

**ALPHABET
SOUP**

Why UN, WTO, G8 don't work

NUCLEAR HOLY WAR

Contention between two mighty religions is getting hotter.
How far will they go to convert each other?

**WILL GOD SAVE
ALL RELIGIONS?**

We answer our skeptics

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2005

THE PHILADELPHIA

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TRUMPET

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7/7

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in its prophetic
context

BRITAIN & AMERICA

A crumbling foundation

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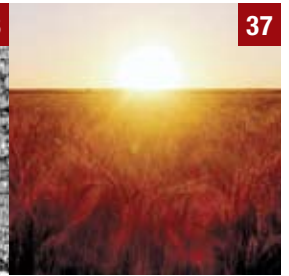
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COVER A man weeps after placing a floral tribute in remembrance of the victims of the July 7 terrorist attacks in London, England. Getty Images
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Gerald Flurry



REUTERS

Are Two Great Religions About to Trigger Nuclear War?

FINGERS ON THE TRIGGER Members of Islamic Jihad clutch Korans and AK-47s as they march through a refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

ARE THE VISIONS OF TWO MIGHTY RELIGIONS POSING the greatest danger on Earth?

Iran just elected its most militant, right-wing candidate, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Stratfor Intelligence wrote, “[T]he election of Ahmadinejad as president PLACES THE ENTIRE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN IRAN UNDER THE COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE CLERICS” (July 27, emphasis mine throughout).

That kind of political control by the clerics is not seen in any other powerful Muslim nation.

Here is why this is so frightening. Iran is an unbelievably oil-rich nation, it is the world’s number-one terrorist-sponsoring nation, and it is about to get nuclear bombs! And the *entire political system is under the control of the clerics—fanatical clerics*. That reality ought to terrify the world!

Already Ahmadinejad is declaring a *worldwide* Islamic revolution. That’s an extremely dangerous ambition. And even now this country strikes fear into the other Middle East nations.

Any way you look at this situation, it means deadly trouble for this world.

What makes this picture even worse is that these mullahs are often guided by religious *visions*. That makes them routinely over-confident and far more perilous.

America lacks the will to deal with Iran and radical Islam,

and the European Union is too weak to do so at this point. So Iran grows stronger and more belligerent.

However, the EU won’t remain weak. The Vatican is going to unite the Union into a Roman Catholic superpower, but with fewer nations. The less zealous members are going to be removed. (If you want to understand how I can make such a bold statement, write for our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*).

Probably the most right-wing cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church was elected as pope in April. He is going to move the church much further to the right than any of his recent predecessors. When this happens in a church with such *political* power, we all should be deeply concerned.

Here is what Pope Benedict XVI said in his weekly address delivered from his summer retreat in the Aosta Valley on July 24: “[I]t comes to us ... at this particular moment in history with all its problems, to reflect on the contribution that Christianity [Catholicism] has made and is continuing to make to building Europe.

“I would like to do so by thinking back to the pilgrimage in 1982 of my beloved predecessor, the servant of God John Paul II, to Santiago de Compostela, where he made a solemn ‘Declaration to Europe’ ... in which he spoke these memorable words of

See **NUCLEAR WAR** page 23 ▶



ONE SIP of a

HOW CAN you *not* become complacent? Suicide terrorist attacks have become so routine in daily headlines that we casually scan them and move on.

Many rush-hour riders of the London Underground surely felt that way as they toured the city or commuted to work the morning of July 7. Some may have even fleetingly cast their eyes over a small report in that morning's paper of yet another suicide car bombing the day before in northern Iraq that killed an Iraqi soldier.

But suddenly, mere words on a page became horrifically vivid—a bloody reality.

On three separate trains, each filled with 700 to 900 passengers, deafening booms shattered the calm. Commuters pitched forward as

the train abruptly stopped. Blackness—lights blinked out and carriages filled with smoke.

Screams and cries pierced the air.

"We were all trapped like sardines waiting to die," one survivor said. People shattered windows and battered down doors to escape.

Through the haze they spilled, running in panic and terror. "I saw a lady coming toward me soaked in blood," said another witness. "Everyone was in confusion."

Pieces of flesh lined the train walls; corpses and portions of corpses littered the ground.


"I honestly thought I was going to die," said another, "as did everyone else."

Fifty-seven minutes later, a nearby blast ripped the roof off a double-decker bus and killed 13 people. "There were bodies everywhere,"

said one onlooker. "Heads and bits of bodies, heads and arms and legs all ripped away."

All told, 56 were killed and 700 wounded in the four coordinated attacks that Thursday morning in London.

The event made major headlines worldwide particularly because it had hammered one of the world's premier cities. But it was only one of countless terrorist attacks that occurred worldwide in July, some few of which were even more lethal. Iraq saw one of its bloodiest months ever, suffering an average of 68 attacks per day; in one of the worst, July 17, a car bomber rammed a fuel tanker, creating an explosion that slew 90 people. In Egypt, the Red Sea resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh was rocked in the early hours of July 23 by three



The sound of London's mournful cry
ascending from the carnage of 7/7
infuses the Western world with dread.

Sadly, that city's suffering
is only a taste of what is to come.

HEAVEN'S TEARS

Raindrops on a car window reflect the Union Jack in New York's Times Square during a tribute to the victims of 7/7.

BITTER CUP

bombs that killed at least 88 people, foreigners as well as Egyptians. Other major attacks occurred in Lebanon, India and Turkey.

Such violence has been a horrifying fact of life in the little nation of Israel for some years. But the cancer is spreading. Suicide attacks have struck over 25 countries on five continents, and have hands-down become the weapon of choice for Islamic terrorists the world over.

As more and more lives are lost and upset, complacency will become a luxury we can no longer afford.

There is, in fact, a palpable and dramatic shift taking place in our world.

Against the backdrop of July's spike in terrorist attacks came a rash of reports outlining a correlated and equally troubling trend: a

weakening of anti-terrorism forces. *U.S. military recruitment declines; junior officer retention sags. Unforeseen Iraq occupation costs skyrocket; U.S. economy strained. Washington questionably declares a sort-of victory; justifies withdrawing almost two thirds of U.S. forces from Iraq by next year. Iraqi draft constitution aims to establish Iran-style theocracy; end result of U.S. intervention could be a nightmare.*

Meanwhile, Israel proceeded with plans for its unilateral pullback from the Gaza Strip despite the move angering and dividing Israelis and emboldening militant Arabs.

Add to this equation the recent political shift to the right within Iran and that country's new president's declaration of a revived worldwide Islamic revolution.

Step back and view the whole picture, and it is as if the current world order is visibly unraveling. The momentum, it appears, is swinging away from the United States in favor of the most dangerous pockets of radical Islam.

Is this how it is to be now? Will these trends persist?

The *Trumpet* states with confidence that, sadly, the answer is yes.

More and more, complacency is about to give way to recognition that we are leaving behind a comfortable era of Western dominance—and entering a new and uncertain era of violent competition for supremacy among remorseless foes.

It is a cruel era specifically prophesied by Jesus Christ.

SPECIAL REPORT

TIMES OF THE GENTILES

SPEECHLESS

Londoners in Parliament Square observe two minutes of silence in memory of the 56 citizens murdered in the previous week's bombings.

DURING CHRIST'S ministry, His disciples asked, "[W]hat will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" (Matthew 24:3, Revised Standard Version). Jesus didn't dismiss the idea that the world as we know it would come to an end. No—He responded by warning His disciples of specific events to beware of (found in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21). He concluded with the words, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

One third of the world's population considers itself Christian. So it should hardly seem unusual or unorthodox to take Jesus at His word. Do you?

In one of these specific signs, Christ said that the people of "Jerusalem" would "fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (verse 24).

Who are the Gentiles? If we are to watch for this sign, we must know.

The common idea that any non-Jew is a Gentile is false. A careful study reveals that the modern identity of the tribes of the biblical

nation of Israel—of which Judah, or the Jews, is only one—includes, most prominently, the United States and Britain. If you have not proven this truth, a reading of our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* by Herbert W. Armstrong is critical.

Christ prophesied that—barring mankind's repentance—we are about to enter a time when America's and Britain's global influence will be snuffed out, and Gentile powers will wreak unimaginable havoc on the Earth.

Jerusalem, the literal city located in modern-day Judah, will be "trodden down of the Gentiles." Revelation 11:2 also shows how the Gentiles shall "tread under foot" the "holy city" for 42 months—or 3½ years. But Bible prophecy also uses Jerusalem, the capital of ancient Israel, to denote the entirety of prophetic Israel—chiefly the American and British peoples.

This seismic shift in geopolitical momentum—away from America and toward a clutch of non-Israelite, or Gentile, powers, accompanied by an escalation in brutal violence and war—is one of the visible signs Jesus Christ gave of His imminent return!

The darkness and evil that are about to flood this globe presage the most wonderful news in human history!

In this issue, the *Trumpet* illuminates this sign: the geopolitical shift in favor of this world's growing Gentile powers. The terrorist attacks—the rise of Iran—the drawdown of U.S. forces in Iraq—the retreat of Israel—these are early indicators. The articles that follow put these events into their prophetic context.

We will look squarely at the remarkable rise of radical Islam and where it is leading. We will examine the measurable decline of Western, specifically American, power. We will expose two other world powers gaining ascendancy exactly in keeping with the Bible's prophetic outline.

We will take an unblinking look at just what this world should expect when the early indications we see today explode into their full scope.

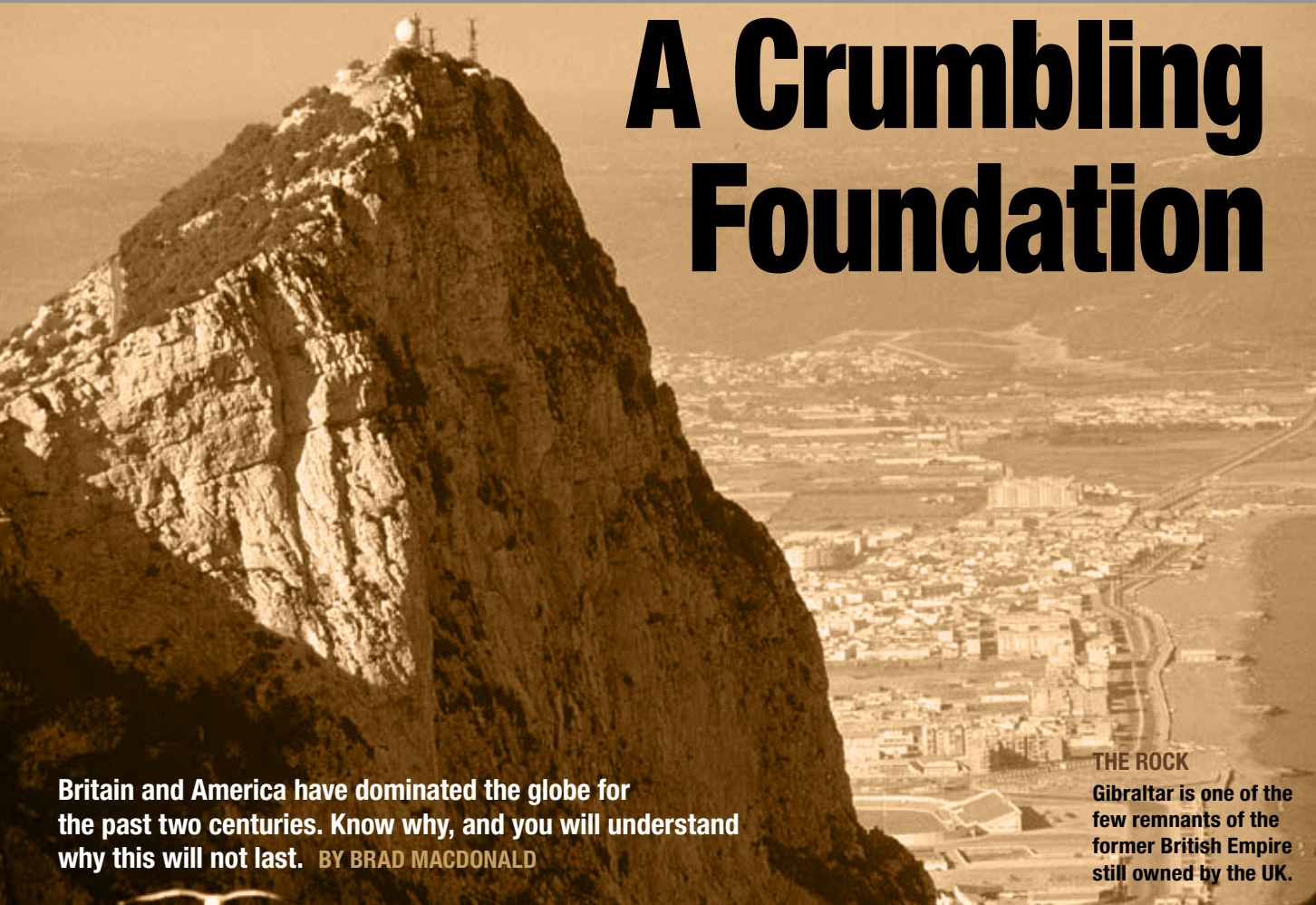
And we will discuss the hope of physical protection God affords those who put their trust in Him—and the far greater hope of a new world, governed by God, which will begin when the darkness has passed.

But what darkness. 9/11 was the first sip of a bitter cup for Anglo-America—7/7 the second. Soon we will look back upon these terrorist strikes as mere pinpricks.

The time for complacency is past.

The times of the Gentiles are upon us. ■

A Crumbling Foundation



Britain and America have dominated the globe for the past two centuries. Know why, and you will understand why this will not last. **BY BRAD MACDONALD**

THE ROCK
Gibraltar is one of the few remnants of the former British Empire still owned by the UK.

“WITH HER LEFT HAND SHE was leading the advance of the conquering Allied armies into the heart of Germany,” Winston Churchill said, “and with her right, on the other side of the globe, she was irresistibly and swiftly breaking up the power of Japan.”

Churchill, in this April 17, 1945, speech to the British House of Commons, recognized the role that World War II played in thrusting the United States to “a height never attained by any nation in history.” American power became so immense during World War II that it stood at the vanguard of the most epic of wars in both Europe and Asia. History has never produced a single nation with such wealth and power.

Although millions of people have joined Churchill in acknowledging American greatness, few understand the truth about exactly *what* drove the U.S. to such heights.

The same can be said of the global preponderance of the British Empire during the 19th and early 20th centuries. At its height, it governed a quarter of the

Earth’s inhabitants and encompassed a quarter of the its surface.

The fact that America and the British Empire attained unmatched greatness in back-to-back centuries was not coincidence; it actually fulfilled a remarkable, millennia-old biblical prophecy.

Understanding why these nations achieved unparalleled wealth and power is crucial to understanding why they are about to crumble. This truth proves the veracity of the Bible and the existence of the great promise-keeping Creator God.

Age-Old Prophecy

The modern history of American and British greatness is rooted in ancient history, as recorded in the Old Testament. You can study these biblical roots in our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.

The family line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the key theme in the history of what made America and Britain great. Chapters 12 through 50 in Genesis detail this family history.

In Genesis 12:1-2, God rewarded the unerring obedience of Abraham

by promising that He would “make of thee a great nation.” In Genesis 17, God promised Abraham again that He would “multiply thee exceedingly” (verse 2) and that Abraham would be “a father of many nations” (verse 4).

Following Abraham’s death, God confirmed the same promises to Abraham’s son, Isaac: “And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and I will give unto thy seed all these countries, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 26:4).

Upon Isaac’s death, the promises passed to Isaac’s son Jacob, whom God renamed *Israel*. This is the first time God specifically refers to what we know to be America and the British Commonwealth. Consider the revealing terminology of Genesis 35:11: “And God said to [Jacob], I am God almighty. Be fruitful and multiply: a *nation* and a *company of nations* shall come from you, and kings shall be born of your stock” (Amplified Bible).

Abraham’s grandson Jacob had 12 sons, but God established that it was Jacob’s son Joseph through whom He would perpetuate the promises of national greatness

originally made to Abraham.

Under God's direction, Jacob passed on the birthright promise of greatness to Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. This account can be read in Genesis 48:2-5 and 19, where the aging patriarch stated that Manasseh "shall become a people and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother [Ephraim] shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations." God promised that Ephraim and Manasseh were to become two of the world's mightiest powers—one a globe-encompassing empire of nations, and the other the wealthiest, most influential nation on Earth.

The United States and Britain in Prophecy describes these prophecies thoroughly and explains in vivid detail the remarkable truth that the nations of the British Commonwealth (those of British heritage—primarily Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa) and the United States of America are the modern-day descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh! The greatness of these nations is a direct result of God fulfilling His promises to Abraham and his seed.

The Bible makes clear that British and American domination over the past two centuries has not been mere luck, nor the result of any righteousness or goodness on the part of the people of Britain and America. If we understood the *true* reason—that it came from blessings for one man's obedience—our peoples could avoid losing that domination.

God is clearly the *author* of American and British greatness. And *how* has He done it?

Elements of Power

In his classic text, *Politics Among Nations*, Hans Morgenthau identified a number of important characteristics that combine to determine national greatness—among them geography, natural resources, industrial capacity and military preparedness. The extent to which a nation possesses these elements directly impacts the nation's wealth, strength and influence. To be great, a nation must be strong in most, if not all, of these areas.

Review American and British supremacy with these elements in mind, and it is evident that God played a direct role in delivering *all* of them into the hands of these peoples.

GEOGRAPHY, the most stable element of national power, has played a critical role in establishing British and Ameri-

can global dominance. Every nation is impacted by its location and geography. Although Russia, for example, is the largest nation in the world and possesses vast amounts of raw materials, it lacks a natural border on its west and southwest, leaving this massive power vulnerable to invasion—a handicap that has repeatedly figured into its history.

America's geographic isolation has been a key factor contributing to American supremacy. The fact that it sits between the world's two largest oceans has essentially alleviated the probability of invasion, allowing America to pursue internal interests with little or no concern about foreign threats. And although this is less of a factor in modern times, "It is fallacious to assume, as is frequently done, that the technical development of transportation, communications and warfare has eliminated altogether the isolating factor of the oceans" (Morgenthau, *ibid.*).

The same can be said for Britain, and even many of its Commonwealth nations. On numerous occasions, the English Channel has saved the British from vicious neighbors. This treacherous strip of water thwarted Rome's attempts to invade more than once; even though Rome did eventually invade England, the blustery Channel remained a thorn in its side the entire time it occupied the island.

If oceans are the watery fields that people must cross to travel between continents, then ports and sea lanes are the gates through which people must enter to visit individual nations. The nations that control those gates brandish significant influence over global commerce and possess a strategic military advantage.

Quite remarkably, between them Britain and America have had control over *every* major sea gate and sea lane in the world!

This, too, was part of the promises made to Israel: "And they blessed Rebekah [Isaac's wife], and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them" (Genesis 24:60).

The sea gates not only delivered great wealth into the hands of Britain and America, they also played critical roles in their military histories. Consider the consequences, for example, if Great Britain hadn't controlled the Strait of Gibraltar, the western gateway into the Mediterranean, during World War II.

The British Commonwealth and America were also blessed with an in-



comparable abundance of NATURAL RESOURCES.

The most important natural resource is food. America's self-sufficiency has historically been one of its greatest advantages. In like manner, Britain at its height had access to boundless quantities of food thanks to the globe-spanning reach of its empire and the fact that it owned the sea lanes through which food and other goods were carried.

Great Britain dominated global trade and commerce. Cloth, spices and tea from Asia, gold and minerals from South Africa—all these contributed to its wealth and power.

Read Deuteronomy 33:13-17 and notice the great wealth that was to be bestowed upon the descendants of Joseph. This prophecy alone is a powerful indicator of who modern Israel is. As Herbert W. Armstrong wrote, "Whoever is Ephraim and Manasseh today must have been in possession of the Earth's choicest agricultural, mineral and other wealth—the great gold and silver mines; iron, oil and coal; timber and other resources" (*The United States and Britain in Prophecy*).

With these prophecies in mind, we can't view it as coincidence that over half of all tillable, cultivable, temperate-zone lands on Earth came after A.D. 1800 into the possession of America and Britain.

These two entities, at their height, possessed natural resources in unmatched



CRITICAL CHOKE-POINT

Billions of dollars' worth of goods and critical military hardware float through the Panama Canal every year.

REUTERS

pursue its foreign policy is restricted.

No other nation in the world has a military capacity comparable to that of the U.S. In 2004, America led the world in military expenditures with \$455 billion spent on military hardware and personnel. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the U.S. figure was more than the combined total of the 32 next most powerful nations!

Early in the 19th century, it was the British Navy under Admiral Lord Nelson that blocked the English Channel and spearheaded the demise of Napoleon and his navy. The peace that settled across the oceans that century came largely because of the British Navy. Under pressure from the advancing Axis powers in World War II, it was the British who invented and used radar to assist in defeating Hitler's armies. To the east in the South Pacific, it was the American-designed atomic bomb that brought Japan to its knees.

Who can deny the military supremacy of Great Britain and America over the past two centuries?

abundance. World petroleum output in 1950 was almost 3.8 billion barrels. Of this total, the United States *alone* produced over half. Together, the British Commonwealth and the U.S. produced 60 percent of the crude petroleum, not including their vast foreign investments. Britain and America mined 50 percent more than *all other nations combined*. In 1950, the British Commonwealth and America produced three quarters of the world's steel—the U.S. *alone* producing almost 60 percent of the world's supply. They also produced half again as much pig iron as *all other nations combined*. They possessed nearly 95 percent of the world's nickel, 80 percent of the world's aluminum, and 75 percent of the zinc. Together, Britain and America produced two thirds of the world's rubber, and dominated the world's copper, lead, tin, bauxite and other precious metal outputs.

These are stunning facts! Like or dislike America or Britain, no one can deny the sheer wealth and industrial might these nations once possessed, and still do today—though to a diminishing extent.

INDUSTRIAL CAPACITY is a nation's ability to transform its raw materials and natural resources into readily usable products. Raw materials such as oil and coal are useless if the technology and infrastructure to harness the energy within them is not available. Both America and Britain have benefited immensely

from their industries. It's no surprise that modern industry actually began in Britain with the Industrial Revolution.

Highlighting the importance of industrial capacity to a nation's power, Morgenthau wrote, "What distinguishes the superpowers from all other nations ... is their virtual *industrial self-sufficiency* and their *technological capacity* to stay abreast of the other nations" (emphasis mine throughout).

Until the past two decades, no nations even came close to competing with the U.S. in technological development. Evidence of American industrial and technological capacity is scattered across the globe. Farmers in Russia plant wheat using the American-designed Global Positioning System. Diseased people throughout Africa use U.S.-designed medicine. Even Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil-producing nation, is supported by American technology and human resources.

Although the aforementioned elements of national power are important, what gives them their teeth is how they contribute to the nation's MILITARY PREPAREDNESS. In this respect too, America and Britain have excelled all other nations.

If diplomacy is the velvet of a nation's foreign policy, military preparedness is its steel. Without the military capacity to back up its rhetoric (combined with the political will), the nation's power to

One Man's Faith

Possessing all of the physical characteristics required for national greatness, America and the British Commonwealth have been the dominant peoples of the past two centuries. It behooves us to remember *why*.

The sole reason these peoples received such wealth and power was that God, though having deliberately delayed it for 2,520 years, was keeping His promise of *national greatness* to the patriarch Abraham! (see again Genesis 12:1-2; 17:1-6).

America and Britain did not deserve or earn the wealth and influence they possessed. The great God of this universe gave it to them as a gift!

America's 16th president publicly acknowledged this fact in his April 30, 1863, proclamation: "We find ourselves in the peaceful possession of the fairest portion of the Earth. ... *We toiled not in the acquirement or the establishment of them*. ... We have been the recipients of the choicest blessings of heaven." Peoples of America and the British Commonwealth today would do well to meditate on Abraham Lincoln's words!

We can't emphasize this point enough. America and the British Commonwealth became the two greatest powers in the world solely due to the faith and obedience of *one man*. Strive to fathom this profound truth!

See AMERICA page 12 ▶

The New ISLAMI

ON THE SMALL STAGE OF the Middle East, “the times of the Gentiles” is playing out in miniature.

Coming soon to a city near you.

Arbitrary violence.

Daily attacks. Israel in retreat. Terrorists becoming politicians even while maintaining their vicious views. The world’s mightiest military helpless to stop an insurgency—eager to turn the job over to underqualified locals.

And in the midst of it all, a head-shakingly belligerent nation defiantly rearing up—knowing that its greatest enemies are simply *unwilling to stop it*.

The eyes of the world are fixed on the drama unfolding in the Middle East. Why? People may not recognize it, but this extraordinary narrative is about nothing less than *the emergence of a frightening new global power*—one that demands to be reckoned with.

Iran is roaring onto center stage, riding a surge of circumstances and events that have prepared its way.

And it is doing so exactly according to Jesus Christ’s prophecy of “the times of the Gentiles”—and right on schedule.

The Glory of Persia

How did Iran suddenly burst into such prominence in our day? The story is fascinating.

Before 1935, Iran was always known to the West as *Persia*.

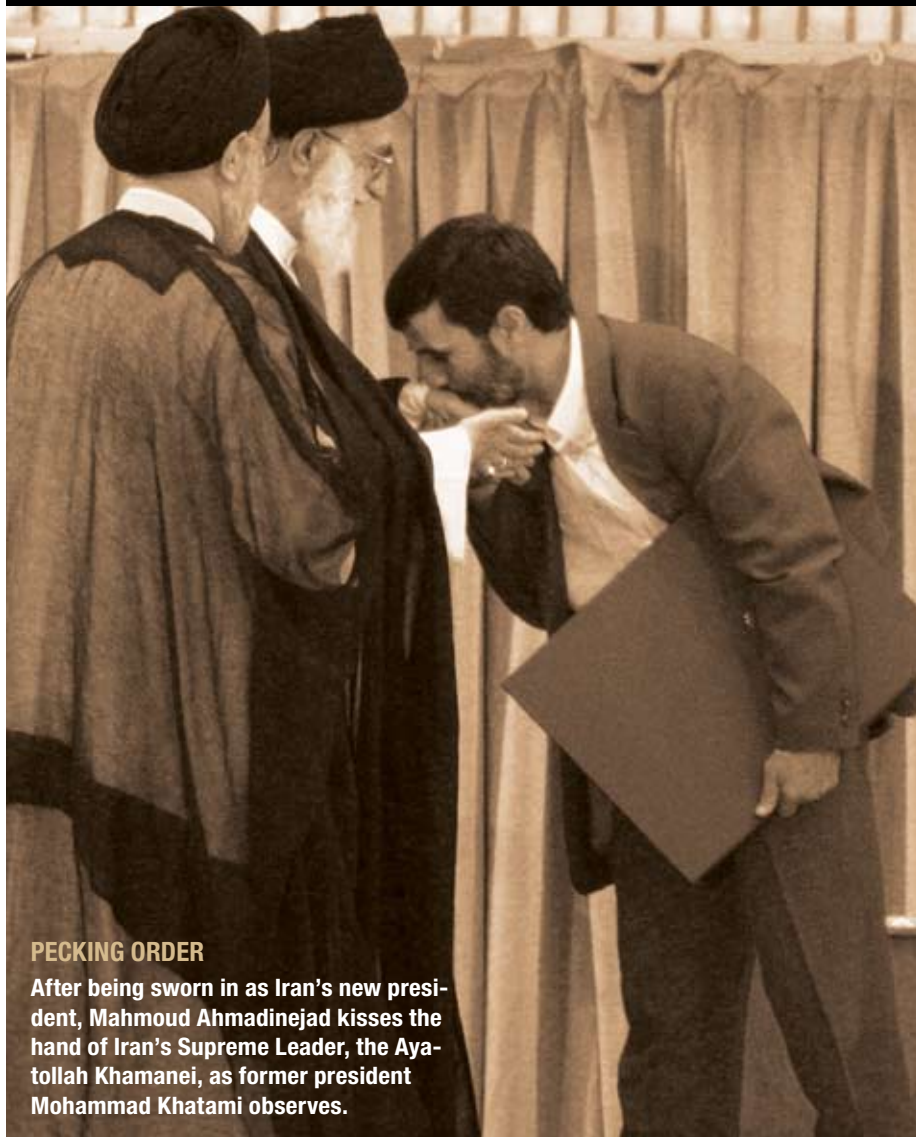
The resplendent Persian Empire, which dominated Southeast Asia from the sixth to the fourth centuries B.C., was one of four dominant Gentile superpowers in history. Governed by luminaries such as Cyrus the Great and Darius, it expanded and flourished.

Later rulers, however, succumbed to decadence, and when the empire was attacked by the ambitious Alexander the Great, it fell quickly.

Nevertheless, the flame of that glorious history still burns in the heart of Iran.

Over the centuries, the power of the Persians rose and fell with the tides. At

Look who’s seized center stage in the Middle East. BY JOEL HILLIKER



PECKING ORDER

After being sworn in as Iran’s new president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad kisses the hand of Iran’s Supreme Leader, the Ayatollah Khamenei, as former president Mohammad Khatami observes.

the beginning of the 20th century it was in ebb, and for decades Iran remained a minor player pressured by the United Kingdom and Russia (later the Soviet Union). Not until 1943 did Iran receive assurances of postwar independence. Still, its oil, discovered in 1908, was controlled by foreign nations, especially Britain and America, clear up through 1973—and its politics were pro-Western.

But the seeds of revolution were taking root through these years. In stark

contrast to the liberal government, hard-core Islam was spreading among the populace, and as far back as the 1940s an Iranian Islamist leader named Ruhollah Khomeini was breathing fire. “[T]hose who study *jihad* will understand why Islam wants to conquer the whole world,” he wrote in a 1942 essay. “Those who know nothing of Islam pretend that Islam counsels against war. Those are witless. Islam says: Kill all the unbelievers just as they would kill you all! ... What-

C SUPERPOWER

ever good there is exists thanks to the sword and in the shadow of the sword! People cannot be made obedient except with the sword!”

Throughout these years, Islamic groups grew increasingly agitated. The Islamic clergy, led by Khomeini (who became an ayatollah in the 1950s), roundly criticized Iranian politicians for their spineless dealings with the West. They ignited widespread protests throughout the late 1970s, and were able to isolate the pro-Western Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and force his exile on Jan. 16, 1979. Within a month, Khomeini took control and established Iran as an ultra-conservative theocracy.

Khomeini represented the genuine arrival of a fiery brand of Islam that stirred the spirit of many Muslims. The sight of a turban crowning a nation's leader for the first time in generations inspired many with the notion that this was a beachhead for Islam—*today Iran, tomorrow the world.*

It didn't turn out that way. A year and a half later, Sept. 22, 1980, Saddam Hussein's Iraq invaded western Iran to gain control of a contested waterway, and Iran lashed back, triggering a vicious eight-year war that killed 1½ million, sapped the strength of both countries, and ended inconclusively.

This, it seems, was the perfect outcome as far as the United States was concerned—the last thing it wanted to see was a decisive victor that could then pose a larger threat. (In a National Security Directive in 1983, the U.S. pledged to do “whatever was necessary and legal” to prevent Iran from winning and began to supply intelligence and material support to Iraq; meanwhile, it secretly sold arms to Iran.)

After the war, however, both nations rebuilt quickly. Saddam Hussein managed to incur the wrath of the U.S. in doing so, and in the first Gulf War, Iraq's development was again considerably set back.

Meanwhile Iran, which understandably remained neutral in that war, quietly went about the business of becoming a genuine, bristling power. Khomeini's

death in 1989 brought in Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and elections that summer ushered in Hashemi Rafsanjani as president. This pair laid considerable groundwork for Iran to become the preeminent power in the region.

To advance toward regional supremacy, Iran endeavored to seize the reins of leadership among radical Islamists. Thus, throughout the 1990s, it aggressively bankrolled international terrorism (on four continents) and upgraded its military. Khomeini would have been proud.

A popular reform movement empowered Mohammad Khatami, replacing Rafsanjani in 1997—but then something interesting happened. With a “moderate” now president, Iran enjoyed an image makeover. It effectively mutated from an outcast state into a bona fide partner to many countries, particularly Russia and China. Emerging into the sunshine of broader international acceptance, Iran nurtured political and economic ties worldwide—despite the reality that Khatami had no actual power, and the mullahs continued to pursue their violent program.

It was under Khatami's watch that the U.S. decided to make *the Taliban* its first target in the war on terror. It so happened that this hardline Islamic group in Afghanistan, just over Iran's eastern border, was Tehran's enemy—and the U.S. did the Iranians a favor by deposing it.

But that was just the prelude. Then came the main event: The U.S. next focused its sights on Saddam Hussein.

Maybe Washington had been lulled by Khatami's charisma and by its own hopes of the imminent triumph of Iran's moderate movement; maybe it figured it had to move a step at a time and that Iran would be next; maybe it believed its mere presence in the region would intimidate Tehran into acquiescence. Whatever the case, ousting Saddam Hussein well and truly scrapped the dual-containment policy that had kept the Islamic Republic in check for 2½ decades, and *virtually guar-*

anteed that Iran would achieve its first ambition: *supremacy in the Middle East.*

It was truly a watershed moment. The U.S. essentially threw the door open for Iran.

Iran responded immediately, vigorously pressing its advantage.

To advance toward regional supremacy, Iran endeavored to seize the reins of leadership among radical Islamists.

A Bold Forecast

The *Trumpet's* editor in chief forecast for over 12 years, based on Bible prophecy, that Iran would rise to lead the radical Islamic camp and in the process assume preeminence in the Middle East. Over a decade ago, in “Is Iraq About to Fall to Iran?” (*Trumpet*, December 1994), Gerald Flurry detailed the additional prophetic indications that *Iraq could come under Iran's control.* (These are spelled out in his free booklet *The King of the South.*)

Today we're watching that happen.

As Amos 3:7 states, God alerts His true servants to the important prophetic trends that will affect world events. We cannot afford to ignore these powerful statements in the *Trumpet's* history. These predictions resulted from prayerful study and comparison of several relevant Bible prophecies with current events.

However, God does not give us a complete picture all at once. As the Apostle Paul said, “now we see through a glass, darkly.” God requires that we *watch* events (Luke 21:36) so that, as they unfold, we see more clearly how specific prophecies will be fulfilled.

Iran's gentle conquest of Iraq is happening in a far more extraordinary fashion than the *Trumpet* anticipated! Not only did it come about by the hand of the United States, but also at the expense of U.S. power. It appears that Washington,



FREE UPON REQUEST

now weakened, will yield to the pressure to withdraw from the region (the generals have announced a possible pullback of two thirds of American forces next year) having spilled far more blood and spent far more borrowed cash than it had planned. Whenever this occurs, you can be sure that Iran will eagerly fill the void.

The situation demonstrates the weakening of the American superpower and the strengthening of this radical Middle Eastern power more vividly than anything we have yet witnessed! A tremendous sign of the coming *times of the Gentiles*.

Ultimately the U.S. will have spent the lives of its soldiers and billions of its treasure to create another Shiite Islamic republic in the Mideast.

A Budding Islamic Empire

With Saddam Hussein gone, Iran wants more than anything to extend its influence by forcibly transforming its former enemy into its closest ally. It seems to be finding considerable success.

“We have come to our Iranian brothers to ask them for help,” Iraqi Defense Minister Saadoun al-Duleimi announced in the first week of July. He was visiting his counterpart in Iran, Ali Shamkhani, to discuss the beginnings of robust military cooperation between the two countries, including Iran’s contribution of \$1 billion in reconstruction aid to the Iraqi government, of which a slice would go to the Defense Ministry.

The beginnings of military cooperation between these two neighbors—a stick in the eye to Iraq’s American benefactors, to be sure—is as unsurprising as it is audacious. The Iranian defense minister went so far as to ask Baghdad to prevent the U.S. from establishing a long-term base on its soil. Both defense ministers bristled at the suggestion posed by reporters that American opposition to their new military arrangement should be considered. “No one can prevent us from reaching an agreement,” Shamkhani said, to which Duleimi chimed in, “Nobody can dictate to Iraq its relations with other countries.”

The collaboration extends to the energy sector. In order to help solve the energy crisis in Iraq, the new prime minister, Ibrahim al-Jaafari, signed energy agreements with the Iranian government in July. There are three parts to these agree-

ments: 1) linking the electricity grid of the two countries; 2) using Iran’s Caspian ports to import refined fuels into Iraq from central Asia; and 3) building a 40-kilometer oil pipeline between the Iraqi oil center of Basra and Iran’s Abadan port.

How Iran would love to gain access to Iraq’s oil! Mr. Flurry’s words from December 1994 ring out: “Can you imagine the power [the Iranians] would have if they gained control of Iraq, the second-largest oil-producing country in the world?”

Duleimi’s trip was the first such visit since the two countries went to war in 1980. While apologizing for the

war, Duleimi placed the blame squarely on Saddam Hussein. “We’ve come here to open a new page in our relations against

the painful page of the past,” he told reporters. A new page indeed—especially considering the fact that Iraq’s biggest military partner at present is the U.S., Iran’s number-one enemy!

But Iraq knows that the Americans are only there for the short term. Eventually they will vacate, and Iran will remain next door. Prime Minister Jaafari, at a May 18 news conference with Iran’s foreign minister, said as much: “[T]he party that will leave Iraq is the United States, because it will eventually withdraw. But the party that will live with the Iraqis is Iran, because it is a neighbor to Iraq.” It’s clear where his loyalties lie.

Certainly a U.S. pullout would open Iraq to greater influence by Iran. Is it not likely, given the fact the mighty U.S. has been unable to squash the insurgency in Iraq, that terrorists will seize the initiative in those areas from which it withdraws and give the far-less-mighty Iraqi security forces more fight than they can handle? Considering the security and economic cooperation already beginning between Iraq and Iran, it seems virtually assured that Iranian forces will be called upon to help restore order.

Imagine the prospect of Iran succeeding where America could not.

Creating a Monster

Days after Defense Minister Duleimi’s visit to Iran, Prime Minister Jaafari himself led a high-level delegation on a visit to Tehran. During this reportedly very friendly visit, then-President Khatami said, “Hopefully, the visit will

set a turning point in the bilateral historical relations.”

This “turning point” is a goal Iran has worked toward for some time. Tehran has labored intensively to infiltrate Iraqi politics in order to achieve it—even before America’s invasion of Iraq in 2003. And Jaafari—who tried to spread the Iranian Revolution to Iraq in 1979 and was subsequently forced into exile in Iran, who maintains strong links with Iran’s ruling clerics, whose party’s official position is that Iraq should be an Islamic state—appears to be more than sympathetic to Iran’s aim.

But Iran’s work behind the curtain in order to draw Iraq into its sphere of influence hasn’t been limited to politics—it has included culture and religion (see “Iraq’s Iranian City,” page 11).

A look at Iraq’s demographics reveals why Iran has pursued such an aggressive strategy.

Saddam Hussein’s Sunni Baathist leadership was an anomaly in a country with a majority of Shiite Muslims. With him gone and the people given a political voice, Iraq now has a Shiite prime minister, a Shiite-dominated government and a Shiite-dominated constitution-drafting committee headed by a Shiite. Shiites rule the nest, and, simply put, many of their hearts still resonate with the spirit of the Iranian Revolution.

Over recent months, Iraqi officials have sparred over whether—or, more accurately, the degree to which—Islamic law should be enshrined in the new Iraqi constitution. Most Shiite leaders in Iraq want the country to become an Islamic state, not so different from the Iranian model. Iran wants this most of all.

In flat opposition to America’s goals, vociferously stated shortly after the fall of Baghdad, this outcome seems inevitable. Iraq will almost surely end up becoming, like Iran, some form of Islamic theocracy.

As unbelievable as it once would have seemed, ultimately the U.S. will have spent the lives of its soldiers and billions of its treasure to create another Shiite Islamic republic in the Mideast.

Jordan’s King Abdullah has said, “If Iraq goes Islamic republic, then yes, we’ve opened ourselves to a whole set of new problems that will not be limited to the borders of Iraq.”

Essentially, the Middle East would be dominated by a broad crescent of radically infused Shia governments sitting on the world’s most prized oil reserves.

A whole set of new problems, indeed. And largely thanks to America.

Surrounded by Iran

On Sept. 11, 2003, former President Rafsanjani was quoted by the Islamic Republic News Agency as saying, “Even though the United States has a physical presence in the countries that surround us, the reality is that the United States is, in fact, surrounded by Iran. God has pushed the Americans into a quagmire

in Iraq. If they stay, they will be victims every day, and if they leave it will be a loss of honor.”

Two years later, it’s difficult to deny the truth in these ugly statements.

But why? Isn’t the United States the world’s supreme *superpower*?

In truth, no label can disguise the fact that Washington’s hands are effectively tied with respect to this “little” Mideast nation of Iran.

For one, as the *Trumpet* has exam-

ined previously, the U.S. relies heavily on Iran to help stabilize Iraq by keeping the Shiites quiet. (The insurgency is led by Sunnis; if Iran incited a Shiite uprising, the U.S. would be in deep trouble.) This dependence will only increase should Washington withdraw troops.

On top of this, the U.S. would be logistically incapable of maintaining the level and duration of commitment needed to deal with Iran militarily. In fact, declining recruitment numbers and an unsustainable level of military responsi-

Iraq’s Iranian City

WHILE IRAQ’S CONSTITUTIONAL authority bickered over whether to codify Sharia law as the law of the land, in parts of the country Shiite leaders went about implementing it as the law of the street.

Back in February, the *Telegraph* reported that a “silent and largely undocumented social revolution has transformed the Shia-dominated south of Iraq into a virtual Islamic state in the two years since the U.S. Army invaded” (February 14).

In July, several news sources confirmed that Basra—Iraq’s main port city and oil production center, and which borders Iran—is dominated by extremist Shiite Muslims and is “steadily being transformed into a mini-theocracy” (*New York Times*, July 7).

Residents of Basra, once one of the more secular of the Shia cities, “describe the changes as an Iranian-style revolution, hesitant at first but rapidly building momentum” (*Telegraph*, op. cit.).

Tools for this transformation include instruction in the universities and mosques, and sometimes brutal enforcement. “Religious Shiites do not have to legally enshrine Sharia, or koranic law, to exercise their will. Enforcement of

Islamic practices is done on the streets, in the shadows” (*New York Times*, op. cit.).

Shiite militias, directed by the controlling political parties and working in cooperation with the official security forces, enforce strict Shiite religious rulings involving dress standards, music, alcohol and the like. For instance, through intimidation and violence, within a year the militias have virtually put a stop to women being seen in public without the traditional Islamic head scarf and full-length black robe. These social changes are Iranian, comments one Basra resident. “Basra has really become an Iranian city. I no longer recognize it” (*Christian Science Monitor*, July 13).

Iran’s fingerprints are everywhere. Posters of the Ayatollah Khomeini are displayed in the streets. The rhetoric is the same also: A poster of Khomeini outside the governor’s office displays the words “All the problems of Islam stem from colonialism and the Great Powers.”

In addition, as the *Telegraph* reported, Sharia law is now routinely used instead of civil codes in Basra’s courts. Shiite rule has even changed which days constitute the weekend: To avoid including Saturday, which Jews celebrate as a day of rest, the official weekend in

this part of the country is now Thursday and Friday.

The Shiite takeover of southern Iraq and the imposition of the strict code of Islamic law have been underway since Saddam Hussein was toppled. Since the Iraqi elections in January this



BASRA
A citizen walks by the closed South Oil Company in Basra.

year, however, this process has accelerated with more radical politicians coming to power and the consolidation of Shiite religious rule. Basra’s provincial council is dominated by Shiite politicians (35 out of 41) who are loyal to the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI)—a Shiite political party with strong representation in the national government—and to Ayatollah Mohammed Yacoubi, a radical cleric associated with

Moqtada al-Sadr, the notorious anti-American cleric supported by Iran. One official in Basra claims that half the Governing Council members have ties to Iran.

Numerous small religious parties—such as God’s Vengeance and Master of Martyrs—have the backing of these major Shiite groups and are suspected of “being agents of the Iranian government” (*New York Times*, op. cit.). One such party was established in Iran by an Iraqi cleric seeking refuge there during Hussein’s reign.

Despite having differences, politicians composing Basra’s majority Shiite government agree on the future of the city: “Today, our society is changing, becoming more religious,” said its provincial governor. “We must reflect that Basra is becoming a purely Islamic city” (*Christian Science Monitor*, op. cit.).

This, incidentally, is being accomplished at no small price: Iraqi officials estimate that about 1,000 people, mostly Sunnis, have been killed in the city in the past several months (ibid.). Sunnis accuse intelligence agents from Iran of masterminding these killings.

For the strategic southern city of Basra, Gerald Flurry’s statement that Iraq would come under the control of Iran has—for all intents and purposes—become reality.

ESSAM AL-SUDANI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

bilities in combat areas are already making America look to get out of Iraq.

Then there is the consideration of both world opinion and public opinion within America concerning U.S. intervention in Iraq, and the still-sensitive issue of whether or not there was a smoking gun. The pressure is intense not to make the same “mistakes” in Iran. For example: American intelligence sources now say Iran is *10 years* from making a nuclear weapon, according to the *Washington Post*. This is absurd, but the idea effectively buys the U.S. time—at least in its own mind—in its dealings with the Islamic Republic.

Unable to act, the U.S. is left only to dream. Administration officials hope against hope that the Iranian government is near its end, soon to be trampled under the country’s slow march to democracy. The *Washington Times* quoted an official familiar with policy discussions on Iran as saying that the administration keeps “hoping the mullahs will leave before Iran gets a nuclear weapons capability.”

This is essentially what America’s foreign policy toward Iran has been reduced to.

Iran knows it.

Times of the Gentiles.

Prophetic Timetable

Iran has already attained an impressive degree of clout within the Middle East. Gary Samore of London’s International Institute for Strategic Studies said, “The Gulf countries naturally see Iran as the big power, much more powerful than any Gulf state including Saudi Arabia, and as a country that needs to be balanced.” Iranian political scientist Mohammed Hadi Semati of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace concurs: “The Bush administration has to face the reality that Iran is now the regional superpower.”

As impressive as Iran is, however, it’s about to become even more so. Considering that the nation has a new president who strengthens the hand of the mullahs, the world should brace itself for a series of bold, pushy moves that establish Iran as a legitimate *global* superpower.

The timing of Iran’s rise is no fluke. It is occurring precisely according to the Bible’s prophetic timetable, and it should make plain the urgency of the times we live in—how near we truly are to witnessing Jesus Christ’s prophecy of the times of the Gentiles play out before us on the world stage. ■

However, while it was the faith of a single man that secured the unmatched wealth and power of America and Britain over the past two centuries, it is the sins of the American and British peoples that have hastened the loss of those blessings and demise of these great powers.

Losing the Elements of Power

Speaking to Ephraim and Manasseh today, God said, “And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring *seven times more plagues* upon you according to your sins” (Leviticus 26:21).

The British Empire attained the height of its power in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; the United States, as Winston Churchill noted, reached its peak during and right after World War II. Since these times, the greatness of both peoples has deteriorated as a result of their increasing sins.

While the *Trumpet* takes little plea-

The U.S. has transformed from being a world supplier of critical resources into the world’s largest debtor nation.

sure in discussing these national calamities, it is our hope that this message will wake people up!

The peoples of America and the nations of the British Commonwealth lead the world in social problems. Droughts, floods and other natural disasters have plundered the agricultural wealth of Australia and Britain, and the U.S. agriculture industry is rapidly plummeting. These nations have carelessly let the critical sea gates they once owned slide through their fingers, leaving these nations at the mercy of China and Europe in global trade and commerce.

Compared to the more than 50 percent of world oil production America accounted for in 1950, today the United States produces only 11.1 percent of the world total—and relies on foreigners for more than 60 percent of its oil. Whereas America and Britain manufactured about 75 percent of the world’s steel in 1950, by the late 1990s, American and British steel production had plummeted to about 14 percent of world production. These nations have experienced similar declines in the mining of key minerals, including gold, silver, nickel, aluminum and

zinc. America and Britain now seek these minerals from foreigners.

The United States has transformed from being a world supplier of critical resources into the world’s largest debtor nation—a stunning and dangerous change of direction.

The God-given elements that drove Britain’s and America’s greatness are rapidly being lost!

You can study the last half of Leviticus 26 to see all the curses for disobedience God promises to send upon America and Britain, and read your daily headlines to see how they are coming to pass.

Gentiles to Wrest Control

The rapid decline of these two major Israelite powers—the British Empire’s decline in the mid-20th century, and now the irreparable weakening of U.S. influence—is clearing the way for Gentile power blocs to assume the lead in global politics (see page 13). Soon these

Israelite nations’ power will be gone. The “times of the Gentiles” will begin in earnest.

There is a route you can take, however, to escape the catastrophic demise of America and the British Commonwealth nations. That too, can be found in the story of Abraham.

Study Abraham’s life for yourself. Note the number of occasions where Abraham willingly and without hesitation obeyed God. This man was prepared to sacrifice everything for God—even family and possessions. Those who strive to match Abraham’s obedience and faith will be saved from the calamities soon to fall upon America and Britain!

Upon repentance and obedience to God, you too can experience a future life of wealth and greatness, just as America and Britain have, thanks to the faith and obedience of Abraham.

God has a master plan for this Earth that is unfolding before our eyes. You are part of that plan. If you would like to begin to understand your role, it’s important to learn the key to understanding Bible prophecy. Request *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* to gain this all-important key.

And after reading this book, request our free book *The Incredible Human Potential* for a detailed explanation of the future of man. Together, these books will introduce you to the most remarkable, encouraging and inspiring truth anyone could find! ■



The Contest for World Domination

Meet the three contenders. BY RYAN MALONE

NEWIS IS A DAILY COMMODITY. A car bombing, an election, a coup. Specific events can be earth-shaking—but it's their cumulative effect that truly matters. Step back from the brush strokes of individual events and view the entire global canvas, and what do you have?

The Fall of Giants

Since the beginning of the 19th century, the Anglicized world has dominated global politics—from the reign of the British Empire at its peak to the rise to superpowerdom of the United States.

Great Britain rose to the pinnacle of power following the end of the Holy Roman Empire's dominance over Europe and the fall of Napoleon in 1815. By the early 20th century, it had become the largest empire in history.

Across the Atlantic, the newly independent United States took a huge step with the 1803 Louisiana Purchase—the largest real-estate transaction to that point in history. Though at first the budding country had no real global influence and remained relatively uninvolved in foreign affairs, this changed with the

dawn of the 20th century as Europe's Great War lured America out of isolation. Finally, after World War II, with the decline of Britain's global empire and the fall of the pound sterling as the world's reserve currency, America (along with its currency) achieved global supremacy.

The only power strong enough to counter the U.S. after 1945 was the Soviet Union. Tension between this Communist union of "republics" and America became a Cold War. This ended when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, which left America the world's lone superpower—an unprecedented achievement for any single nation to that point.

Three Rivals Emerge

Later during the 1990s, however, three power blocs began forging to challenge America's global dominion.

When the Soviet Union—which had largely squelched Islamist sentiment—fell, radical leaders and politicians came out of the woodwork in Mideast politics. The Islamic Republic of Iran soon became the center of gravity in the Middle East.

Iran's promotion of terrorism led to a global escalation in terrorist attacks.

The heights that terrorism reached on Sept. 11, 2001, are still being felt: The U.S. has since been embroiled in a crusade against terror—a military operation that is testing its strength and will.

Of the three emerging blocs, the Islamic power is currently the most visible (see page 8), but two more colossal powers are rising—largely unnoticed by the world.

Return of Europe

Germany's reunification in 1989 marked a turning point for Europe. The fledgling European economic zone adopted the euro in 2002, and the combined GDPs of its member nations surpassed that of the U.S. as the world's largest economy.

Accompanying Europe's rise as a power bloc, its largest and most powerful nation also rose to new heights. In fact, the EU provided Germany a viable cover to help it regain its status as a major nation. After creating a crisis in the Balkans by recognizing Croatian and Slovenian independence, Germany rallied the EU behind the cause that gave Germany an excuse to embark on its first real military venture since World War II. (Request our free booklet *The Rising Beast* for more on

how the Balkans campaign contributed to the growing influence of a German-dominated Europe.) The Union accelerated the building of its own military—taking over several NATO operations in the region. After all, the rationale for NATO's existence had been lost when the Soviet threat disappeared—providing further impetus to the EU's military development.

Its Balkans "remedy" (i.e. conquer and occupy) gave the EU a certain prestige in geopolitics. It began sending more of its troops to peacekeeping missions the world over—to the point now where Europeans do more policing in conflict areas than the U.S. In fact, Germany's Bundeswehr is now the primary international peacekeeper in Afghanistan.

On the diplomatic front, Europe has taken a leading role in the Israeli-Palestinian imbroglio. It is the only power considered a viable mediator concerning Iran's clandestine nuclear program.

In May 2004, the Union expanded to a massive federation of 25 countries. Later that year, national leaders agreed on the text for a draft constitution.

This year, however, Europe and Germany arrived at a crossroads. A leadership vacuum was exposed when a majority of French and Dutch citizens rejected the constitution. *Europe is growing too large, critics said; it's out of touch with the people.* Meanwhile, the ruling party in Germany, experiencing a crisis of its own, called for early elections.

Herein lies Germany's—and Europe's—intersection of destiny. If the troubled nation's newly elected leadership also fails to revitalize its economy

and its people, Germany will continue to falter, and the EU will buckle under the weight its troubles. But if the new government is more successful at addressing the woes of the German people and building a prosperous, focused nation, its leader will also speak for the European people.

Rising in the East

In the East, after the Cold War, Asian giants also built muscle.

Asia's economies developed in outstanding fashion, starting in Japan, then moving into Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea, and finally China—which officially entered the World Trade Organization at the end of 2001. India also joined the world economy by embracing capitalism, and its economy has grown steadily ever since.

Although the Soviet Union's fall stagnated the Russian economy, it wasn't long before a shrewd Vladimir Putin brought a sense of stability back to the bear, albeit by strong-arm tactics so characteristic throughout Russian history.

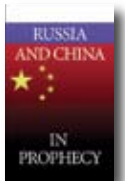
Further east, after a huge financial meltdown toward the end of the decade, East Asia renewed efforts to increase economic cooperation. As its economy took off in the 1990s, China expanded its empire—regaining Hong Kong and Macau. Chinese businesses expanded their interests in strategic waterways around the world—investing heavily in a vital Pakistani port at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, vital choke points in the Caribbean, and also the Panama Canal.

Japan's military—banned by the U.S. after World War II—got back on the job

under the guise of supporting U.S. military operations. Japan's parliament has been proposing several forms of legislation ever since to revise the charter's pacifist Article 9. Meanwhile, its prime minister has made numerous controversial visits to a war shrine that honors the soldiers who inflicted grave atrocities upon the region during World War II.

Asia also held global attention by obtaining nuclear materials: India and Pakistan, the bitter rivals of South Asia, both went nuclear, and apparently so did the rogue Stalinist regime in North Korea.

In similar fashion to the European continent, the great powers of the East are finding strength in unity. The two behemoths of the region—China and Russia—with their fickle love-hate history—now cooperate more than ever in the form of energy agreements and joint military exercises (for more, request our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy*). China and its once-bitter rival India have even participated in joint naval exercises, and relations between China and Japan are stronger than ever (see our July 2004 article "The Competition Myth").



FREE UPON REQUEST

Ganging Up on U.S.

So here we stand: Radical Islam is wearing down America's will through relentless terrorist attacks in Iraq. Oil prices continue to break records, with Washington unable to reverse the trend. Europe's euro challenges America's dollar, and the EU's defense force rivals NATO. Many Asian nations, once strong allies

The Next Big Three

A look at the three major power blocs vying to overturn American dominance.



IRAN

Claim to Fame The leader of radical Islam, Iran, continues its nuclear program despite American and European demands that it stop.

What to Watch Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will likely swing Iran further to the extreme right.



THE EU

Claim to Fame Becoming the mediator of choice for some of the thorniest international issues. Peacekeeping forces are keeping busy.

What to Watch Look for a strong leader to remedy Germany's woes—one who will speak for all of Europe.



ASIA

Claim to Fame China has rocketed into modern times economically and militarily and is impressive politically. Putin rescued Russia from a tailspin.

What to Watch Expect increased cooperation among Russia, China, Japan and the rest of Asia.

of the U.S., now look to regional powers like China and Japan.

On top of these developments, these three power blocs *collude* to marginalize and diminish the influence of the greatest single nation on Earth.

Europe drives this coalition—visible in its economic romance with Russia, China and other regional powers in Asia, and its opposition to the U.S. approach in Middle Eastern affairs.

The EU doesn't hide its motive: to challenge U.S. supremacy. Military research and development initiatives announced earlier this year are part of "a strategy to become a military superpower and close the defense technology gap with the United States" (*Times Online*, March 2).

Many of Europe's foreign policies in the Mideast and North Africa, though economically beneficial to European interests, exist additionally to counter Washington's efforts. Europe uses the Middle East as a sparring ground against many U.S. policies and plays both friend and foe to rogue nations, depending on which tactic better limits American influence. It consolidates trade links and diplomatic relations with rogue states like Iran, Syria and the Sudan—much to America's chagrin—and once it has exhausted that ploy, cracks down on these nations in order to preempt any bold moves attempted by Washington.

Asian banks, in concert with European banks, loan billions to Iran to develop its natural gas fields. Even Japan, Washington's strongest Asian ally, agreed to a \$2 billion deal early in 2004 to develop an Iranian oil field, ignoring U.S. pressure to the contrary.

China, Indonesia, India and Japan have looked to the EU economically, politically and technologically. India and the EU (India's largest trading partner) signed deals at the end of 2003 to boost trade and investment. Over the last couple of years, China has worked more intensely with the European Space Agency.

Both China and India invested millions in the EU's global satellite system, Galileo. Through this project, the EU is forming a technology bloc to rival the U.S.

Germany's strategic partnership with Russia, according to the Ludwig von Mises Institute, "covers the Euro-Asian continent, the geostrategic heart of the world. It represents an alliance that is ready and capable of challenging U.S. influence in almost any aspect" (March 9).

Even the euro exists specifically "to challenge the global hegemony of the

dollar" (T.R. Reid, *The United States of Europe*). In trade, the EU pursues trade agreements with both Asian and Latin American trade blocs, largely leaving the U.S. out in the cold.

But Asia is the continent where the U.S. has enjoyed the stronger influence. Alliances and strong relations with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and Taiwan, to name a few, give Washington considerable leverage in international politics. But even these political bulwarks are crumbling. Lately, U.S. allies in Asia (like Japan and South Korea) have distanced themselves from America while others (like China) are using their increased strength to firm up intra-Asian relations and neutralize U.S. influence.

And it is no secret that Moscow, Beijing and New Delhi have batted around the idea of forming a triple axis to counterbalance Washington. Though Russia and India have had strong ties for many years, China and India have been historic adversaries. They have never shared such sunny relations as they do now. In addition to enjoying unprecedented military cooperation, the two powers are bolstering their economic ties.

Why is this happening? Two bitter rivals do not just change their policies toward each other for no reason at all. Again, the motive is to contain U.S. influence in the East. As the *New York Times* recognized, "China's rivalry with the United States in Asia and Latin America isn't a side effect of economics; it's an explicit ambition" (Dec. 26, 2004).

When it comes to besieging U.S. influence in Asia, China stands at the helm. The pin holding Washington's Asian influence in place is its relationship with Japan. But U.S.-Japanese ties weaken as their interests diverge. Watch for further contention in this alliance, likely triggered by America's deepening economic woes, which may cause Japan to untie itself from the U.S. As Tokyo's relations with Beijing continue to improve, China's ability to round up Asia and counter U.S. hegemony in Asia will be realized.

Where the Global Reordering Is Leading

What will this hot wash of seething global events produce? For the answer, we must turn to the only truly reliable source for accurate geopolitical forecasting—the Holy Bible. According to prophecy, the seemingly invincible

United States of America will not merely be marginalized by its enemies, but surrounded and besieged!

Prophecies in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 list the blessings and curses to befall the latter-day nations of Israel (which include the U.S., Britain, Israel and other English-speaking nations) were they to follow God or turn from Him. Because America has turned from God, its reign as a superpower is nearly finished. It has already begun to reap the curses God warned about—including

These three power blocs collude to marginalize and diminish the influence of the greatest single nation on Earth.

ing terrorism, broken national will and failure in foreign policy and military ventures (Leviticus 26:16-19).

These curses will climax in a nightmare: America's fall to another nation, which prophecy shows to be "Assyria," or modern-day Germany (Isaiah 10:5). Deuteronomy 28:49-50 read, "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance ..." The same Hebrew phrase for "fierce countenance" is used in Daniel 8:23, where God describes the man who will lead Germany in the end. Germany—that nation which flies as the "eagle"—will deal the deathblow to the U.S. as a political power, taking it off the world stage altogether.

"And he 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" (Deuteronomy 28:52). The fact is, God gave America its power—domestically and in foreign policy. But because the U.S. has forgotten this and insists on trusting in its own strength, God tells this nation, twice in the same verse, that it will be besieged by a greater power.

Bible prophecy reveals that once the superpower seat is left vacant, the three power blocs rising to dominance now will clash in a colossal global power struggle—a period the Bible specifically calls the "times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24; Revelation 11:2; see page 16). Current events show how dreadfully near we are to this time, when nations will vie for the superpower slot! ■

The global order of nations will change dramatically over the next few years. This will lead to the darkest period in the history of man—what the Bible calls ...



The Times of the GENTILES

BY RYAN MALONE

WHAT PERIOD OF HUMAN history would you consider the worst time of suffering ever inflicted by other human beings? What would you consider the height of man's inhumanity to man?

Perhaps you would say Nazi Germany's mistreatment and execution of millions of Jews and other "inferior" races.

Perhaps it was Mao Tse Tung's murderous reign, or that of Cambodia's Pol Pot. Maybe it was life under Stalin or Saddam or any one of a thousand dictators past or present.

Perhaps it is the way radical Muslim governments, like that of Iran, treat women. Or the way white men in positions of power abused those of differing races: the reign of the Ku Klux Klan in the American South, or examples in history of blacks being mistreated by their "masters."

Maybe it was a time far in the past—the inquisitions through which Catho-

lic-dominated Europe spared nothing to eradicate "heretics" from its midst.

Man's bloody history gives us plenty of grisly examples to choose from.

Could man ever produce worse times than these? During His ministry, Jesus Christ talked a lot about the age we are living in *right now*. He said that "great tribulation" was coming—a time of suffering "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time [the end time—our day today], no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21).

That time is just ahead.

It won't last long—and it will be followed by the greatest, most shining event ever to occur on Earth. But the dark times on the horizon will stagger the imagination, surpassing any time of terror that mankind has experienced. And no amount of wishful thinking or idealistic initiatives from the world's greatest minds can stop this period of punishment. The only thing that could stop the Great Tribulation is mankind turning to

God in heartfelt repentance for our sins.

These times will radically impact the lives of every individual on this Earth! What will this time be like?

Why Would God Allow It?

This *Trumpet* issue describes how the building blocks of the global power structure are tumbling into a new order. As the United States and Britain (representing the two major tribes descending from Israel) decline in strength, three significant non-Israelite (or "Gentile") blocs have emerged: a radical Islamic resurgence led by Iran, a united Europe, and an integrating Asia. Furthermore, we see all three blocs in cahoots to challenge American supremacy and to pull the U.S. from its superpower perch.

This world is hurtling toward a time when American influence will be not only *countered* by these three power blocs, but also *ELIMINATED* from global politics. Then these three superpowers-in-waiting will scramble for the lead.



Consider, if you can, what this time will be like!

In addition to describing the magnitude of human suffering at this time, Jesus Christ coined a phrase to describe this future, recorded in Luke 21:24: “And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES be fulfilled.”

Revelation 11:2, which uses similar language, tells us the *length* of this period: 42 months.

The time is coming when Gentiles will dominate the world scene. Sadly, these “times of the Gentiles” will be times of unprecedented suffering. Man’s mistreatment of fellow man has never been so dastardly as it will be in just a few years.

While it may seem unbelievable in our modern age, all the human rights abuses that have occurred throughout history will be nothing compared to this 42-month cataclysm soon to engulf Earth.

Though man will bring this harm upon himself, God is also behind these events. He will use this time to punish the descendants of Israel for their sins. The main targets for these Gentile powers, at least at first, will be Israelite nations.

But in this tribulation lies an even greater purpose. God will allow us to reach the brink of annihilation in order to teach a vital lesson in aversion therapy: *that man cannot successfully rule man!*

World War!

The emerging radical Islamic power—which the Bible calls the “king of the south” (see Daniel 11:40), led by Iran—will wear down America’s will continue fighting the war on terror and leave the tiny nation of Israel in tatters. Islam has *already* succeeded in wearing thin America’s (and Israel’s) national will to fight. It has already succeeded in engaging the U.S. in a war where troops are stretched thin and bases are being abandoned in “less strategic” parts of the world.

The Bible prophesies that a full ONE THIRD of American and British lives will be lost through internal violence and *terrorism* (our free booklet *Ezekiel—The End-Time Prophet* proves this). This would never have seemed realistic until 9/11 and the subsequent admission by many experts that NUCLEAR terrorism is only a matter of time.

How bad will this reign of terror get? If Christ is to be believed, it will be substantially worse than any violence committed in the name of Islam or Christianity in history.

Consider the time when Islam’s founder, Muhammad, united and ruled all of Arabia—waging an average of nine military campaigns per year, slaughtering and humiliating non-Muslims in his *jihād*. Think of the ways Islamic radicals in positions of power subjugate and humiliate their own people even today: Women who do not adhere to strict dress



FREE UPON REQUEST

REUTERS

codes are whipped in public or forced to put their hands in buckets of spiders. Others, who won't agree to "temporary" marriages or who are accused of adultery when they've actually been raped, are buried up to their necks and stoned. Men can be sentenced to *thousands* (that's right) of lashes for certain crimes. In Saddam Hussein's Iraq, members of the political opposition were sent to the firing squad, fed to lions at the Baghdad zoo, or tortured indescribably.

The atrocities the Islamic power bloc—through terrorism—will wreak on the West will far surpass any previous such attacks. What power this Islamic bloc will rise to!

But soon after, according to Bible prophecy, this king of the south will *push* at the "king of the north"—a united Europe, led by Germany and the Vatican in a final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire. In response, this king of the north will act decisively. It will have learned from the mistakes of the U.S. policy in Iraq. Europe will not go the route of precise missile strikes and exhausting occupation, reconstruction and counterinsurgency. It will move in Teutonic, *blitzkrieg* fashion! (Daniel 11:40). This "whirlwind" will utterly wipe out the Islamic power, and a united Europe will set up shop in the Middle East (verses 41-43).

Ruling from the Mideast, the king of the north will hold the world in its palm.

What will it do with that power? Prophecy tells us it will utterly decimate an already frayed America, Britain and Israel, taking captives from all these conquests that will amount to another *one third* of these populations being taken into slavery (our *Ezekiel* booklet also explains this).

Again, using Jesus Christ's words as our reference, we can look to historical comparisons for a glimpse at the brutality this European power will unleash.

It will be a time of church-state dominion on the Continent worse than Europe's Dark Ages and surpassing the violence witnessed during the rule of Charlemagne, who took the church-state combine to new heights and waded through a "sea of blood." Similar to Muhammad, Charlemagne was constantly engaged in battle. He forced Catholicism on those he conquered and executed any who refused to convert. Through four separate inquisitions, Catholic-dominated Europe led a massive witch-hunt to convert "heretics" to Catholicism—a gruesome campaign that led to the murder of an estimated 50 million people.

The coming tyranny of this European power will eclipse the demoniacal reign of Adolf Hitler, whose victims were taken to "labor camps" for the supposed crime of belonging to the wrong race or religion. In these concentration camps, people faced either forced labor, gas chambers—or "donating" their bod-

ies to Nazi science as guinea pigs (without anesthesia). Six million died under these nightmarish conditions.

But the coming "times of the Gentiles" will be **FAR WORSE!**

Again, as Jesus Christ said, this will be "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be!"

The new world order, under the jackboot of this dreadful superpower, will be war, inquisition and genocide all in one. Tens of millions will be taken captive—forced into labor camps of unprecedented severity. And those "heretics" who will not accept the religion of Europe will be persuaded through grisly means to convert. No inquisition will have ever been so fierce! No genocide so appalling!

And who will be able to stop it? This king of the north will be the world's *only* superpower—unmatched and unchecked—that is, until another power bloc builds up enough strength to threaten it.

This is where the last of the three power blocs enters. Russia, China, Japan, India and other Asian powers will have seen what Europe did to the Middle East's predominant power and be gravely concerned. They will link together to "make war" with this beast.

United Europe will sense the gathering storm to its north and east (Daniel 11:44). The king of the north will then, again in historic Germanic fashion,

A Glimpse of the Future?

The annals of history are saturated with examples of terrible atrocities.

This is what makes Jesus Christ's prophecy of a time just ahead that much more alarming: He said that "great tribulation" was coming—a time of suffering "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time [the end time—our day today], no, nor ever shall be."

Is it true this world will witness instances of inhumanity even worse than these?



CHARLEMAGNE Constantly engaged in battle, he forced those he conquered to convert to Catholicism and executed those who did not.



THE INQUISITIONS Catholic-dominated Europe led four gruesome campaigns that led to many "heretics" being tortured or killed. The body count is estimated at 50 million.

launch a pre-emptive strike against this conglomerate. Its attack will leave the Earth in unimaginable ruin.

But Asia will return in kind, capitalizing on its vast population to build an army of unheard-of size. Ruthless leaders like Genghis Khan and Joseph Stalin did not achieve the level of inhumanity to be attained by those who will lead this massive combine. The horrors of Tiananmen Square and the Gulags will be trivial by comparison. Their cruelty will exceed that of Japanese soldiers at the Rape of Nanking in 1937, where tens of thousands of women and female children as young as 7 were raped, mutilated and killed. It will be far more barbaric than the Japanese treatment of enemy soldiers during the Bataan Death March (which ground out 10,000 lives), the way the Vietcong treated its prisoners during the Vietnamese War, or the way North Korea still treats its 150,000 to 200,000 political prisoners. Great European captains and generals will hide themselves and whimper like children in the face of this onslaught. (For more on this clash, request our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy*.)

Asian armies, after their initial conquest of the European power, will march their troops toward the Middle East for the final humiliating blow. What's left of the European armies will go to meet these "kings of the east" for this final nuclear showdown—one that will bring this world

to the precipice of self-destruction.

Enter one more superpower—the greatest world power of all. One that mankind has ignored for six millennia.

Through the clouds, on a piercingly bright white horse, the King of this empire will appear: Jesus Christ riding with a resplendent cavalry behind Him! (see Revelation 19).

This new power bloc will descend upon man's forces, which will then turn to fight this supernatural force—the true "kingdom of heaven."

The mortal armies will be obliterated on the battlefield. The times of the Gentiles will be "fulfilled"—utterly finished!

A New Day Dawns

This new kingdom, which will have taken the world by force, will *keep* it—IN PEACE—forever!

Imagine a world under *this* kind of domination—governed by benevolent, perfectly selfless spirit beings under the rule of the righteous Jesus Christ. What would it be like to be ruled by *this* global empire? How different would it be from that of carnal Israel, or of the Gentile kingdoms soon to propel this world into darkness?

There *will* be stringent enforcement of God's eternal, perfect law—which is the only means to real happiness and peace. But God's nature is the way of *give*; His

ambitions, goals and desires consider what is *BEST* for *others*—not some satanic lust to *get* power.

Therefore, there will exist none of the conditions so prevalent under the rule of power-crazed men.

No oppression of women.

No injustice, no torture. No terror.

There will be no genocide or racism.

No inquisition.

It will be a time when all humanity, Israelite and Gentile, will live in perfect harmony—all enjoying the bounteous blessings of the great God! He wants to give us these blessings. He wants to teach mankind the ways that lead to such gifts. In this new world, mankind will learn to take on this divine nature.

Just as Jesus Christ prophesied of the dreadful times of the Gentiles, so too He issued the advance news of this prosperous, peaceful Kingdom of God. Its future is certain—as sure as the rising of tomorrow's sun!

To learn more about this vision of a hopeful future promised in your Holy Bible, request a free copy of Herbert W. Armstrong's *The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like!* Not only does the booklet describe this inspiring utopian era, it shows how you can escape the dreadful times of the Gentiles just ahead! ■



With reporting by SARAH LEAP



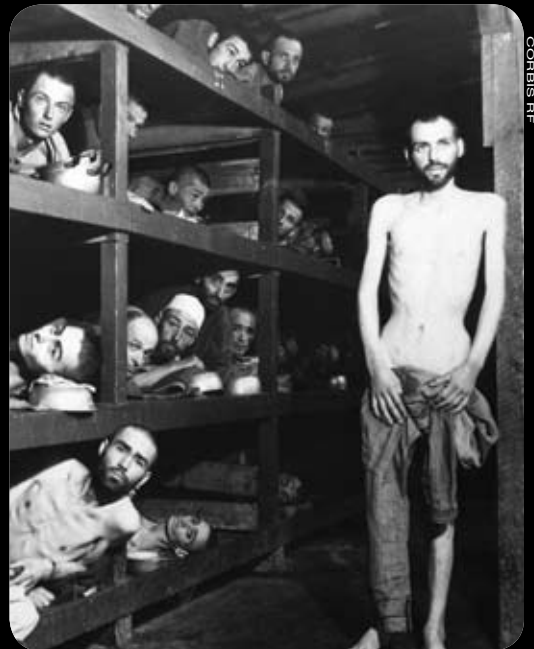
ART TODAY

MUHAMMAD Led an average of nine military campaigns a year, murdering and humiliating non-Muslims.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE RAPE OF NANKING Japanese soldiers raped, mutilated and killed tens of thousands of Chinese women and girls as young as 7.



CORBIS RF

THE HOLOCAUST Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler slaughtered over 6 million whose crime was simply being the wrong race or religion.

collapse that was to prove a classic model for Africa" (*Africa: Dispatches From a Fragile Continent*).

Of course, as long as a brain-dead United Nations continues to not only tolerate, but also seemingly encourage by its lack of any condemnatory initiative, the worst of Africa's leaders in their economic and social plundering, Africa will remain the world's worst basket case.

The tapestry of tyranny, corruption and economic deprivation that has been woven across the continent since the 1950s is the backdrop to the three headline initiatives at the beginning of July that focused on ways to relieve Africa of its woes: the Live 8 rock concerts, the G-8 summit in Scotland, and the African summit in Libya. It seems all such initiatives are doomed to fail. Why?

A Voice of Reason

Occasionally, the voice of sane reason breaks through the imposed political correctness of the language police to place the shameful acts of African leaders into true perspective. Such a voice is that of George Ayittey.

Visiting associate professor of economics at American University, founder and president of The Free Africa Foundation, Ayittey hails from Ghana, where he has firsthand experience with classic, post-colonial African history. Interviewed by National Public Radio, his solution to the problems of Africa contrasted starkly with the platitudes being peddled at all three of the above-mentioned gatherings.

Ayittey contends that the continual giving of multiple billions of dollars' worth of aid to African nations is an invitation for the squandering of such funding by Africa's leaders. "[W]e all know that in the past, giving aid to African government simply didn't help. ... [M]uch of the aid disappeared into the pockets of corrupt African governments, but it is something that's not politically correct to talk about ... because a lot of people don't want to criticize black African leaders for fear of being labeled as racist, but you just can't ... give aid to Africa using the old approach" (July 6).

In a clear reference to the massive pilfering of aid by Africa's "Big Men," Professor Ayittey mused, "Africa's begging bowl leaks horribly. The old Africa seeks to put more money into this leaky bucket. A new approach will seek to plug the leaks. ... [I]n the past, ... the Western donors sort of cast a blind eye to this



The Big Men

Why the noblest initiatives to solve Africa's problems always fail

GUILTY PARTIES Leaders from Libya and Nigeria confer at the African Union summit in July.

BY RON FRASER

MARGARET THATCHER IS rumored to have called them a bunch of mendicants. *Washington Post* journalist Blaine Harden, in his outstanding account of Africa, simply called them the "Big Men" of Africa. Others have called them tyrants. They are the leaders of African nations who have bled their countries dry of any hope of competing effectively in the global marketplace, let alone being taken seriously in the international political arena.

They met the first week in July in Libya for an African summit. There, wine and dined to their merry hearts' content, African leaders basked in the plentiful platitudes and repetitive rhetoric which we have all become so used to hearing in nighttime sound bites, broadcast over news networks by hardened hacks to a weary public that just wants to get on with immersing itself in the latest escapist "reality" show.

But Africa is reality! Africa is today's living definition of ongoing tribal conflict, rampant disease, starvation on massive scales, endemic poverty, deeply embedded international debt—in short, Africa is, today, in far too many cases,

representative of *utter hopelessness*.

The paradox of 21st-century Africa is reflected in the bloated Swiss bank accounts and fleets of Mercedes Benz of far too many of its leaders, contrasted with the below-dirt-poor status of far too many of its peoples.

Look at Ghana. What happened there seemed to cast the mold for much of the rest of old colonial Africa over the past 50 years.

Handed independence in 1957, the former British colony of the Gold Coast, renamed Ghana, was gifted a supreme opportunity. Under British rule, the nation developed into the world's largest producer of cocoa and possessed some of the most productive gold fields in the world. It also boasted the largest currency reserves in Africa at the time. The British education system, combined with the Brits' knack for efficient administration, had yielded the most skillful bureaucracy on the continent.

How its new leaders squandered this marvelous collection of blessings is, in a word, unconscionable. Blaine Harden describes it thus: "Ghana's leaders pooled these advantages, mixed in a large portion of megalomania, naiveté, avarice and socialist rhetoric, and engineered a

massive corruption Africa's salvation doesn't lie in begging and begging for more aid, and as an African, I find it very, very humiliating. We're talking about a continent which is tremendously rich in mineral resources. ... [O]ur leaders have mismanaged the resources. Look, the salvation of Africa lies in Africa going back to its roots The problem that happened after independence was that our leaders rejected the market system as a Western institution and tried to destroy it This is why the continent started its road to ruination."

Asked what the G-8 and Live 8 could do to help effect positive change for the good in Africa, Ayittey declared, "[T]hey [the G-8] say they must distinguish between African governments or leaders and the African people so that they themselves will instigate reform from within. The solutions to Africa's problems lie in Africa, not in live aid concerts."

As an indigenous African, Professor Ayittey has an approach that is quite refreshing. But it does not pose the ultimate solution to the African problem. While he singles out bad government and bad governmental leadership as being root causes of the problem, the professor is not able to pose a once-and-for-all healing for Africa's woes. That solution, though it does involve elements of that which he proposes, lies quite outside—in fact far above and beyond—his chosen discipline of economics.

The solution is metaphysical. It involves the imposition of yet another, final and ultimate, African dictatorship. *Not* a tyranny! But a *strong government* based on a law of *love*, of genuine, outgoing concern for neighbor—a law bound up in 10 basic precepts (Exodus 20). These precepts are innate, binding, immutable laws—impossible for man to genuinely obey of and by himself. But, under the loving inspiration and guidance of a future governor, *Himself* immutable and unchangeable (Hebrews 13:8) in His commitment to lovingly govern His subject peoples (Isaiah 9:7), people will be able to keep them. That future government is destined to bring real hope and joy—together with an abundance of many other plentiful blessings—to not only the whole continent of Africa, but, in time, to the whole world! ■

This inspiring future is spelled out in detail in Herbert W. Armstrong's book *The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like*. A free copy is yours upon request.

The Fatal Fault in International Government

It's alphabet soup: UN, WTO, IMF, G-4, G-5, G-12, G-20. But can any large gathering of nations really solve the world's woes?

BY RON FRASER

ON JUNE 26, THE UNITED NATIONS held a special celebration to mark the 60th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter, which took place in San Francisco on June 26, 1945. It was a disappointing affair. Even UN members were somewhat surprised at the absence of any high-level representatives from the world's leading nations. No doubt many expressed surprise at the absence of Secretary General Kofi Annan, who, though he deigned to send a message of congratulations to anniversary delegates, was conspicuous in not attending the celebration to deliver it personally.

In September, the world body will convene the 60th session of its General Assembly. Billed as the 2005 World Summit, this session is to review implementation of its "millennium declaration," which was adopted at the UN's Millennium Summit in September 2000. It set out "specific, attainable goals aimed at achieving a better and safer world in the new century" Just one year later, in September 2001, a horrific act of terror heralded mankind's entry into a far less safe and better world than even the murderous 20th century had witnessed.

But even, and perhaps particularly, in this age of terror of the 21st century, the meetings of world bodies charged with the oversight of this planet grind on. The 15 specialized agencies of the UN will all have their own special meetings designed to come to grips with the unique global problems and challenges that each agency was set up to deal with. In addition, the UN will have hosted eight high-level meetings or summits during 2005, kicking off in January with the unbelievably long-tagged *International Meeting to*

Review Implementation of the Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and ending with the briefer-named *World Summit on the Information Society* in November. Sandwiched in between these will be the meetings of the various international groupings of nations—the G-4, the G-5, the G-8, the G-12, the G-20 and, presumably, any other number of nations who elect to form themselves into a "G" grouping in order to protect their individual interests by negotiating a consensus on mutual benefits to each other, often at the expense of those nations excluded from the group.

What do all these summits seek to achieve? What hope do they have of producing anything positive, considering the dynamic of geopolitical disruption that has shaken this world over the past 15 years, and, in particular, since the watershed event of 9/11?

One Constant

The singular constant in international relations is *human nature*. This one predictable phenomenon can be relied on to convert the very best of aspirations of those who seek the genuine good for all mankind into mere Utopian pipe dreams. "This being inherently a world of opposing interests and of conflict among them, moral principles can never be fully realized, but must at best be approximated through the ever-temporary balancing of interests and the ever-precarious settlement of conflicts" (Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*).

Thus, those leaders who participate in these annual summits, should they possess a *realist's* perspective, can hardly hope to achieve much. The history of such institutions has been one of issuing



GETTY IMAGES/AFP

PUTTING IT IN WRITING

China's commerce minister (right) shows discussion items to the EU's trade commissioner at the G-20 summit July 11 in Dalian, China.

statements of expediency based on, at best, excessive compromise to the satisfaction of the most antagonistic of participants, or at worst, conclusions that sacrifice the goodwill of the most benevolent to the greed of the most grasping.

One Example

Established in 1999, the G-20 group includes major industrial nations and emerging market economies accounting for over 90 percent of global gross domestic product, 80 percent of global trade, and two thirds of the world's population. At the beginning of the year, China took over the presidency of the G-20 from Germany, which held that position for the previous 12 months.

The current president, Jin Renqing, in setting the goals of his presidency, summed up: "As the host country, China sincerely hopes that the G-20 finance ministers' and central bank governors' meetings in 2005 will provide efficient fora and smooth communication channels, through which all members can actively engage in and benefit from candid and constructive interactions on strategically important issues in the international economic realm."

Pleasant thoughts. But how realistic are they? A brief look at some elements of the foreign policies of just a few of the G-20 member nations should answer that question clearly.

Take China itself. A chief plank in its foreign policy is the declaration that its number-one enemy is the United States. For its part, to sustain the greed of its own consumerist society, the U.S. willingly outsources its industrial production to this declared enemy, sells off its technology to it (or allows it to be pilfered by it, as occurred under the previous U.S. administration), and in turn imports its finished goods. For this, China receives scads of U.S. dollars, courtesy of the largesse of U.S. banks extending unmanageable quantities of credit to the American consumer. Then, the declared number-one enemy of America invests these dollars in U.S. bonds! So who is it that, in reality, increasingly holds the whip hand over America's financial and economic future?

It's a classic formula destined to end in a global financial fiasco of unheard-of proportions. But it's the principal arrangement of convenience upon which the whole global economy largely spins.

Consider Argentina. Nestor Kirchner, son of a Nazi who fled Germany in the Vatican pipeline known as the Ratlines, accepts the loans which the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the benevolent Western capitalists underwrite, then refuses to pay his debt. Lacking real teeth to do anything about this, all the investors can do is bite down hard and take the loss.

Then there's Brazil, the largest country in South America, itself having been dependent on the good graces of the G-8 and central banks for handouts to assist its wavering economy in the past. Brazil's foreign policy is an intriguing mish-mash combining anti-U.S. rhetoric with the courting of China, Russia and the EU for inward investment.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has the declared intention of building Brazil into Latin America's first nuclear power. This policy has the ready acceptance of all three of the above—Russia (America's foremost enemy of the Cold War), China (which has loudly and repeatedly proclaimed its hatred of the U.S.), and a German-led EU (from whence emanates increasingly hysterical invective against the American giant).

The wonder of all this is that, while we hear much concern from Washington as to Iran's nuclear intentions, we hear little about the prospect of Brazil, so close to America's back door, posing any imminent or future nuclear threat to that nation!

Such are the contrasting aims of only three of the larger nations within the Group of 20. There are 17 others, all with their own national agendas, all seeking to influence each other so that decisions made are to their own advantage.

What hope is there for such a global

economic system as presently exists to survive, given the great disparity of national goals that obviously exists among the members of the world's main decision-making bodies? Of what real value are the functional agencies this world sets up, such as the G-8 and G-20, to deal with global problems?

One Hope

That grand old student of international relations, Hans Morgenthau, summed it up thus: “[T]he contributions international functional agencies make to the well-being of members of all nations fade into the background. What stands before the eyes of all are the *immense political conflicts that divide the great nations of the Earth and threaten the well-being of the loser ...*” (ibid., emphasis mine throughout).

There's simply something missing in man that would lead him to a spirit of genuine cooperation and unity at these conferences. There's always someone willing to break a treaty, flout the law, treat any agreement reached by the members of such institutions with mere impunity. It's a fact of *human nature*.

As the Apostle Paul declared, considering the troubles of the world at his time, and looking to the heart of the matter, “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be *spiritually minded is life and peace*” (Romans 8:6).

This very bone-headed carnality of man stands in the way of mankind achieving the system to solve this world's unbelievably complex problems. As Morgenthau stated, the solutions that such world bodies seek, “[in] so far as they deal with the real problem and not merely with some of its symptoms, *presuppose the existence of an integrated international society, which actually does not exist*” (ibid.).

It's the *system* that is at fault. And the fault with the system lies in the *nature* of man himself! *Human nature!* The hope, the *only hope* for mankind, lies, in turn, with his potential to have that nature *changed*. That is something that mankind does not willingly subscribe to—though deeper thinkers, such as Gen. Douglas MacArthur, have. Truly, as MacArthur stated, that change “must be of the spirit, if we are to save the flesh!”



For more on this subject, request our free booklet

Human Nature: What Is It?

the greatest timeliness which I now repeat: ‘I, bishop of Rome and shepherd of the universal church, from Santiago, utter to you, Europe of the ages, a cry full of love: *Find yourself again. Be yourself. Discover your origins, revive your roots.* Return to those authentic values which MADE YOUR HISTORY A GLORIOUS ONE and your presence so beneficent IN THE OTHER CONTINENTS” (www.vatican.va).

The last two popes have been continually repeating that message: *Discover your origins, revive your roots.*

What *origins* is the pope referring to? What *roots*? Why must they find themselves *again*? He is referring to the history of the “Holy” Roman Empire. The real origin he discusses is Charlemagne, who waded through rivers of blood to make Catholic converts. Most people, however, know little about his bloody exploits.

Is that *the glorious history* to which the pope refers?

Those *roots* also include several extremely bloody crusades against Islam in the Middle East. Maybe he was referring to that *glorious history*. That recent history even includes Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler.

The EU already has the nuclear bomb. Are we about to see a *nuclear* crusade?

The pope also said: “Let us ask this of God through the intercession of Mary most holy, who watches as mother and *queen over all the nations* as they journey on” (ibid.).

What an inflammatory vision that is! “Queen over all the nations”—queen over not just Europe, but over the Middle East, America, Russia, China, India and other nations? Remember, he is talking about the bloody history of the “Holy” Roman Empire—in Europe and in *the other continents*. NO RELIGIOUS EMPIRE HAS EVER SPILLED MORE BLOOD. And the worst is yet to come!

What an ambition! The kind of ambition that causes crusades and bloody wars. And so horrendously dangerous in this nuclear age.

These two powerful religions are now turning their wrath toward each other. Here is what we reported on our website on August 1:

“Some pooh-pooh the idea that the world is experiencing the beginning stages of a religious war. But one fascinating outgrowth of the recent spate of terrorist attacks suggests that, in fact, a modern crusade is heating up.

“Pope Benedict XVI, in an official statement July 8, described the first set

of attacks in London as ‘anti-human and anti-Christian.’ He also called the murder by terrorists of Egypt’s envoy to Iraq ‘atrocious’ and ‘barbaric.’ A telegram from the Vatican to Egypt’s ambassador said it went against ‘every human and religious sentiment,’ and that ‘it can never dent the international community’s commitment against violence and common efforts to eliminate its political, social and cultural causes.’

“Essentially, the pope threw down the gauntlet to jihadist Islam.

“And, it seems, some of the jihadists willingly grabbed on to that gauntlet in response.

“A Web statement from a group claiming links to al-Qaeda praised the London bombings and directly threatened Rome. ‘We warn Rome, the capital of infidels, that the lions of jihad in Europe are ready to launch strong strikes against the collaborating government with the crusaders, the Americans, the enemies of God, the Prophet and Muslims,’ it said. It was issued by a little-known group called Jihad in the Arabian Peninsula.

“Last Monday [July 25], a fresh warning was issued against Rome by another group called the Abu Hafs Masri Brigades: ‘After London, it is Rome’s turn.’ Run on the Internet, the statement, addressed directly to Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, said that unless the prime minister withdrew Italian troops from Iraq, he would be making the choice to ‘turn Rome into a graveyard’ in strikes worse than those in London. ‘As long as a single Italian soldier remains in Iraq, you the prime minister can look forward to nothing but more and more blood.’

“According to DEBKAFfile, ‘One of al-Qaeda’s prime targets is expected to be the Vatican, which the terrorist organization sees as a world center of heresy.’

“The *Trumpet* is closely watching for friction to increase between the Vatican and the more militant organs of Islam. It is not a sideline issue in the war against terrorism. The historical and biblical proof is plenteous that this tiff will flare into the most violent confrontation the world has ever witnessed.

“Watch for it.”

This is bad news for the world. But it’s leading *directly* to the best news this world has ever heard. Our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire* will explain that exciting subject to you.



UNITED STATES

Military Plans Pullout Next Year



CORBIS RF

U.S. OFFICIALS ARE PREPARING for a phased, large-scale pullout of Iraq by summer 2006. According to the *New York Times*, 30,000 of 138,000 U.S. troops will be leaving by next spring, “conditions on the ground permitted” (August 6).

On July 10, the *Mail*, a British newspaper, published a memo allegedly leaked from a British official that indicates that of the 176,000 troops in Iraq, up to 110,000 would be withdrawn. This is good news for the thousands of families who have been without the fathers, husbands, mothers and wives who have selflessly sacrificed and put their lives on the line for their country. But it “provides a glimpse into U.S. strategic thinking” (Stratfor, July 13) that carries troublesome implications.

According to the memo, the insurrection has been brought under control in 14 of Iraq’s 18 provinces—areas that can soon be relinquished to Iraqi control.

This may partly be the reason for withdrawing a majority of the troops by next year. But looking at the situation honestly, there lurks “a more gloomy reality,” as Stratfor suggests:

The U.S. simply doesn’t have enough troops to maintain this level of commitment.

The *Times* reports, “Senior administration and Pentagon officials, as well as political leaders in both parties, say there is mounting anxiety over the \$5 billion-a-month cost of the war, an overtaxed military, dismal recruiting in the Army and National Guard, dwindling public support for the operation, and a steadily growing number of casualties ...” (op cit.).

It’s true that both the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns demonstrated the unmatched strength of the U.S. military to invade and conquer. The problem is, in the post-9/11 world, the *occupation* phase of war is as intense a military operation as the battles themselves. Plus, the war on terrorism has virtually *no end in sight*, and the U.S. lacks the manpower to extend the war to another front.

The U.S. has been occupying two hostile territories without increasing the size of the Army. In fact, military recruitment numbers are substantially declining. The Army will not meet recruitment goals by the end of fiscal year 2005 (ending September 30). The Army

Reserve—which comprises roughly 40 percent of the Army’s troops in Iraq—faces even greater shortfalls.

The Army is even losing officers. More junior officers left the force in 2004 than in the previous two years. Thus, the promotion rate for officers has been accelerated, which can compromise the quality of the forces: “[M]any officers are promoted with less experience and less-developed leadership skills. In addition, the Army is lowering the requirements for officer candidates, relaxing age restrictions, and accepting candidates who would normally be rejected due to prior convictions for drug or alcohol-related offenses” (Stratfor, June 17).

Also compromising the strength of the military, is the fact that “the Army has made it more difficult to kick soldiers out for abusing alcohol or drugs, being overweight or performing unsatisfactorily, such as failing to meet physical fitness standards” (ibid.).

Because of the declining recruitment numbers and

a longer-than-expected occupation, the Army is being overextended. Troops are being forced to stay beyond their contractually agreed-upon terms.

This situation appears to be affecting soldiers’ families. In 2004, the divorce rate for officers jumped 3.5 percent over 2000—before 9/11. Divorce rates among deployed troops increased dramatically from the start of the Iraq war through 2004—78 percent among officers and 53 percent among enlisted personnel. Might this contribute to further weakening of U.S. defense forces as men and women cope with the emotional wreckage of a divorce or even leave the military to save their marriages?

Washington truly is in a conundrum: It lacks the forces to maintain a decent occupation in a volatile country and lacks the military preparedness to handle another war on another front. Even its present strength is being diluted.

Stratfor added, “[T]he administration ... assumes

War Draining U.S. Economy

IRAQ—EXPECTED TO BE THE most expensive war in 60 years—will deal a huge blow to the U.S. economy and further compromise America’s military readiness.

In a thorough article in the July 17 *San Francisco Chronicle*, James Sterngold recorded that the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan have cost American taxpayers \$314 billion, with the Congressional Budget Office projecting an additional \$450 billion in expenses over the next 10 years. “That could make the combined campaigns, especially the war in Iraq, the most expensive military effort in the last 60 years ... The concern is that soaring

costs, given little weight before now, *could play a growing role in U.S. strategic decisions* because of the fiscal impact” (emphasis ours throughout).

One think tank in Washington estimated that the Korean War, in current dollars, cost about \$430 billion, and that Vietnam cost \$600 billion—whereas Iraq could exceed \$700 billion.

One reason for the astronomical costs is that America is essentially taking this war on by itself. The 25 other countries in Iraq make up only a small fraction of the force, and another 11 countries have left since the campaign started.

Bad financial estimates have made matters worse.

The Deficit Is Falling!

that there will be no threats in Eurasia that the United States would have to respond to until 2007 at the earliest, and ideally not before 2008. That may be true, but given the history of the second half of the 20th century, it is pushing the odds” (op. cit.).

Speaking of the capability to project force into Eurasia, Stratfor stated, “At this point, that capability simply doesn’t exist. The United States can sustain operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and maybe squeeze out a few brigades for operations elsewhere—but that’s all That puts the United States in the most dangerous position it has been in since before World War II” (ibid.).

The morale of America’s troops, and its people’s will to see a thorny occupation through, will continue to falter. The snazzy technology and highly trained special forces—though achieving certain temporary success for the nation—will ultimately be resources spent in vain, as a prophecy in Leviticus describes.

BUDGET NEWS FROM Washington in mid-July sounded good: The U.S. deficit is falling! *Compared to the last fiscal year*—the worst deficit on record—this year’s deficit through the first corresponding nine months is indeed \$76 billion lower.

Consequently, the projected deficit for the whole fiscal year (ending Sept. 30, 2005) has been revised to “only” \$333 billion—not as bad as last year’s \$412 billion deficit, but still the third largest in history. It’s not something to get very excited about.

The big reason for the improvement is that, so far, overall tax receipts have jumped 15 percent. Corporate tax revenue is up 40 percent and quarterly payments on business earnings and gains from sale of investments are 20 percent higher.

Closer analysis reveals that part of the reason for the tax revenue spike relates to a *one-time* factor—the expiration of a tax break that had allowed

businesses to accelerate depreciation expense on new equipment. That anomaly *reduced* tax revenue last year by \$61 billion.

Let’s get some perspective. The *deficit* is the annual shortfall between the revenue coming in to the government (its salary, so to speak) and what it spends. Last year, it spent roughly 20 percent *more* than it took in. This year, using tax revenue to extrapolate, the government might spend roughly 14 percent more than what it hopes to take in. While this is *better*, it’s not exactly a paragon of fiscal responsibility. You would think that with a 15 percent hike in revenue and unemployment at a relatively low 5 percent, we could do better than a \$333 billion deficit.

Moreover, the *debt* is the *cumulative* total of each year’s deficits. Though this year’s deficit will probably not be as bad as last year’s all-time record, America’s

debt is still skyrocketing. So don’t be fooled by the hype of a shrinking deficit.

Say you earned \$40,000 last year but you spent 20 percent more than that, which would be \$48,000. Your deficit was \$8,000. This year, you receive a 15 percent raise so you’re earning \$46,000. That’s a very good increase. However, your expenses also shoot up—to \$52,500. The difference this year—or deficit—is “only” \$6,500; about 14 percent more than what you are earning. Compared to last year’s deficit of \$8,000, that is an improvement, but you still added \$6,500 to your overall *debt*.

Imagine telling your spouse that after getting a 15 percent raise in one year, you refigured the budget and this year you’re going to spend “only” 14 percent more than you earn. He/she would be ecstatic and overcome with joy. Yeah, right.



The Congressional Budget Office estimated back in September 2002 that the war would cost \$1.5 to \$4 billion a month. It actually costs \$5 to \$8 billion. For the current fiscal year, the cost has been \$5.6 billion per month, according to the Pentagon.

Steven Kosiak, director of budget studies at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, said: “Two years ago, *no one expected the war would take this long*. ... On a per-troop basis, this war has been far more costly than expected, almost double the estimates” (ibid.).

Sterngold paraphrased another military consultant, Edward Luttwak: “[T]he U.S. military, Luttwak said, is



PRICETAG Iraq operations are costing billions more than expected.

the best on Earth at fighting conventional wars, but one of the worst at policing and counterinsurgencies.”

The Iraq war, according to Sterngold, “is harming U.S. taxpayers by saddling them with an enormous debt burden, since the war is being financed with deficit spending.”

The Bible prophesies of a military attack coming directly upon the United States. How could this be, we asked in a January 2002 article, when the U.S. is the most militarily superior nation in the world?

In that article, we foretold that economic woes would have a

direct impact on America’s military preparedness: “The U.S. has downsized its defense program to the point where it can no longer fight a war on two fronts. The current campaign in Afghanistan may look impressive, but prophecy indicates that what is left of America’s strength will be ‘spent in vain’ (Leviticus

26:20). Perhaps this war on terrorism will have exhausted American forces by the time the real enemy attacks.”

The Bible also speaks of terrorism crippling this nation economically (see also our free book *Ezekiel—The End-Time Prophet*). This will also compromise America’s military preparedness.

A dark time is coming in U.S. history. But thankfully, this time of suffering will turn America to God—and usher in a time of unparalleled joy and peace for all nations where no nation will need to rely on military strength for its security—a time when weapons will be made obsolete (see Isaiah 2:1-4 and Micah 4:1-4).



GETTY IMAGES

ECONOMY

Chinese “Yuan” Up on America

IN JULY, CHINA ABANDONED its peg to the U.S. dollar—which theoretically should help American exports. But are American interests actually in danger?

China has kept its currency, the yuan, pegged to the U.S. dollar for over a decade at around 8.28 yuan to the dollar. While America’s trade deficit has burgeoned and the dollar declined, the U.S. long asserted that China’s fixed-exchange-rate policy undermined American manufacturers.

The theory was that if allowed to float freely in the marketplace, the yuan would be substantially stronger against the dollar, thus making China’s exports relatively more expensive. In turn, U.S. consumers would be less likely to buy Chinese products, and U.S. manufacturers would be more likely to sell their own. Hence, the trade deficit would improve. (The U.S. trade deficit with China is larger than its deficit with all of Europe; it is larger than its deficit with Canada and Mexico combined.)

In a report to Congress on May 17, the Treasury Department warned China “that its currency policies were distorting world trade and it brandished the threat of retaliation against the country’s exports [i.e., tariffs] if Chinese leaders did not change course in the

next year” (*New York Times*, May 17). Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan had told the Senate Budget Committee in April that China’s peg was beginning to have a detrimental effect on the *Chinese* economy.

On July 21, China abandoned its peg to the dollar and announced that the new rate, initially, would be 8.11 yuan per dollar—a change of only 2.1 percent, well short of the significant adjustment that Washington was hoping for. (Economists estimate

that the yuan is undervalued by anywhere from 10 percent to 40 percent).

However, by abandoning its peg to the dollar, China allows itself the flexibility of further revisions as it deems appropriate. And there’s the rub. China, like any nation, acts primarily in its own self-interest. The peg was beginning to hurt *its* economy.

It has accumulated a stash of about \$600 billion in dollar-denominated securities—enough to buy every major oil company in the U.S., if it could. To the extent the yuan is allowed to appreciate against the dollar, these securities become less valuable and China has even less incentive to buy more, which means it could become more difficult for the U.S. to finance its deficits. Interest rates would have to increase sufficiently to attract the needed funds, and the debt-laden American consumer would be hit very hard.

Paul Craig Roberts, who was assistant secretary of

the Treasury under U.S. President Ronald Reagan, put it this way: “When China’s currency ceases to be undervalued, American shoppers in Wal-Mart, where 70 percent of the goods on the shelves are made in China, will think they are in Neiman Marcus. Price increases will cause a dramatic reduction in American real incomes. If this coincides with rising interest rates and a setback in the housing market, American consumers will experience the hardest times since the Great Depression” (*American Conservative*, July 4).

Only within the last 20 years has the U.S. become a debtor nation—today, it is the world’s largest at that. Now China has substantial leverage over the U.S. economy. As China moves forward, balancing the pros and cons of letting the yuan appreciate, it will not hesitate to act in its *own* best interests, regardless of the consequences to the U.S.

China Military Buildup Continues

BEIJING BEGAN A NEW PROJECT IN APRIL: Remodeling the never-completed former Russian aircraft carrier Varyag—dry-docked in China’s Dailian shipyard.

The ship’s ultimate purpose has not been revealed. Regardless of whether the refitted carrier will enjoy civilian usage, be sold to another nation or added to the Chinese Navy, it is evident that “the Chinese will gain valuable experience in aircraft carrier construction and operation from the refit, which will contribute to the overall modernization of Beijing’s military” (Stratfor, July 13; emphasis ours).

The expertise required to refit and reconstruct an aircraft carrier—one of mankind’s greatest military developments—cannot be found at just any port. Few nations have aircraft carriers, let alone the competence and resources to construct one. The technological benefits and experience China stands to gain from this remodeling project cannot be underestimated.

Also, by refitting the Russian-made aircraft carrier, Beijing gains an asset even more

important than expertise and a new piece of naval hardware: a prime opportunity to deepen ties with Russia. “Sino-Russian cooperation could include provisions for Russian technical assistance in restoring the Varyag to some level of operational capacity. Helping the Chinese refit the Varyag also would represent a way that Russia would counter the U.S. geopolitical offensive in its periphery” (ibid.).

Watch for China to push to acquire and construct more military hardware. Russia will continue to be China’s primary weapons supplier as Moscow seeks greater Chinese investment and Beijing remains in the hunt for Russian oil and weaponry. As China’s military buildup continues and the nation develops strong ties with oil-rich Russia, watch for Asian nations to rally more intensely around Beijing.



GETTY IMAGES

CARRIER Russia’s Varyag

Russia Reaches Out to Iran



GESTURE Russia's President Putin was quick to congratulate his new Iranian counterpart.

Russian President Vladimir Putin was one of the first and the few world leaders to congratulate Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on his June election victory. Putin wasted little time in informing Iran's new leader of his desire to strengthen relations between the two nations. "I am confident that your election ... will maintain continuity in the development of long-term and multifaceted partnership and cooperation between our two states," he wrote (*Islamic Republic News Agency*, June 25).

Is there more to Russia's congeniality toward Iran? What does Moscow stand to gain from this controversial relationship?

The Russian news agency Novosti identified the economic benefits for Moscow: "[Russian-Iranian] relations have been developing dynamically Trade volume exceeded \$2 billion for the first time. ... There are good prospects in cooperation in the spheres of oil and gas, ordinary energy, transport, telecommunications and civil aviation" (June 26).

Russia has also expressed its interest in the construction of six more nuclear reactors, as well as 20 nuclear

power plants, in Iran. It was also revealed in July that Russian defense company Rosoboron-export is negotiating with Iran over the repair and modernization of Iranian submarines, "a \$270 million deal that could

revive the bilateral arms trade [between Russia and Iran] but further irritate the *United States*" (*St. Petersburg Times*, July 5; emphasis ours throughout).

Here is the driving reason behind the warming Russian-Iranian partnership: to defy the U.S. and marginalize, if not eradicate, American influence from the neighborhood of both countries—the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Russia and Iran are aligned perfectly in their views of America. "The USSR had a lot of traditional allies. Some of them lean toward Russia nowadays, demonstrating coldness and sometimes hostility with regard to the United States. *Moscow takes these countries under its wing, becoming a natural center of anti-American axis ...*" (*Defense and Security*, June 24). Iran is one of those countries.

The fact is, anti-Americanism is a defining ideology underlying Russian-Iranian relations.

While mutual economic benefits and the desire by both nations to compete with and marginalize American power will draw these two nations together, there is one other critical reason behind

Moscow's attempts to woo Iran: a united Europe.

Though Europe is presently laden with political and economic troubles, Russia is keenly aware that should the European Union ever free itself of the baggage that divides it, it will become a most powerful and dangerous alliance of nations.

Russia remembers its bloody history with a militarized Europe and is eager to

counter the Continent's future dominance by building an alliance with the leading rival nation—Iran.

For the same reason, Russia is furthering its ties with China, Japan and the rest of Asia also—for while Russia and Iran stand to gain much from their mutually beneficial relations, time will prove that Moscow's strongest alliance will be with its eastern neighbors.

UK Under the Weather

HALF OF THE UNITED KINGDOM IS UNDER DROUGHT; the other half, under water.

Areas in densely populated southern England have had eight months of below-average rainfall, the fourth-driest period since 1892, when records began, and the lowest recorded since 1976. Water suppliers are imposing restrictions on hundreds of thousands of homes—possibly millions before the summer is out. This is the first summer of widespread water-rationing in a decade and could prove to be a repeat of the record heat wave of August 2003.

Meanwhile, portions of northwest UK have seen 140 percent more rainfall than what is normal for the period, causing floods, with Scotland having its fifth-wettest winter and spring on record.

The jet stream detoured, said meteorologists. An unexplainable bloc of high pressure sat in the Atlantic, redirecting the stream's usual route. Clouds dumped rain in the north, which exhausted them by the time they reached southern England, causing drought there and creating the worst drought on record farther south, in Spain and Portugal. "Nobody knows why the high pressure developed in the Atlantic. ... [T]hese are all mysteries that meteorology cannot answer" (*Times Online*, June 21).

Mysteries? God states explicitly in the Bible that He withholds rain when we sin against Him (Deuteronomy 28:23; 1 Kings 8:35-36; 2 Chronicles 7:13-14; Isaiah 5:6; Jeremiah 5:24-25; Zechariah 14:17—and more). He *specifically* states in Amos 4:7-8 that He causes neighboring

regions to experience contradictory weather patterns, as is happening in the UK: "I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city"

These curses are a warning to modern Israel to turn to a loving God.



DRY A reservoir in southeast England sits at 45 percent normal capacity in July.

How God Preserved the Bible

Do we have the complete Bible? Has God's Word been preserved for us accurately? You can prove that it has. BY DENNIS LEAP

PARTS OF THE BIBLE ARE OVER 4,000 years old. Has it been handed down to us accurately? Do we have the complete Bible? How do we know? Can our modern sophistication allow us to believe that God preserved His own words as a great gift for all mankind?

Let's look at how God preserved the Bible for us today. Having the Bible *intact* is a miracle far beyond any marvelous invention of current technology.

God saw to the preservation of the Bible through a process called *canonization*. Our English word *canonization* comes from the Greek word *kanon*, which means a *straight edge* or *ruler*. The books of the Bible that we use today have been *canonized*. This means that after a rigorous review, it has been determined that these books are *Holy Scripture*, or the inspired *Word of God*. This could not have been done without the use of explicit rules and standards. Unfortunately, we have lost the records of the specific standards. Yet, we can safely figure out at least four major rules that were used to canonize a book of the Bible as *Scripture*.

The Rules of Canonization

The *first rule* considers divine inspiration of a book. The Bible records that God specifically directed that certain books be written.

The clearest examples of this rule come from Moses and the other

prophets: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua" (Exodus 17:14). "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel" (Exodus 34:27). "Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel"

(Deuteronomy 31:19). God commanded Isaiah to write down the prophecies given to him. Study Isaiah 30:8. This verse proves that God intended Isaiah to be read and understood far into the future. God also commanded Jeremiah to write down his message into a book (Jeremiah 30:1-2; 36:1-3). The verses in Jeremiah 36 also show that God has a message for all nations today.

The *second rule* looks into internal evidence within a book. Some books as-

sert that they themselves or other books are Scripture. The book of Joshua confirms the first five books of the law are Scripture in Joshua 1:8. The book of Judges, written by the Prophet Samuel, also confirms Moses's books as Scripture in Judges 3:1-4. Daniel confirmed that Moses's and Jeremiah's books were Scripture (Daniel 9:2, 11, 13). Peter confirmed that Paul's writings were Scripture (2 Peter 3:16).

The *third rule* takes into account public action or recognition of the canonization of a book. In Israel and Judah, the priests publicly read and instructed out of the Bible. It was Moses who began the tradition. He *commanded* the Levites to read the Scriptures to the people. "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of re-



"And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people) and when he opened it, all the people stood up." Nehemiah 8:5

lease, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 31:9-12). This public reading certified the books as Scripture.

Centuries after Moses, Ezra continued this same tradition by dutifully reading the books of the law at the Feast of Trumpets. “And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people) and when he opened it, all the people stood up” (Nehemiah 8:5). The public reading of the Scriptures has been a tradition for millennia. Certainly, it was the case in Christ’s day. In fact, He personally participated in the custom. “And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read” (Luke 4:16). You should also study scriptures such as Acts 13:15 and Acts 15:21. The Jews were passionate for their traditions. Paul and the other apostles carried on such customs into the true Church of God. The point here is that the people knew the Scriptures so well that it would have been nearly impossible to read a non-canonized book in a public service.

The *fourth rule* demands consistency and accuracy in doctrine within the books. The one truly amazing fact about the Bible is there is not one inconsistency or conflict in doctrine. There is one homogeneous doctrinal thread that runs throughout the Bible from Genesis through Revelation. This fact alone demonstrates that one divine mind orchestrated the writing of the Bible.

Started With Moses

Canonization began with Moses and ended with the Apostle John. Others have also played a significant role in canonizing the Scriptures. It is accepted that several of the prophets collected and compiled portions of the Old Testament. Jewish traditions tell us Samuel assembled the book of Judges. It is evident Samuel added to the book of Deuteronomy: 1 Samuel 10:25 shows that God directed Samuel to write into a book the laws concerning the establishment of the monarchy; what we have left of that

book is found in Deuteronomy 17:14-20. It is also believed that Isaiah and Jeremiah most likely compiled 1 and 2 Kings. Sections from Isaiah and Jeremiah are repeated verbatim in Kings.

The men most responsible for the canonization of what we know as the Old Testament today were Ezra, Nehemiah and the body of priests and elders known as the Great Assembly. This great assembly consisted of 120 men of whom Ezra was the chief. Among its members are said to have been Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They pulled together all of God’s revelation to that point into one complete book. At that time, the Old Testament was preserved on 22 scrolls.



Many men have given their lives to preserve the Bible. No other books from antiquity have been so guarded.

When the King James Old Testament was established, it was separated into 39 books and reorganized into three basic classifications of law, history and poetry. This was not a correct structuring of the true text. Essentially, translators chopped up the Bible, introducing confusion.

Originally, the three divisions into which these scrolls were put were the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms, or Writings. These three divisions of the Old Testament are known as the *tripartite*. Jesus Christ confirmed that the Old Testament was complete in these three divisions. Just after His resurrection He told the disciples, “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me” (Luke 24:44).

Isaiah prophesied that the true Church of God would be used to complete the canon of God’s revelation to all mankind. He wrote: “Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples” (Isaiah 8:16). The apostles Peter and Paul had a part in finalizing the New Testament. We know that Paul worked to protect a set of parchments. “The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments” (2 Timothy 4:13). The parchments were obviously the originals of Paul’s letters that we have today. It was Peter that

certified Paul’s epistles as Scripture. He wrote this about Paul’s letters: “As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction” (2 Peter 3:16).

It was up to the Apostle John to complete the canonization of the Bible by finalizing the New Testament. His Gospel, letters and the book of Revelation were the last and *final* books to be added to the Bible. John states this at the very end of his Gospel: “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen” (John 21:25). John was very aware of the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus Christ inspired John to write his Gospel in a unique way that gives more depth about

Jesus Christ’s message brought from God the Father. Then at the end of his Gospel, John states definitively that there would be no other Gospels in the canon. He adds the word *Amen* to add a ring of finality to that section of the Bible. He makes a similar statement at the end of Revelation. He writes, “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18-19).

God the Father and Jesus Christ used John to write the Bible’s most comprehensive prophetic book—Revelation. This book coordinates the timing of all Bible prophecy. Here it is clear that John knew that this book completed God’s revelation to mankind. He warned that no man was to add to or take away from the prophecy in Revelation: Anyone who did would be cursed. John’s statements show that we have the complete Bible.

The New Testament has 27 books, organized into four sections: the Gospels, Acts, the Epistles and Revelation.

How the Bible Was Preserved

The history of how the Bible has been preserved is truly miraculous and in-

spiring. Many painstaking hours have been employed to ensure that the Scriptures have been preserved accurately. Many men have given their lives to preserve the Bible. No other books from antiquity have been so guarded.

From the Bible's very beginning, God saw to its protection. Although we don't know much about the most ancient times, Jewish tradition tells us that Noah preserved and protected the genealogical records given to us in Genesis 5. The first formal record of the charge to protect the Bible doesn't appear until the time of Moses. He charged the Levites with the task: "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses

commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee" (Deuteronomy 31:24-26). Moses commanded the Levites to keep the books he had completed under God's inspiration right with the ark of the covenant. The ark was the national symbol of the nation's covenant with God. On the lid of the ark was the mercy seat, a representation of God's throne. Keeping the Scriptures with the ark demonstrated to the people that the books were the very Word of God and should be closely guarded, respected and—even more—obeyed!

Yet, in general, it was the Jewish people who were especially commissioned by God to protect the Bible. Notice what Paul states: "What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Romans 3:1-2). God knew that false prophets, teachers and even writers would come along and claim to be prophesying, teaching or writing for God (Jeremiah 23:32). So God had to inspire His people to preserve what had been given. The Jews have done their job well. A detailed and closely guarded system of copying was developed to preserve the texts as originally written.

Professionals known as scribes were highly trained at writing new copies of the text as the rolls wore out from use. It was the job of the scribes to preserve the Word of God from generation to generation. The Pharisees were responsible for the oral reading of the Scriptures in public services. Jesus Christ recognized that the scribes had authority over the Scriptures (Matthew 23:2-3). He also promised that what had been written would continue to be preserved until His Second Coming (Matthew 5:18).

The Neglected Scrolls

Unknowingly, King Josiah of Judah played a significant role in the preservation of the Old Testament. His grandfather Manasseh was the most evil king in Judah. He promoted idol worship far worse than any one of the evil kings in Israel—even Ahab. Manasseh turned the people completely away from God and God's Word. Josiah set about to make major reforms in the land. He eliminated idolatry from Jerusalem and Judah. Yet

it was not until the 18th year of his reign that the book of the law was found in the temple (2 Kings 22:8-13). Hilkiah the high priest found the Scriptures during the renovation of the temple. The faithful priest presented and read the books to the king. Josiah was thunderstruck by what he heard. He knew that to spare the nation any more trouble, a great education program had to be instituted. The Word of God had to be taught to every man, woman and child in the nation.

Notice what *Clarke's Commentary* has to say about Josiah: "And if the king and the high priest, who were both men of eminent piety, were without this part of the Holy Scripture, it can scarcely be thought that anyone else then had it. But so religious a prince as King Josiah could not leave this long unremedied. By his orders copies were written out from this original; and search being made for all the other parts of Holy Scripture ... and thenceforth copies of the whole became multiplied among the people; all those who were desirous of knowing the laws of their God, either writing them out themselves, or procuring others to do it for them; ... [the sacred writings] were got into private hands, who carried them with them into captivity. That Daniel had a copy with him in Babylon is certain, for he quotes the law, and also makes mention of the prophecies of the Prophet Jeremiah, which he could not do had he never seen them."

The Babylonian captivity had not only destroyed the nation of Judah and the city of Jerusalem with the holy temple, it also wiped out the central depository of God's revelation. By the decree of the Persian King Cyrus, Zerubbabel and a contingent of Jews returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the temple (2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-2). Yet, after Zerubbabel's death, the Jews began degenerating in their zeal for God's way of life. Even the temple began to fall into disrepair. Ezra was well trained in God's law. He desired to revive God's way of life in Jerusalem. God directed Ezra to do just that. In fact, we have Ezra most to thank for the preservation of our Old Testament. "This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him. ... For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and

The Complete Bible

Properly organized, the Bible divides into seven divisions, with 49 books.

Old Testament	Law	Leviticus
	Genesis	Numbers
	Exodus	Deuteronomy
	Prophets	Isaiah
	Joshua/Judges	Jeremiah
	Samuel/Kings	Ezekiel
Minor Prophets	Daniel	
New Testament	Writings	
	Psalms	Lamentations
	Proverbs	Ecclesiastes
	Job	Esther
	Song of Songs	Ezra/Nehemiah
	Ruth	Chronicles
	Gospels	
	Matthew	Luke
	Mark	John
	Acts	Acts
Epistles		
Romans	2 Timothy	
1 Corinthians	Titus	
2 Corinthians	Philemon	
Galatians	Hebrews	
Ephesians	James	
Philippians	1 Peter	
Colossians	2 Peter	
1 Thessalonians	1 John	
2 Thessalonians	2 John	
1 Timothy	3 John	
Revelation	Jude	
	Revelation	

judgments” (Ezra 7:6, 10). Ezra returned to Jerusalem, beautified the temple and established the proper order of worship. Nehemiah, as governor, fully supported his reforms. Because Josiah had made sure that multiple copies of the Scripture scrolls existed, Ezra collected all the scattered rolls that could be found and, inspired by the Holy Spirit, worked with the Great Assembly in putting the books into a proper order.

Ezra took on a very important responsibility to make sure we had the properly inspired canon of the Scriptures. He got “together as many copies of the sacred writings as he could, and out of them all to set forth a correct edition ... he took care of the following particulars: First, he corrected all the errors that had crept into these copies Secondly, he ... disposed them in their proper order; and settled the canon of Scripture for his time” (*Clarke’s Commentary*). Ezra the priest placed the authorized scrolls in the temple. The priests were again put in charge of the scrolls.

These standard copies remained intact until the buildings were destroyed by Titus in A.D. 70. All the synagogues in the first century maintained the same canon of Scripture. All scrolls agreed with the divine canon deposited in the temple archives.

It is now the responsibility of the true Church of God to protect the Scriptures as handed down to us, just as it was of the Old Testament “church in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38).

A Complete Bible

The Old Testament canon, with its various books and divisions, was the model used for the canonization of the New Testament. God always used men to canonize various books.

When the Jews in the New Testament refused the message of Christ, God raised up the apostles to go into the Greek world to have His New Testament Scriptures preserved for us. Realize that the Old Testament was written basically in Hebrew with some Aramaic, while the New Testament was written in Greek. The Greeks, not the Jews, were given the New Testament to preserve. However, God used the apostles to make the decision as to which books the Greek world would preserve.

When the New Testament is placed side by side with the Old Testament, the Bible is complete with seven divisions:

the Law, Prophets, Psalms, Gospels, Acts, Epistles and Revelation. *Seven* is the number of completion throughout the Bible. The number *seven* has made its mark in the canonization of both the Old and New Testaments. Here is how.

The complete Old Testament is actually comprised of 22 scrolls (books), categorized under three divisions.



Professionals known as scribes were highly trained at writing new copies of the text as the rolls wore out.

The Law included five books—Genesis through Deuteronomy.

The Prophets were organized in a special way. The books of Joshua through 2 Kings, excluding Ruth, are known as former prophets and were written on two scrolls. Joshua and Judges shared one scroll. 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings shared one scroll. The 12 minor prophets were also written on one scroll. Adding in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel there are a total of seven books.

The Writings total 10 books. The books included are Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra/Nehemiah (one book) and 1 and 2 Chronicles (one book).

Together with the 27 books of the New Testament, there are actually 49 books of the Bible. The number 49 is a significant number that carries divine meaning. This number is seven times seven, showing absolute completion. The seven divisions of the Bible and the number of books is no accident. They are clearly there by design to show that the revelation of God is complete with 49 books.

Apocrypha Not Canonized

The 14 books of the Apocrypha have not been canonized. These books should not be considered Scripture. Controversy about these books raged for centuries before they were accepted as a part of the Roman Catholic Bible. Following the example of Rome, many Protestant sects include the Apocrypha in their Bibles. One article about the Bible states: “The addition of Apocryphal books to the Old Testament did not begin until about A.D. 80. Numerous spurious books were gradually introduced into the inspired canon. *No two copies of the earliest Catholic Bibles agree as to which Apocryphal books*

were to be added. It was not until A.D. 397, at the council of Carthage, that Augustine, the Canaanite bishop from Hippo in North Africa, led the council of Carthage to generally approve seven Apocryphal books. As late as A.D. 363 at the Council of Laodicea, the Greek Church rejected the Apocryphal books as a whole. And the Roman Catholic scholar Jerome, who translated the Latin Vulgate version, rejected the Apocrypha and made his translation from the Hebrew Old Testament directly. It was not until the Council of Trent that the Apocrypha were declared equal to the books of the Bible.

At the Council of Trent on April 8, 1546, those who rejected the Apocrypha were declared to be ‘*anathema of Christ!*’ (Herman L. Hoeh, “Do We Have the Complete Bible?,” 1974).

Recognize that these books are inconsistent with Bible doctrine. Jesus Christ and the apostles never quoted from them. The addition of these books to the Bible was based on the authority of men—not of God.

Other ancient books referred to in the Bible are “source documents,” such as the book of Jasher (2 Samuel 1:18), as we wrote in last month’s *Trumpet* (“The Critics Vs. Moses”). Bible writers occasionally cited sources, as we cite the sources of our research in our literature (whether secular or Scripture). This does not mean that these sources should have been canonized. Even Paul quoted poets and philosophers in his letters, not intending that these be counted as the Word of God (Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12-13).

The Bible is truly one of the most valuable things a human being can possess. It is a living miracle that will greatly enrich your life. Although the Bible may have several translation deficiencies, it is not a flawed book. Not one book of the Bible has been lost. Not one book is missing. The books of the Bible are correct as you find them in the King James Version. Paul taught Timothy, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is the only true spiritual guide on Earth. Every man, woman and child needs the information contained within its pages. ■

“God is going to save Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Catholics, Protestants and Jews—all religious people. But God is going to do it His way and according to His time frame.”

Is that true?

Can People of All Rel

ACCCEPT CHRIST OR BURN. That’s what a lot of professing Christians believe. So you can imagine the response we received last month when Gerald Flurry wrote, “We believe God is going to save Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Catholics, Protestants and Jews—all religious people. But God is going to do it His way and according to His time frame.” One reader wrote, “My Bible says that when we die our chance of salvation dies with us If you die without Jesus Christ as your Savior, YOU ARE LOST FOREVER.”

In simplest terms, this reader believes there are two classes of people: the saved and the lost. If this is true, the number of those lost is staggering. Literally billions of people have never even *heard* the name Jesus Christ. Did God simply not get to those people before plunging them into the fire?

Many others—again, probably billions—have heard of Christ but still not accepted Him as their personal Savior.

What about all the people born *before* Jesus Christ’s human ministry and sacrifice? And what about the Jewish people—part of God’s chosen nation, Israel—who rejected Christ as the Messiah?

Have most of humanity really lost their only chance at salvation? And is that what God wanted?

Let’s look at God’s plan of salvation—one that offers hope to ALL mankind.

The Will of God

We don’t have to guess what God’s will is on this topic; the Bible tells us: “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have *all men to be saved*, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:3-4). There it is: God *wants* to save everybody. Is God

the all-powerful Being who “doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand ...” (Daniel 4:35). If He isn’t, then the Bible offers us no hope—even if we have accepted Jesus Christ.

Will we believe the all-powerful Creator when He says it is His will to save everybody?

How sad it is that some believe God has not only failed to save most of mankind, but also that He never gave so many even the *opportunity* to be saved.

The Bible shows us clearly that everyone will have a chance—one chance. But *not everyone has had that chance yet*.

Let’s see scriptural **PROOF** of that.

Have you ever wondered why Christ spoke in parables? The disciples asked Christ this exact question, and this was His answer: “Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given” (Matthew 13:11). These people actually saw Jesus Christ speak in person. They heard His words, but Christ deliberately obscured the true meaning from them.

So what was Christ doing? Didn’t He come to preach the gospel and *convert* all nations? Definitely not! Christ said the gospel is a *witness* to all nations: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14). Jesus Christ preached that gospel to relatively few in His human lifetime. All nations would hear the gospel message—but not until the end time. And even then, it was to be a *witness* to the nations, not a converting power that would cause God’s way of life to spread all over the Earth. That will eventually happen too—but not yet, as we’ll see.

Rather, Jesus Christ told us that *few*

follow God’s way to life (Matthew 7:14). The Apostle Paul added that the weak and base are called to confound the mighty (1 Corinthians 1:26-27). Surely God doesn’t discriminate against the mighty in His eternal plan. But if only the few find the way to life, then the **MANY** are not saved, and this would contradict what is recorded in 2 Peter 3:9, which says that God is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

The truth is, God’s purpose is not to save humanity—today. If it were, surely more people would be following and obeying Him today. There is a time order in God’s purpose for mankind. The reality is, most don’t even know what the purpose of man is or what it actually means to be saved!

A Plan of Salvation

We can begin to see God’s plan of salvation by looking at the nation of ancient Israel. Israel was God’s own chosen people who received His law and whom He brought out of slavery. He had a special plan for Abraham’s descendants.

Today, however, the nations comprising Israel are blind to Jesus Christ and have not accepted Him. Romans 11:8 tells us why: God has blinded them! He gave them “the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear”

But verse 26 tells us that “all Israel shall be saved” and that the Deliverer (Jesus Christ) will come out of Zion and turn away all ungodliness from Jacob. This is talking about the return of Jesus Christ! Clearly that hasn’t happened yet, and Israel has not yet been saved, but your Bible says unequivocally that it will be. The hope for the nations of Israel is sure—though still in the future.

Religions Be Saved?

BY MARK JENKINS

Numerous scriptures show that God's purpose for man includes a resurrection of the dead. Read Ezekiel 37:1-14 to read about the resurrection of the whole house of Israel. (For more information on what modern nations this comprises, please request our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.) If these people already had their chance at eternal life, why resurrect them, cleanse them, put David over them as king, and expect them to walk in His statutes and judgments? (verses 23-24). God is going to pour out His Holy Spirit on these people and teach them His way. He will write His laws on their hearts and in their minds (Hebrews 8:10).

This opportunity isn't exclusive to Israel. Joel 2:28 tells us God will pour out His spirit on ALL flesh—Gentiles and Jews alike. *Everyone* will have the opportunity to be saved. Isaiah 2:2 tells us that all nations—EVERYBODY—will go to the mountain of the Lord in the last days. More than that, His way of life will be opened up to them: "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (verse 3).

Have these scriptures been fulfilled yet? No, but they WILL be—and sooner than you might think.

Why Not Call Everyone Today?

So having seen God's wonderful, amazing plan to save everyone, one has to ask: Why not do it right now? What is God's purpose in waiting thousands of years to offer a chance for salvation to most of humanity? Why call only some now?

In his booklet *Predestination—Does*

the Bible Teach It?, Herbert Armstrong answered these questions. "That great purpose [of calling some today] is to be trained to rule with Christ, and to teach, under Him, when He comes in His Kingdom—when all Israel shall be saved. We are being trained, prepared, fitted, through trial and test, through hardship, through persecution, through tribulation, with continual Bible study and prayer, growing in grace and in knowledge, to be able, then, to fill the high office of a king or a priest—to rule in the civil sense, or to preach God's truth when the time comes

has died? Make no mistake: This won't be a second chance for them. It will be the FIRST chance they have had to really come to know Jesus Christ and God the Father. Even though they were not saved in their lifetime, they are certainly not "lost." These people, resurrected to physical life, will have a choice to make: to follow God's way of life or to continue to live a lifestyle that everyone on Earth has seen fail abysmally. People of every religion, every type of sinner, every type of person who ever lived will be given the chance to learn God's way of life then.

The Bible shows us clearly that everyone will have a chance—one chance. **But not everyone who ever lived has had that chance yet.**

that all may be privileged to understand, and to be called. What a glorious mission is the true Christian life!"

Today, in preparation for the education of all of these people, God is teaching the few who have been called to follow Christ. When the time does come for all mankind to have His Spirit poured upon them, He wants the conditions to be absolutely perfect; when they will have the best chance of success possible—far greater than they would have today! Then, Satan the devil will be put away, and everyone will see how much they *need God*. After a lifetime in societies run by evil men, people will be ready to turn to God. Mankind as a whole will be ready to learn about not just a religion, but a way of life. Those today who overcome Satan, society and themselves, and who follow Christ, will be ready to help Him *teach* it.

This plan offers tremendous hope to everyone! After all, who hasn't wondered about the ultimate fate of a loved one who

If you are one of those chosen *today* who remains faithful, you will have the opportunity to help save them!

A Day of Salvation For Everyone

Yes, God is going to save Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Catholics, Protestants—people of every religion—and those of *no* religion. But He won't save them *as* Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Catholics and Protestants. After all, "there is none other name under heaven given among men [than Jesus Christ], whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). When God sets His hand to save them, they won't have just a "religion" anymore. They will have a WAY OF LIFE—God's way. The world isn't going to remain religiously divided. The Bible tells us there is one body, one spirit, one hope, and one faith. When all mankind receives their chance, everyone will be a part of that body, a part of God's lifestyle, and practitioners of the only way of life that truly works. ■



SUPREME LAW Stone tablets depicting the Ten Commandments are displayed outside the U.S. Supreme Court after religious group's vigil the night before the court's double decision.

LAW

Ten Commandments Ruling Reveals Supreme Flaw

ON JUNE 27, THE UNITED States Supreme Court issued two hairsplitting decisions: 1) a Ten Commandments monument outside the Texas state capitol does not violate the Constitution, and 2) the display of the Ten Commandments in several court houses in Kentucky, surrounded by historical symbols and documents, is unconstitutional.

These recent decisions concerning the display of the Ten Commandments on public property reveal something critical about contemporary lawmaking.

The U.S. legal system is anything but simple. Americans live in a society where federal statutes and formal rules now total about 100 million words, where federal tax laws take up 36,000 pages, and where agencies like the Occupational Safety and Health Administration have conceived 140 separate regulations about wooden ladders.

Laws are increasingly written and rewritten to be more exact, more certain, more air-tight. So, when it comes to interpreting law written years ago—like the “vague”

First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution—the hairsplitting reaches new heights.

The government cannot make a law “respecting the establishment of religion,”

the Bill of Rights says. But what does that mean?

As commentator George Will pointed out, this amendment “was drafted by the First Congress—after it had hired a chaplain” (*Washington Post*, June 28).

Even Thomas Jefferson, who coined the “wall of separation” phrase concerning church-state affairs, “allowed the War Office and Treasury to be used for religious services that were open to the public. The Supreme Court chamber was also used for services” (*ibid.*).

On July 4, 1801, a minister took up an offering in the House of Representatives to support services at a nearby hotel.

“The generation that wrote and ratified the First

Amendment obviously thought that none of these practices ... violated the establishment clause,” said Mr. Will.

But now we live in a time where the interpretation of the law has become so complex as to give one a headache. The Supreme Court’s June 27 decision to allow a monument of the Ten Commandments to remain on one piece of public property but not another is just the latest display of man’s ineptitude in writing, following and judging law.

This should deepen our appreciation for *God’s* perfect, immutable law—summed up, ironically, in those 10 simple commandments.

For more on the Ten Commandments, please see our article series on theTrumpet.com, from the February 2004 through February 2005 issues.



MARRIAGE

Same-Sex Unions Recognized

FIVE YEARS AGO, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE was illegal in every Western country. In 2001, the Netherlands started the ball rolling with the first laws approving same-sex marriage. Since that time, the debate has raged around the world.

The last week in June, just four years after the Dutch took that first step, Spain and Canada seemingly raced to the finish line to see which country could legalize homo-

sexual marriage first. Many other Western nations have laws providing some sort of legal recognition to same-sex couples.

July 4, the United Church of Christ became the first mainstream Christian denomination to support same-sex marriage with a resolution that offered “equal marriage rights for couples regardless of gender.” Now we can watch as the endorsement of same-sex marriage spreads to other religious groups, just as it has to governments around the world.

The question this raises is fundamental: What is marriage? Is it something that can be defined by the state? Is it something that a religion defines?

Even more fundamental: What defines a family? Why male and female at all?

Most have already made up their own mind as to what they think on this issue. On both sides of the marriage debate, you find name calling, argument based on emotion, and a general lack of input from the Bible as the authority.

For a godly view of the same-sex marriage debate, please read our September-October 2003 article “War Over Marriage” or request Herbert W. Armstrong’s masterful work on the subject, *Why Marriage! Soon Obsolete?*



UNDER THE SPELL Two Dutch girls dive into the new Harry Potter novel—predicted to be the fastest-selling book ever.

The Potter Phenomenon

A RECORD-BREAKING 6.9 million copies of *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* were sold in the United States in the first 24 hours of its official release. Harry’s phenomenal popularity has taken children and teens by storm. Many bookstores have difficulty keeping their shelves stocked with the books.

The story of Harry Potter, the child wizard, glorifies magic and the occult. One children’s author wrote that “*Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* is different. It’s not quite like the Harry Potters that have gone before. ... *The Half-Blood Prince* is much darker ...” (BBC News, July 20). Still, many parents and teachers are thrilled to see kids taking the time to read.

The occult and supernatural must not be dismissed as mere superstition or as “just another genre of literature.” There is, in fact, a real world of evil spirits. Moreover, their manifestations can be extremely hazardous.

One source that addresses this topic in detail is the Holy Bible. It is the most

complete reference book available on the subject.

The Bible reveals the existence of perverse spirit beings—demons—who seek to seduce and ultimately destroy humanity. Satan the devil, whom the Bible labels the “prince of demons,” leads these spirits (Mark 3:22, Revised Standard Version). Yet Satan has become a myth to most people. Many laugh at him as a cartoon figure of a red, dancing monster with wings like a bat, horns, a long, pointed tail and a pitchfork.

However, the real Satan and his demonic cohorts are violently at work.

The Bible labels the popular occult and supernatural pursuits of our modern age as “works of darkness.” In addition, it cautions us in Ephesians 5:11 to “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness ...” We need to understand this important warning—and teach it to our children.

Harry Potter is portrayed as a wizard that fights evil, yet the Bible says that wizardry *is* evil. Such a mixed message will only confuse children (and adults) about

MEDICINE

One Third of Studies Dodgy

DRUGS MAKE LIFE BETTER—OR SO THE TELEVISION says. Americans are barraged daily with commercials telling us that relief (accompanied by unpleasant side effects) is only a pill away.

But some of that assurance was undercut recently by research showing that one third of medical study results don’t hold water.

In a review of major studies from 1990 to 2003 published in the July 13 *Journal of the American Medical Association*, nearly one third of the original results were later found to be seriously flawed. In one case, “Hormone pills were once thought to protect menopausal women from heart disease but later were shown to do the opposite” (Associated Press, July 13). Another study found that nitric oxide does not actually improve survival in patients with respiratory failure, contrary to previous claims.

According to Dr. John Ioannidis, who authored this study, “Contradicted and potentially exaggerated findings are not uncommon in the most visible and most influential original clinical research.”

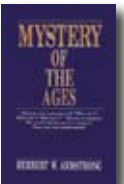
But even when the studies are 100 percent correct, drugs still don’t deal with the root causes of illness. To learn more about those causes, we invite you to read our November 2003 article “Will Pills Solve Our Ills?” on theTrumpet.com.



what evil is and make them susceptible to Satan’s deceit.

Parents ought to realize that children do not yet have the wisdom and experience to guide their own lives or to make fully informed choices. This is surely illustrated by Proverbs 22:15: “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child ...” (The word translated *foolishness* actually means *evil* in the Hebrew language.) Parents have a heavy responsibility to direct their child’s interests toward wholesome and profitable channels.

The second chapter of our book *Mystery of the Ages* will help you understand what the Bible teaches about evil spirits. We will send you a copy, gratis, upon request.



To contribute possible items for this column, send them to **SOCIETYWATCH, P.O. Box 1099, Edmond, OK 73083**, or e-mail societywatch@theTrumpet.com. If you e-mail a story from a website, be sure to include the URL address.



Many of our readers had questions about our map and table on page 7 of the August *Trumpet*, which accompanied the article "'Clay' Nations Trouble Europe."

First, the information in the table "Where are they now?" would have been clearer if the description had read, "The 12 biblical tribes of

Israel—and nations where they predominantly reside today." Note that Gentiles of many nations have also settled among these largely Israelite nations, especially in the big cities.

Second, the information originated from Herbert W. Armstrong (request *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*) and Dr. Herman Hoeh, historian at Ambassador College under Mr. Armstrong. Many of their conclusions were derived from researching ancestral names of nations, tribes and families. The table printed in the *Trumpet* was a general summary of what they found. We also deduce national identities from the characteristics detailed about each tribe in Genesis 49 (verse 1 specifies that these national characteristics would be apparent "in the last days").

One reader asked, "Why do you not include Benjamin and Levi

along with Judah in present day Israel?" The table, again, was a general summary and not precise. The Bible records that the tribe of Benjamin and most of Levi did indeed align with Judah in the land of Israel (1 Kings 12:21) and remnants returned to that territory after the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 1:5). Levites were scattered among the tribes in ancient Israel (Numbers 35); when the northern and southern kingdoms were taken captive, the Levites remained scattered.

To be more precise, the table could have also included Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and other former British colonies among the descendants of Joseph.

Another reader asked, "How did you come up with the idea that France represented Reuben? Over the course of even the last few issues of the *Trumpet*, anyone would come away with the idea that France was on the side of the Holy Roman Empire and not a part, parcel or portion of lost Israel." God said Reuben would be "unstable as water" (Genesis 49:4). If anything, France's disloyal politicking and "no" vote against the EU constitution supports our claim about its heritage, as our article pointed out. Also, read "The Mistress of Europe" in our sample "He Was Right!" issue or February 2000 issue of the *Trumpet*, available at theTrumpet.com.

American Universities

WHILE BRAD MACDONALD MAKES SOME good points in his article "The Ailing State of American Universities" (July), he goes way too far in implying that professor Ward Churchill would have been arrested for treason in the past for his outlandish comments about 9/11. And Mr. Macdonald seems to favor such action against Churchill if it were taken today. Despite Churchill's bombast, he has not committed treason; it's not even close. Mr. Macdonald should remember that in America, there's academic freedom to voice one's opinion, and there's also freedom to counter and dispute that opinion. Proposing incarceration for academics who speak unpleasantly is a bad idea and a bad policy, and it's certainly not American. The best approach is to boycott his classes, and maybe not even attend the school that employs him; dictatorial propositions and tactics are very dangerous and shouldn't be recommended in the case of Ward Churchill or anyone else like him.

Kenneth Reynolds—BRONX, N.Y.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR RECENT *Trumpet* article on the ailing state of American universities. You hit the nail right on the head! I saw this firsthand when I was a student in the 70s. This indoctrination is enough to knock even a properly brought-up student off his foundation. Thank you for exposing it. Keep up the good work!

Theodore Huntsman—HESSTON, PA.

Who Started World War I?

YOUR ARTICLE ON WORLD WAR I AND Germany ("Who Started World War I?" August) was very interesting. Is it not also true that Germany in preparation for war paid off its debts and called in loans and debts owed to it in the summer of 1914, and wouldn't have done this if not expecting war?

Joseph Forbes—PITTSBURGH, PA.

MAY I CONGRATULATE MR. RYAN Malone on the excellent article "Who started World War I"? The real sequence of events requires careful analysis of the documents and events. The Fritz Fischer work, I. Geiss and others over the last few years have provided useful conclusions. However, some of this work was done by earlier historians 80 years ago but has been neglected. They came to the same conclusions and also identified the evidence. ...

DAVID PRICE

The Clean Life

I WAS INTERESTED IN READING YOUR "The Best Medicine" sidebar (August 2005) in that the author quoted a number of benefits to laughter that, while suspected, have not been medically proven: There is no research showing that laughter boosts endorphins as claimed in this article. The claim that laughter lowers heart rate and blood pressure needs explanation, namely that heart rate and blood pressure are both

raised during and immediately after laughter. It is true that they do both then fall after the laughter subsides. Also, there really is no proof that laughter reduces any infections although this is suspected since there is demonstrable benefit to the immune system. I make these comments as the science chair of AATH, the Association for Applied and Therapeutic Humor. It is important for our credibility that all of us who love and promote the benefits of laughter and humor be scientifically accurate and be careful not to overstate.

Bob Nozik, MD—E-MAIL RESPONSE

Shaken Catholic

I AM SORRY TO HAVE MISSED YOUR JUNE special issue. I am a shaken Catholic and I want to know exactly who and what we are dealing with here. I became very angry with your earlier issues, and in my endeavor to gather information to prove you wrong, I saw more and more evidence to support what you were saying. I would like, if it is possible, for you to send me that issue. It sounds like just the sort of info I am looking for. ... Thank you for standing up for what you believe to be God's truth. ...

Marco Monti—NEW ZEALAND

Comments?

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Dawn of a Perfect World

BY HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

STATESMEN, SCIENTISTS AND EDUCATORS KNOW THE ONLY hope for survival and for peace is one world government. We could quote many scores of world leaders affirming this.

We could quote other scores of world leaders saying it is impossible.

So it's "world government—or annihilation" on the one hand, and it's "world government is impossible" on the other hand.

That is the stark paradox of terror facing all mankind today. No wonder God Almighty says "the way of peace have they not known" (Romans 3:17).

But what man cannot do for himself, the great living God will do for him. World government—perfect government—is coming in our time, in the hands of the great ruling Christ, and unnumbered thousands of co-rulers given immortality with and under Him.

And that good news is the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Christ is to inherit the world throne (Luke 1:32-33), which God had promised to David would never cease on this Earth (2 Samuel 7:13). Jesus said, before Pilate, it was for this express purpose that He was born (John 18:36-37).

Jesus constantly preached the good news about the coming Kingdom of God (Matthew 4:23; 6:10; 7:21; Mark 1:15; 4:11; 14:25; Luke 4:43; 8:10; 9:2, 11, 62, etc.). He pictured Himself as the young nobleman going away (to heaven) to be coronated and to return to Earth (Luke 19:12-27).

Repeatedly Jesus said He would return to Earth (Matthew 24:27, 30-31, 42; 25:13; Mark 13:26; Luke 12:42-43; 17:24; 18:8; 19:12; 21:27; John 14:3, etc.). "If I go and prepare a place [position, office, habitation] for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). He will then be on the Earth—Zechariah 14:3-4 with 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

The living Christ is coming in all the power and glory of Almighty God, as "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Revelation 19:11-21), to put down the rebellion of warring nations (Revelation 17:14), and establish God's world-ruling government over all nations (Daniel 2:44; 7:9, 13-14, 18, 22, 27; Isaiah 9:7).

No wonder the whole hope of a true Christian is the resurrection (Acts 23:6; 24:15) to immortality—eternal life—as a co-ruler, under Christ. Jesus said: "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron ..." (Revelation 2:26-27). And again, "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne [on this earth] ..." (Revelation 3:21; Luke 1:32-33). And "... we shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10).

The Apostle John, in vision, saw a preview of the beginning of that rule and world government: "And I saw thrones, and they sat

upon them, and judgment was given unto them ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4).

Jesus said no one could see or enter into the Kingdom of God

STEVEN HERCUS



until he is born of God (John 3:3-5). He made plain when one is born of God, he, just as God is, will be spirit. We have now, as humans, been born of flesh—and therefore we are flesh. But God is Spirit (John 4:24, Revised Standard Version), and when we are born of God—of the Spirit—we shall be spirit (John 3:6-8). Now, we are earthy—of the earth (1 Corinthians 15:48). We are "flesh and blood" from the earth—from matter (verse 50)—yet flesh and blood humans cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (same verse). But, as we have borne the

image of the earthy—mortal—human—we shall, when born of God, bear the image of the heavenly that is, spirit (verse 49).

Jesus Christ is the firstborn of many brethren (Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:18) who shall be born of God "by a resurrection" (John 5:25-29; 6:39, 40, 44).

Christ, the King of kings. Perfect in character, absolute in honesty, integrity, faithfulness, loyalty and trust; filled with outgoing concern for the governed—their welfare and salvation; total knowledge, understanding, wisdom. Complete love, mercy, patience, kindness, compassion, forgiveness. Yet, possessing total power, and never compromising one millionth of an inch with His perfect law—which is the way of love. He will enforce God's law—God's government on Earth. He will compel haughty, carnal, rebellious humans to yield in complete submission to God's government.

No one will be deceived—as the vast majority of mankind is today. All will know the truth. No more religious confusion. Eyes will be opened to the truth. Humans will become teachable. People will start living God's way—the way of outgoing concern for others—the way of the true values—the way of peace, of happiness, of well-being, of joy.

Crime, sickness, disease, pain and suffering, gone. Poverty, ignorance banished. Smiles on people's faces—faces that radiate. Wild animals tame. Air pollution, water pollution, soil pollution, gone. Crystal pure water to drink; clean, crisp, pure air to breathe; rich black soil where deserts, mountains and seas formerly were, producing full-flavored foods, and fantastic beauty in flowers, shrubs, trees. A world filled with happy, radiating humans, guided, helped, protected and ruled by former mortals made immortal—and all the humans realizing that they, too, may inherit everlasting life in supreme happiness and thrilling joy.

What a fabulous picture!

Excerpted from the book *The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like*. This book is free upon request.

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