

Preface to First Edition

It is probably true to say that the prophecies of Daniel are the most remarkable predictive prophecies ever made. Not only are they astoundingly detailed and accurate, but also they look forward to the most important event in the history of this planet (if not the universe), and beyond that, perhaps, right up to the end of time itself.

Many Christians are fascinated by these prophecies and would love to know what they really mean; but they are confused and bewildered by the conflicting interpretations put forward in the past. Indeed there are some who feel that so many contradictory books have been written on the subject, it is useless trying to probe any further. Another book with a new interpretation would simply complicate the picture even more. I feel otherwise. I believe that there is a real need for a radically new type of book which succeeds in sorting out this confusion.

This book has been written primarily for the thoughtful general reader, and it investigates the meaning of Daniel's prophecies in considerable detail. Although it takes a radically new line and contains many new ideas, it does also draw upon existing interpretations, both critical and conservative. It welds the various elements, old and new, critical and conservative, into a harmonious unity; and the result is, in my view, a distinctly clearer and more credible picture. It shows that the prophecies' primary fulfilment is in fact perfectly straightforward. And not only is it straightforward, but we can know it and be sure of it, virtually to the point of certainty.

I am a medical missionary, and it is worth explaining how I came to write a book about Daniel's prophecies! It stems partly from my enjoyment of reading history and partly from my interest in the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Although a conservative evangelical, I became convinced, some years ago, that the critics are correct in identifying Daniel's fourth kingdom as the Greek empire. This led to further research, further discoveries and the publication of articles in the *Theological Students' Fellowship Bulletin* (1967) and *Themelios* (1977). A further article has been accepted for publication in *The Evangelical Quarterly*. My qualification for writing this book is not that I am a theologian. It is the fact that I have made some new discoveries which throw fresh light on the meaning of Daniel's prophecies.

It has been a fascinating and rewarding study, pursued intermittently over a number of years; and the knowledge gained has been put to good use. I am engaged in missionary work amongst Muslims — people who profess to accept that the Old Testament prophets were sent by God. I often raise the subject of Messianic prophecy when discussing the claims of Christ with Muslims.

Now critical scholars have done their best to reduce the Bible to a collection of ordinary human literature — and this includes the book of Daniel. They tell us that it (the book of Daniel) is largely fictional and contains many historical errors. Anything to do with the miraculous, they dismiss as spurious. I have read several critical commentaries on the book of Daniel, and I have been sufficiently open-minded to see that they score over conservative commentaries in at least one area of interpretation. On the other hand, I have proved (to my own satisfaction, at least) that the critics have erred seriously in saying that the prophecies of Daniel are historically inaccurate.

Far from losing my faith in the book's historical accuracy and general trustworthiness, I have gained added assurance that the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God. The prophecies of Daniel are only a small part of the Bible, but they have been attacked very

heavily by the critics, and the confidence with which they have been dismissed as spurious and inaccurate is enormous. If the critics are wrong concerning the book of Daniel, therefore, we can be sure that they are seriously wrong in many other areas also.

I pray that God will bless and use this book in spite of its many shortcomings. I would like to put on record my gratitude to all those who have helped in any way with its production. I am particularly grateful to The Rev. A. E. Cundall, Mr. A. R. Millard, The Rev. Stafford Wright, Archbishop Blanch and The Rev. J. E. Goldingay, all of whom took the time and trouble — at various times over a period of several years — to read the manuscript and give me their comments. I am also very grateful to The Rev. David Post, who drew the maps, and to my father, Dr. T. R. V. Gurney, who has helped in ways too numerous to mention.

R.J.M.G.

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Preface to the Second edition

God in Control has been out of print for 26 years. However, it is still being used, and it is now being put on the 'BiblicalStudies.org.uk' website. Much of the book remains unchanged; but I have taken this opportunity to make a few alterations and additions, and to respond to criticism. I am aware of only one really critical reaction in the literature (although there may be more which I have not seen). It concerns my interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45, and it appeared in a commentary on Daniel published in 2002.

The main changes which I have made in this edition are as follows: 1) I have corrected the numerous printing errors. 2) In Chapter One I have expanded the section on historical accuracy and date of authorship. I have been more forthright in stating my belief that the book of Daniel is a work of the sixth century B.C., and I have provided more evidence for this. 3) In Chapter Five I have added a further comment on Darius the Mede. 4) In Chapter Six I have added a paragraph about the special status of the Jews. 5) In the same chapter I have revised the section about the prediction of the date of Christ's first advent. 6) In Chapter Seven I have deleted a minor point concerning 'the kings of the north and the south' in Daniel 11, as it was based on a misunderstanding of the Hebrew. 7) In the same chapter I have expanded the section on Daniel 11:40-45, and I have responded to the above criticism. 8) In Chapter Nine I have revised and updated a rather controversial section about a possible secondary fulfilment of Daniel 7.

I am grateful to Dr. Philip Johnston and Otto Nordgreen for their helpful comments (although they do not agree with everything I have written), and to Rob Bradshaw for putting this book on the above website. I am grateful to my brother Peter also for encouraging me to bring out this new, computerized edition, and for producing the new maps.

R.J.M.G.

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Revised and updated for the Web by the author.

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