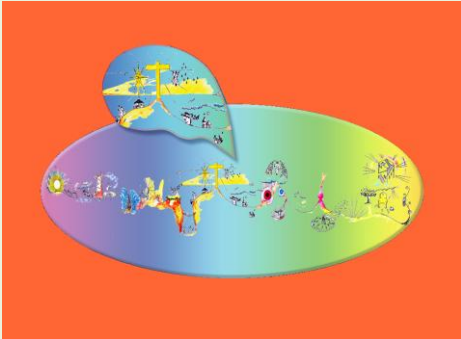


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## Eternal Fellowship News Bulletin

We believe in one GOD, in three persons; FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT. We regard the Bible (both Hebrew Bible and New Testament) as the only infallible authoritative WORD OF GOD.

HULDAH MINISTRY aims to return to the Word Of God, founded on Hebrew background and to interpret it from Hebraic perspective, acknowledging that Jesus is a Jew and the Jewish-ness of His teaching as a continuation from the Hebrew Bible. The Ministry also aims to put His teaching into practice, to have a closer relationship with the Lord, Jesus Christ, and to regularly have a Christian fellowship so that this-worldly kingdom of God will materialise in the midst of the followers of Jesus here and now, as well as earnestly seeking Christ's Return to establish the otherworldly Kingdom of God on earth.

*All activities are free of charge and no obligation whatever. Just enjoy our fellowship!*

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HULDAH MINISTRY

# LETTER TO THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST

## 【ALL THE NATIONS WILL EVENTUALLY SEE GOD'S TRUTH】

*“The word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach and will rest upon Damascus—for the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the LORD—and upon Hamath too, which borders on it, and upon Tyre and Sidon, though they are very skillful. Tyre has built herself a stronghold; she has heaped up silver like dust, and gold like the dirt of the streets. But the Lord will take away her possessions and destroy her power on the sea, and she will be consumed by fire. Ashkelon will see it and fear; Gaza will writhe in agony, and Ekron too, for her hope will wither. Gaza will lose her king and Ashkelon will be deserted. Foreigners will occupy Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. I will take the blood from their mouths, the forbidden food from between their teeth. Those who are left will belong to our God and become leaders in Judah, and Ekron will be like the Jebusites. But I will defend my house against marauding forces. Never again will an oppressor overrun my people, for now I am keeping watch.*

*Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

*I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle-bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit. Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you. I will bend Judah as I bend my bow and fill it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and make you like a warrior's sword.*

*Then the LORD will appear over them; his arrow will flash like lightning. The Sovereign LORD will sound the trumpet; he will march in the storms of the south, and the*

***LORD Almighty will shield them. They will destroy and overcome with slingstones. They will drink and roar as with wine; they will be full like a bowl used for sprinkling the corners of the altar. The LORD their God will save them on the day as the flock of his people. They will sparkle in his land like jewels in a crown. How attractive and beautiful they will be! Grain will make the young men thrive, and new wine the young women.*** **ZECHARIAH 9:1-17.**

According to a “look back at the big stories” on the BBC News website, the two events which attracted the most attention in 2011 on their website were the English riots in August, with 15.9 million viewers, and the Japan earthquake in March, with almost 15 million viewers. The year of 2011 started with the Arab Spring which is still in progress, and it was also coloured by the crumbling of regimes and the toppling of despots and demagogues in North Africa and the Middle East. In a survey on the website two facts were singled out: “The knock-on effects of the tsunami in Japan”, by which governments around the world were forced to review their nuclear power policies, and “Economic woes in a handful of countries”, which affected the whole euro-zone and beyond. Another interesting and significant change in recent years has been the manner in which news of these events are disseminated, received and consumed by the world. For example, the first inkling of the raid that killed Osama Bin Laden came not from President Obama’s solemn press conference but from one of the al-Qaeda leader’s unwitting neighbours in Abbottabad who mused aloud on Twitter about the US helicopter that had suddenly disturbed his evening. Things around us, knowledge and technology in every area have rapidly and greatly changed, which indeed proves that today is the very end-times predicted in the Book of Daniel: ***‘Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge’ (Da.12:4)***. It has recently been debated that the speed of light is in fact variable rather than constant. This means that, as the speed of light has a direct effect on the atom and atomic decay rates, if decay rates were much higher in the past, then dating methods based on today’s rates of change would be inflated. Some young-earth physicists and creation geologists actually argue that the speed of light has been slowing down and accordingly, radioactive decay rates have slowed down over time as well. They argue that while such age-dating methods are not wrong in theory and they can still be useful for the most part in giving “relative dates”, i.e., older or younger between the samples in comparison, the generally accepted age of the earth was largely exaggerated under a number of wrong assumptions. As “Answers In Genesis” puts it: ‘New evidence indicates that radioactive elements in the rocks, which are used to date the rocks, decayed as much faster rates during some past event (or events) in the last 6,000 years’ and ‘Radiometric dating methods sometimes yield conflicting results, but the technique itself is scientific and reliable, and once the results are interpreted in a biblical framework, they yield clear patterns that help us better understand the earth’s history since creation six thousand years ago’ (<http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/am/v5/n1/patterns>), so, the time seems very near when God’s truth will be revealed to everyone and His Word will be vindicated.

The tension in the Middle East has acutely increased since the middle of last December when a possible conflict was agreed between Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, indicating that they are poised for a regional war, including an attack on Iran sometime between Dec. 2011 and Jan. 2012. It is very fortunate that so far, there has been no sign of this happening. However, because of the biblical end-time prophecies such as Psalm 83, Ezekiel 38 & 39, Isaiah 17 about Damascus, Zechariah 12:3: ***‘On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves’***, and so on, there are many who watch signs and movements in the Middle East. The New Year 2012 has started with continual antagonism against Israel and the West by the nations surrounding Israel. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) roused the Arab League against the increasing Israeli settlement activity in Jerusalem and the West Bank as a threat towards Arab’s national security. Hamas called on the Palestinian Authority to boycott peace talks with Israel. Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt expressed their intention not to recognise Israel under any circumstance in an interview by Arabic daily al-Hayat. In the middle of this month, concerning the issue of sanctions against Iran’s nuclear weapon program; penalising its central bank and blocking payments for its petroleum, Russia warned Israel and the West that an attack on Tehran would be considered an attack on Moscow. The threat is understood to heighten the

prospect of World war III in the event of a military strike on Iran. Having taken sides with the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, Russia, who is a major arms supplier to Syria and who has invested in Iran's nuclear facilities, also warned Western nations not to intervene in Syria with military forces. Turning to the Scriptures, Isaiah originally spoke the following prophecy as a reference to Sennacherib's invasion in 701BCE but it was also a prophecy on Israel's perpetual experience of threats against their nation: ***'Oh, the raging of many nations—they rage like the raging sea! Oh, the uproar of the peoples—they roar like the roaring of great waters! Although the peoples roar like the roar of surging waters, when he rebukes them they flee far away, driven before the wind like chaff on the hills, like tumble-weed before a gale' (17:12- 13).*** This very situation seems to be in progress today. Isaiah concluded this prophecy with God's victory over whatever powerful invaders they should be, as happened in his day to Sennacherib and his Assyrian army: ***'In the evening, sudden terror! Before the morning they are gone! This is the portion of those who loot us, the lot of those who plunder us'.***

The passage quoted at the beginning from Zechariah also encompasses both immediate- and yet future-prophecies concerning the judgment upon the kingdoms surrounding Israel. While verses 1-8 highlighted the successful campaign of Alexander the Great along the Mediterranean coast to Jerusalem, and the miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem that took place in 333 BCE when the Lord used Alexander as the agent of His judgment, they can also be applied as events for future fulfilment. ***'Hadrach'*** is now identified with Hatarika as an Aramaean country near Damascus and Hamath on the Orontes River. ***'Damascus'*** was the leading city-state of the Arameans, described as frequent enemies of Israel since the time of David and also, the oldest continually inhabited city today. Isaiah's similar prophecy about the complete destruction of Damascus yet awaits its future fulfilment: ***'An Oracle concerning Damascus: "See, Damascus will no longer be a city but will become a heap of ruins. The cities of Aroer will be deserted and left to flocks, which will lie down, with no-one to make them afraid' (17:1-2).*** Aroer is regarded as the surrounding areas of Damascus. Because of these prophecies, many in recent days are closely keeping watch on the uprising against the Assad regime in Syria. ***'Hamath'*** was the principal city of Upper Syria. All these historic enemies of Israel; Damascus, Hamath, Syrian cities and the cities along the Mediterranean coast were once swept away by Alexander the Great as a visible instrument of God.

In the Scripture, ***'Tyre'*** is a symbol of the materialistic world and Ezekiel 28 describes her as the pre-fall career of Satan along with Isaiah 14. Tyre was known as an invincible citadel, an off-shore impassable island fortress, surrounded by a wall 45m high. Enemies attempted to take it but failed: For example, the Assyrians besieged it for five years under Shalmaneser. The Chaldeans besieged it for thirteen years under Nebuchadnezzar but all eventually failed. Thus, Tyre's pride and defensiveness had become proverbial until Alexander the Great took it in only seven months. ***'Ashkelon'***, ***'Gaza'***, ***'Ekron'***, and ***'Ashdod'*** were all capital cities of Philistia. Seeing Tyre's destruction, they greatly feared Alexander's steady advance and consequently, they were all destroyed despite Gaza's five month resistance. The Hebrew term ***'mamzer*** (foreigners) used in ***'Foreigners will occupy Ashdod'*** means "bastard, illegitimate" and so, it could be a remnant of the ***'Nephilim (Rephaim)'***, introduced in Genesis 6:4, while some interprets it as a reference to people of mixed nationalities at the post-exilic period. After the Philistines were swept away from the land, however, there might have been the remnant of the tribes of Canaan who were incorporated into the commonwealth of Israel in the time of David and Solomon. This verse is also a future promise of blessings for enemies of Israel in which they will become part of the people of God and they will share in the blessings of Israel. According to ***"Antiquities, XI, 8:3-6"*** by Josephus, the then Jewish high priest Jaddua refused Alexander's request for tribute, because he could not break his oath of loyalty to the Persian king Darius. Infuriated, Alexander threatened Jaddua to cause a punishment upon Jerusalem. In such impending crisis, gathering the population to make sacrifices to God, Jaddua prayed for deliverance. God miraculously answered their prayer and Jerusalem was spared. Alexander himself, touched by God in his dream in Macedonia before his meeting with Jaddua, venerated the name of Yahweh and treated the Jews kindly. However, the verse 8: ***'Never again will an oppressor***

*overrun my people*' is not yet completely fulfilled. Actually after Alexander's death more cruel and terrible rulers showed up such as the Seleucids of Syria and the Romans, and continual oppression by surrounding nations lasts up to this day. Accordingly, this prophecy will be fulfilled when Christ, the Jewish Messiah comes back to rule over the entire world.

Verse 9 is the well-known prophecy of the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem, which historically took place on 6th April, 32CE. On this particular day Jesus Christ rode on a donkey to enter the city of Jerusalem in order to fulfil this Zechariah's prophecy that the Messiah the King would present Himself in a predicted way. Solomon, the son of David also presented himself in public as a legitimate king of Davidic line by riding on a mule, on the day when he was anointed as king by Zadok the priest. The exact date of Christ's entry into Jerusalem can be worked out from Daniel's prophecy of the "Seventy Weeks" in Daniel 9:24-27. When Daniel, who was deported to Babylon in his teenage years was reading a passage of the seventy year duration of deportation that God had determined for Israel in the book of Jeremiah near the end of the Babylonian captivity, he realised that the seventy years of servitude were almost over and he began to pray for the Lord's intervention to fulfil His promise. It was at such a time when the angel Gabriel came and gave the remarkable visions of the "Seventy Weeks". The focus of the vision was on Israel and Jerusalem. The message that the angel Gabriel gave was that the interval between the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem and the presentation of the Messiah as King would be 69 weeks of 360 day-years ( $69 \times 7 \times 360 = 173,880$  days). The decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (not only the Temple but also its city walls) was issued by Persian King Artaxerxes Longimanus on 14th March 445 BCE and so, the date 173,880 days after the day of the decree turns out to be exactly 6th April, 32CE. After the day when Christ entered Jerusalem to die on the cross as Daniel prophesied in 9:26: ***'the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing'***, there appears to be a huge gap between the 69th week and the 70th week described in Daniel 9:25 and 27, respectively, which is the so-called "church age", lasting almost 2000 years, in which we live now as followers of Christ, but this unseen interval was not revealed in Daniel's visions. Accordingly, there is yet one week of years, i.e., the last 70th week (the final seven year period) remaining to be fulfilled. During this last week the rebuilding of the third Jerusalem Temple is expected and it is exciting enough to know that it has already begun today.

Retuning to the passage of Zechariah quoted at the beginning, the same unseen interval exists between the verses 9 and 10. Because of the gap age belonging to the Gentiles, this was hidden in the Hebrew Bible, which Paul called '*mystery*': ***'...the mystery made known to me by revelation...my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit of God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel...shares together in the promise in Christ Jesus'*** (Eph.3:3-6). When the Messiah reigns in Jerusalem all the instruments of war will be removed from His people and a universal kingdom of peace will be established as the ultimate fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant. In sharp contrast to man-made kingdoms founded on bloodshed, oppression and servitude, there will be peaceful rest among the nations in the messianic kingdom. One of the reasons that God has revealed such detailed prophecies is to warn the nations in advance so that more people will be saved by turning to Him. The fact that God's declarations of salvation follow His judgement proves this, as exemplified in Isaiah 19:22, where, after the severe oracle against Egypt, Isaiah expresses the Lord's real heart to the Egyptians: ***'The LORD will strike Egypt with a plague; he will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the LORD, and he will respond to their pleas and heal them'***. Christ's words in His prophecy about the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem written in Luke 19:44 is very significant as well: ***'The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognise the time of God's coming to you'*** (Line added). Here Christ held the Jews accountable for having failed to recognise this very day from Daniel's prophecy. Actually what was warned in advance by Daniel and Christ has already taken place in Jerusalem. Likewise, it is significant for us who are living in the end-times, to understand the prophecies in the Scriptures, watch what is going on around us, and wisely discern the time.