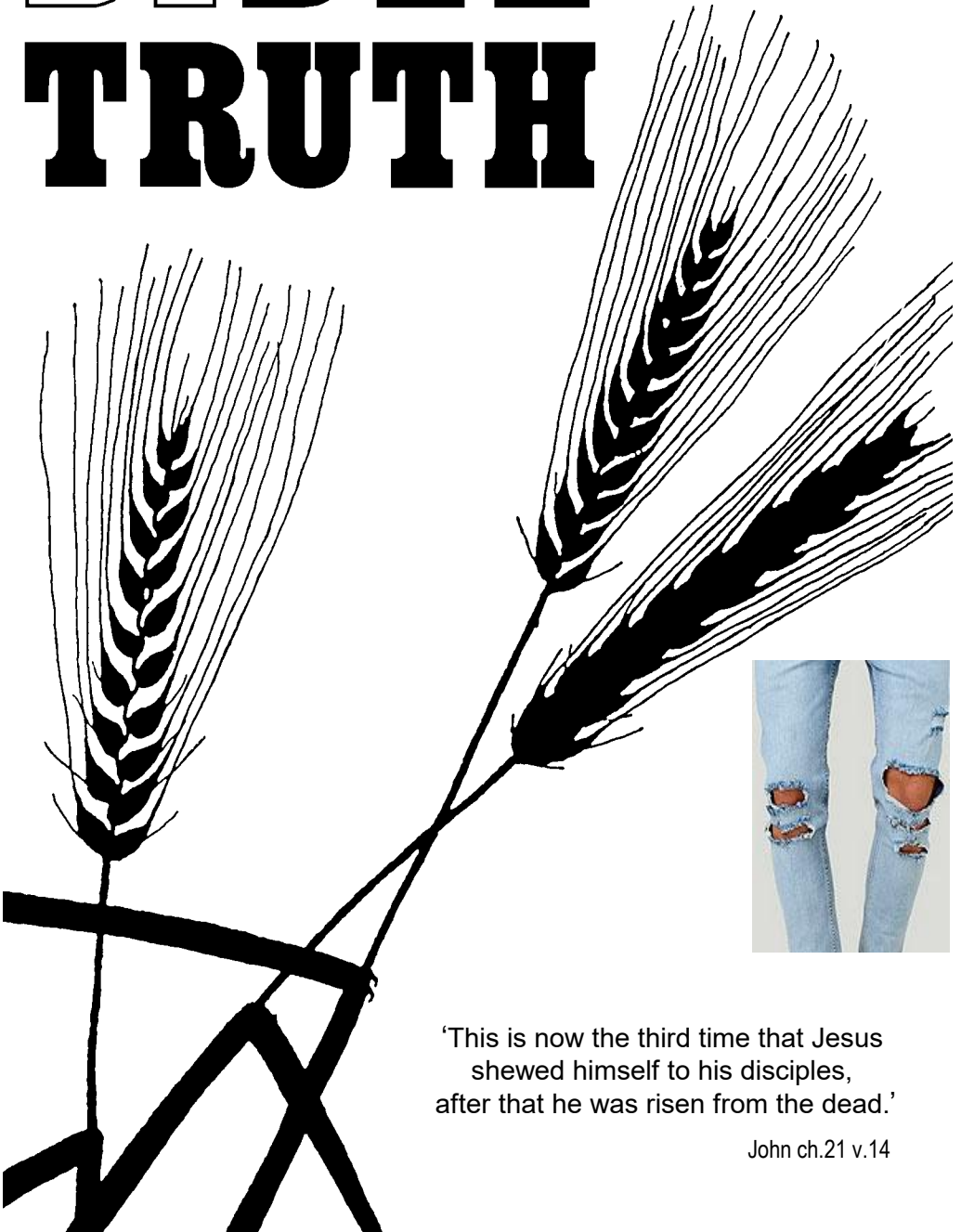


BIBLE TRUTH

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'This is now the third time that Jesus
shewed himself to his disciples,
after that he was risen from the dead.'

John ch.21 v.14

ASWAN

Part Two

by the late

Revd George H. Thompson



‘And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod.’

Isaiah ch.11 v.15

The Tongue of the Egyptian Sea

One of the most difficult passages to explain is the reference quoted above relating to the tongue of the Egyptian sea. Two definite views have been put forward,

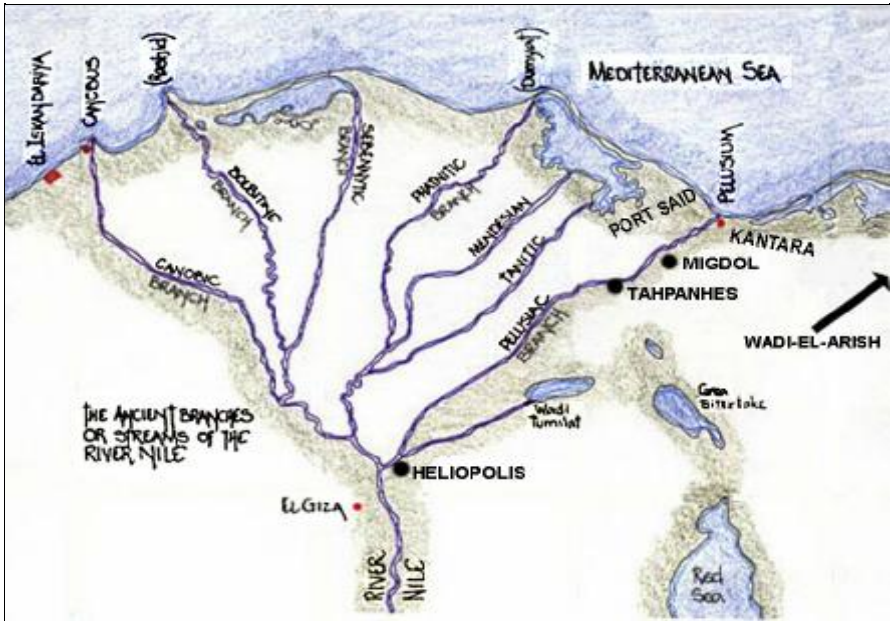
1. that the Gulf of Suez at the Bitter Lakes is the tongue,
2. that the tongue is the Port Said end of the present Suez Canal.

We must consider both although acceptance of either view would not materially affect the prophecy.

In the Maps of Antiquity the Mediterranean Sea just north of the Delta is definitely referred to as the Egyptian Sea, and the *Imperial Bible Dictionary* declares,

‘As by ‘the tongue of the Egyptian Sea’ must be meant the Bay of the Mediterranean into which the Nile empties itself.’

A careful examination of the Map of the Delta should suffice to illustrate how this conclusion was reached, but there is a useful Scripture which explains the real meaning of tongue. When speaking of the lot of the tribe of Judah it says,



Map of Nile Delta with modern names added, and used with permission of carographyunchained.com

‘And their south border was from the shore (the end) of the salt sea, from the bay (the tongue) that looketh southward.’

Joshua ch.15 v.2

This word is used again in verse 5 of the same chapter and yet again in ch.18 v.19. The tongue is therefore the bay, and is associated with the ‘seven streams’, four of which actually flowed into this bay now called Lake Menzaleh. It is impossible to explain with small maps the intricacies of this tongue, or bay, but it actually winds down to Lake Balah which is approximately fifty miles from the Mediterranean Sea, and forms part of the present Suez Canal.

On the other hand, the Bitter Lakes at the Suez end of the Canal also stretch for a great distance and appear as a great tongue. Whichever view one takes it clearly indicates that the prophecy of Isaiah will be fulfilled.

‘And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian Sea’

The whole area of the Suez Canal will, therefore, be affected.



Migdol — The Tower, or Pillar

As we refer to maps of ancient Egypt in our quest to locate Migdol we find another interesting dilemma. Some authorities indicate Migdol as near the present El Kantara (north end of the Canal), while others suggest a place near Suez. Again, we have the area of the whole Canal covered in these important prophecies.



In the margin of the *Authorised Version* of Ezekiel ch.29 v.10 we find, 'from the tower of Syene' rendered as 'from Migdol to Syene' (Aswan). It is now obvious that this expression signified the entire length of the land of Egypt and was used in the same way as the Old Testament refers to Palestine, 'from Dan even to Beersheba' or, as we in England would say, 'from Land's End to John o' Groats'.

It is also significant that in the building of the Great High Dam a control tower was needed; so, from Migdol the tower, to the Aswan tower even to Ethiopia, in this instance the Sudan, the whole land would become desolate and the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel would be literally fulfilled.

Remember The Aswan Dam

This dam was due to be completed in 1968, and it has been stated that at some time in the future the river Nile will dry up, and, 'they shall turn the rivers far away' (see Isaiah chs 11 v.15 & 19 vv 5 - 6). It is obvious that this cannot take place until the dam is completed, so that we should watch and see the shadows over Egypt, which clearly indicate the fulfilment of prophetic events.

At the time of writing, in July 1966, there were news articles from different parts of the world indicating that hydrologists were positively aware of the imminent danger of what they term 'degradation' in regard to the river Nile, and it seemed too late to avert a national calamity in Egypt. If this is so, then, major prophecies would be fulfilled. Let us consider some of the facts.

'The biggest hidden cost which will result from the dam ... is the prevention of what hydrologists call 'degradation' of the Nile river bed; and it, like many other problems, traces back to the subject of silt. With clear water only passing through Aswan, a process known as scouring is slowly taking place downstream, during which the silt-free water picks up mud from the river bed itself.

This is now happening, and one hydrologist estimated that eventually the river bed would be from 30 to 45 feet deeper than it is today.

The effects of this can be easily imagined. Bridges, barrages, and other river structures would weaken and collapse. Worse yet, the cost of irrigating delta lands would become prohibitively expensive.'

The Los Angeles Times

The Prophet Isaiah is vindicated

'... and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.'

Isaiah ch.19 vv 6-7

This literal fulfilment as a result of degradation is so possible that there is no need to comment further, but as we proceed with the prophecy from the 19th chapter of Isaiah there is even more reason to be amazed at the inspiration of the prophet.

'The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the

waters shall languish. Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded.'

Isaiah ch.19 vv 8-9

The following news item applied to this passage makes very interesting reading.

'... Of the two main outlets to the sea, the Damietta branch was closed, and the Rosetta branch only partially opened. The result was not unanimously acclaimed. Among the dissidents were the fishermen who go out each August and September for the sardine catch. ... The sardines turn up off the delta each flood time to feed off the nutrients which used to pour into the Mediterranean. With the flood reduced to a mere trickle the fish simply didn't show, and the fishermen returned home with meagre catches.'

[NB 'The fishers also shall mourn ...' Isaiah ch.19 v.8]

The Problem of Silt

Egypt's economy depends upon the silt brought down by the Blue Nile from the mountains of Abyssinia, and it is the elimination of this estimated 130 million tons of life-giving soil, usually deposited over the river banks and especially the Nile Delta by the annual floods, that is primarily responsible for the present and impending disasters. This natural fertilizer is rich in phosphates and other nutrients, and in its absence artificial fertilisation is a poor and very expensive substitute. One Egyptian critic of the Dam Project pointed out that apart from the chemical qualities, Nile silt has a physical composition which helps bind together the sandy texture of the delta soil. This, he says, would be difficult if not impossible to imitate.

'Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded.'

Isaiah ch.19 v.9

Let us now turn to the news from Cairo as printed in *The Sunday Telegraph* of 24th July 1962 under the heading of,

'New Blow to Nasser as the Cotton Crop is Threatened'

'This year's cotton crop is threatened with almost total failure ... such failure would be a body blow to President Nasser's economy. Cotton accounts for more than one third of the country's exports ... Half the output has been mortgaged to Russia ... in return for arms, equipment and machinery ...'

Egypt's New Plague — The Weevil

This latest setback for Nasser, or 'body-blow' as the correspondent calls it, was due to an unexpected plague of weevils which, apparently, cannot be controlled. It is estimated that on average it takes from two to three weeks for the boll-weevil to develop from the egg to the adult, so that the problem of this plague in Egypt is not an easy one to control. The cotton crop will continue to be exposed to danger until the end of July. The blame has been put on the exceptionally hot weather, but the soil starvation may well be a factor to be considered. This correspondent continues,

'Cafes in rural areas were closed by government order last month' (June) 'so that no time was wasted in picking the boll-worm eggs off the cotton plants ... Evidently this did not do the trick. The fully grown insects are creating havoc'.

It will be interesting to note the extent of this plague on Egypt's cotton crop, which, added to the already existing debts accumulating as a result of the Aswan dam, etc., will leave Egypt wide open to a take-over by Russia.

The Cruel Lord

'And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts.'

Isaiah ch.19 v.4

The fact that Egypt was now mortgaged beyond all hope of recovery will play a big part in the takeover of Egypt by the cruel lord, whom we believe to be Russia. We state this because of the dominant part played by Russia in the affairs of Egypt since the Suez crisis of 1956, when, according to the plan of God, Britain came out, and Russia went in to discharge her prophetic role as a cruel lord.

It might be well to look back to 1958 when discussions in Cairo between Mr Nitikin of the Soviet Council of Ministers and Dr Aziz Sidky, the United Arab Republic's Minister of Industry, resulted in the following projects being considered in co-operation with Russia,

1. The construction of five new airfields (sites undisclosed).
2. The creation of new industrial projects (no details given).
3. The building of several factories and a thermal power-station at Suez.

A few days later Egypt and Russia signed an agreement on Soviet co-operation in the first stage of the Aswan High Dam project. It provided,

- a. that the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and commonly known as the Soviet Union) should supply the necessary materials and equipment, together with the services of technicians and experts;
- b. that the Soviet 400 million rouble loan for this purpose would be repaid in 12 annual instalments starting in 1964.

On the 9th May, 1966, it was announced that Russia would spend £20 million on Oil Prospecting in the Egyptian desert under a recent agreement. This was the first time that Russia had prospected for oil in the Arab world.

Nasser's Dilemma

Unable to meet his commitments in the future and mortgaged as he was, General Gamal Abdel Nasser was already throwing out feelers for finance. He obtained some £357 million from the United States, and as the special correspondent of the *Sunday Telegraph* put it, 'almost anyone is welcomed if they can provide the necessary long term credits for trading with Egypt' and 'even Britain without an ambassador or diplomatic status in Cairo, and forbidden to fly a Union Jack over the Embassy building, is being courted as a prospective trading partner and moneylender'. From such, good Lord deliver us!

Economic difficulties in Great Britain coupled with the promise of Commonwealth aid to the emergent nations, running into hundreds of millions, was no doubt a deciding factor in our inability to assist Nasser financially. Besides, our political leaders must have known beyond all doubt that Nasser's dilemma was beyond all human control.

As for us, we know his rivers would dry up; his economy would crash; his land would be taken over by a cruel lord, and the Aswan Dam may well be known as Nasser's Folly, for the Lord has spoken concerning Egypt's destruction, and it will surely come to pass.

Russia's Ally - East Germany

'Thus saith the LORD; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down: from the tower of Syene [Aswan] shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord GOD.'

Ezekiel ch.30 v.6

One of the main arguments brought against the application of Old Testament prophecies to present day and future events is the absurdity, and the fact, that most of them have already been completely or partially fulfilled.

The answer to this is simple. If an event such as the drying up of the river Nile or the splitting of the Mount of Olives has not yet taken place, then we must do one of two things, either, discard the Old Testament, or believe the Bible literally in that these things must surely come to pass.

The drying up of the Nile is associated with the Judgment of God upon those who uphold Egypt at the time of the Aswan Dam. As already indicated that one nation IS upholding — not only financially but also technically, as well as controlling Egypt's vital airfields, and the connection must be apparent.

Another supporter of Egypt was what was known as West Germany at the time, and she entered the field almost unnoticed. A report was issued which brings her into actual working contact with Egypt, and the news is important in this context:

'West Germany signed an agreement to help the United Arab republic with one of its most bizarre schemes - The Quattara Depression Power Plant. The idea is to let water from the Mediterranean into the Quattara Depression in the Western desert through a channel. This water will evaporate in the burning heat, and keep more flowing in constantly from the Mediterranean to generate electricity. Though the idea seems fantastic, West Germany has kept at it for years, because she failed to get in on the Aswan Dam scheme ... Another agreement will be signed later for the main £100 million project now scheduled to start in 1967, to be completed in 1973. It could herald a new era of German-Egyptian co-operation for President Nasser'.

The signing of this agreement between West Germany and Egypt was widely acclaimed with the exception of Russia and East Germany. East and West Germany now entered the picture in a new role — allies with Russia in the land of Egypt.

When the West German-Egyptian agreement was drawn up in 1964, and the projects as outlined above were under consideration, it seemed certain that with West Germany money and scientific help, collaboration would boost the Egyptian economy. But it was not long before a strange twist took place which altered the situation in the Middle East.

The East German leader, Herr Ulbricht, decided to pay an official visit to Cairo, and as a result, relations between West Germany and Egypt underwent a serious deterioration. West Germany withheld economic aid, although the German scientists remained in Egypt unofficially, while at the same time Egypt drew West Germany's attention to the fact that they disagreed with West German deliveries of arms, etc., to Israel, as well as her initiative in opening up diplomatic relations with Israel.

To West Germany, the visit of the East German leader to Egypt pointed to recognition of the illegal partition of their land, and the West German press commented strongly,

'... Such a visit by Herr Ulbricht, the arch-enemy of German unity and satellite of Moscow ... would involve deep changes in the relations between the German and Egyptian peoples, and between the two governments'.

As a result of this controversy full publicity was given to the fact that an agreement between Dr Adenaur [Chancellor of West Germany] and Ben-Gurion [Prime Minister of Israel] resulted in a loan of some £30 million. This aid resulted in 200 American-built tanks ... 5 motor torpedo boats ... fighter bombers, anti-tank guns, radio and military equipment being supplied to Israel, while at the same time a number of West Germans in Egypt were now accused of spying for Israel.

We are only now concerned with the outcome of these events inasmuch as they enable us to see who upholders of Egypt really were. When we know this we can look more intently at East Germany and Russia as allies fulfilling their prophetic role as they who uphold Egypt.

Egypt and the State of Israel

In a *Daily Telegraph* editorial of the time the relationship of the Israel State and Egypt was dealt with at some length, and the following quotation sums up what must be considered vital.

‘The Egyptian Government believes it now has the edge over Israel in air strike capability, with planes and rockets based within easy range of tightly packed targets in Israel.

The Government-guided press at Cairo has frequently hinted that President Nasser plans eventually to have nuclear weapons. For the foreseeable future Egypt would have to obtain such weapons from abroad, presumably from Moscow.’

No one seems to doubt the source of Egypt’s supplies of arms and equipment, and the extent to which the old Iron Curtain countries were prepared to assist the Arab world in its fight against the Israel State. ‘Israel must be destroyed’ was the cry coming from Arab Prime Ministers to the rank and file of men in the street. Nasser’s plan was not confined to Egypt, but reached and penetrated into the Yemen, and Abyssinia, wrongly named Ethiopia.

The map on the following page should suffice to show the policy of Nasser toward Israel’s only seaport on the Red Sea.

We need to focus attention upon the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, the Gate into the Red Sea from the Indian Ocean. Bab-el-Mandeb literally means ‘Gate of Tears’, and is a strait located between Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula, and Djibouti and Eritrea in the Horn of Africa. It connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden.

In these straits, near the Arabian coast stands the small but important island of Perim, 3 miles long, with an area of 5 sq.m. having a good harbour on the south. Perim was garrisoned by the British in 1799 and reoccupied in 1857 in view of the cutting of the Suez Canal. It is formed of volcanic rock, and is in the track of the great earthquake belt which stretches the length of the Red Sea from Bab-el-Mandeb to Eilat in the Gulf of Akaba.

Perim is 96 miles from Aden and has always been considered to be part of the colony. It interested Nasser because of its proximity to the Yemen, and its association with Aden.



EILAT — The Gulf of Akaba



Almost without comment the State of Israel opened a seaport at Eilat in the Gulf of Akaba. New luxury hotels, factories, and a shipping company now operate from this important port, important in as much as this state is no longer dependent upon the Suez Canal which was banned to her shipping.

Eilat, anciently called Elath, near Ezion Geber has a long history as an important naval base in the time of King Solomon, and Hiram, King of Tyre. That this is now an Israel possession and a key port for trade clearly indicates the farsightedness of her government. Needless to say, Nasser is furious as part of his policy in the Yemen is aimed at the eventual control of the Red Sea, and in particular the Red Sea gate at Bab-el-Mandeb.

A recent report from someone on the spot read,

‘The Russians will probably help him [Nasser] in his aim. The presence of Admiral Gorshkev, the Soviet Naval Commander-in-Chief and Deputy Defence Minister, with Mr Kosygin during his recent visit to Egypt even opens the possibility that the Russians may be planning to establish a secret naval base in Aden or Hodeida under Nasser. In any event, Nasser in Aden would be in a position to cut the sea routes to Assab and Massawa, Ethiopia’s only two seaports, and also to cut the sea route to Israel through Eilat’.

That men of the world can see these things taking place and assess the situation so clearly without the aid of prophecy, should be an incentive to those who believe, to look to God for light in these dark days. May His Holy Spirit open our eyes, and clarify our vision, that we might warn the people of the things shortly coming to pass, that they might prepare themselves and look to God.

Further Confirmation

When the above was written, a series of articles by Julian Amery [later, Lord Amery of Lustleigh] appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* under the heading, 'False Economies East of Suez'.

'Inside Egypt, Nasser's regime faced growing economic difficulties and discontent. American support seemed in doubt; the Soviets were cool. People questioned whether Nasser would last out the year ... In February the Labour Government announced that it would quit Aden altogether in 1968 unless Nasser had first withdrawn from the Yemen ... At the same time Nasser announced that his army would stay in the Yemen until Britain had left Aden.'

And so this cat and mouse policy continued, but not for long. Governments are as putty in the hands of the Almighty and only the will of God can emerge triumphant out of chaos. No better summing up could be given than the following report.

'The Ethiopians were alarmed at the Egyptian invasion of Yemen. They are now dismayed at the sudden decision of the British Government to withdraw our troops from Aden by 1968. The British withdrawal will make a fundamental change in the balance of power, not only in Aden, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the African seaboard of the Indian Ocean. The Ethiopians fear it will allow Nasser to establish himself in Aden where he could become the dominant sea and air power controlling the Bab-el-Mandeb — the entrance to the Red Sea.'

AD 1968

1968 was a year timed by the powers of both Egypt and Russia for the culmination of their main projects, as well as the many strategic moves to further their policies, and because of this movement of the godless nations to destroy the Land of Promise, the judgment of these nations is inevitable. It would be unwise to underestimate the strength of those who at present occupy the land of Palestine. Their prowess in the field and their fanatical resistance to all opposition is well known to the world at large, but particularly to the Arab countries and Egypt.

The High Command of the Israeli people maintain that the most vulnerable target in the world will be the Aswan Dam, and the way they talk about it clearly suggests that they have it high on their military list of objectives in case of an attack. This is borne out by the following report.

‘The Israeli Military Authorities have recently referred to the Aswan Dam as “Number One Target” in the event of an air war with Egypt. The Egyptians may ask Mr Kosygin for improved weapons to protect the dam and to threaten retaliation. As the dam is Russia’s biggest overseas project, Mr Kosygin will undoubtedly be prepared to discuss its protection.’

This, of course, will justify the vast increase of arms and equipment to be transferred from Russia to Egypt in the name of precautionary measures. No one would question the legitimacy of this move, but civil war in Egypt seems to be indicated sometime by the following prophecy which is coupled with the Cruel Lord’s occupation of the land.

‘And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: ...’

Isaiah ch.19 vv 2-3

As a Means to an End

It would be wrong to bring this article to a close, having mentioned only judgment, famine and insurrection in the land of Egypt. The wonderful promise of blessing for the Middle East after these events is fully recorded in Isaiah chapter 19. If we may use a simile to illustrate this fact we could refer to a perfect photograph. A perfect photograph is the result of a perfect negative, and as we proceed to deal with all the negative phases of prophecy we are satisfied that God is working His purpose out, and the result will be perfection.

The concluding passages of Isaiah chapter 19 reveal a clear picture of deliverance for the land of Egypt, after punishment.

‘... and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit. ... for they [Egyptians] shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them. And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation;

... And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the LORD, 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.'

Isaiah ch.19 vv 14, 20-22 & 24-25

Can anything be so vast or blessed in its implications? Should we not welcome the fulfilment of these latter-day prophecies with their attendant great and precious promise of blessing?

If we really believe that the earth shall be filled with the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea, then we shall rejoice when we see these great events which are casting their shadows before them.

This article was first written in 1964 and most of the people mentioned are no longer in office. President Nasser died in 1970, age 52 and his funeral drew five million mourners and an outpouring of grief across the Arab world.

Because the facts of the Aswan Dam project still have relevance, the article was rewritten with a few additional comments to update it. A later report (New Middle East - October) read as follows.

'The current Nile Water Agreement allocates seventy two thousand million cubic metres (72 milliards) a year to Egypt; and 24 milliards to Sudan. Until 1977, Egypt may borrow more than her share, to fill up Lake Nasser behind the dam wall, and to establish new crops which need very heavy irrigation during their early years.'

However, of one thing we are sure, all the prophecies regarding Egypt will come to pass, and the waters of the Nile will be diverted.

'... I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom.'

Isaiah ch.19 v.2

No one doubts the plainness of this verse, so, as we wait, look and listen, so shall we see this sign of yet another step in the fulfilment of God's prophetic plan, noting from Isaiah ch.19 v.3 that,

- 'the spirit of Egypt shall fail',
- 'the counsel thereof shall be destroyed',
- 'the Egyptians shall seek their idols, charmers, and them that have familiar spirits, and their wizards'.
