

THE PHILADELPHIA Trumpet

**Who is the modern-day
Jeroboam?**

**The Russian alliance you
should really worry about**

Cities that won't enforce law

Should Germany have nukes?

**Does counting calories
help you lose weight?**



**Trump's TRADE POLICY
could upset the global order
(and fulfill Bible prophecy)**

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LAWLESS Artist's rendering of King Jeroboam leading Israel away from the true worship of God. (GERBRAND VAN DEN EECK)

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Who Is the Modern-Day Jeroboam?

Bible prophecy reveals who he is and which country he rules today! You desperately need to *prove* this revelation.

DONALD TRUMP'S VICTORY IN THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL election gives us a clear indication as to where we are in Bible prophecy.

In the weeks before the election, Hillary Clinton held a considerable lead in the polls (seven points at the time). But in a sermon at the same time, I commented that I was leaning toward Mr. Trump being the winner. Why? Because of an end-time prophecy in the book of Amos.



GERALD FLURRY

It seems obvious that God is telling us we have now entered the time frame of Amos chapter 7. What does that time frame mean for America and for you? God has revealed to me more understanding from Amos 7.

The book of Amos has some of the strongest prophecies in the Bible, with little emphasis on the positive message. But there is great hope in this prophetic book.

The Time of Jeroboam

“Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand” (Amos 7:7). A plumbline is usually used in measuring a building or in construction. But God uses it differently here: This is about measuring the *destruction* that is to come upon the nations of Israel. This destruction is not random; God is measuring it carefully and precisely. And it will bring about the most wonderful results imaginable.

“And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: *I will not again pass by them any more*” (verse 8). This is GOD talking! He has warned these nations several times to try to wake them up, but they have ignored those warnings. So, He says, *I'll warn one last time!* (Our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* explains who the nations of Israel are today.)

We are entering the *last time* God passes by the people of Israel before they are destroyed! This is a time of extreme urgency!

And notice: THIS IS IN THE CONTEXT OF AN END-TIME JEROBOAM. Verse 9 continues: “And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise against THE HOUSE OF JEROBOAM with the sword.”

When God says, “I will not again pass by them any more,” He is talking about not passing by them in the *time of Jeroboam*.

Who is Jeroboam? Who is this *specific man* that the Bible talks about in the time frame of the *last time* God passes by to

show the end-time nations of Israel how to solve their problems and difficulties, and to warn them of the consequences of their failure to do so?

This passage strongly indicates that God is going to rise with the sword *in the time of Jeroboam*. The Moffatt translation renders the end of verse 9 as, “I will attack Jeroboam’s house.” There is something very upsetting to God about the house of Jeroboam. This is why He wants us to understand it and why it is so *offensive* to Him!

God emphasizes the U.S. superpower, the leader of the nations of Israel. The U.S. is led by a modern-day Jeroboam. When there is a type of Jeroboam on the scene, then God will send the sword upon His people because of all of their sins. It’s because of AMERICA’S SINS that it must suffer!

This is sobering to think about. Here is a severe end-time prophecy, and GOD IS TALKING ABOUT AN INDIVIDUAL. God *names names!* WE MUST UNDERSTAND THESE NAMES AND THE ROLES THESE MEN PLAY IF WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND THESE END-TIME PROPHECIES! It is *essential* that we know who these individuals are.

God gives us checkpoints in Bible prophecy: the end time, the “last end,” and the “last HOUR.” This prophecy occurs in the *Jeroboam time frame*—or, we could say, the JEROBOAM END—the LAST TIME God will pass by with His message! God will not bring this warning to His people again; the Jeroboam time is going to be the LAST TIME!

If you understand this, it really makes Bible prophecy come alive to you. God is revealing the identity of *significant* individuals in Bible prophecy in this end time especially—I believe

Here is a severe end-time prophecy, and God is talking about an individual. God names names. We must understand these names and the roles these men play if we are to understand these end-time prophecies.

like He’s never done before. He wants us to understand this because it is leading directly into the Great Tribulation and then the coming of the Messiah! Though it is extremely distressing news in the short run, what it leads to is GREAT NEWS!

An Accusation of Treason!

Amos’s prophecy continues: “Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath



A SANCTUARY OF SUPPORT
Donald Trump enjoys the support of many churches, such as this one he attended just days before the election.

conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words” (Amos 7:10).

Who is this “priest of Bethel”? “Bethel” means *house of God*. “Amaziah the priest of Bethel” is prophetic language referring to a man who came from *within the Church of God* in this end time. You can see from the prophecy in Revelation 3 beginning in verse 14 that the *last era* of God’s true Church before Christ’s return—the very time frame we are in right now—is the *Laodicean* era, a lukewarm church that has turned its back on God. *Amaziah* is a very rebellious Laodicean minister.

Here Amaziah is accusing Amos, God’s true prophet, of treason! Amos is a type of the man in this end time who is proclaiming God’s warning message to Israel today. So this is a prophecy of a real clash between a false minister and a true prophet of God.

I believe Amaziah the priest is the same man as the leader of God’s Church whom we battled with for copyrights to the truth and message of God (Amos 9:1, 11-12). Amaziah HATES our message. He is almost certainly the individual who led a six-year court battle trying to suppress God’s truth from going out to this world! (You can read more about that Amos 9 court battle in our free booklet *The Lion Has Roared*.) Satan doesn’t like that we won that battle and made him look bad. He never gives up when something like that happens. We are in the middle of Satan’s worst wrath.

The priest Amaziah is sending this message about Amos to *Jeroboam*. This strongly indicates that this end-time Jeroboam has a RELIGIOUS following! He is leading people in a way that they should not be led.

Look again at Amos 7:9, and you see more religious imagery. As our booklet on Amos, *The Lion Has Roared*, explains, “the high places of Isaac” refers to the Laodicean Church. “The sanctuaries of Israel” are the religions of this world, like the evangelicals.

Mr. Trump received over 80 percent of the evangelical vote and a large portion of the Catholic vote. He really is leading most of America’s “religious” people. BUT WHERE IS HE LEADING THEM?

The Land Cannot Bear His Words

Amaziah’s message to Jeroboam is, “The land is not able to bear all his words.” What “words” are so difficult to bear?

Amaziah explains: “For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land” (Amos 7:11).

In the short run, this *is* bad news. But it is a message from God that MUST BE DELIVERED! This false priest will go before Jeroboam and say, “This is what AMOS says.” He doesn’t say that this is a message FROM GOD! But when Amos speaks, he says, “[H]ear thou the word of the Lord ... thus saith the Lord”! (verses 16-17). AMOS CAME WITH A “THUS SAITH THE LORD” MESSAGE! Amos is just the messenger. God gives the messenger His message and says, *Go and deliver this to my people*.

The world doesn’t want to believe this is from God. They almost always look at it as a message from a man. But it isn’t! THIS IS WHAT GOD SAYS! It’s such a powerful message that you can’t deny it is coming from God—but the world still tries.

We all have human nature, but we must overcome it or we too will think, *Well that’s just a man’s opinion; I don’t think it is from God*. WE HAVE TO STAY FOCUSED ON “THUS SAITH THE LORD”! THIS IS A MESSAGE FROM GOD!

America has different messages coming from Republicans and Democrats, but THE ONLY MESSAGE THAT WILL PREVAIL IS “THUS SAITH THE LORD”! NOTHING ELSE WILL SUCCEED. This world must understand that.

How well do YOU understand that God is sending out His WORD today? The message you are reading right now is coming from *His mouth*, not some man’s! This is critical understanding that ought to sober anybody!

For decades, we have been warning Israel about what is going to happen, but people have scorned this message and pushed it aside. Yet there will come a point when people can’t bear it anymore.

It is OUR WORDS that the land will not be able to bear! That strongly indicates that there are SERIOUS PROBLEMS plaguing the nation or they wouldn’t care what we say. But we have a message they cannot bear because IT’S ABOUT THEIR DESTRUCTION! They want to close their minds to what is coming upon them—instead of repenting of their sins.

Still, the message is wrapped in wonderful good news. Even though there is bad news in the short term, this is the beginning of ISRAEL GETTING TO KNOW GOD! There will be rough times ahead, but we are letting God use us to help Israel get to know Him! We have to see the destruction in the context of God's plan. This VISION will keep us positive. When you think about the end result, what could be more inspiring?

AT THE TIME OF THE END, JEROBOAM IS GOING TO BE LADEN WITH PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES, BUT HIS BIGGEST PROBLEM IS GOING TO BE THE MESSAGE OF GOD COMING OUT OF THIS ORGANIZATION! Our message is going to plague him! This is what people in this land are going to fear most of all—not anarchy within or national chaos. God is forcing them to face *the warning message* of their own destruction! This is a problem Jeroboam never saw coming.

The King's Chapel

Anciently, God allowed the dividing of the nation of Israel because of its sins and gave control over the northern 10 tribes to Jeroboam. Jeroboam was “a mighty man of valour” and “industrious” (1 Kings 11:28). But he ended up being a disaster for Israel, turning the people away from God by institutionalizing false religion (1 Kings 12). The emphasis in Amos 7 on the “house of Jeroboam” could mean the leader of America in the end time is a *descendant* of that Jeroboam anciently.

It seems logical that God would have an Israelite leader, a Jeroboam type whose ancestors were from ancient Israel, in this end time because our message is to warn Israel, or specifically modern-day America, Britain and the Jewish nation. We have to warn people that it is *their sins* that God is concerned about! There are Gentiles in this land, and they will suffer along with Israel. But God puts the blame *on Israel*, the house of Jeroboam. That is where the sword is aimed. You probably wouldn't have an Antiochus, a Gentile leader, in office when God is punishing the house of Jeroboam (I explain about Antiochus in my booklet *Great Again*; request a free copy).

America is one of the birthright nations of Israel. God has blessed this land abundantly. Perhaps America's greatest sin is ingratitude for what God has given it.

America's president says, “I will make America great again.” Notice the big “I”: *I will make America great again*—not God—*like I made myself great*. That is going to be the ultimate disaster. Men vainly think they can do magnificent things. That is one of the most deceitful thoughts anyone can have! Yet that is what we are facing in this time of Jeroboam.

America, the British peoples (including Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa) and the Jewish nation are facing horrendous problems. *Only God* can save these nations.

That means our people must repent for that to happen. Do you see evidence of that happening? I do not. WE NEED A LEADER WHO WILL CAUSE OUR PEOPLE TO EMBRACE THE LIVING GOD—NOT A PUNY HELPLESS MAN!

This modern-day Jeroboam fights for many good causes. But in the process he gets people to look to *him* as the solution—not the omnipotent, all-powerful God!

This is the great deception and the great sin.

“Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there:

But prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court” (Amos 7:12-13). Amaziah is being directed by Jeroboam about what to say. He's saying, *Tell them to get out of here! This is “the king's chapel,” the president's domain—this is OUR religious place. Get out of this land because we will have none of that message!*

This man becomes “Jeroboam” because he is fighting against God and God's Work—along with Amaziah the priest, who is a spiritual Antiochus. The modern-day Jeroboam commits the same sin that Jeroboam did anciently. There is a *reason* God uses *Jeroboam* as the last warning to the nations of Israel. The

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original Jeroboam committed a great sin, and the modern-day Jeroboam is committing the identical sin again. What is that sin?

What Was Jeroboam's Sin?

The book of 1 Kings is part of what is called the former prophets, and it is prophecy mainly for this end time. (Request a free copy of my book *The Former Prophets—How to Become a King*. It explains thoroughly how relevant these biblical books are for us in this end time.)

Notice what Jeroboam did after he received rulership of the 10 northern tribes of Israel: “Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David” (1 Kings 12:25-26). He *feared* that the people would return to the house of David. They had just broken away, and he wanted to keep them *separated* from King David's throne. God had even explained the importance of the house of David to Jeroboam (read 1 Kings 11:29-39), but he rejected God's instruction.

Jeroboam wanted to keep the 10 tribes of Israel away from the house of David, denying the eternal promise that God had made to David. So what did he do?

“If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah [Solomon's son], and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt” (1 Kings 12:27-28). *Jeroboam took them right back to the false gods they had before they knew the true God!*

Jeroboam then polluted the priesthood by ordaining priests from “the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi” (verse 31). Then he changed the dates of God's sacred holy days so they would be different from what they were under David and in Jerusalem (verses 32-33). He had his own holy day plan—his own “master plan.” He rigged the system so he could

TRADE WARS HAVE BEGUN

The Bible prophesied that this is how World War III would start.

BY BRAD MACDONALD



THINKING ABOUT WORLD trade is a bit like thinking about your blood pressure. The subject is neither compelling nor obviously significant, so it doesn't come to mind often. But then a blood vessel hemorrhages and your life is turned upside down.

Is global trade war about to suddenly turn humanity upside down?

The world trade order is currently being reconfigured in an astonishing way. This transformation is already impacting trade relations and facets of some economies. But soon it will significantly impact *every* national economy, *every* national government, and *every* major international relationship. The political and geopolitical ramifications will be extraordinary.

What is happening exactly?

First, America is relinquishing world leadership and is becoming isolationist and protectionist. President Donald Trump's motto is "buy American, hire American." To many Americans, this sounds terrific; but to foreign leaders, the thought of the world's most important economy *reducing imports* is alarming. America is reassessing established trade relationships, seemingly abandoning globalization, and canceling trade deals. President Trump scrapped the Trans-Pacific Partnership, called NAFTA one of the worst deals in history and hinted at reworking it, and threatened to impose tariffs on imports from Germany, China and Mexico.

Second, Britain's departure from the European Union has compounded the sense that globalization is over and that it's now every man, or nation, for himself. Brexit has also created enormous uncertainty and anxiety, *especially in Europe*. What does Britain's departure mean for the future of the EU? Will European nations have open access to UK markets? Is the UK now a competitor in global trade? These are life-and-death questions for the EU.

Finally, America's and Britain's moves to shed their postwar roles and responsibilities and to blaze new trails—including a possible renaissance in Anglo-America relations—have given other world powers,

especially Europe, opportunity and license to do the same.

The upheaval in global trade and commerce has caused enormous uncertainty and anxiety. More and more it is sparking competition and hostility. The world, as daily news headlines now routinely declare, appears to be entering a period of trade war!

Here is what to expect.

Watch Germany

When it comes to trade, no nation has more at stake than Germany. Berlin quietly sits at the heart of global trade. It has the fourth largest economy in the world, is the world's third biggest exporter, and is the engine that drives Europe economically. As Spiegel Online put it, "No other large economy is more reliant on the free exchange of goods and services, on border-free trade and barrier-free exports, than the German economy" (January 28).

Mr. Trump's views on trade, according to Spiegel, are a "DANGEROUS COCKTAIL FOR GERMAN INDUSTRY." This is not hyperbole. America is the single largest importer of German goods. In 2015, it accounted for almost 10 percent of German exports. (And the UK accounted for 7.5 percent.) "Considering that 46.8 percent of Germany's GDP comes from exports," explained *Geopolitical Futures*, "the importance of the U.S. to Germany's export machine should not be underestimated" (February 6).

Even a marginal drop in U.S. demand for German goods—and the drop, in the event of a 35 percent tariff, would surely be more than marginal—would have a massive impact on the German economy.

"It is becoming apparent that Trump's presidency represents a break in the transatlantic relationship, the kinds of which hasn't been seen since World War II," explained Spiegel.

Some looking at this development see Germany and Europe as innocent victims of Donald Trump and Brexit. Germany's media are doing a marvelous job at selling this narrative. But Germany isn't a poor, helpless victim. On the contrary, all the uncertainty and tension is giving Berlin an opportunity to develop new trade relationships, to act more aggressively, especially toward the U.S.,

and to assume a greater leadership in global trade and commerce.

The international community in general dislikes President Trump and his vision for America. One consequence is that many nations—European states especially, but others worldwide—are beginning to look to Germany as the new America! The world is rallying behind Berlin as it stands up to Mr. Trump, and we can expect this trend to continue.

It's still early, but Germany is already gearing up for a fight.

In January, when asked about Mr. Trump's threat to put a 35 percent tax on some German imports, Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble told German public broadcaster ZDF: "I also want to point out that currently American companies don't have to tax their gains which they make outside of the U.S. That means that hundreds of billions of untaxed gains, of



"We should use the change in the trade strategy of the U.S. to the EU's advantage by intensifying our talks with interested partners ..."

—European Council President Donald Tusk

great American companies, rest in a tax oasis" (*Trumpet* translation).

Germany and Europe have long resented facets of America's business culture and have been openly hostile to companies like Facebook and Google. The *Financial Times* reported that Europe was putting together an army of lawyers to battle America over a proposed border tax: "The EU and other U.S. trading partners have begun laying the groundwork for a legal challenge to a U.S. border tax proposal in a move that could trigger the biggest case in World Trade Organization history" (February 13).

Germany and Europe might have been shocked by some of President Trump's decisions, but they're not sitting around feeling sorry for themselves. On the contrary, they are exploring new partnerships and opportunities and preparing for greater competition with America. As Spiegel wrote, Germany is thinking: "Is it better to remain composed and unperturbed, relying on rationality, on the strength of decades of ties and on the rules of the global economy? OR WOULD IT BE BETTER TO PREPARE COUNTERMEASURES, SEARCH

FOR NEW ALLIES IN, FOR EXAMPLE, ASIA OR PERHAPS EVEN TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE VACUUM THAT IS BEING CREATED?" (op cit; emphasis added throughout).

Europe Looks East

In January, European Council President Donald Tusk told EU leaders: "We should use the change in the trade strategy of the U.S. to the EU's advantage by INTENSIFYING OUR TALKS WITH INTERESTED PARTNERS, while defending our interests at the same time."

This search for partners is mainly taking place in Asia.

In January, German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said Germany should work "quickly" to form a new Asian strategy. Writing in the *Financial Times* on February 2, Alexander Stubb, former Finnish finance and foreign minister, called for Europe to champion free

trade in the global American vacuum. Europe, he wrote, must be at the vanguard of global trade outreach to Asia.

A February 14 Politico article reported on the "peculiar alliance" forming between Germany and China: "The partnership is partly intended to signal to Washington that, in the face of the White House's rising economic nationalism, DEALS WITHOUT THE U.S. WILL BECOME MORE IMPORTANT, shrinking its influence on the global stage." In an interview with the *New York Times*, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, president of the Eurogroup, discussed Europe's shift in focus. "We've always said that America is our best friend," he said, but if that is "no longer the case, if that's what we need to understand from Donald Trump, then of course Europe will look for new friends" (January 30).

Who should Europe look to? "China is a very strong candidate for that," Dijsselbloem stated. "The Chinese involvement in Europe in terms of investment is already very high and expanding. If you push away your friends, you mustn't be surprised if the friends start looking for new friends."

Dijsselbloem is right. Trade relations between Europe and Asia have grown significantly in the last two decades. EU imports from China increased 11-fold from 1995 to 2013. Exports going the other way increased eight times over the same period. From 2010 to 2014, Chinese investments in Europe rose from \$6 billion to \$55 billion. China invested nearly as much money in Europe in 2014/2015 as it did in the seven years from 2008 to 2014.

In early 2016, as China's President Xi Jinping stated at the time, 1 out of 3 containers at Germany's Hamburg port was from China. Today there are more than 5,000 German companies in China, and almost 1,000 Chinese companies in Germany. THIS IS A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR IMPROVED TRADE RELATIONS BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA.

Jörg Wuttke, president of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China, told Politico: "The emergence of 'Trumponomics' has opened a window

"In the face of the White House's rising economic nationalism, deals without the U.S. will become more important"

—Politico

for us to renegotiate" relations with China. While a change in free trade with America is unwelcome, he noted, "THE PROSPECT OF A MORE EQUITABLE TRADE RELATIONSHIP WITH BEIJING COULD BE A BIG SILVER LINING FOR BERLIN" (op cit).

Germany and Europe are not only looking east. In February, with tensions rising between Mexico and America, the EU announced that it had agreed to speed up negotiations with Mexico to modernize their existing free-trade pact. There is also a strong push to improve trade relations between Europe and Latin and South America.

Can you see what is happening? Europe and Asia are actively seeking improved economic relations. In the process, these nations are also positioning themselves to undermine and oppose America and Britain. WE ARE IN

THE EARLY STAGES OF A MASSIVE GLOBAL TRADE WAR!

What's Next?

Some believe increased global trade is a path to peace. They think that by interlocking multiple economies and increasing interdependency, nations have a vested interest in preserving the peace. This sounds reasonable, but what does history show?

"Does trade increase or decrease the likelihood of conflict?" historian Samuel Huntington asked. "The assumption that it reduces the probability of war between nations is, at a minimum, not proven, and MUCH EVIDENCE EXISTS TO THE CONTRARY" (*The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*).

The line between cooperation (globalization) and competition (trade war) is fragile. The free flow of goods, services and people between nations can produce peace, but it lasts only as long as all sides benefit. If one nation begins to suffer—especially if its distress is a result of the other nations' success—then tension, resentment and animosity fester. Eventually, the disadvantaged will defend their interests.

Two toddlers will play happily and share their toys as long as both are satisfied. But when one child grows bored with his toy, or it breaks, what happens? He lunges for the other child's toy—who, naturally, doesn't want to relinquish it. "It's mine!" he screams. The scene transforms from peaceful cooperation to fierce competition in a moment.

It's much the same with globalization: Everything is great as long as all parties benefit. But when one senses it is being treated unfairly, partners can quickly become competitors; allies can become enemies.

Many historians believe World War I began as a trade war. In *The Ascent of Money*, Niall Ferguson wrote: "It has recently been suggested that [World War I] should be understood as a kind of backlash against globalization, heralded by rising tariffs and immigration restrictions in the decade before 1914"

Does that sound familiar?

The *Trumpet* and its predecessor, the *Plain Truth*, agree: Globalization can quickly spiral into political and even military conflict.

Will history repeat? Bible prophecy answers with a resounding yes.

A Euro-Asian 'Mart of Nations'!

The Prophet Isaiah forecast a massive global trade network in the end time and said it would revolve around a German-led European superstate. You can study this prophecy in Isaiah 22 and 23. In Isaiah 23:1, China is called by its ancient name, *Chittim*. The same verse calls the German-dominated European combine *Tyre*, which was a major economic power extant at the time the prophecy was written.

In this prophecy, the end-time Tyre is shown to be in a trade relationship with China and other Asian peoples. The mention of the *sea* (verses 2, 4, 11), *oceans* ("great waters," verse 3), *ships* (verses 1 and 14), and *seaborne merchant traffic* (verse 8) indicates this is a trade alliance. Verse 3 calls this a "mart of nations." *Mart* means emporium, trade or merchandise. Verse 13 mentions Italy (Chaldea). Italy is here depicted in association with Germany, whose biblical identity is Assyria, or Asshur.

Clearly, this is a prophecy about an end-time trade axis between Europe and Asia!

Notice too: America and Britain are not part of this "mart of nations." Why not? Because this trade emporium is a *rival* of the U.S. and Britain. It is infused with strong anti-American and anti-British sentiment. *This "mart of nations" exists to COMPETE WITH America and Britain!*

Trumpet editor in chief Gerald Flurry discusses this prophecy in his book *Isaiah's End-time Vision*: "[W]e believe there may be a brief alliance between the German-led Holy Roman Empire and certain Asian powers (Russia, China, Japan—the kings of the east)." This German-led global trade conglomerate will be a "DYNAMIC MARKET OF NATIONS," he states.

HE WROTE THAT SEVEN YEARS AGO!

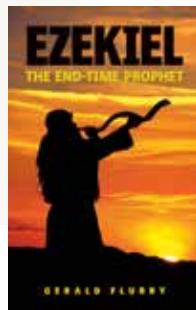
Mr. Flurry also warns that this temporary "mart of nations" is "going to besiege America, Britain and the Jewish nation." This warning comes from a specific prophecy in Ezekiel 5. Here, God warns that the cities of America will burn with fire caused by riots and mass civil unrest. Millions of Americans will

die. This violence will be inflamed by an *economic siege*—TRADE WARS—inflicted by the resurrected Holy Roman Empire working in conjunction with China and other Eastern nations.

Consider these statements:

“The U.S. and other Israelite nations are surrounded or besieged by fierce and often unfair competition. ... As the U.S. and Britain become less and less competitive worldwide, unemployment will steadily increase. ... The United States and Britain are going to be left out in the cold as two gigantic trade blocs, Europe and Asia, mesh together and begin calling the shots in world commerce. These nations of Israel are going to be literally besieged—economically frozen out of world trade!”

Ezekiel: The End-Time Prophet
By Gerald Flurry
(request a free copy)



WE ARE CLEARLY IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE TRADE WAR THAT PRECEDES THIS SIEGE!

THE SIEGE IS AT THE DOOR!

Ezekiel also prophesied about this temporary Europe-Asia economic alliance. The end-time prophecy of Ezekiel 27 discusses a “merchant of the people for many isles.” It foretells Germany trading with Middle East nations (verses 9-10), with Russia (verses 12-13), and with Japan (verse 14).

The Apostle John delivered a similar prophecy. The theme of Revelation 17 and 18 is the seventh and final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire. Revelation 18:3 describes the demise of this superstate, stating that “the kings of the earth have committed fornication with



her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.” This prophecy shows that for a brief period—just before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ—a German-led Holy Roman Empire will sit at the nucleus of world trade.

We have just noted three distinct biblical passages, written by three individuals at three different times, discussing exactly the same end-time event. How can you explain this incredible fact?

We have been warned! And not just by Isaiah, Ezekiel and John.

For decades, Herbert W. Armstrong warned that trade wars would precede World War III and the return of Christ. In 1968, he described how the beginning of World War III would be “ECONOMIC IN NATURE. We have shown how God prophesied a VIRTUAL TRADE WAR will get underway against the United States and Britain ...”

Here is another warning, delivered in 1971. On this occasion Mr. Armstrong specifically addressed America’s protectionist policies. “Either we start raising high tariff barriers against other countries, STARTING A TRADE WAR WHICH IN TIME WILL TRIGGER THE NUCLEAR WAR THAT WILL DESTROY US—or, American workers are going to have to meet the competition of the workers in other countries, by lowering living standards. Obviously American workers are not going to choose to do the latter. And if they don’t—well, THE HANDWRITING IS ON OUR NATIONAL WALL”

(*Plain Truth*, March 1971).

What a profoundly prescient statement. Mr. Armstrong foresaw the exact dilemma America faces today!

He did not use a crystal ball—he used Bible prophecy. And the Bible plainly shows that a nuclear World War III will be preceded by a global trade war.

In fact, Scripture is even more specific. It says that a German-dominated European power will temporarily align with China, Russia and other Asian powers to bring America down.

These prophecies are being fulfilled, dramatically, in detail, and astonishingly fast!

Viewed through the lens of Bible prophecy, the subject of global trade and commerce is riveting. But putting world events together with Bible prophecies needs to be more than just a rousing intellectual exercise. Seeing Bible prophecy fulfilled in such obvious and dramatic fashion ought to arouse curiosity in the Bible, in God’s existence and plan. IT OUGHT TO STIR US TO ACTION!

If a trade war is looming, then don’t you want to know how to escape the destruction? You *can* be protected. Your family *can* be protected. You *can* be there to witness the outcome of the trade war and full-scale military conflict and to witness the greatest event to happen in the history of the universe: the return of Jesus Christ. What do you have to do?

For the answer, read Acts 2:38 (New King James Version): “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” ■



Latin America: FRONT LINE OF TRADE WAR

America's new protectionism is forcing Latin America to seek new partners. **BY RICHARD PALMER**

AMERICA'S INFLUENCE IN Latin America is decreasing, while the influence of other world powers in the region is growing. If it continues, this trend could destroy America.

Dominance of the Caribbean basin is integral to America's safety and essential to its ability to project power globally. If a rival power were able to establish a significant presence in the Caribbean, it could threaten the American heartland. The Caribbean is also key to United States' trade. The *majority* of all U.S. waterborne foreign trade travels to or from U.S. ports on the Gulf of Mexico. When you include goods traveling through the region from other ports, no other part of the world is more essential to America's trade.

This is why more Americans ought to be concerned that foreign powers are rapidly moving into the Caribbean, as well into South America itself.

Former President Barack Obama practically invited these powers into the hemisphere, as his administration declared that it had ended the Monroe Doctrine. This pillar of American foreign policy sought to keep foreign powers well away from the American mainland. Yet in 2013, Secretary of State John Kerry announced that the "era of the Monroe Doctrine is over."

Since then, a string of left-wing and radical-left governments in the region

have fallen and been replaced by governments more open to global trade.

Finally, U.S. President Donald Trump's promises to upend America's trade with the world are pushing the nations of South and Central America into the eager arms of foreign powers.

"With a barrage of insults and threats, President Trump has begun the process of turning Mexico against us," wrote Stephen Kinzer in the *Boston Globe* (February 17). "This could bring the United States something it has never had: an unfriendly country on our border." While Kinzer appears to have some anti-Trump bias, his general point stands: Mexico is, in fact, in the process of turning anti-American.

The current president, Peña Nieto, is considered too pro-American by Mexican voters, and his approval rating from 24 percent in December to 12 percent by mid-January. Instead, voters want someone radical. Andrés Manuel López Obrador is the rising star, with his far-left rhetoric and promises to stand up to the United States. "Imagine a version of the late President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, the most outspoken anti-U.S. leader to emerge from Latin America in this century, on our southern border," wrote Kinzer. This appears to be where Mexico is heading. If López becomes president, he could invite foreign powers right onto America's doorstep the way Chávez did in Venezuela.

Yet it would not take a new president for Mexico to form closer trade relations with foreign powers. The nation is alarmed by Mr. Trump's anti-trade rhetoric, promises of tariffs, and his opposition to U.S. companies moving south of the border, and thus is already trying to reduce its dependence on the U.S. To do this, it is reaching out to the South American trade bloc MERCOSUR, as well as to Europe and China.

On February 1, Mexican and European officials agreed to work on modernizing an existing free-trade pact. Negotiations on this pact, worth \$57 billion in 2015, are being sped up. Meanwhile, Agence France-Presse reported on February 3, "China appears as an attractive alternative, with its massive market of 1.37 billion people." President Nieto has visited China several times. The two nations signed a strategic partnership in 2013. It won't be easy for Mexico to reduce its trade dependence on its northern neighbor, but it is certainly making an effort.

Europe is also looking for alternative trade partners, eager to take advantage of the opportunity to move into the region.

On February 4, just before hosting Uruguayan President Tabare Vazquez in Berlin, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she would welcome a European Union-South American trade deal.

"[M]any countries are now turning to us because they believe protectionism

is not the right answer,” European Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom told *Handelsblatt*. “We are already negotiating with almost all of them, or preparing conversations.” Since Mr. Trump’s election, the EU has sped up talks with Mexico and MERCOSUR, she said, along with Japan.

China is ready to move in as well. “China Eyes Latin America in Ashes of Monroe Doctrine” reported the Latin American business magazine *America Economia*. “First with Obama and now with Trump, the U.S. is making space for a second imperialist power on the American continent, China” (February 17).

Several countries in Latin America were to be part of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal, which Mr. Trump withdrew America from, leaving these nations searching for another partner.

America Economia noted that Chile’s foreign minister, Heraldo Muñoz, has already said that in the wake of the TPP’s demise, they must look to China and South Korea. “Latin America is experiencing (perhaps without understanding it) China’s advance in what is still considered the U.S. ‘backyard,’” it wrote. China has already set up the China Construction Bank in Latin America to encourage trade in Chinese currency and is working to sell arms to the region.

In 1942, geopolitical thinker Nicholas Spykman warned of the importance of careful diplomacy in this region. No power in the great Caribbean basin could, by itself, challenge the U.S. The danger comes from outside powers moving in. “Only a very skillful diplo-

power has had designs to attack America, it has always sought to use the Caribbean as a launching pad.

Further south, South America is still important for American security, but not so immediately crucial as the Caribbean. This region is separated enough from the United States to make it harder for the U.S. to project power there, yet it is still near enough that it could pose a threat if used by an Asian or European power.

Musing on Spykman’s warnings, bestselling author Robert Kaplan writes that “already one can see that the more united Europe becomes, the greater its tensions with the United States. A true European superstate with armed forces and a single foreign policy at its command would be both a staunch competitor of the U.S., and possibly the dominant outside power in the equidistant zone of southern South America” (*The Revenge of Geography*).

Europe has deep trade and cultural links with the region. As Europe unites, it will look to project great influence here. We can expect China to also grow its presence in this region.

The May 1962 *Plain Truth* warned that “the United States is going to be left out in the cold as two GIGANTIC TRADE BLOCS, EUROPE and LATIN AMERICA, mesh together and begin calling the shots in world commerce.”

Dozens of biblical prophecies promise blessings to Israel for obedience to God’s laws and warn of curses for disobedience. These apply most of all to the *end-time* descendants of the

“[T]he United States is going to be left out in the cold as two gigantic trade blocs, Europe and Latin America, mesh together and begin calling the shots in world commerce.”

—Plain Truth, May 1962

macy and a very thick velvet glove will be able to make the reality of the power relationship tolerable to our good neighbors,” he warned. That does not describe America right now—and the nations of this region are running to foreign powers in response to America’s recent and current diplomacy.

From Napoleon to Kaiser Wilhelm to the Soviet Union, whenever a foreign

ancient nation of Israel, of whom the United States is chief. (To learn more about this incredible history, request your free copy of *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, by Herbert W. Armstrong.)

One specific prophecy of these curses is found in Deuteronomy 28. Among the punishments upon modern-day America that this chapter



lists for rebellion against God, verse 52 warns that foreign nations “shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.”

These “gates” include the vital sea-lanes by which America trades with other nations and imports goods that its people rely on every day. This is a specific prophecy that these sea-lanes will be *cut off* by foreign powers!

That scenario simply couldn’t happen without Latin America: It will entail an enemy or alliance of enemies closing the Panama Canal to American traffic and gaining naval and aerial superiority in the Caribbean.

Europe and China are right now working on a “mart of nations”—an anti-American trade alliance. Already it is clear that Latin America will become part of that trade alliance. This makes it a huge threat to the United States.

For more on the vital importance of this region, read *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry’s article “The Deadly Dangerous U.S.-Cuba Deal” (theTrumpet.com/go/12381).



The Russian Alliance You Really Have to Worry About

Concern over a Trump-Putin friendship is misplaced. Instead, watch for the global order to be overturned by a different relationship. **BY RICHARD PALMER**

DONALD TRUMP AND RUSSIA. It has become one of the most discussed potential romances of our time.

The United States abandoning its traditional Western allies and siding instead with Vladimir Putin would be the most dramatic realignment in global politics since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

It won't happen. America may try to draw close to Russia, but no close alliance is possible.

Instead, there is *another* alliance coming that the world should really pay attention to.

A Short-Lived Alliance

Just weeks into Mr. Trump's presidency, the wheels already seemed to be coming off the much-anticipated U.S.-Russia alliance. National Security adviser Michael Flynn, the most pro-Russian of Mr. Trump's advisers, was fired. The U.S. said it will not end sanctions

on Russia and that it expects Russia to return Crimea to Ukraine.

Meanwhile, Russia went back to business as usual, violating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and buzzing U.S. ships in the Black Sea.

Mr. Trump is about as well known for his consistency as he is for his modesty, so this could change. But there are more fundamental reasons to expect this Russo-American détente to fail.

Barack Obama began his presidency with his infamous "reset" with Russia. George W. Bush declared Putin a man Americans could trust. Bill Clinton's collapse into uncontrollable laughter at a 1995 press conference with President Boris Yeltsin suggested, if not trust, then at least an absence of fear.

No president starts his term wanting conflict with Russia. But no recent president has avoided one. Why? Because alliances are not based on intention or good will. We live in

a world founded in selfishness. An alliance works if both sides get what they want. The alliance must be in the self-interest of both parties.

A Russo-American alliance has continually failed because it is in neither nation's long-term interests.

What Are These Nations' Interests?

America's number one interest is to prevent any power from rising up to challenge it. The only place such a power could come from in the foreseeable future is Eurasia. "[O]ur constant concern in peacetime must be to see that no nation or alliance of nations is allowed to emerge as a dominating power in either of the two regions of the Old World from which our security could be threatened," wrote Prof. Nicholas Spykman, one of America's greatest thinkers on the subject of international relations (*The Geography of the Peace*). He was referring to

Europe on the Atlantic, and East Asia on the Pacific.

During the last 70 years, that potential challenger has been Russia—particularly in the form of the Soviet Union. And so the U.S. has opposed Russia.

But Russia is not Mr. Trump's top concern. China is a massive and assertive trade power. Germany is using the euro to economically dominate the eurozone. Therefore, Mr. Trump believes, America could ally with the declining power of Russia and oppose Germany, China and also radical Islam.

But what can America offer to persuade Russia to turn against China and to confront Europe?

Russia's top interest is to dominate Eastern Europe. It has no natural frontiers there. This is why Russia constantly pushes as far west as it can. Historically, this extra space between Europe and Russia's heartland has thwarted most attempts to conquer Russia.

Russia also has an interest in confronting Islamic terror and in gaining access to Western finance and technology.

There are complementary interests and the potential for an alliance. But the problem is that the *price* Russia would have to demand—to make it worth its while to turn on China and Germany—is higher than the U.S. can afford. Russia would need help in achieving its main interest: more space in Eastern Europe.

America cannot afford that. America cannot be certain that Russia is no longer its top threat. Though Russia lacks the economic heft of either the European Union or China, it has a formidable military and, most importantly, a formidable leader. In backing Russia, many even in Mr. Trump's administration fear that the U.S. could be building up its own worst enemy.

An alliance with Russia then, actually threatens America's number one interest. Of course Mr. Trump would love to get Russia on his side without giving much in return. But that is not how the world works. Thus, no long-term alliance is on the cards.

There could be *short-term* arrangements. In the Middle East, for example, America and Russia could work together. And it would be possible for America to make concessions in Ukraine and Eastern Europe. But we

will not see a wholesale global realignment around a U.S.-Russia alliance.

The fundamental difference in interest between the U.S. and Russia has meant that they have allied together only once in history: in World War II. This addressed an urgent threat to both powers, but it was short-lived and immediately gave way to a nuclear-armed Cold War rivalry.

But there is another power with more compatible interests—one that Russia has allied with repeatedly.

The Real Power Couple

Germany's core interest is to avoid encirclement—a hostile France in the West and hostile Russia in the East. This interest is taken care of, thanks to the EU. Germany has no fear of a French invasion.

Another important interest is a secure export market for its heavily export-dependent economy. This it meets primarily through the eurozone. The countries of the eurozone are locked into a common currency and cannot raise their exchange rates. This means that imbalances that would normally fix themselves over time cannot—so Germany can export far more to these countries than it imports. It also provides Germany with a *de facto* subsidy when exporting to other markets.

The migrant crisis and radical Islam make the Middle East another important interest for Germany.

Russia and Germany have much to gain by working together. Historically, Russia could only dominate Eastern Europe when European powers were weak, or when they acquiesced.

Meanwhile, the two have several complementary interests. Economically, they go together hand in glove. Germany has excellent technology and manufacturing, and needs to export. Russia needs to buy Western technology and know-how. Russia has energy commodities, and Germany is among its best customers. Russia's deep ties to the Middle East make it the perfect partner for a Germany that needs to stem the tide of refugees into Europe. Russia has even edged its way into the euro crisis—its strong ties to Cypriot and Greek financial systems mean that it could hurt or help Germany's economic ambitions.

Furthermore, an alliance with Germany does not require Russia to drop its alliance with China. Thus it needs much less from Germany to make such an alliance worth its while.

Germany, then, can afford to pay the price Russia requires, while the U.S. cannot. The cost-benefit calculation looks very different.

A Russo-German alliance still carries risks. Done recklessly, it could alienate much of Central and Eastern Europe. But with care, allowing Russia to expand its sphere of influence into parts of Eastern Europe would actually drive the remaining countries to Germany. Germany would also have to be sure it was rewarded enough to make up for the extra insecurity that would come from an expanded Russian sphere of influence.

But Germany, whether it wants it or not, is being forced into this alliance.

Germany Has Little Choice

The other major part of President Trump's foreign policy is a withdrawal from the world. He believes the U.S. is spending far too much money intervening beyond its shores.

If America withdraws from Europe, Germany is left with little choice but to cut a deal with Russia. Economically, the EU dwarfs Moscow—but militarily, Russia is a force to be reckoned with. Right now Europe could not stand up to Russia alone. So, what do you do if you can't beat them?

Writing during the latter half of the Cold War, Hans Morgenthau, in a later edition of *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, outlined what could happen if America withdrew from Europe. The nations of Europe are “ambivalent towards the United States, whose support they need but resent,” he wrote. If the U.S. withdraws, these countries “may then perceive themselves as having been abandoned by the United States and having to face the Soviet Union alone, unchallengeable in its military power.” This, he wrote, would force the nations of Europe to “accommodate themselves with Russia.”

If Germany does this, it “would signify a drastic change in the distribution of world power,” Morgenthau concluded. For Germany, there are

“rational arguments ... in support of an Eastern orientation.”

Today, the Russian military is not as overwhelming as it once was. But if America pulls out of Europe, Germany still faces a similar dilemma.

Trump’s openness to an alliance with Russia has also made it easier for European powers to draw closer to Russia. The top leaders of Germany’s Christian Social Union (CSU), part of Germany’s ruling coalition, have remained close to Russia, despite their nation’s sanctions against it. In 2016, Bavarian State Premier Horst Seehofer and Honorary CSU Chairman Edmund Stoiber visited Russian President Vladimir Putin. Stoiber welcomed the election of Donald Trump, partly because he believed it could help open the door for closer relations between Germany and Russia. Trump, he said, will “set a new tone in foreign policy.”

A History of War

These same pressures now heaped on Germany have led to similar alliances in the past. From 1772 to 1795, Prussia, Austria and Russia divided the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth among themselves. At that point, Poland extended much farther eastward than it did today, including almost all of present-day Belarus.

Shortly afterward, German generals helped modernize the Russian Army. As Leo Tolstoy noted in *War and Peace*, one Russian general was so irked by the commanding role Germans played in the Russian Army that he reportedly asked the emperor if he could be promoted to the rank of German.

While Otto von Bismarck united the German states, he worked hard to stay on Russia’s good side. As he famously said, the secret to politics is to “make a good treaty with Russia.”

In the early 20th century, the German high command rejected Bismarck’s advice, thinking Germany had a shot at defeating Russia. Russia collapsed during World War I, but Germany lost in the West. The fall of both

Russia and Germany allowed Poland to become an independent state for the first time since it had been divided. Other smaller nations sprouted up. The next time Germany tried to take over Europe, it made a treaty with Russia first. The Rapallo Treaty helped Germany rise from the ashes of World



LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER
Russian Foreign
Minister Molotov
signs the infamous
Molotov-Ribbentrop
Pact with Germany.

War I. Then Poland was again divided in the infamous Hitler-Stalin pact, also known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact.

Shortly thereafter, Hitler caught Stalin napping and attacked Russia, a decision he may or may not have lived long enough to regret.

The history between Germany and Russia proves not only that their self-interests align better with each other’s than with America’s. It also proves that self-interest is *self-interest*: Once one nation thinks it can gain more by stabbing its “ally” in the back, it will do so.

Another Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact

The shared interests here are so powerful that the *Trumpet* has long forecast a new alliance between these two nations.

In May 1962, the *Plain Truth*—predecessor of the *Trumpet*—wrote, “Once a German-dominated Europe is fully established, Germany will be ready to negotiate and bargain with Russia—and behind the backs of the Western allies if necessary.”

“When a Russo-German deal is made, you can be sure that the doom of the

United States and Great Britain is on the horizon,” warned the same article.

Sound far-fetched? Eminent scholars in the field of international relations made the same warning! To Morgenthau, such a deal would be “a drastic change in the distribution of world power.” Spykman warned that the lack of a unified power in Europe or in East Asia “is an absolute prerequisite for the independence of the New World and the preservation of the power position of the United States.”

“The United States must recognize once again and permanently, that the power constellation in Europe and Asia is of everlasting concern to her, both in time of war and in time of peace,” Spykman wrote.

Under threat is America’s most core interest of all: its very survival.

This coming Russo-German alliance will last only as long as it is in the interests of both parties. Historically, that has not been long.

“[L]ook at history,” warns *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry. “Every time competition between Russia and Germany heats up, they form a deal with one another—JUST BEFORE GOING TO WAR!” (*Russia and China in Prophecy*).

Those wars have expanded to engulf the world and have turned these allies-of-convenience against each other in devastating manner.

There are already strong signs that the two sides have been talking and dealing. Germany has emerged, more recently, as Europe’s leading opponent to Russia—although even as it has rallied other nations to keep pressing sanctions, it has continued to work on some potentially lucrative pipeline deals with Russia.

But pressure is now building on these two powers to work together much more closely—a development that will quickly change the world. ■

Want to know Russia’s goals and how it plans to achieve them?
Nothing provides the intel that biblical prophecy does.
Request our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy*.



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The Thin Evidence of Counting Calories

It's not the quantity that counts. **BY JORG MARDIAN**

IF YOU'RE ONE OF 45 MILLION AMERICANS PLANNING A low-calorie, quick-fix diet to solve your weight or health problem, take some advice: Don't. Many doctors, nutritionists and food marketers actively promote restrictive eating, but there are good reasons to take a different approach.

According to *Scientific American*, the *source* of your calories is more important than just how many you eat. In fact, what makes us fat is not necessarily just a calorie imbalance but also a hormonal divergence, with the prime suspect being the *quality* of the foods we consume.

A Faulty Beginning

In 1921, Lulu Hunt Peters wrote the first American blockbuster diet book, *Diet and Health, With Key to the Calories*. Since then, restricting calories has been the main form of "dieting." Peters wrote, "A person can eat what they like—candy, pie, cake, fat meat, butter, cream—but they need to count calories!"

Seventy years later, not much had changed. The *American Journal of Medicine* said that between 1980 and 1990, Americans were consuming 4 percent fewer calories and 11 percent less fats than before, and fat-free food consumption rose from 19 percent to 76 percent. Yet over the same decade, obesity in America rose a bewildering 31 percent.

Now we are over 90 years on, and the long-held notion of calorie restriction still hovers at a dismal 95 percent long-term failure rate; often, it proves harmful. Yet people continue to count their calories—and eat "low calorie" pre-packaged pies, cakes and so on as they do.

A Hormonal Issue?

Calories are important factors in weight loss and weight maintenance. But food quality is more important. More and more experts are seeing that it is better to consume quality food than to reduce calories. Unfortunately in America, convenience food is found in every nook and cranny. The average American now consumes 2,481 calories a day, about 23 percent more than in 1970.

As a person becomes conscious of weight gain, he often cuts back on calories. Instead of reaching for healthier, more natural foods, many turn to more processed, low-calorie options, with unexpected results. They do not stop to realize that a given calorie's worth of salmon, olive oil, white rice or boxed cereal each has a different effect in the body. Whole foods inhibit appetite and promote energy, while processed foods promote hunger and energy storage.

Dr. David Ludwig, author of *Always Hungry*, writes that we

have to think about obesity in terms of what makes us overeat: "When you're gaining weight, something has triggered your fat cells to store too much energy, which doesn't leave enough for the rest of the body. That 'something' is often the hormone insulin."

While generally there is no one whole-food nutrient to blame for insulin trouble and weight gain, Ludwig correctly singles out refined grains, starches and sugars (found in many low-calorie foods) as the principal drivers. When your body's insulin response is out of control, cutting back further on calories can actually make the problem worse. The excess insulin secretion causes cells to retain fat rather than using it to fuel the body. As few as 10 or 20 calories stored as excess fat each day can lead to obesity over decades.

Some experts still insist that all grains are problematic, but this is not true if they are complex and unprocessed. It's the hyper-processed, overly stimulating foods with their intense taste and textures that are unhealthy and create food addictions. They also put the brakes on satiating hormonal signals, slow down your metabolism, cause thyroid hormones to drop and cortisol levels to rise, and activate fat-storage enzymes. The end result: excess body fat storage.

Journal Your Way to Health

Our bodies are complex and intricate creations. Since we must store nutrients continually in the body, we also have to eat a balanced, nutritious daily diet. Depriving the body of healthy food—or much food at all—in order to lose weight is the worst thing to do.

Natural foods, which have the highest nutritional content, do not need nutrition labels because they are often the lowest in calories anyway. But even natural meat and dairy foods that have higher calorie counts will nourish your body when consumed with the proper balance. To make sure you eat enough natural foods, you have to understand your eating habits. The easiest way to do so is not to relentlessly track every calorie based on its packaging and labels, but to instead keep a simple daily food journal. Note what you eat and how much, as well as perhaps when and why. This can be as simple as leaving a notepad out near the kitchen or in a kitchen drawer and jotting down, *3 cups spaghetti, 2 cups broccoli, 1 glass water*.

The Creator of the human body also designed the food that fuels it. Humanly manufactured and mass-produced products simply are not proper fuel. God's principle in eating, as with many other aspects of life, is always BALANCE. Whether you have a weight or health problem, you don't need to restrict your calories. You can undo decades of unbalanced and excessive eating by sticking to a wide variety of high-quality, fresh, natural, unprocessed foods. As you adjust your expectations and your taste buds to this type of eating, you will find it to be free of unpleasant side effects, filling, easily sustained and much tastier! ■

Jorg Mardian is a registered holistic nutritionist.





Must Cities ENFORCE THE LAW?

Cities around America are saying no—and leading the country toward a second civil war. **BY ANDREW MILLER**

ON JULY 1, 2015, JUAN FRANCISCO Lopez-Sanchez fired a stolen gun on a pier in San Francisco, California. The bullet hit a young woman who was walking arm-in-arm with her father. “Help me, Dad,” she said. Two hours later, in a local hospital, she died.

Her killer, authorities soon discovered, was an illegal immigrant who had been convicted of seven felonies and deported five times.

After illegally entering the United States for the sixth time, Lopez-Sanchez had been arrested and incarcerated in a federal prison. As the date neared for him to be turned over to federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers, however, prison officials decided to move him to the San Francisco Sheriff’s Department on an outstanding drug-related warrant. The San Francisco district attorney’s office refused to prosecute Lopez-Sanchez for a decade-old marijuana possession case, and instead released him back onto California’s streets on April 15, 2015.

He shot Kathryn Steinle with a gun stolen from a U.S. Bureau of Land

Management vehicle 77 days after his release.

Steinle’s death elicited a public outcry against “sanctuary” cities like San Francisco that refuse to cooperate with federal immigration officials to deport people who enter the U.S. illegally and are wanted by federal authorities. In fact, in the three weeks after Steinle was killed, Republican support for presidential candidate Donald Trump jumped from 15 to 28 percent. Trump’s campaign pledge to actually enforce existing U.S. immigration law resonated with millions of Americans who were fed up with politicians downplaying out-of-control illegal immigration and its deadly results.

In the presidential election, 63 million Americans ended up voting for the candidate who promised to faithfully enforce the immigration laws passed by Congress, in contrast to his predecessor. But now that President Trump has begun to take action against illegal immigration, the spotlight is on more than 650 cities, counties and municipalities that have their own statutes

that directly oppose federal (and sometimes even state) law.

These local governments uphold sanctuary laws that *forbid* local officials from assisting federal agents who are enforcing U.S. immigration law.

This is one trend among many others showing that America is more ideologically and politically divided now than at any time since the Civil War.

It is hard to know how this situation will unfold, but this much is certain: A fight is brewing between the Trump administration and a coalition of Democratic Party officials over whether or not sanctuary jurisdiction will allow U.S. immigration law to be enforced. The *Trumpet* can say with certainty that this division will get much deeper, based on a biblical forecast that is 3,500 years old.

Sanctuary Jurisdictions

From 1990 to 2014, the number of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. tripled from 3.5 million to 11.7 million, meaning *illegal immigrants now account for about 3.5 percent of the nation’s population*. Because these illegal immigrants

aren't vetted before entering the country, a disproportionate number of violent criminals have mixed in among these waves of hard-working individuals and families seeking a better life.

This is why illegal immigrants commit murder at roughly three times the rate of U.S. residents in general. According to the Government Accountability Office, "criminal aliens" were incarcerated for 25,064 homicides between 2003 and 2010. This figure includes murders committed by all noncitizens, not just illegal immigrants, but it shows that noncitizens—8 percent of the population—commit 22 percent of the murders.

Despite such alarming facts, at least five states, 633 counties and 39 cities limit the extent that local officials can assist federal immigration agents. Between January 2014 and September 2015, sanctuary jurisdictions refused over 17,000 requests from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to detain an individual for 48 hours after their release date in order to give federal officials time to put them into the federal deportation system.

Nearly 12,000 (70 percent) of these rejected requests were issued for illegal aliens with a criminal record.

This means sanctuary jurisdictions are releasing nearly 600 illegal aliens with criminal backgrounds each month.

In an attempt to end this practice and to enforce federal immigration laws, President Trump issued an executive order on January 25, "Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States." "Sanctuary jurisdictions across the United States willfully violate federal law in an attempt to shield aliens from removal from the United States," this order states. "These jurisdictions have caused immeasurable harm to the American people and to the very fabric of our Republic. ... The purpose of this order is to direct executive departments and agencies to employ all lawful means to enforce the immigration laws of the United States."

Since constitutional law forbids the president from federalizing local police departments or compelling states to enforce federal laws at their own expense, Congress usually encourages local governments to assist in the enforcement of federal acts by giving

out grants of money. President Trump's executive order threatens to strip sanctuary jurisdictions of such federal funding if they continue refusing to assist immigration agents.

The American Transparency Organization found that the federal government gives 106 sanctuary cities nearly \$27 billion in funding. Yet much of this funding does not explicitly state that it is available only if these cities comply with federal immigration laws. So unless Congress changes each federal grant to include such a precondition, it is highly unlikely the judiciary will allow President Trump to cut off all \$27 billion in funding to sanctuary jurisdictions.

However, if the Trump administration can make a convincing legal case that these funds are not being used according to their intended purpose, the federal government could strip these jurisdictions of at least millions of dollars.

New Nullification Crisis

Now that Republicans hold the presidency, along with both houses of Congress and 31 state governorships, cities are the only major layer of government that Democrats still control. Yet Democratic politicians still hold a lot of power, because 2 out of 3 Americans live in cities. The mayors of 37 major American cities have pledged that they will steadfastly remain sanctuary cities in spite of the president's threat to withhold federal funding.

President Trump and these mayors are currently engaging in a high-stakes game of chicken. If Congress supports the president's pledge to cut funding to sanctuary jurisdictions and the mayors still refuse to comply, America will experience a new nullification crisis.

The original nullification crisis erupted in 1832 during the presidency of Andrew Jackson, whose portrait now hangs on the wall of President Trump's newly decorated Oval Office. South Carolina declared certain federal tariffs to be unconstitutional, and the state stopped enforcing these tariffs. To stave off a constitutional crisis, Congress passed two measures: a compromise tariff to assuage South Carolinians, and an act authorizing President Jackson to use military force if the state didn't

accept the compromise. South Carolina accepted the compromise tariff. But it wasn't until after the brutal Civil War that every state accepted that federal courts have the final say in determining which acts of Congress violate the U.S. Constitution.

If local jurisdictions were able to nullify federal immigration law, then anyone could enter the United States. That is why the Constitution vests the

WHAT MADE AMERICA GREAT?

WHY is America a great nation? Or why was it great? President Donald Trump's campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again," has raised this question in recent times.

Genesis 48 records Jacob's blessing of his two grandsons Manasseh and Ephraim. He said that God would make the descendants of Manasseh a "great" nation, and the descendants of his younger brother Ephraim a "multitude of nations."

Jacob said this prophecy is for the "last days" (Genesis 49:1). What "great" nation and "multitude of nations" have shared a brotherly relationship? This prophecy about Manasseh and Ephraim concerns the United States superpower and the commonwealth of nations that arose from Great Britain's empire. Request a free copy of Herbert W. Armstrong's book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, which offers abundant proof of their biblical origins and advance good news of their destiny.



power to determine immigration policies with Congress, not states, municipalities or universities. So while it is true that the president cannot force sanctuary jurisdictions to cooperate with federal immigration agents if they are willing to endure certain funding cuts, Congress can pass an act requiring local police agencies to report illegal aliens with criminal backgrounds to federal immigration officials.

This is a legal truth that sanctuary jurisdictions must accept if a constitutional crisis is to be averted.

Send in the Feds

If sanctuary jurisdictions continue to refuse assistance to immigration agents, President Trump will either have to give up on his campaign pledge to enforce America's immigration laws, or he will have to enforce these laws using only federal officials. The second option would mean a massive expansion of federal police power.

The number of federal officers with arrest-and-firearm authority has nearly tripled from less than 75,000 in 1996 to more than 200,000 in 2016. The number of nonmilitary federal officers authorized to make arrests and carry firearms now exceeds the number of U.S. Marines. Former Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama have been the primary architects of this expansion of federal power, but President Trump's executive order will add another 5,000 border patrol agents and 10,000 Immigration and

Customs Enforcement agents to the ever growing list.

Besides promising to enforce U.S. immigration laws, President Trump also pledged to restore "*law and order*" to America's cities. In his first week in office, he expressed his willingness to use federal police power to honor this pledge, posting on social media that he would "send in the feds" to Chicago if the city didn't fix the "horrible carnage going on."

Exactly what the president meant by "send in the feds" is still a matter of debate. His two likeliest options would be to either embed Federal Bureau of Investigation agents within local police departments or to send in the National Guard until order is restored. While the second option is certainly the more extreme move, former Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and Lyndon B. Johnson set precedents for such actions.

In 1957, President Eisenhower invoked the Insurrection Act of 1807 to authorize military intervention in Little Rock, Arkansas, after a riot broke out against federal efforts to desegregate the Arkansas school system. In 1967, President Johnson invoked the same act, sending in soldiers from the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions to put down a violent race riot in Detroit. While Johnson collaborated with Gov. George Romney of Michigan, Eisenhower circumvented state authority to quell the civil unrest.

As murder rates surge in America's largest cities and race riots become more common (sidebar, this page), President Trump is going to face some difficult decisions about how to enforce the law in a nation where city mayors obstruct justice and encourage lawlessness. Meanwhile, on the streets, a segment of American society is digging in and making itself "ungovernable" in protest against the president. Anger

AMERICA'S MURDER RATE

AMERICA'S MURDER RATE IS RISING FASTER THAN AT ANY time in the past 45 years. According to data from the Federal Bureau of Investigations, 15,696 murders were committed during 2015. This means the nationwide homicide count rose by 10.8 percent, the biggest year-to-year percentage jump since 1971.

For 2016, the *Economist* gathered data for 50 of America's most violent cities and found that homicide rates rose in 34 of them. These 50 metropolitan areas contain 15 percent of the country's population, yet account for 36 percent of the country's murder victims. The Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) estimated that the homicide count increased by double-digit percentages in 61 American cities last year. Since the majority of murders in America take place in big cities, this indicates that the nationwide murder rate almost certainly increased substantially again last year.

"We've had at least two years running now where there's been an increase in 35 to 45 major cities," MCCA executive director Darrel Stephens told *Time* magazine. "It's a major issue and should be in the cities where it's taking place" (January 30).

Total violent crime—including murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault—increased from 1,153,022 reported incidents in 2014 to 1,197,704 reported incidents in 2015, the biggest spike since 1992.

Stephens cited gang violence, drug-related violence and the easy availability of firearms as root causes behind the spike in homicides. Meanwhile, American political commentator Heather MacDonald, author of *The War on Cops*, argues that this recent surge of murders is a result of the "Ferguson effect"—police officers in minority neighborhoods backing

off from interacting with residents when not absolutely necessary because of public hostility in the wake of the Michael Brown shooting in Ferguson, Missouri, in August 2014.

Milwaukee Sheriff David A. Clarke Jr. digs deeper and blames government entitlement programs for making his fellow black Americans in inner cities dependent on the state, fueling a breakdown of nuclear families that exacerbates criminal behavior. While 1 in 3 American children is raised without a father, this figure goes up to approximately 1 in 2 or more in some big cities. Approximately 85 percent of youths in prison come from fatherless homes.

The family, the foundation of any stable society, is under attack in America. As long as this continues, American society will continue to produce criminals at a record rate. One reason violent crime had been decreasing until just recently is that America's prison population has quintupled since 1970. Almost 700 out of every 100,000 Americans sit in the nation's prisons and jails—a higher rate than any other country in the world.

President Donald Trump has promised to "make America safe again" by declaring a federal war on crime. Until the root cause behind America's crime epidemic is fixed, however, the nation will continue to struggle with violence. Five months before the United States Constitution was signed, Benjamin Franklin wrote, "[O]nly a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters." When people are out of control, when the sense of personal responsibility and morality degenerates, freedom diminishes, and people are forced to either live in a police state or in anarchy.

ANDREW MILLER

and bitterness are running high and, at times, erupting in violence.

The situation is leading to a civil war.

The Real Cause of Civil War

Astonishingly, the deep division plaguing America over sanctuary cities was actually prophesied millennia ago in the Bible.

In Deuteronomy 28, God told the ancient Israelites that their society would be blessed for obedience to His laws and cursed for disobedience. In verse 43, He said that one of the primary curses for disobedience would be that “[t]he sojourner who is among you shall mount above you higher and higher; and you shall come down lower and lower” (Revised Standard Version).

This is a dire warning to the modern-day descendants of Israel (the peoples of America and Britain) that foreigners from other cultures would cause serious problems if the people of these nations rebelled against God’s law and turned away from Him. Today, even well-known political commentators who disregard God’s prophecies and reject America’s biblical identity can see that illegal immigration has set the country on a dangerous course.

Verse 52 lists yet another curse: “They shall besiege you in all your towns, until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you in all your towns throughout all your land, which the Lord your God has given you” (RSV).

Trumpet editor in chief Gerald Flurry pointed out in his article “Where America’s Race Riots Are Leading” (theTrumpet.com/go/12158) that this reference to America’s “high and fenced walls” coming down refers to illegal immigrants streaming into the country (November-December 2014).

Isaiah 1:7 says, “Your country lies desolate, your cities are burned with fire; in your very presence aliens devour your land; it is desolate, as overthrown by aliens” (RSV).

God is remarkably specific in these verses. Because the American people have turned away from His law, their “cities are burned with fire” and are “overthrown by aliens” in their midst. President Trump has done an

admirable job identifying so many of the curses that afflict America, but his attempts to make America great again will only further inflame the situation unless the American people as a whole turn to God and His way of peace.

For years, the Western Hemisphere has been plagued by violent Latin American cartels that move dangerous drugs northward into the United States in return for cash profits and military-style weapons. One primary reason these cartels have been successful is that Americans have spent about a trillion dollars on illegal drugs in the past decade. The cartels infiltrating America are financed by U.S. drug users and supported by U.S. gangs of fatherless youth.

This is a perfect example of how *sin* has direct, real-world consequences.

In many U.S. cities, drug cartels have teamed up with local gangs and criminal organizations. Yet the leaders of these cities are defying the federal government and throwing open their doors to more unvetted immigrants, many of whom are dangerous criminals. They are also pursuing economic welfare and drug legalization policies that will lead to more broken families. So while America’s new “law and order” president may try to crack down on crime, a deadly war will break out if he tries to curb the supply of drugs without curbing the demand.

Consider the deadly situation brewing in hundreds of American cities. Youth unemployment is growing, racial tensions are rising, and violent criminal organizations are gaining strength. Family breakdown and drug addiction rates are at an all-time high. Mayors and other local government officials are thwarting federal attempts to deport illegal aliens with criminal records. Imagine the anarchy that would follow if the U.S. government decided to crack

down on crime in this environment without addressing the underlying moral breakdown that has caused this tragic situation. Then again, imagine the inevitable violence and anarchy that will come if the government continues to turn a blind eye and allow gangs and cartels freedom to operate.

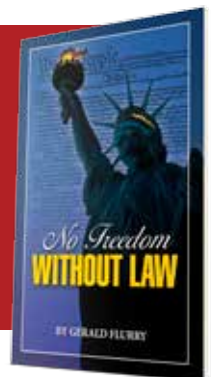
No matter what, war is coming to America’s cities if there isn’t repentance on a nationwide scale.

Now is the time for every American to ask *what might we be doing* to have brought such chastisement upon ourselves. This is not merely a speculative religious hypothesis or a debatable theological introspection. It is something we did as a nation when we faced our first civil war. During that war, President Abraham Lincoln wrote: “The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both *may* be, and one *must* be, wrong. God cannot be *for* and *against* the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God’s purpose is something different from the purpose of either party—and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to affect His purpose. I am almost ready to say that this is probably true—that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet.”

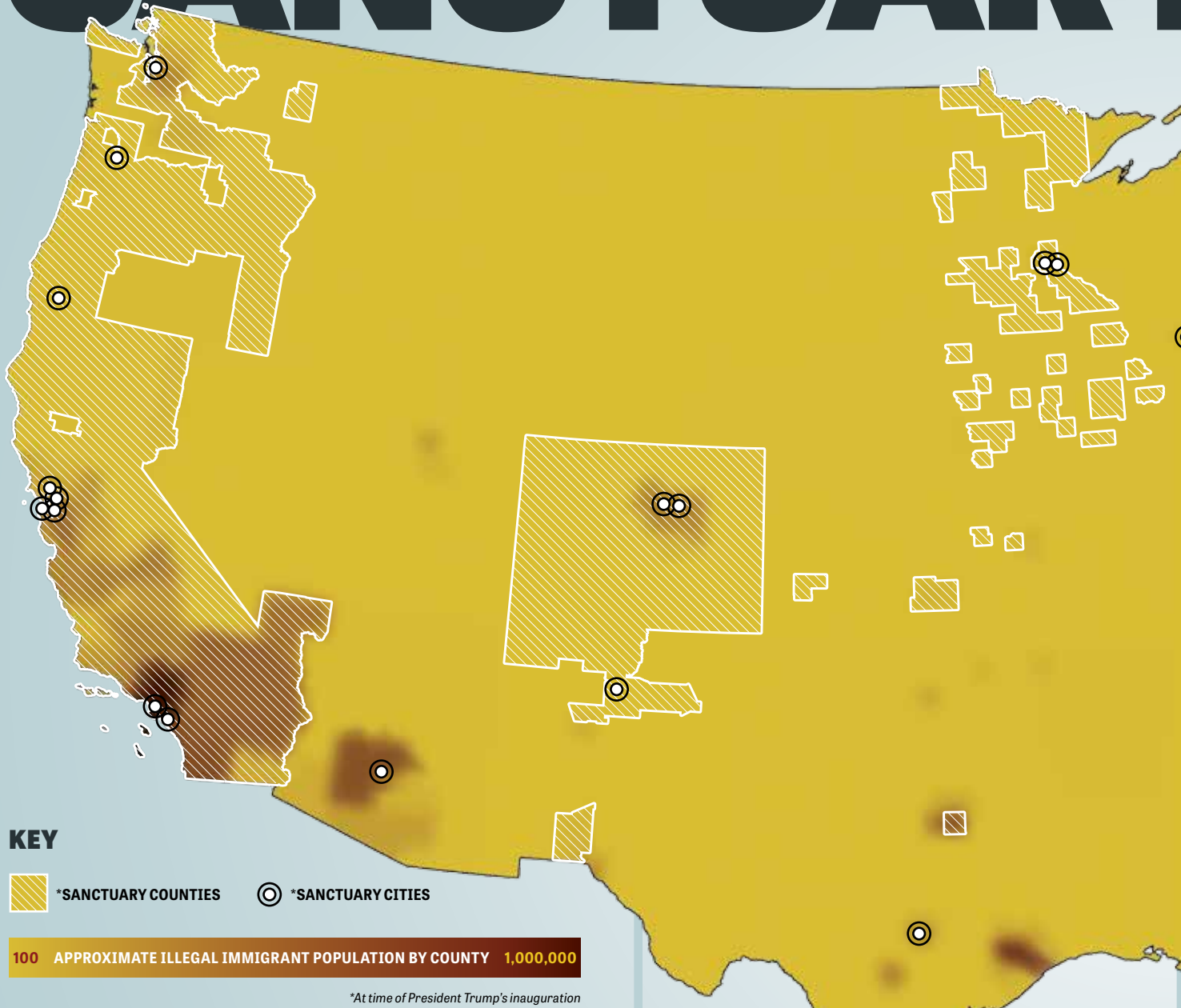
The destruction about to sweep through America will be allowed for a purpose. It will be precisely measured by God to bring humanity to a point where they will finally be willing to listen to Him and to submit to a way of life that eliminates senseless killings, organized crime, ineffective government, crushing poverty, unjust laws and escapist addiction. It’s the one way of life that eliminates the *root cause* of our suffering: sin! ■

Are you concerned about divided America?

Sanctuary cities show America heading toward a civil breakdown, and the reason revolves around society’s attitude toward law. To learn why lawlessness is so deeply concerning, request Gerald Flurry’s free booklet **No Freedom Without Law**.

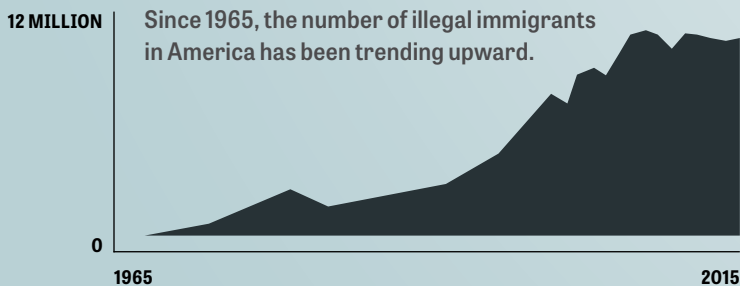


SANCTUARY



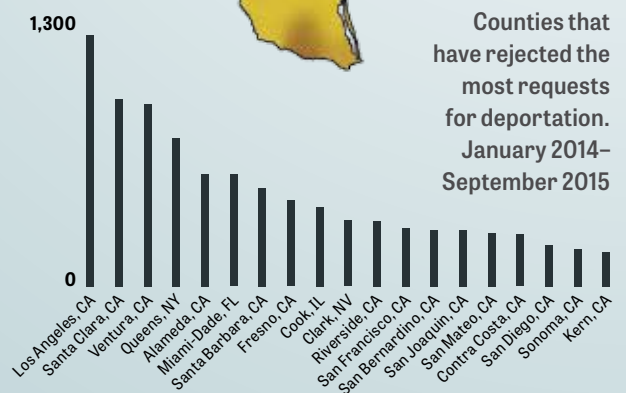
KNOWN POPULATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Since 1965, the number of illegal immigrants in America has been trending upward.

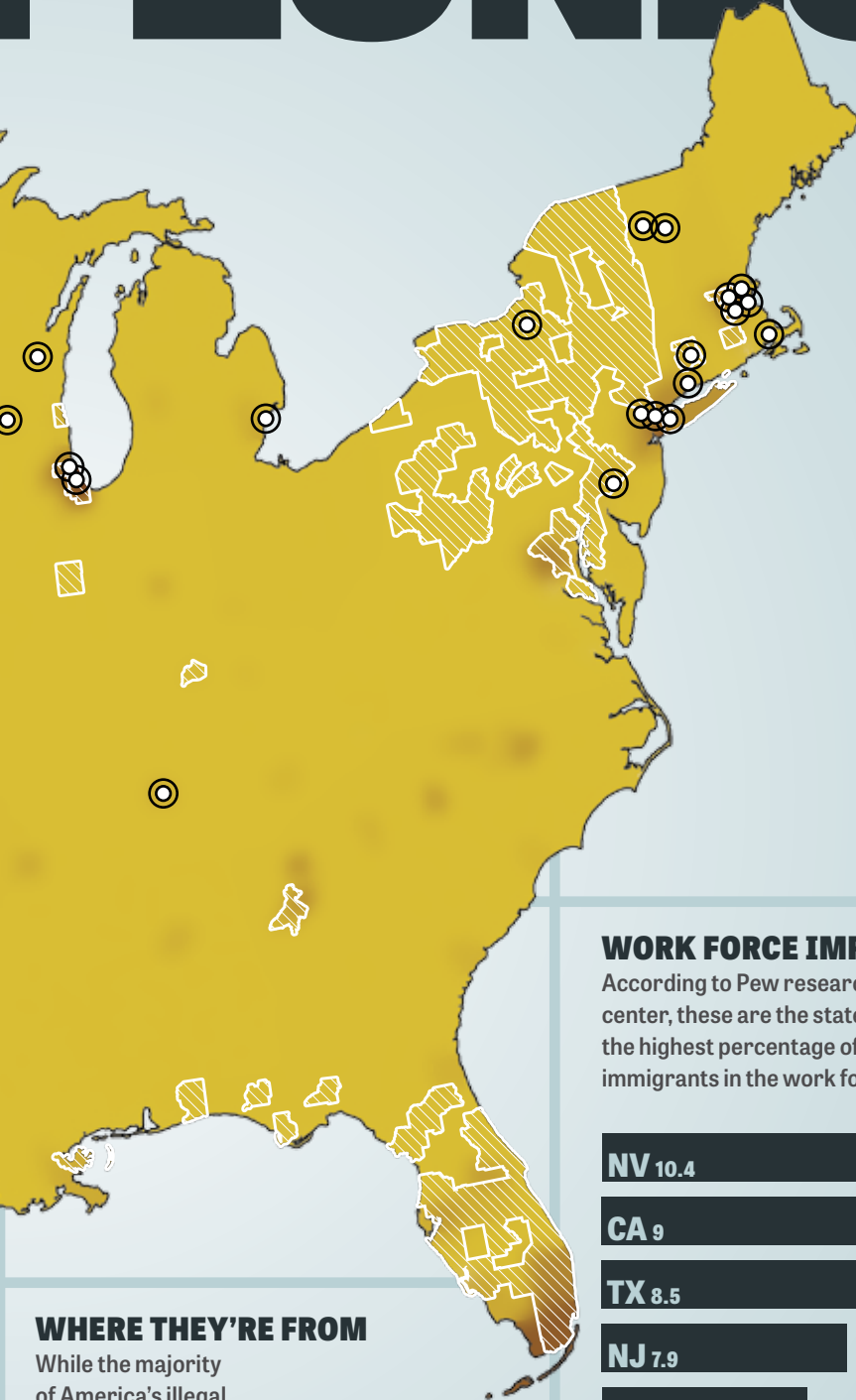


DETAINEES

Counties that have rejected the most requests for deportation. January 2014–September 2015



Y ZONES



On January 25, President Donald Trump signed an executive order restricting federal funding to “sanctuary jurisdictions.” The term “sanctuary jurisdiction” doesn’t have a specific legal definition, but it has been widely used to describe local jurisdictions that follow procedures sheltering illegal immigrants from deportation.

Specifically, such procedures limit the extent that local law enforcement can cooperate with federal immigration agents.

According to data from the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, there are at least 5 states, 633 counties and 39 cities in the United States that have enacted “sanctuary” procedures.

At the state and county level, such procedures usually mean local officials must refuse requests from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to detain illegal immigrants for 48 hours after their release date to give federal officials time to put them into the federal deportation system. At the city level, such policies often mean local law enforcement cannot ask about an arrested person’s immigration status.

WORK FORCE IMPACT

According to Pew research center, these are the states with the highest percentage of illegal immigrants in the work force.

NV 10.4

CA 9

TX 8.5

NJ 7.9

AZ 6.6

FL 6.2

NY 5.9

MD 5.9

CRIMINAL RECORDS

Between 2003 and 2010, “criminal aliens” were arrested for:

504,043 DRUG-RELATED CRIMES

213,047 AGGRAVATED ASSAULTS

115,045 BURGLARIES

94,492 WEAPONS VIOLATIONS

81,719 MOTOR VEHICLE THEFTS

69,929 SEX OFFENSES

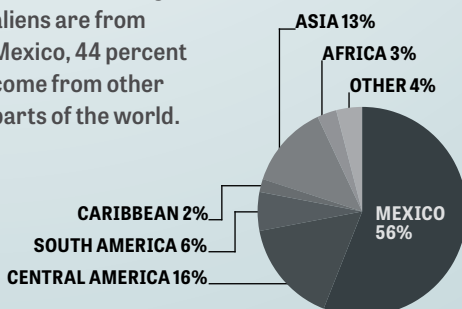
42,609 ROBBERIES

25,064 MURDERS

14,788 KIDNAPPINGS

WHERE THEY'RE FROM

While the majority of America’s illegal aliens are from Mexico, 44 percent come from other parts of the world.



Source: Governmental Accountability Office

SHOULD GERMANY HAVE

For decades in Germany, talking about nuclear weapons was taboo. Today, it's necessary. **BY KIEREN UNDERWOOD**

WHEN GERMANY LAY IN RUINS after World War II, the Americans picked it up and set it back on its feet. As the Soviet Union loomed during the Cold War, America shielded West Germany with the threat of nuclear warfare against the Soviets. West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, however, was unsure whether the United States would actually risk mutual annihilation in order to stop a Soviet invasion of his country. He told his cabinet in September 1956 that he wanted West Germany to develop the capability to defend itself, “to achieve ... as quickly as possible, the chance of producing nuclear weapons.”

French statesman Charles de Gaulle put a stop to those ideas when he became prime minister in 1958. The mere mention of a nuclear debate became taboo for decades. Nevertheless,

last German bomb exploded in World War II—Germany’s ruling coalition stated that one of its goals was to remove those American B-61s from German soil.

How quickly things change. Today—quite suddenly—the sentiment is completely different. The Germans are openly considering building nukes of their own.

Public Debate

Though the public is still skeptical of giving the Bundeswehr the most deadly weapons on Earth, influential news outlets on both sides of the political spectrum have published editorials urging citizens and their leaders to reconsider.

On Nov. 28, 2016, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, a conservative-leaning newspaper with Germany’s largest foreign circulation, published an opinion piece titled “The Utterly Unimaginable.”

on defense,” the return of “compulsory military service,” and a new debate on nuclear weapons. He wrote that although it seems “completely inconceivable” to the German mind, Germany needs to ask the “question of our own nuclear deterrent.”

Kohler and many others have the answer to that question already in mind.

Earlier in the month, the left-leaning Spiegel Online, one of Germany’s most widely read news websites, published an article in anticipation of Donald Trump winning the United States presidential election. Ulrich Kühn, from the Stanton Nuclear Security Fellowship, described the piece as musing “about the possibility of Germany pursuing its own nuclear weapons if NATO were to break up in the aftermath of a Trump administration’s withdrawal from the alliance.”

About the same time, Roderich Kiesewetter, a Christian Democratic Union politician and a former Bundeswehr general staff officer, made similar points in an interview with Reuters: “[I]f the United States no longer wants to provide this [nuclear] guarantee,” he said, “Europe still needs nuclear protection for deterrent purposes” (Nov. 16, 2016). Kiesewetter also happens to be the deputy chairman of the Subcommittee for Disarmament, Arms Control and Nonproliferation.

The Germans are not alone in their desire for Germany to have its own nukes. Writing in *National Interest*, former special assistant to President Ronald Reagan and senior fellow at the Cato Institute Doug Bandow encouraged the

While Germany’s mainstream politicians are not yet on board with the idea of nuclear weapons, they are clearly worried about how to address rising threats to European security.

the Cold War brought American B-61 nuclear bombs onto German soil under a “nuclear sharing” arrangement. The bombs would be controlled by American forces, and deployed only in time of war by special Tornado fighter-bombers.

So strong was the aversion to any type of nuclear weapons in Germany that in 2009—over six decades after the

Coeditor Berthold Kohler said the “simple ‘same as before’” route cannot continue. The retreat of the United States and the advance of Russia and China mean that the Continent is changing, he said, and that Germany can no longer rely on building “peace without weapons.”

A new path needs to be drawn, Kohler indicated: one with “higher spending

NUKES?



idea. “Rather than expect the United States to burnish NATO’s nuclear deterrent, European nations should consider expanding their nuclear arsenals and creating a Continent-wide nuclear force,” he wrote (January 13).

Even Poland, Germany’s victim in World War II, is on board. The government’s gray eminence, Jarosław Kaczyński, told *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* that Poland would “welcome an EU nuclear superpower.” Kaczyński is not the president or prime minister, but sources including Politico rate him the most powerful man in Poland—“it is Kaczyński who makes the final call.” Europe needs to be “ready for huge expenditures,” said Kaczyński. “A separate atomic unit would have to be able to compete with Russia.”

Trusting Themselves

While Germany’s mainstream politicians are not yet on board with the idea of nuclear weapons, they are clearly worried about how to address rising threats to European security. Former Vice Chancellor Joschka Fischer, who belongs to the left-leaning Green Party, has made calls for Germany to leave behind its pacifist role. “Judging by Trump’s past statements about Europe and its relationship with the U.S., the EU should be preparing for some profound shocks,” he said.

There is no question that Donald Trump as America’s president is factoring into this discussion. It has shaken Europeans’ confidence in America as their nuclear shield.

President Trump’s inconsistent comments on the nuclear issue haven’t helped. On nuclear proliferation, he has taken both sides. At a CNN townhall

debate held during the campaign, candidate Trump said that nuclear proliferation “is going to happen anyway.” He also told the *New York Times*, “[I]f Japan had [a] nuclear threat, I’m not sure that would be a bad thing for us.” Nine months later, in an interview with Germany’s *Bild* and the *Times* of London, he said, “I think nuclear weapons should be way down and reduced substantially.”

In the same interview, Mr. Trump repeated his claim that “NATO had problems ... Number one, it was obsolete, because it was designed ... many, many years ago. Number two, the countries aren’t paying what they’re supposed to pay.” Yet Defense Secretary James Mattis has opposed the president’s view, saying the U.S. has an “unshakable commitment to NATO.” Thus, the EU has to choose whom to believe: The pro-nuclear-proliferation President Trump, the pro-disarmament President Trump, or President Trump’s advisers.

An alternative is for European nations to start trusting themselves—and that seems to be their choice.

Even the stable and collected German Chancellor Angela Merkel has acknowledged the need for this change. Spiegel Online wrote in “The End of the World Order as We Know It?” that within the EU, “Concerns about America’s possible pullback have hastened things that for years had seemed implausible” (January 4). It then quoted Merkel: “I have to say, within only a few months, a considerable amount of cooperation has taken shape.”

Public Resistance

Those opposed to a German nuclear program, and even the current nuclear weapons sharing agreement in

THE DEBATE

NOV. 6, 2016

Spiegel Online sparks a nuclear debate with an article suggesting “Trump could force Germany to rearm.”

NOV. 16, 2016

A former Bundeswehr general staff officer, Roderich Kiesewetter, tells Reuters that Europe needs to consider developing its own nuclear deterrent strategy.

NOV. 17, 2016

The director of Berlin’s Global Public Policy Institute writes in *Foreign Affairs* that European states may “rethink their nuclear postures.”

NOV. 28, 2016

A coeditor for *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* publishes “The Utterly Unimaginable” op-ed, saying Germans must ask the question of their “own nuclear deterrent.”

DEC. 6, 2016

A Stanton Nuclear Security fellow, Ulrich Kühn, writes “The Sudden German Nuke Flirtation” for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

JANUARY 13

Former special assistant to Ronald Reagan, Doug Bandow, writes in *National Interest* that “European nations should consider expanding their nuclear arsenals and creating a continent-wide nuclear force.”

JANUARY 23

Tagesspiegel’s Maximilian Terhalle publishes an article titled “Germany Needs Nuclear Weapons.”

FEBRUARY 2

Left-leaning German television channel ARD calls for an “open debate” on the “German nuclear bomb” in its *Panorama* program.

FEBRUARY 6

Poland’s most powerful politician, Jarosław Kaczyński, tells *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* that Poland would “welcome an EU nuclear superpower.”



How a Nation Came to Ruin

Stones in northern Israel silently tell the story. BY STEPHEN FLURRY

THE STONES ARE STILL THERE. YOU can see them and touch them yourself if you travel to Upper Galilee in northern Israel. There you will pass from arid surroundings into the Tel Dan Nature Reserve, a popular scenic park where trails wind through lush oaks, ash, eucalyptus, buckthorn, laurel and willow herb, and across numerous footbridges spanning dozens of streams that seem to flow in every direction. But beyond the marsh ferns and reeds, the salamanders and the otters, this place holds something much less idyllic: a warning of ruin.

Walking down the boardwalks and across the rushing brooks, you will come face to face with something different: signs of a human habitation—a ruined one. According to some historians, this was the most important northern city in the ancient kingdom of Israel. Today this is all that is left of the city of Dan.

The Bible records this city's original name, Laish, which was changed when the Israelite tribe of Dan, known for naming places after its father, captured the city during the period of the judges. The city of Dan is one of the

first examples of many self-identifying places named by the people of Dan, a tribe God prophesied would leave behind a “serpent’s trail” (Genesis 49:17).

A couple of well-preserved structures from the earliest days of the Israelite kingdom still stand at the excavation site, including a city gate complex and a long section of the wall of the old city. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that the well-preserved inner gate is typical of what Israelite city gates looked like during biblical times.

But what happened to these Israelites? Why did they make a “serpent’s trail” westward from here? Why did they not stay in this beautiful place, their historic homeland?

It has little to do with economics, weather or politics and everything to do with what happened *right here* on these stones at this ruin.

After Solomon died in the 10th century B.C., the kingdom of Israel split in two, in exactly the way that the biblical prophets had warned. Responding to heavy taxes imposed by Solomon’s son, the 10 northern tribes, including Dan, left the kingdom and selected a man named Jeroboam to be their king.

The contentious division nearly caused a full-scale civil war between the

north and south. After the dust settled from the bitter separation, Jeroboam had a new kingdom of his own—and a problem. He had political power, military backing and economic support, but he was missing the most crucial component: *religious* support. The people of Israel were deeply religious. King Jeroboam feared that if he did not fundamentally alter Israel’s religious worship, the northern tribes would continue looking to the holy city of Jerusalem. Eventually, that one element of religious faith would override everything else, and the Israelites would switch their allegiance back to Solomon’s son, the house of David, and the God of David.

Jeroboam had a choice. Keep Israel’s religion pure, or blend in his own ideas to his own political advantage.

“Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan” (1 Kings 12:28-29).

Jeroboam used his influence to convince Israelites to go along with this rebellious form of religious worship by telling them that there was a much



WASTELAND
The remains of Tel Dan, an Israelite city and religious center for the religion of Jeroboam

easier way to observe God's commands. He was like many modern preachers—who speak “smooth things” to their followers.

Jeroboam made a “house of high places.” To this very day you can go to one of his high places, the exact spot where a people turned away from God to a religion that was more convenient for them and politically expedient for their leader.

Jeroboam also dissolved the Levitical priesthood and instead “made priests of the lowest of the people” (verse 31), crossing another red line by taking control of religion and thus the masses. “And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that *he had made*: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places *which he had made*. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month *which he had devised of his own heart*; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense” (verses 32-33). Note how similar this is to the way human nature reasons today. Jeroboam took a religious festival and made it into something he

thought would work better. Perhaps he himself said, “After all, it doesn't matter how you worship as long as you worship.” But even if it has the exact same name and includes all of the same forms of worship, if it is not observed at the time God designates or carried out the way He commands, *it is not God's festival*, and the person keeping it is *not worshiping God!*

This was Jeroboam's religion through and through. Israel followed right along after this pagan form of worship. This came less than two generations after King David had shown the nation how to truly worship the true God!

God sent prophet after prophet to plead with Israel to return to the true God. But these God-fearing men were despised and rejected.

So Israel sinned. What was the big deal?

“And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan *until the day of the captivity of the land*” (Judges 18:30). In other words, the tribe of Dan and the other northern tribes were attacked, conquered and evacuated from their homeland to become slaves.

Their cities, their streams, their homeland—and their pagan high

places—were left behind and ultimately became a ruin.

According to *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, Vol. 2, the city of Dan flourished until the late Iron Age, when Galilee and the northern coastal regions became the first areas to be conquered by the Assyrians. The Assyrians, under Tiglath-Pileser III, destroyed Dan and a new city was later constructed over it. Assyrian pottery vessels and statues, in addition to Phoenician chapels and settlements from the Persian period, have also been uncovered in Tel Dan. Unsurprisingly, the name of the pagan god “Ba'al” appears in a few of the finds from Dan.

When I saw the excavated remains at the Tel Dan site—the pagan temple precincts, the large stone gateway, and the new city structures the Assyrians built on top of a crushed and desolated Israelite city—I couldn't help but think about how those excavated ruins validate not only the history of the Bible, but specifically the many sobering warnings delivered by the prophets of old, who constantly warned Israel to return to God's festivals and God's laws. Not because they are merely cultural or religious quirks, but because they are the very difference between national life and national death.

A Witness at Tel Dan

The most famous discovery made at the Tel Dan site is a ninth-century B.C. stone tablet bearing a clear reference to the “house of David” and “king of Israel.” The author of the inscription, a Gentile king, boasts of defeating both the king of Israel and the king of Judah—the latter monarch being a descendant of the “house of David.” Even notable Bible skeptics Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman could not ignore the significance of the Tel Dan tablet. They wrote in 2001, “Thus, the house of David was known throughout the region; this clearly validates the biblical description of a figure named David becoming the founder of the dynasty of Judahite kings in Jerusalem.” You could also say that this fragment hints at what destroyed these kings of Israel and Judah and what ultimately desolated this city of Dan: They left behind not only the “house of David” but also the *God* of David. ■

Man Is to Become Greater Than the Angels



God's angels have lived for millions of years with stunning power and without sin. How could mortal men exceed them? **BY GERALD FLURRY**

GOD DESCRIBES THE ANGELS IN brilliant detail throughout the Bible. They are as burning coals encompassed by a bright fire, shooting forth lightning. Their faces are bright like the sun. Their feet are pillars of fire. They are a righteous army under God their General, riding on horses and chariots of fire. The angels are full of fiery majesty.

You are destined to become *greater* than the angels, with better character, a deeper mind and more transcendent power. So says your Bible.

The angels may be remarkable, but they are *staggered* and *stirred* by God's plan for man. "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy [Spirit] sent down from heaven; *which things the angels desire to look into*" (1 Peter 1:12). The angels are *mesmerized*, *IN AWE*, of man's potential.

Angelic Power

To grasp your potential, it is important to understand just how awesome the angels are. "As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning" (Ezekiel 1:13). The angels dart from place to place like *LIGHTNING*. They radiate overwhelming *FIRE*. Yet they *marvel* at *YOUR FUTURE!*

"And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire" (Revelation 10:1). It is hard to even *picture* a being with such power and glory!

"And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth" (verse 2). The angel in this vision standing on the sea and on the land had a message from God for the whole world. God trusts the angels to deliver His message.

"And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices" (verse 3). Angels exude *resounding, thunderous POWER*. How could you possibly become greater than these majestic beings? Do you really *BELIEVE* God when He reveals your future?

'You Are My Son'

In his writings, the Apostle Paul made it a point to compare the power of the angels to the potential of man. "For to what angel did God ever say, 'Thou art my son, to-day have I become thy father'? Or again, 'I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me'?" (Hebrews 1:5; Moffatt). God seeks a family relationship with mortal human beings! He is re-creating Himself in *you*. You can pray to Him as your Father every day, as much as you desire. The angels can *never* pray to God as a Father. They are God's sons in the sense that He created them, but they are not literally

sons of God like Jesus Christ is—or like you and I can become.

Lesson 18 of our *Herbert W. Armstrong College Bible Correspondence Course* reads: "Man, now lower than angels, has a destiny far higher! Neither animal, nor angel, nor any other being except man, was created to be literally begotten by the *spiritual reproductive process* and then actually be *BORN* into the divine *GOD FAMILY!* Angels were not, and never can be, *begotten* and *BORN* of God! *No angel can ever become a literal member of the DIVINE FAMILY OF GOD!*"

"To what angel did he ever say, 'Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies a foot-stool for your feet'?" (verse 13; Moffatt). God's loyal people today, the first-fruits, are preparing to rule the stars from Christ's throne forever. God can trust only Himself with the universe, so He is reproducing Himself in us! He has never offered the angels co-rulership over the *ENTIRE UNIVERSE* as the Bride of Jesus Christ (Revelation 19:7). He *will never* offer such a reward to them.

The loyal servants who obey God before Christ returns will not only become God's sons, they will be honored to become Christ's Bride. The overwhelming majority of human beings, who are converted after Christ returns, will also become God's sons. That potential is *still* greater than what the angels have. We human beings come from the dust of the Earth, yet God wants to give us *everything!*

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14). The angels are destined to serve *YOU*. That is their potential.

"For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak" (Hebrews 2:5). The angels are not called to rule the world. You are!

A Little While Lower

"But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little [while] lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he

left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him” (Hebrews 2:6-8). Until God transforms us into spirit beings, we are far less brilliant and powerful than the angels. But it won’t stay that way. The way God sees it, His sons rule the universe *already!* That is man’s POTENTIAL.

God tells us to be careful to respect the angels since they are “greater in power and might” at this time. “But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord” (2 Peter 2:10-11). Only *rebels* speak poorly of God’s angels.

Very soon, mortal humans will receive the power of the angels—and *much more!* “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...” (Genesis 1:26). God created human beings in His likeness, meaning that we resemble Him in our appearance. Much more importantly, God created us in His *image*, with the ability to develop His very MIND and CHARACTER. One day, YOU can possess the perfect mind and character of God. You will not only look like your Father, you will also think and act like Him! That is *power—exceedingly* above the angels!

Even Jesus Christ was once a little while lower than the angels. “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Hebrews 2:9-10). The Captain of our salvation subjected Himself to that situation *to bring the sons of God to glory!* Think deeply about God’s plan for man. How can we neglect so GREAT a salvation? (verse 3).

“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren” (verse 11). Jesus Christ happily calls us His Family. We are all brothers and sisters, sons of God. Christ

is our elder brother; through His sacrifice, He enabled the rest of us to be born as spirit beings into the God Family one day. He was the eternal Word who lived for eternity serving as the Spokesman for God the Father. While He walked the Earth as a flesh-and-blood man, He declared the Father (John 1:18). The gospel message is all about FAMILY!

How the Angels Failed

Before God created man, the angels had the opportunity to rule the Earth. If they had succeeded, they would have ruled the universe. In his book *Mystery of the Ages*, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote: “So the angel potential was to take over the entire universe—to improve and finish the billions of physical planets surrounding the uncountable stars, many of which are SUNS. ... God started this Lucifer out with everything going for him. He sealed up the sum of wisdom, beauty and perfection. He was PERFECT in all his ways from the instant he was created UNTIL INIQUITY—rebellion, lawlessness—was found in him (Ezekiel 28:15).”

Mr. Armstrong compared the universe to unfinished furniture. God created the universe without a single flaw. The angels would apply the finishing touches,

building His character in us, or we will fail just like one third of the angels did.

Lucifer became the perverted archdemon Satan. He still has a lot of power. In fact, *he still rules the Earth.* The Bible calls him the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 12:9). The whole world is ENSLAVED under his tyrannical rule! As a result, this world has been a horrid place ever since the first man and woman began to follow Satan, and generation after generation, their descendants have made the same choice to reject God, rely on themselves, and be influenced by Satan. After thousands of years of this debacle, we are now plunging into the worst violence and destruction in human history (Matthew 24:21-22).

But although Satan has enormous power, you have access to far *more* power—IF you obey God. This is a lesson that a man of God taught to his servant in 2 Kings 6:15-17: “And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with

Although Satan has enormous power, you have access to far more power—if you obey God.

making it habitable and beautiful the way they had done it on Earth. But the archangel Lucifer became selfish and evil and led astray one third of all the angels. He brought destruction and ugliness to Earth and to the universe beyond.

This proved to God that only beings with His mind and character could be trusted with such a massive responsibility. The angels were Plan A. Plan B was the ultimate, high-stakes backup plan: mankind!

God can create *nothing greater* than perfect sons who DEVELOP His character through trials and tests during this physical life. Christ said in Matthew 5:48, “[Become] ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” The key to the whole plan is godly character. We must submit to God

them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”

As you fight to submit to God and use His power to conquer the devil, this great angelic army of God is on your side! These fiery warriors protect God’s people. And this is just the beginning of a relationship that will last for eternity after we are born as God beings and the angels continue to assist us.

Just like the young man in this passage, pray that God will open your eyes to see the marvelous power that is backing you each day. Ask for the faith to BELIEVE in your potential—a potential that is *greater* than the angels. ■

Renewed fighting in Ukraine

Russian-backed forces unleashed a massive artillery attack against Ukraine over the weekend beginning January 28. The Ukrainian military claimed that Russia was using “all the might of their arsenal along all front lines” between Donetsk and Mariupol. On January 29, Monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe reported 2,260 violations of the ceasefire that was supposedly in place between the two forces.

Russian-backed separatists then launched a ground assault against the town of Avdiivka,

near the front lines. Over 20,000 were without heat or water in the harsh Ukrainian winter, and the government began evacuating vulnerable citizens. Temperatures in Avdiivka were as low as zero degrees Fahrenheit.

The timing of the flare-up—coming so soon after Donald Trump’s inauguration in America and just days after the new president’s first official phone call with Vladimir Putin—gave the renewed violence additional significance. Russia blamed Ukraine for the violence, saying it was merely responding to Ukrainian attempts to gradually

ease territory away from the pro-Russian forces. But even if that is true, the Russians still chose the timing of the attack.

“The Avdiivka attack certainly looks like the Kremlin’s first probe of the Trump administration,” wrote *Times Record News*. “Putin wants to know if he can continue to wage slow war while reviving his economy” (February 1).

The offensive could be a prelude to a much larger Russian advance. Europeans certainly viewed this as evidence of Putin’s intent to keep pushing forward as he has opportunity.

CASUALTY Mourners attend a funeral for a Ukrainian serviceman killed during clashes with Russian-backed rebels in Eastern Ukraine.

Germany takes back gold from U.S.

In February the Bundesbank announced that it had retrieved 583 tons of gold stored in New York City and Paris ahead of schedule. The German Central Bank said on Jan. 16, 2013, that it would relocate to Frankfurt 300 tons of its gold from New York and all of its 374 tons of gold from Paris. This decision was made after the United States Federal Reserve refused to submit to an audit of German gold held in U.S. vaults.

The 300 metric tons of gold repatriated from New York equates to 20 percent of Germany’s gold holdings in the United States. The Bundesbank

currently stores 47.9 percent of its gold in Germany, 36.6 percent in the U.S., 12.8 percent in England, and 2.7 percent in France. The Germans initially estimated it would take seven years to repatriate its gold in Paris, but they announced they will complete the French repatriation by the end of 2017, three years ahead of schedule. Once further planned transfers are complete, Germany will hold half its 3,378 tons of gold in Frankfurt, with the balance in New York and London.

Why is Germany’s gold in America to start with? One reason goes back to World

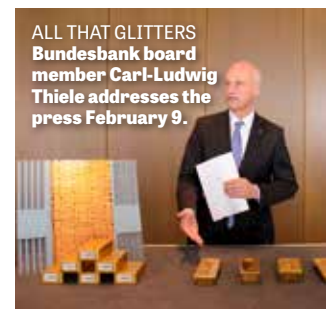
War II. When the Allies finally stopped the German death machine in 1945—for the second time in 27 years—they purposed to ensure that Germany could never again destroy world peace. *Forcing Germany to store its gold overseas was the primary financial mechanism preventing Germany from ever starting another war.* As analyst Byron King noted, “One way for the U.S., Britain and France to keep a leash on Germany was to keep ‘German’ gold under control outside of that country’s borders” (*Daily Resource Hunter*, Jan. 22, 2013).

As long as the Allies controlled Germany’s gold, they had a

But what is Europe to do in the face of Russian aggression and with little support from the U.S.? On February 1, Stratfor reported: “Disheartened by the new U.S. administration’s stance on Russia, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko traveled to Germany on January 30 to meet with Chancellor Angela Merkel. Germany, as the European Union’s de facto leader, is an invaluable ally for Ukraine—all the more so now that the United States may be wavering in its commitment to Kiev.”

Lithuania, too, is looking to Berlin. Germany is in the process of sending 200 vehicles and 450 troops to Lithuania with the first contingent having arrived in late January. It will lead a battle group of more than 1,000 soldiers, supplied by Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway and Luxembourg.

Eastern Europe’s fear is leading to a major shift within Europe. Over the last decade or so, the region has vacillated between putting its trust in Germany or in the United States. Now Mr. Trump is leaving it little choice: Germany now looks like the only option. ■



conqueror’s insurance policy that ensured Berlin would not again disturb the peace. Without its gold, Germany’s currency, and thus its economy, could be destroyed virtually overnight.

But now, America, Britain and France appear to think that they no longer need that insurance policy. ■

Iran pushing for war

On February 1, the Trump administration put Iran “on notice,” following what former National Security adviser Michael Flynn described as “recent Iranian actions, including a provocative ballistic missile launch and an attack against a Saudi naval vessel conducted by Iran-supported Houthi militants.”

On January 29, Iran launched a medium-range ballistic missile from a test site outside Semnan, east of Tehran. The missile launch defied United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231, which calls on Iran to refrain from undertaking

“any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology.”

The next day, three small vessels belonging to Iranian-backed Houthi rebels attacked a Saudi Arabian frigate off the west coast of Yemen. Some evidence indicates the Houthis believed the ship was American.

Video footage of the attack showed a barrage of Houthi gunfire and one explosives-laden vessel plowing into the rear of the Saudi warship, causing a large blast and fire that killed two crewmen and injured several others. It was the

third maritime attack of this kind by the Houthis since October in the volatile yet strategic Red Sea/Bab el-Mandeb region.

The United States responded with new sanctions on individuals and companies connected to Iran’s ballistic missile program and those supporting the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Iran in turn announced further military exercises and issued bold warnings to the United States and Israel.

Iran’s Fars News Agency quoted a former Guard Corps official as saying, “[O]nly seven minutes is needed for the Iranian missile to hit Tel Aviv.” Brig. Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh told the Tasnim news agency, “If



DEFIANT
Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif comments on the January 29 ballistic missile test.

we see [the] smallest misstep from the enemies, our roaring missiles will fall on their heads.”

However the U.S. confronts Iran, Bible prophecy says Iran will not stop pushing—until an altogether different superpower confronts it once and for all. ■

Russia returns to Afghanistan

Ever since the Soviet Union’s humiliating retreat from Afghanistan in 1989, Russia has dealt with that nation with extreme caution. That is, until recently.

On February 7, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov announced that Russia would host a conference on the future of Afghanistan later that month. Russian authorities expected to meet with representatives from Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, Iran and India—and even the Taliban. The United States was not invited, despite its enormous investment in Afghanistan politically, militarily and financially.

This follows two covert meetings between Russia, Pakistan and China last year and a third meeting on Dec. 27, 2016, which was publicized by the three powers. It appears Russia is commandeering the Afghan peace process in the same way it hijacked the Syrian crisis in 2013.

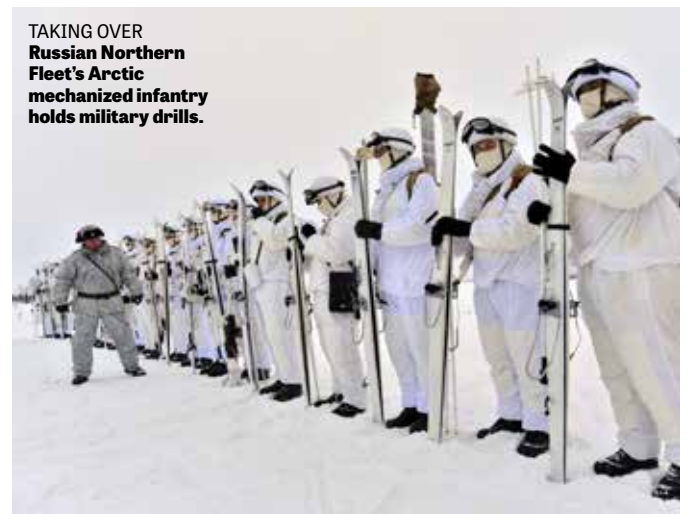
Geopolitical Futures assessed that this move provides Moscow with “the additional benefit of inserting itself in an area of interest for the U.S. in hopes

that it can increase its leverage over Washington” (January 18).

On January 12, Stratfor noted that Pakistan, which supports the Taliban, “is arguably the most important foreign actor in Afghanistan,” and “the United States has been working to diplomatically isolate Pakistan.” But Russia is embracing Pakistan in the same way it embraced Iran and Hezbollah in Syria.

“The Bible warns us to expect a great power rising from the east,” our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy* says. “It calls it ‘the kings of the east’” Those “kings” represent some of the very nations that are embedding themselves deeper into Afghanistan: Russia, China, Pakistan and India.

As Russia and its allies cooperate and increase their influence in Afghanistan, the greater Middle East and Eurasia, this resurgence is bound to frighten Europe, as the *Trumpet’s* Gerald Flurry warned in his January 2004 article “Russia Frightens Europe—and Fulfills Bible Prophecy” (theTrumpet.com/go/1049). ■



TAKING OVER
Russian Northern Fleet’s Arctic mechanized infantry holds military drills.

Moving into the Arctic

Russia’s military presence in the Arctic has grown to levels not seen since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Reuters reported on January 31. Some speculate that Moscow will soon possess greater capability and control in this strategic and resource-rich region than the Soviets ever had.

The report showed that in recent years, Russia has established four new Arctic brigade command units, 16 deep-water ports, a new Arctic command, and 14 operational

airfields. Moscow is either reopening or constructing six military facilities, and has a fleet of 40 icebreakers, with nearly a dozen more being constructed. Icebreakers open channels for military and civilian ships to pass through, and Russia’s fleet of icebreakers is far and away the world’s most advanced. “The highways of the Arctic are icebreakers,” said United States Sen. Dan Sullivan, underlining their importance for access to this strategic region. ■

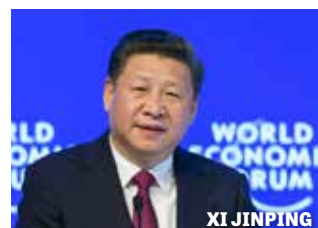
Russia and China developing meaner weapons

Russia and China are developing more advanced weaponry, improving existing arms systems, and possibly practicing for preemptive strikes on American targets.

In "Threat Report 2017," published on February 6, *Popular Mechanics* says the biggest game changer out of Russia is the new Buk-M3 surface-to-air missile system. "In modern warfare, owning

the sky is everything," it writes. "And the cheapest way to own the sky is to shoot down, from the ground, anything that tries to fly in it." The Buk-M3 grants the Russian military the capacity to accomplish that with unprecedented potency, range and sensitivity. The report says the Buk-M3 system "has the potential to change everything."

Russia is also now field-testing new next-generation T-14 tanks, which the "Threat Report 2017"



As U.S. retreats, China seeks to lead

As America steps back from the world stage, China is stepping forward. Beijing's latest move occurred on January 17, when President Xi Jinping became the first Chinese leader to attend the Davos World Economic Forum, the venue at which European and American elites have long assembled to establish the framework for global affairs.

Mr. Xi delivered a speech in the Swiss city, proclaiming

China as the new champion of globalization and free trade. Writing for the *Telegraph*, Ambrose Evans-Pritchard explained the significance of Xi's speech: "His star appearance is packed with geostrategic symbolism. It comes just days before Donald Trump is sworn in as U.S. president, and as America turns in on itself, openly wishing to cede direction of the international system for the first time in three quarters of a century" (January 18).

Analyst David Axe said, "Trump is voluntarily surrendering ground to Beijing on economic, diplomatic and environmental fronts, opening the door to an even greater global role for China that the country's own growing military will only reinforce" (Daily Beast, January 30).

says are now indisputably "the world's most deadly" tanks. The report also notes that Russia and China are developing new stealth warplanes. Russia's PAK-FA and China's J-20 and J-31 are causing planners to worry for the first time in many years about the possibility of losing U.S. jets in dogfights, and about Russian and Chinese aircraft slipping past radar to bomb U.S. air bases and other vital targets. "Stealth airplanes revolutionized modern warfare for the U.S., as they're used to eliminate air defenses so that older, easily seen aircraft can attack other targets," *Popular Mechanics* says. "Now we have to deal with potential enemies having them too."

Meanwhile, *War on the Rocks* said on February 6 that Chinese forces may already be "practicing preemptive missile strikes against U.S. bases." Thomas Shugart from the Center for a New American Security said that "the greatest military threat to U.S. vital interests in Asia" may be China's

ability to carry out such strikes.

Trumpet editor in chief Gerald Flurry said in a January 2014 *Key of David* episode that China and Russia's increasing military might and determination is far more threatening to global stability than most analysts realize: "[T]he goal of Vladimir Putin is to restore the Soviet Union; that's his dream! ... China is expanding into airspace over certain waters in Asia and the East China Sea, in waters claimed by Japan and South Korea. Those are our allies! And they're really, really in a furor over what's going on, and America is doing nothing to help them, and nobody here seems to be that concerned about it. But they should be, because China now is developing a leader very much like Vladimir Putin. ... Can we look at this and believe that there has to be a great world-war clash?"

With these nations' military power expanding in the years since, that "great world-war clash" is drawing closer. ■

Trading U.S. for EU?

On February 1, Mexican and European officials agreed to accelerate updating a 16-year-old free-trade pact between them. Official negotiations for modernizing the pact began in May 2016. But on February 1, barely two weeks after the inauguration of United States President Donald Trump, the two partners agreed to hasten the process.

The EU's trade commissioner and Mexico's economy minister said, "Together, we are witnessing the worrying rise of protectionism around the world. Side by side, as like-minded partners, we must now stand up for the idea of global, open cooperation"—a clear shot at President Trump's policies.

Mr. Trump has criticized the

North American Free Trade Agreement, signed by the U.S., Canada and Mexico. His administration is considering large tariffs, discouraging companies from establishing operations overseas, and requiring Mexico to pay for a border wall.

After the latest agreement, the EU Commission said: "Now is the time to build bridges, not walls." Construction of an economic bridge from Mexico to Europe has already begun.

Mexico's trade is still dominated by the U.S., totaling \$583.6 billion in 2015, compared to \$56.4 billion with the EU. Yet since 2005, European-Mexican trade has more than doubled. Former Belgium Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt called Trump's policy changes an "enormous opportunity." That includes leadership in global trade. ■

Raids on California human trafficking

A statewide operation to combat human trafficking in California in January culminated in the arrests of 474 people and the rescue of 28 sexually exploited children and 27 adult victims.

The sweep took place January 26 to 28 and combined the efforts of federal, state and

local law enforcement agencies and task forces, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said in a news release.

Los Angeles County Sheriff Jim McDonnell said 70 percent of trafficked children are taken from foster care situations. "They're looking for love," he said. "They're looking for someone

that cares about them. The pimp says that they're going to give them this, then leads them down a path of destruction."

McDonnell said that, while the majority of child victims are abducted from foster care, traffickers have ensnared people from all walks of life: "[A]ny family, any kind, anywhere with the Internet can get involved in a situation where they think they're meeting someone who cares about them on the Web ... and then from there could drug them and drag them into the life of this type of behavior. Enslave them, essentially."

Human trafficking and enslavement are not limited to California. Across the United States, 7,572 cases were reported in 2016—up from 5,526 the year before. ■

Berkeley riots: Divided America

Thousands of protesters descended on the University of California–Berkeley campus on February 1 to block Breitbart editor Milo Yiannopoulos from giving a speech. Mainstream media reports described this group as "peaceful protesters." A few hours after the protest began, however, another group of 150 people arrived—dressed in black and wearing masks. This group started throwing rocks and tossing barricades through windows, then set a generator on fire, which produced massive, building-high flames. People were beat up and assaulted with pepper spray, and windows were smashed. Meanwhile, the "peaceful protesters" cheered and chanted, holding signs that read, "This is war" and "Become ungovernable."

All this was done to fight against "fascism" and "hate speech" that was "un-American."



MOB RULE
Violent protests led Berkeley to cancel a speech from a Breitbart editor.

"Let's be clear: A significant number of Americans, both on and off America's college campuses do not believe in other people's right to give speeches with perspectives and ideas they oppose," wrote *National Review* contributor Jim Geraghty in responses to this violent riot. "[*National Review* editor Rich Lowry] noticed how frequently the term 'un-American' is thrown around these days in the debates about immigration law. Physically attacking people because they have different beliefs is about as un-American as it gets" (February 2).

Over \$100,000 worth of damage was done to the campus. Police arrested one person.

Mainstream media rushed to explain that the acts of violence were committed by a small minority of the protesters. "The university blamed '150 masked agitators' for the unrest, saying they had come to campus to disturb an otherwise peaceful protest," CNN wrote February 3. Meanwhile, thousands of others were standing by, cheering on the destroyers and allowing them to hide among them.

The Berkeley violence fore-shadows the future of America: divided and dangerous. ■



Obama endorses anti-Trump protests

Former United States President Barack Obama issued a statement through his spokesman on January 30 encouraging Americans to publicly protest President Donald Trump's executive order that temporarily restricted the immigration of refugees coming from seven Muslim-majority countries known for exporting jihadists.

"President Obama is heartened by the level of engagement taking place in communities around the country," said spokesman Kevin Lewis. "In his final official speech as president, he spoke about the important role of citizens and how all Americans have a responsibility to be the guardians of our democracy—not just during an election but every day. Citizens exercising their constitutional right to assemble, organize and have their voices heard by their elected officials is exactly what we expect to see when American values are at stake."

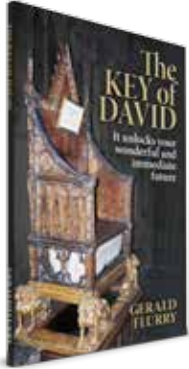
Two days after President Trump signed his executive order, thousands of demonstrators rallied in more than 30 cities across the nation. Protesters in California blocked traffic in Los Angeles and shut down the international terminal of the San Francisco airport. With influential Democratic Party politicians like Barack Obama and Bernie Sanders supporting such protests, it is likely that they will develop into an increasingly common disruption of American society. ■

lead the people and keep them away from the house of David. That was his great sin.

Sadly, the people just went along. They turned away from God and worshiped these golden calves just as they had done in ancient history. This culminated in terrible disaster!

This same sin is being committed today! This is not that difficult to understand or prove: Something is **WRONG** with most religions today—even those that claim to follow the Bible and to understand God. **THE MODERN-DAY JEROBOAM IS CAUSING OTHER RELIGIONS TO LOOK TO HIM—NOT THE TRUE GOD.** It is going the same way it did anciently, only in this end time there is a much greater abundance of truth.

How can we make sure we don't commit this sin?



The Key of David

We need to view this spiritually, as God does. You need to understand the importance of David's throne! This has deep meaning physically and spiritually. I explain it in detail in my book *The Key of David*, which we will send you upon request at no charge.

Revelation 3 beginning in verse 7 describes the *second-to-last* era of God's Church—the one before the Laodicean era. And that message begins: "And to the angel of the church in

A modern-day Jeroboam is turning Israel away from the message of God and the throne of David. He is opposing spiritual Jerusalem.

Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, HE THAT HATH THE KEY OF DAVID" Jesus Christ has the "key of David," and He gave it to this era of the Church.

Do you hear religions today talking about the key of David? How many believers of the Bible do you know who talk about and understand the key of David or the house of David? It seems *strange* to them! The key of David is about a lot more than a man. It is the most important message in the Bible! This is the key that **EXPLAINS** the *house of David*. It is the **ULTIMATE MESSAGE**—the **ONLY** message—that Christ gave to His Church in this end time—yet most people reject it, just like Jeroboam did. Isn't that amazing? They are listening too much to Jeroboam and the spirit of Jeroboam.

Herbert W. Armstrong was the leader of God's Church during the Philadelphia era, and he had this key. The Philadelphia Church of God, which publishes this newsmagazine, has remained loyal to God in the Laodicean era, and we have clung tightly to this key! The name of our television program is *The Key of David*. We have produced abundant material on the promises God made to David.

In Revelation 3:7, God says that for those who have this *key*, He will **OPEN DOORS** so they can deliver this message! We must get this: The key of David is the very heart and core of God's message today and throughout most Bible history! But the Jeroboams keep rejecting it. They want to devise their own

plans and live by their own rules. That leads to one catastrophe after another after another!

Notice this promise God makes to His faithful Philadelphians: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (verse 10). A **GRIEVOUS TRIAL** is about to come upon this whole world! Nuclear weapons are proliferating, and they are going to be *used*! But to those who keep the key of David and promote it and teach it and have a work that delivers it, God promises **PROTECTION**! This is a wonderful promise, even just physically—not to mention the spiritual.

Read God's promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-13. This is also in the former prophets and is prophecy for today: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I WILL STABLISH THE THRONE OF HIS KINGDOM FOR EVER." This is an **ETERNAL** promise!

"And thine house [the house of David] and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: **THY THRONE SHALL BE ESTABLISHED FOR EVER**" (verse 16). That physical throne still exists today. This wonderful, inspiring message is all explained in *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*. However, this promise from God is really talking about much more than the royal line of a mortal man: It is actually talking about **THE THRONE OF GOD**! This is God's throne, and He is going to rule from this throne for **ALL ETERNITY**!

God is inviting human beings to share this throne with Him! If they will be loyal to Him and teach the key of David message, then He will give them the reward of being the Bride of Christ forever—an unparalleled offer to any human being! What a reward God gives those who are loyal to Him!

THIS IS WHAT JEROBOAM REJECTED. AND A MODERN-DAY JEROBOAM IS TURNING ISRAEL AWAY FROM THE MESSAGE OF GOD AND THE THRONE OF DAVID. HE IS OPPOSING SPIRITUAL JERUSALEM, AS JEROBOAM DID AGAINST PHYSICAL JERUSALEM ANCIENTLY.

Isaiah 22:20-22 is a related end-time prophecy. It begins, "And it shall come to pass *in that day*"—an expression that always means the end time, which is today. God says He will call a man and lay upon his shoulder "**THE KEY OF THE HOUSE OF DAVID.**" This is not only about the key of David, but specifically about the key of the **HOUSE** of David—meaning the descendants of David, physically and spiritually.

God says we *must* have this message today, yet most people have rejected it and followed Jeroboam.

Flee to Judah!

When this nation can't bear our message anymore, the leaders will tell us to get out: "O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there" (Amos 7:12). *Judah* is the land of the Jews in the Middle East. The Philadelphia Church of God has had significant projects and activities over there, and these will apparently be well known. People will know a lot about our work and our involvement in Judah. And when we become outcasts, it appears they will force us to go to Jerusalem, on our way to a place of safety.

The “Israel” in Amos 7:11 includes the U.S. and the United Kingdom. Verse 12 brings Judah into the picture. Hosea 5:5 reveals that all three of these nations will fall together. Why is God so wrathful toward these three Israelite nations? Because they received the most blessings of all—they are the birthright nations and the scepter nation—yet are mired in unparalleled sin! In addition, all three of them rejected God’s message. These three nations have a HISTORY with God—yet they are totally ungrateful! Ingratitude is perhaps their greatest sin!

“Ephraim [Britain] shall be desolate in the day of rebuke: among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be. The princes of Judah [modern-day ‘Israel’] were like them that remove the bound: therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water. Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because *he willingly walked after the commandment*” (Hosea 5:9-11). What “commandment” is that talking about? The commandment of *Jeroboam*, who changed God’s holy days, perverted the religious worship, and led the nation into idolatry!

People in Britain, where the third of three prophesied overthrows of David’s throne occurred (Ezekiel 21:27), are going to be led astray by Jeroboam. They are going to be led more deeply into sin. Now that the United Kingdom has decided to break away from Europe, it will be more desperate to trade with the U.S. This will probably result in it following Jeroboam’s lead into disaster.

What a painful day it is in Israel when you look at what its people are doing. God has been so patient; He has given them so many warnings—but this is the LAST ONE! It all revolves around the time of Jeroboam.

A Time of Extreme Urgency

Amos “warned the people that the supreme moment of their success was but the prelude to their doom” (*Soncino* commentary). This is what we are looking at with Donald Trump assuming the American presidency. Some people believe there was good news in this election. The Republican side was ecstatic. Right after the election, Rush Limbaugh said, “We just got our country back!” But they didn’t! The “good news” is a mirage. It is a false hope.

This is actually a prelude to America’s doom. A man is on the scene whose house God is going to take out by the sword! Conditions in America *may* improve for a short time. It may even help the work of God. But its ultimate end is destruction. Our people are going to face THE WRATH OF GOD until they repent!

Amos 7:7-17 show that our time is very limited. WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS OR PERHAPS EVEN LESS?

THIS IS ONE OF THE STRONGEST, MOST URGENT WARNINGS IN THE BIBLE!

“Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit” (verse 14). Amos had no formal seminary or college training. God simply gave him a job. Even without “credentials,” God used this man!

“Now therefore hear thou the word of the Lord: Thou sayest, Prophecy not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac. Therefore *thus saith the Lord*; Thy wife shall be an harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou shalt die in a polluted land: and Israel shall surely go into captivity

forth of his land” (verses 16-17). Amos had a very different view from Amaziah: He knew this was a message from God!

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord” (Amos 8:11). How will this famine of the word come about? God’s Church will be forced to leave. No one will be here to deliver the message anymore. When this faithful remnant of God’s people is taken to a place of safety, God’s message will cease, except what we do from there. The nations of Israel have had over 80 years to heed this message, but soon they will not be able to even find it.

Verse 14 talks about people who are going to “fall, and never rise up again.” This is talking about 50 percent of God’s own Laodicean or lukewarm church who will lose their eternal lives! What a tragedy—the greatest tragedy in this end time!

The Gun Lap

“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old” (Amos 9:11). God’s Philadelphian remnant has worked to rebuild everything that God built through Herbert W. Armstrong. We won the copyright battle for Mr. Armstrong’s writings and raised the ruins as in the days of old. God’s truth continues to go out to this world—for now. But all of this is God’s doing; He gives the victory (verse 12).

Amos 7 shows that our time is very limited. What is going to happen in the next four years or perhaps even less?

God is using a small group of humble people to fulfill this ruin-raising work!

THIS ELECTION WAS PROPHETIC. We don’t know how exactly God intervenes to orchestrate elections and other events, but we do know He puts His people right in the middle of it all—“in the midst of my people Israel” (Amos 7:8). His people have to be at the center telling the world what is happening and what it all means.

We have a limited time to get this work done. God is showing us that we are getting extremely close to the end. This could be our last elected president. This could be America’s last presidential election. When you look at the context of these verses, and you see what is happening in this country, it appears probable that this president will have only one term.

We are in the “gun lap” that Herbert W. Armstrong referred to so often. In a *Plain Truth* personal from May 1967, Mr. Armstrong wrote, “We come, now, to the final stretch of the Work. In a mile or two-mile race, officials fire a revolver in the air as the runners begin the last lap. They call it ‘the gun lap.’ This Work of God, leading to Christ’s coming, has now entered its ‘gun lap.’ We must now put on the final extra burst of effort for the VERY FEW remaining years!” Mr. Armstrong never did reach the gun lap, but you can safely say we are in it now! This is the last time that God is going to pass by the nations of Israel. This is a WARNING ON TOP OF A WARNING in many ways!

When God is done passing by His people, He will take His faithful remnant to a place of safety. If anyone is going to join

them in that place of protection, this is their last chance—or they will face Jeroboam’s fate!

IF YOU AND I ARE NOT OVERCOMING SATAN, THIS IS OUR LAST CHANCE TO DO SO! (Request my free booklet *How to Be an Overcomer*. It will clearly show you how to overcome your sins, Satan and this evil world.)

God has revealed more understanding about this prophecy. He is speaking to His Church directly—and to each of us individually!

Look at the context for Amos 7. “The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel ... And he said, THE LORD WILL ROAR FROM ZION, and utter his voice from Jerusalem ...” (Amos 1:1-2). Who is going to be the voice? Who will be the people who utter God’s voice from spiritual Jerusalem? God has given us this message—we must proclaim it!

If there are protesters who can stand up and speak out so boldly against President Trump, shouldn’t the people of God speak out boldly? We have to warn this nation! Verse 2 concludes, “and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.” The *Anchor Bible* says the subject here is A COSMIC HOLOCAUST—A NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST! GOD IS ABOUT TO SEND NUCLEAR FIRE! (see also verses 4, 7, 10, 12, 14; 2:2, 5).

We are all weak and sinners, but God promises to make us

When we see this world race to its own destruction before our eyes, we know that a new world is almost here.

strong! WE WILL HAVE DIFFICULT TRIALS AHEAD. BUT GOD NEEDS PEOPLE WHO ARE EAGER TO DO BATTLE AND FIGHT FOR HIM, KNOWING THEY’RE GOING TO WIN! WITH THAT FAITH, NOBODY CAN PREVAIL OVER OUR MESSAGE.

“Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?” (Amos 3:4). God is roaring—and He wouldn’t be doing that unless the destruction of Israel is *very close*.

“Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?” (verse 6). *Soncino* says, “Shall the horn be blown in a city and the people not TREMBLE?” If we are properly trembling at God’s word, we will be overcoming and conquering our problems. God is building His character in us, but we first have to overcome our weaknesses.

“SURELY THE LORD GOD WILL DO NOTHING, BUT HE REVEALETH HIS SECRET UNTO HIS SERVANTS THE PROPHETS. The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, WHO CAN BUT PROPHECY?” (verses 7-8). We have to prophesy! We have so much wonderful truth and a powerful message from God that must be delivered to the end-time nations of Israel!

“Therefore thus saith the Lord God; An adversary there shall be even round about the land; and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be spoiled. Thus saith the Lord; As

the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus in a couch” (verses 11-12). Again, this is a “thus saith the Lord” message. It is not from Amos or any man. IT’S A PICTURE OF A LION’S ATTACK ON SHEEP, BUT IT IS TALKING ABOUT ISRAEL—NOT SHEEP! God is going to tear these nations apart! This is what it takes for them to get to know God and listen to Him!

This message has been saturating their lands, especially America and Britain, but they have refused to hear. God is going to bring them down, so they can finally get to know Him!

“That in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him I will also visit the altars of Bethel: and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground” (verse 14). “Altars of Bethel” is talking about the Laodiceans (God’s own lukewarm Church). Anciently, people could take refuge in the temple and grab the horns of the altar. By doing this, there was a good chance they would be saved from punishment because they were showing God that they deeply repented and wanted to change. Oftentimes, they would receive mercy from God. But in verse 14, God is saying that won’t happen anymore! There won’t be horns on the altar. They can’t run and hide!

Those without God’s protection who try to flee from one disaster will just be hit by another one! (Amos 5:19). But if we seek God and turn to Him, He will help us overcome, and we will LIVE! (verses 4-9). God will protect us physically and spiritually (Revelation 12:14). Even in a blistering message like Amos’s, there is GOOD NEWS!

When we see this world race to its own destruction before our eyes, we know that a new world is almost here! Yes, there are difficult prophecies ahead, but they all lead to the return of Christ!

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God” (Amos 9:13-15). This is the wonderful conclusion Amos gives us.

There is a lot of bad news in the near future, but that is only temporary. All of it is good news because God is paving the way for Israel to know Him! Soon, everyone will be educated in God’s ways, and blessed for their obedience! ■



Are you ready for what’s coming?

Biblical prophecy reveals a time of trouble to come and how you can escape it—by overcoming Satan. It’s not easy, but God promises victory. Learn the path to that victory in Gerald Flurry’s free booklet *How to Be an Overcomer*.

Look in the Mirror

To remove the blemishes on your character, you have to see them first.

YOU CHECK THE MIRROR EVERY DAY TO FIX your hair, straighten your clothes and make sure you don't have remnants of breakfast in your teeth. But how often do you study your spiritual reflection?

Honest self-examination is essential to the Christian life. You cannot grow without it. The mirror you need to look into is God's perfect law of love, and the perfection of Jesus Christ (James 1:22-25). When you study the face in that mirror, you can see what needs to change so you can become more like God.



JOEL HILLIKER

In the first-century Church, members in Corinth had become prideful and judgmental. They criticized the Apostle Paul for what they perceived as his weak speaking. Paul responded with a challenge: "EXAMINE YOURSELVES, whether ye be in the faith; PROVE YOUR OWN SELVES" (2 Corinthians 13:5). *You've been examining me, he said; turn that examination on yourselves.*

Examine here means to test, prove or scrutinize to see whether a thing is genuine or not. When you take an *examination* in school, you are tested on your knowledge and your progress. In a courtroom, when a witness is *examined*, the lawyer presses him with hard questions to bring out the truth of a matter. If the witness is lying, the lawyer tries to pin him down and expose that. Sometimes we must *examine* our own *hearts*, because our hearts are deceitful above all things (Jeremiah 17:9).

Take a good look at yourself, Paul says. What is going on deep down? Don't be content with a panoramic view, or with looking only at how others perceive you. Look into the recesses of your thoughts that only God knows. Examine not just your actions but also your motives. What sins mar your character? How can you become more obedient to that law of love?

This is work. Nobody likes to look at his own faults and ugliness, which is why we shy away from self-examination. It is also why we need to ask for God's guidance in this process (e.g. verse 10; Psalm 26:2).

Consider the poem "Self-Examination" by Isaac Watts: "Let not soft slumber close your eyes, / Before you've collected thrice / The train of action through the day! / Where have my feet chose out their way? / What have I learned, where'er I've been, / From all I've heard, from all I've seen? / What have I more that's worth the knowing? / What have I done that's worth the doing?"

/ What have I sought that I should shun? / What duty have I left undone, / Or into what new follies run? / These self-inquiries are the road / That lead to virtue and to God."

Honest self-examination helps you remove self-deception and see yourself as you actually are, as God sees you. It reveals flaws that need to change and areas where you need to grow. Though it can be sobering, it should not be discouraging: It helps reveal a path forward. "Ponder the path of thy feet, and

let all thy ways be established" (Proverbs 4:26).

In your self-examination, give real thought to the kind of person you want to be. Pray about it, think about it, visualize it. Picture yourself a year from now, then five years from now, then at the end of your life. Who is that person?

Think of the qualities you would like to build more of. Perhaps you want to become more *positive* and *encouraging*

toward others. You may want to be more *wise*, *productive*, *passionate*, *bold*, *decisive*, *generous*, *self-sacrificing* and *kind-hearted*. Make a list. Now list your characteristics that you want to reduce: perhaps *negative*, *judgmental*, *disorganized*, *lazy*, *selfish*, *petty*, *oversensitive*, *impatient*, *unreliable*—surely there are others. Decide on *practical steps*—even small acts—that will move you in the direction you want to go. Ask for God's help in following through, and then take action.

Ponder your most important relationships. Are they as strong as they should be? Consider how to make them stronger, more enriching. Think about the qualities you appreciate in your friends and family, or even that you would *like* to see more of in them. Then take the initiative to exhibit more of these qualities *toward them*. Contemplate whether you are giving enough of your time and yourself to your relationships.

How strong is your sense of *purpose* in life? Think about your career. Is it challenging you and helping you grow? Does it align with your values? Is it what God wants you to be doing? How well are you fulfilling His purpose for you?

Ask yourself: What are you really passionate about? What is it *about* these things that excites you? How do they benefit *other people*? How much could you help others, even change the world, if only a little, if you focused more on these things?

Think of your legacy. Give thought to how your children will remember you, and what more you can do to sweeten these memories. How can you preserve the wisdom or other treasures you would like to bequeath to them? "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children ..." (Proverbs 13:22).

These are marvelous aspects of character to contemplate. Failing to consider them can leave you mired in mediocrity, complacent and stagnant, oblivious to opportunity.

The better you know yourself, the more alert you will be to doors God is opening for you to fulfill your true potential. A true appreciation of your purpose creates a determination to use each day to fulfill it, whatever the obstacles.

It all starts with a focused look in the spiritual mirror. ■



I have been paying attention to President Trump since the beginning (“Should Donald Trump Trust Vladimir Putin?”, [theTrumpet.com/go/14519](https://www.thetrumpet.com/go/14519)). It seems to me he does not trust Putin; he respects him for what he is. I think it is smart to respect a potential adversary—understanding the content of their character with caution. In no way is there any reason to think or believe President Trump plans on being buddies with Putin.

Rick Bundy

Since I was a young girl, the book of Revelation and its prophecy have fascinated me more than any other portion of the Bible. I am 74, and at the end of my journey. I see the things unfolding. If I tell someone, it scares them. But in God’s plan, and knowing I am one of His, I’m not scared. But feel sad that so many others cannot see and do not want to know.

Jo

Revisionist thinking

How sad that Japanese leadership would lead its people down the same path to destruction! (“The Cryptic Nationalist Group Steering Japan,” [theTrumpet.com/go/14529](https://www.thetrumpet.com/go/14529)). God help them remember an elderly man who went to Japan in the 1980s and told the leadership at the time that “a strong hand from someplace” was mankind’s only hope.

James Rush CANADA

Great again?

I want to tell Mr. Gerald Flurry how much I appreciate his February 2017 article (“Great

Again,” [theTrumpet.com/go/14437](https://www.thetrumpet.com/go/14437)). He is absolutely right. Unless our nation turns to God we will fall. My prayers are with him as he continues to tell the truth. My prayers are also that Mr. Trump would recognize that he isn’t in control but that God is, and that he will repent and ask God for guidance.

Jerry Delk VERMONT

I just read Mr. Flurry’s “Great Again” article, and I wish more people would give the *Trumpet* more priority. A lot of people scoff at the idea of a church also being a provider of news; yet at times, it seems like the *Trumpet* is the only provider of true journalism.

Thomas Riffenburg OREGON

Dose of reality

I once worked with a man from Estonia in Australia on a work visa, and when I brought up the subject of Vladimir Putin he expressed concern about another takeover of his country (“Who Will Defend Eastern Europe?”, [theTrumpet.com/go/14520](https://www.thetrumpet.com/go/14520)). As



a result, he didn’t want to go back despite leaving behind many of his family members. It gives one a nice dose of reality.

Lance

City of pieces

Amazing, before the ink has dried on this article (“City of Pieces,” [theTrumpet.com/go/14524](https://www.thetrumpet.com/go/14524)), East Jerusalem suffers this horrible terrorist attack with a Palestinian man ramming his truck into a crowd of Israeli soldiers. This shows the veracity of your report, and the sureness of Bible prophecy.

Edward Atkinson ALABAMA

Everything is coming true

I am an old man, but I see that all the things in the magazine are coming true. I have a feeling that over the next four years I will want to read the *Trumpet* even more.

Walter Collins COLORADO

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Trumpet Hour

California's Curses

The drought-stricken state direly needed rain—but it came in a deluge. **BY SAM LIVINGSTON**

AFTER FIVE YEARS OF DROUGHT, MASSIVE RAINSTORMS HIT parts of northern California in February. The precipitation brought much-needed relief to a state in the driest period of its 165-year recorded history. Yet in some areas, what seemed to be a long-withheld blessing became a curse.

The rainwater caused the Lake Oroville reservoir level to rise more than 50 feet in mere days. Engineers opened the dam's main spillway to prevent water from overflowing the 770-foot dam, the nation's tallest. The spillway, a 3,000-foot concrete channel leading to the Feather River below, was in disrepair, and the onrushing water carved a 300-foot crater into it, allowing water to spill out uncontrollably and erode earth beneath it.

At this point, operators faced a dire situation: If the main spillway remained open, the earth beneath it would continue to erode back to the reservoir. This could cause the spillway's barrier to collapse, unleashing a 30-foot tidal wave from the reservoir. They decided to close the main spillway and rely on the emergency spillway, an earthen channel with a holding basin, which had never been used in the dam's 48-year history.

The emergency spillway began eroding faster than expected. Aware of the potential threat, state authorities quickly evacuated more than 180,000 residents living in the floodplain below the dam. By then, the water released through the spillways had lowered the reservoir's levels. The rain stopped and workers hurried to repair the damage before more rainstorms arrived.

The dramatic footage of an enormous dam gushing 100,000 cubic feet of water per second and the suspense of an anticipated catastrophic flood affecting Californians in three counties made front-page news. People worldwide learned of everything this imperiled dam represented: political bickering, rural-urban tension, decaying infrastructure built during a decades-old American boom. These were all partially to blame for the situation at Oroville—and for the estimated 100,000 other American dams like it that need repair.

But for as much blame as has been issued, is it inappropriate to ask what role *God* may have played?

Of course, many say God doesn't exist, or that He plays no direct role in destructive phenomena like extreme droughts, flooding, wildfires, earthquakes and other environmental disasters that have afflicted America and especially California. They insist these problems are simply the aggregate effects of random events and human choice.

But *are* California's problems happenstance? And can they be fixed by improved human choices?

Do you believe in a God who can actually influence events in this world? Couldn't He have provided gentle rain in due

season that would have relieved California's scorching desertification without jeopardizing this dam? For that matter, couldn't He have prevented its searing drought from happening in the first place? Does He not care about such matters?

The Bible shows that He *does* care. In 2003, *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry asked, "Is California Under a Curse?" In this article, he wrote, "God does punish us with 'natural' disasters." He referred back to an article he wrote a decade prior, which said, "One disaster after another is striking California. These deadly disasters are repeatedly labeled the 'worst ever'! ... With all the disasters that have struck California the past few years, it's as if the state is under a curse." That article is as timely today as ever.

Few people seem to believe this today, but weather disasters are warnings from God designed to get people's attention. "The God of the Bible is not impotent. He wields the punitive sword of flood and mildew—and also that of drought (Deuteronomy 28:22; 11:17). Sometimes He uses *both at the same time* in order to heighten their corrective power: 'And also *I have withholden* the rain from you, when there were yet three months to



DELUGE The Oroville Dam spillway suffers massive erosion damage.

the harvest: and *I caused it to rain upon one city*, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered' (Amos 4:7). Notice—this is God talking through His Prophet Amos. God *causes* these weather disasters! In one region God sends a drought—in another region, floods—and it all happens right before harvest time. And why? *God causes it because we haven't returned to Him* (verse 8). Amos is trying to help us see the connection between extreme weather upsets and human sin." That comes from our booklet *Why 'Natural' Disasters?*

Extreme weather events are going to worsen in parallel with the worsening not of Californian partisanship, emissions or budgets, but of *our sins*. Prophecy shows that they will intensify until we admit we simply don't have the intelligence, time, money or cubic yards of concrete to block them all.

When the increasing volume and pressure of environmental disasters finally tops the dam of human effort, many people in the floodplain will finally reevaluate just whether there might be a God after all. Then, the religious and the nonreligious alike will be frantically asking: *If there is a God, why is He letting this happen to us?*

California went from five years of crisis-level drought to devastating floods in mere days. It's time we start asking, *why "natural" disasters?*

Germany, point to the clear public opinion against it. Polls from early 2016 show that 93 percent of Germans want nuclear weapons banned.

It is notable that the German government was *not* among the 113 nations that voted to negotiate a nuclear ban at the United Nations General Assembly last year. International surveys by Soka Gakkai International showed 91.2 percent of people believed nuclear arms were inhumane, while 80.6 percent were in favor of banning all nuclear weapons. If the German public doesn't like nukes, it simply holds the same opinion as the rest of the world.

Though there remains considerable resistance to nuclear weapons in Germany, the current discussion still marks a dramatic change. As Kühn wrote in his article "The Sudden German Nuke Flirtation," "Obviously, current German nuclear flirtations represent a fringe view, but they are an important early warning sign. These flirtations were carried by Germany's biggest left-leaning and conservative media outlets" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Dec. 6, 2016).

"[E]xtreme views on nuclear matters do not always remain at the fringes," Kühn continued. "As the case of South Korea demonstrates, external shocks such as the repeated nuclear tests by North Korea in 2013 can quickly move formerly fringe positions to the center stage of public attention. Once in the mainstream, it can be difficult to put such sentiments to rest, particularly when the underlying security concerns remain."

Since North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006, the idea of a South Korean nuclear program has been gaining acceptance. According to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, from 2013 to 2016, media coverage of South Korea's nuclear debate doubled. Arguments were split nearly evenly between pro- and anti-nuclear views.

South Korea is a model for how previously fringe views become mainstream.

Nukes Already in Germany

While Germany restarts its nuclear debate, U.S. nuclear warheads left over from the Cold War remain at Büchel Air Base. Germany's nuclear contradiction—a "non-nuclear" country which happens to have nuclear weapons—endures for the present.

As is so common, the passing of a few generations has dulled the memory of the German threat to Europe. No doubt the coming debate will feature the pro-disarmament faction recounting the wisdom of Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle and Margaret Thatcher: A German threat to the world must be contained. But Donald Trump is a different type of leader.

Your Bible forecasts a preeminent Germany in Europe, not a pacifist stabilizer. Because of that, you can know the outcome of the coming debates—and the results truly will be the "utterly unimaginable." ■

THE KEY OF DAVID



Philadelphia Trumpet editor in chief Gerald Flurry appears each week on *The Key of David* explaining the meaning behind world events and teaching the inspiring truths of the Bible. The program is also available at keyofdauid.com.

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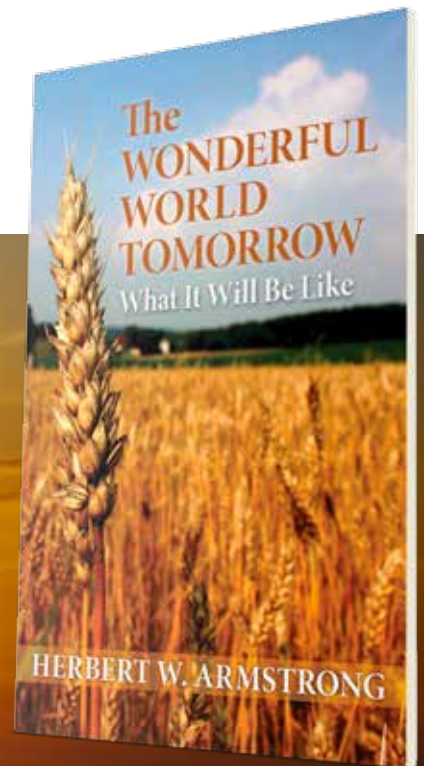
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