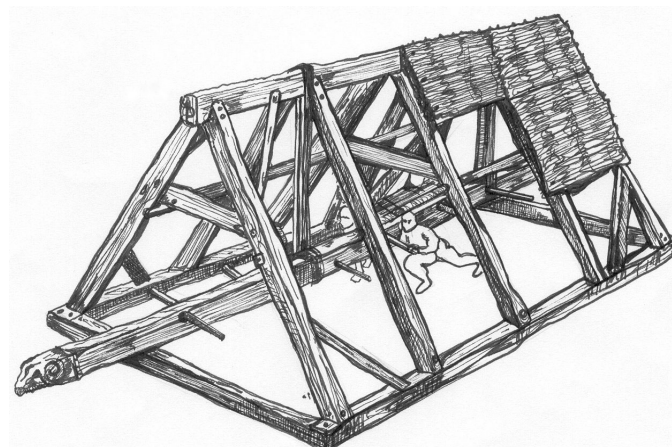
A modern reconstruction of the Roman Eagle

Stones from the Western Wall of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem thrown onto the street by Roman soldiers in AD 70



They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the Lord your God has given you.
Deuteronomy 28 v 52

One characteristic of the campaign against the Jews by the Romans in AD 66 - 70 was the besieging and storming of towns. They had to fight their way through the land destroying one stronghold after another. The formidable Roman “battering ram” was used to breach the walls.



A Roman battering ram

You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters... I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas.
Leviticus 26 v 29 and 31

These verses describe the horrors of the siege of Jerusalem in AD 70:

- Jews ate their children because they were starving
- The Romans destroyed nearly all the cities in Israel
- The splendid temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and all worship there ceased



A model of the ancient temple in Jerusalem

Pointing to the temple in Jerusalem, Jesus said:

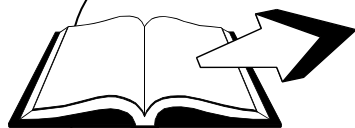
Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down. *Matthew 24 v 2*

Jerusalem was finally destroyed in AD 135. This followed the suppression of the last rebellion of the Jews against Rome under the Jewish rebel leader Bar Kochba. The very foundations of the temple were torn up and the land ploughed. Not even a ruin of the temple survives, as Jesus predicted.

And the Lord will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you. *Deuteronomy 28 v 68*

Though Egypt was not involved in the Jews' overthrow in AD 70, it was involved afterwards, as this verse predicts. The historian Diodorus tells us that those who survived the Jerusalem siege were sent to the Egyptian mines and compelled to work day and night. The markets were swamped with Jewish slaves and the words of the quotation were fulfilled, "no one will buy you".

We can see just how detailed are the predictions relating to this dreadful period in Jewish history.



**Accurate Clear
Predictions**

- The Jews were to be attacked by a powerful nation:
 - much further away than previous attackers
 - whose language was totally different from Hebrew
 - swift as an eagle
 - who would be merciless
 - who would besiege cities to conquer the land
- Jews would eat their own children in the sieges
- The cities in the land would be destroyed
- Not one stone of the magnificent temple in Jerusalem would be left in place
- All places of worship would be destroyed
- Jews would be sold as slaves in Egypt

b) Scattering of the Jews

After the destruction of their nation, the Jews were scattered throughout the vast Roman Empire.

The **Atlas of Jewish History* comments on page 17:

By 300 AD, the Jews had settled in every part of the Roman Empire except Britain.

Estimated Jewish population in 2006 (thousands)

Israel	5,314	Denmark	6	After the fall of the Roman Empire, Jewish merchants played a leading part in trade and ended up dispersed all round the world.
USA	5,275	India	5	
France	492	Panama	5	
Canada	374	Uzbekistan	5	There are many references where the Jews are threatened that they will be scattered if they persistently rebel against God.
United Kingdom	297	Moldova	5	
Russia	228	Greece	5	
Argentina	185	Czech Republic	4	<i>I will scatter you among the nations...</i> <i>Leviticus 26 v 33</i>
Germany	118	Kazakhstan	4	
Australia	103	Georgia	4	
Brazil	97	Lithuania	3	<i>Then the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other...</i> <i>Deuteronomy 28 v 64</i>
Ukraine	80	Poland	3	
South Africa	72	Colombia	3	
Hungary	50	Morocco	3	<i>I will scatter them also among the Gentiles, whom neither they nor their fathers have known...</i> <i>Jeremiah 9 v 16</i>
Mexico	40	Slovakia	3	
Belgium	31	Costa Rica	3	
Netherlands	30	Peru	2	(Gentiles are people other than Jews.)
Italy	29	Bulgaria	2	
Chile	21	Estonia	2	
Belarus	18	China	2	<i>I will scatter you among the nations, disperse you throughout the countries...</i> <i>Ezekiel 22 v 15</i>
Uruguay	18	Puerto Rico	2	
Switzerland	18	Serbia-	2	
Turkey	18	Montenegro	1	
Venezuela	15	Ireland	1	
Sweden	15	Norway	1	
Spain	12	Finland	1	
Iran	11	Tunisia	1	
Romania	10	Japan	1	
Latvia	10	Ecuador	1	
Austria	9	Guatemala	1	
New Zealand	7	Paraguay	1	
Azerbaijan	7	Kyrgyzstan	1	
		Gibraltar	1	

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* *The Routledge Atlas of Jewish History* by Martin Gilbert.



There are many reminders of the Jewish scattering around the world. One is The Jew's House in Lincoln. It is one of the earliest surviving town houses in England.

Dating from the mid-twelfth century, the building originally consisted of a hall at first-floor level, measuring approximately 12 by 6 metres. Below this were service and storage spaces at ground level.

Another reminder of the Jewish scattering is this Synagogue in Amsterdam. On December 12, 1670, the Sephardic Jewish community of Amsterdam acquired the site to build this synagogue, and construction work began on April 17, 1671.



The Radhanites were medieval Jewish merchants who used coastal cargo ships such as this dhow. The Radhanites dominated trade between the Christian and Islamic worlds during the early Middle Ages (approx. AD 500–1000).

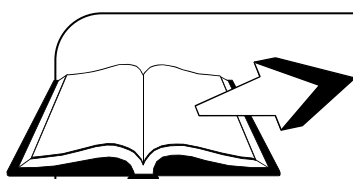
c) Desolation of the Jewish homeland

...your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.

Leviticus 26 v 33



The desolation of the land of Israel before the Jews started returning can be seen from these pictures taken in 1940. The left picture shows one of the first tractors to plough the land in the Huleh Swamp. The right picture shows workers in the same swamps with their heads covered with netting as protection against malaria-carrying flies.



**Accurate Clear
Predictions**

- The Jews were to be scattered throughout the world
- The Jews' land was to be desolate

We will look at more predictions about the Jews in the next section.

