

THE PHILADELPHIA Trumpet

MAY-JUNE 2024

Germany's
Secret—
France's
Ignorance



FEATURES

FROM THE EDITOR | COVER STORY 1

France's Deadly Ignorance About Germany
Why Is Germany Sending Weapons to Ukraine? 4

Is the Red Sea Crisis About
to Fulfill Bible Prophecy? 8

The Global War on Free Speech 12

'Murder With a Borrowed Knife' 15

INFOGRAPHIC

America's Overdose Epidemic 18

A Spiritual Lesson in the Fentanyl Crisis 20

When Oklahoma Legalized Marijuana ... 23

Rwanda: 30 Years On 24

Why the Royal Family Is Struggling 26

Biblical Archaeology Heralds
the Greatest Event in History 28

DEPARTMENTS

PRINCIPLES OF LIVING 31

Five-Star Service

WORLDWATCH 32

COMMENTARY 35

Playing With Fake Fire

THE KEY OF DAVID TELEVISION LOG 36

Trumpet

News and analysis updated daily
theTrumpet.com

TrumpetDaily

Trumpet executive editor Stephen Flurry's television program
theTrumpet.com/trumpetdaily

TrumpetBrief

Regular news updates and alerts from our website to your inbox
theTrumpet.com/go/brief

**THE KEY
OF DAVID**

Trumpet editor in chief Gerald Flurry's weekly television program
theTrumpet.com/keyofdavid

COVER

Clockwise from top left: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and French President Emmanuel Macron. Dramatic current events in these nations are unriddled by key Bible prophecies.

(GARY DORNING/TRUMPET)



FROM THE EDITOR
GERALD FLURRY

France's Ignorance Ger

Recent conflict between the two countries is explained in biblical prophecy.

IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS, FRANCE AND GERMANY have been at odds over stopping Russian President Vladimir Putin's brutal invasion of Ukraine.

French President Emmanuel Macron appears unable to understand why Germany isn't supporting Ukraine as it could. Nevertheless, France under Macron is *wholeheartedly* supporting a European military with nuclear weapons. But little does France know to what end Germany plans to use this power!

France's ignorance over Germany's relationship with Russia is a sign that Germany keeps its military strategies secret from France. Much more, it gives a glimpse into a prophesied future when France will finally find out what Germany has been planning all along. FRANCE WILL THEN BE SHOCKED TO SEE WHAT ITS BETRAYAL OF AMERICA AND BRITAIN HAS CAUSED!

France Is Bewildered

When Russia amassed troops around Ukraine and even in the early stages of the invasion, the French president sided with

Deadly About many

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz (left) and French President Emmanuel Macron assert their Ukraine policies in drastically different ways.

his German counterpart in trying to appease Russia. After Russian troops stormed the border, Macron tried to negotiate with Putin on the phone. He said the West's response should not lead to Russia being "humiliated." At the same time, Germany blocked military aid to Ukraine and sanctions against Russia. France was right in line with what Germany wanted.

In February, around the second anniversary of the war, a different Macron stepped in front of the microphone. He boldly proclaimed that Russia must be stopped, no matter the means. Macron even reminded everyone of Germany's lack of support for Ukraine, saying that "many of those who say 'Never, never' today are the same people who said, 'Never, never tanks; never, never aircraft; never, never long-range missiles' two years ago. Let me recall that two years ago some around this table said, 'We'll send sleeping bags and helmets.'"

Yes, early on when Russian tanks surrounded Ukraine, Germany literally proposed *sleeping bags and helmets!* How do you explain that?

But that's not all. Macron also pointed out that *all* European leaders were "six to 12 months too late" in supplying crucial

weaponry. This too was *Germany's design*; it blocked weapon deliveries from other countries by using NATO weapons-sales restrictions. Britain found a way to send its own weapons to Ukraine, but it had to *fly them around German air space!*

MACRON TODAY APPEARS UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHY GERMANY HAS ACTED THIS WAY AND WHY IT HAS CONVINCED ALL EUROPE TO FOLLOW ALONG!

Last year, France and Britain decided to send long-range missiles to Ukraine and urged Germany to do the same. But Germany still refuses to send the Taurus missiles that would help Ukraine destroy reinforced targets and infrastructure. The weaponry Germany delivers is often not what Ukraine needs when it most needs it. This is bewildering to France and Britain.

Germany's aid to Ukraine has increased, and it does look like it is actually sending substantive help now. Germany *claims* to be the largest European military supporter of Ukraine, with France lagging far behind. But the numbers, which are provided by the *German Kiehl Institute*, are based on *commitments* rather than actual deliveries. These figures also don't take into account how effective the aid is in actually helping Ukraine.

To counter Germany's accusation, France published a detailed list of weaponry it is sending. It hasn't published the list before, and it left some details secret since it doesn't want Russia to know what it is sending.

Instead of helping Ukraine, Germany tries to make France look bad. *France clearly doesn't understand the game Germany is playing!*

German Betrayal

When the German chancellor was confronted about not sending the Taurus missiles, he dropped another bombshell. To reporters in Berlin on February 26, Scholz said, "I'm surprised that some people aren't even moved by it, that they don't even think about whether what we're doing could lead to a kind of involvement in war. This is a very far-reaching weapon, and what the British and French are doing in terms of target control and support for target control cannot be done in Germany. Everyone who has looked at this system understands that."

He *brazenly* revealed that British and French troops are providing technical aid to Ukraine on the ground. *France and Britain had not officially confirmed this sensitive detail.*

TO THESE TWO COUNTRIES, THIS WAS AN ABSOLUTE AFFRONT!

The United Kingdom was especially upset. The chair of British Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee called Scholz's statement "wrong, irresponsible and a slap in the face to allies." A former defense minister commented that Scholz is "the wrong man in the wrong job at the wrong time."

While this debate was still raging, on March 1 Russia leaked a discussion by German military generals held on February 19 about British and American involvement in the Ukraine war and the possibility of delivering the Taurus missile. The fact that Russia could get its hands on a sensitive discussion further proved that Germany cannot be trusted. But the leak also exposed the fact that Scholz's excuse for not sending the Taurus missile was dishonest. In fact, the generals concluded that no German troops were needed for Ukraine to operate the missiles.

THE EVIDENCE SHOWS GERMANY ISN'T INTERESTED IN HELPING UKRAINE—AND IT IS MORE THAN HAPPY TO BETRAY THOSE WHO DO.

Macron apparently didn't get the memo. He keeps looking for other ways to help Ukraine.

Germany Speaks for Europe

Macron invited 20 mainly European leaders to Paris on February 26 to discuss Europe's support for Ukraine. Believing that everyone seeks to stop Putin, Macron wondered about *sending troops* to Ukraine. "There is no consensus to officially back any ground troops," he said. "That said, nothing should be excluded. We will do everything that we can to make sure that Russia does not prevail."

Germany snapped back against Macron immediately. Chancellor Scholz announced a decision as if it *were* the final word for all of Europe: "There will be no ground troops, no soldiers sent [to Ukraine] by European countries or NATO states."

GERMANY BELIEVES IT CAN SPEAK FOR ALL EUROPE!

One rule in warfare is to never reveal your limitations to the enemy. By ruling out Western troops in Ukraine, Scholz effectively assured the Russians that once they conquer Kyiv—no matter the cost—they will have won the war.

Why is Germany continually saying what Russia wants to hear? Why is it withholding critical weaponry? Why is it putting brakes on other countries' efforts to help Ukraine?

The *Telegraph* believes it knows the answer. In "Germany's Elites Run Scared as Putin Rains Down Death on Ukraine," it wrote: "Macron's conduct was what we have come to expect from a man whose *modus operandi* is, in reverse of Teddy Roosevelt's advice, to bellow loudly and carry a rather small stick.

"But it is Scholz who, in his eagerness to rebut his rival, has done far more damage to the cause of freedom.

"At a time of maximum danger, when Ukraine is crying out for help, Scholz and Germany at large are hesitant. Cowed by Putin's threats, propaganda and a deep-seated public reluctance to engage again in war, Berlin is desperate to draw a line in the sand regardless of what it may mean for Kyiv" (March 3).

Various commentators in Britain, France, Germany and around the world believe that Scholz is either afraid of Putin or wants to be seen as a peace chancellor in the next election. Neither of these views explains why Germany is acting this way! It is not cowed or intimidated by Russia; working closely with America, Britain and France, Germany wouldn't have to fear anything.

What Macron and these commentators *do not understand* is GERMANY'S LONG HISTORY OF COOPERATION WITH RUSSIA. This has resumed in recent years.

A German-Russian Deal

Under Catherine the Great, Russia joined with Austria and the German state of Prussia to divide Eastern Europe among themselves. Otto von Bismarck, arguably Germany's most successful

leader, famously quipped, "The secret of politics? Make a good treaty with Russia."

After a break in World War I, German-Russian relations revived in 1922 with the Treaty of Rapallo that made Germany Russia's main trade partner in Europe. Secret deals between the two nations prepared them for the atrocities they committed in World War II—until the two again clashed with each other.

During the Cold War, a famous saying was, *If you want Moscow to know something, then give the information to the Germans*. German-Russian relations again began to warm.

Then after Russia invaded Georgia, it became clear that something sinister was once again in the works. As I wrote in the November-December 2008 *Trumpet*: "I believe that Germany's leaders may have already agreed to a deal with Russia, a modern Hitler-Stalin pact where Germany and Russia divide countries and assets between themselves. This agreement would allow each to turn its sights on other targets. Any such deal that may have been struck between Germany and Russia is a precursor to war!"

After Russia invaded Ukraine, I wrote: "Many elite Germans feel that their nation has now extracted all the benefit it can from the United States, and they are now ready for a new phase in German strategy. Some want modern Germany to use its impressive industrial and economic power to multiply its political and military power. They want to establish Europe as a new superpower, a modern Holy Roman Empire!" (*Trumpet*, July 2022).

If you view current events with that history in mind, all of Germany's dealings make sense.

Macron is seemingly ignorant of these secret dealings, and he is *empowering* Germany in unprecedented ways! THIS IS THE MOST DANGEROUS MISTAKE FRANCE HAS MADE IN ALL ITS HISTORY!

Nuclear Sharing 'Madness'

On January 30, Macron was asked an important question by a Swedish military officer: Since France possesses "a capable and robust naval force" and is the "only [European Union] country with an independent nuclear force," does it have a "sense of responsibility for the protection and preservation of European security and unity"?

"Definitely, yes," Macron replied. The French doctrine of nuclear deterrence covers France's "vital interest," which "clearly has a European dimension that gives us a special responsibility," he said.

Macron's comments at the Karlberg Military Academy in Sweden didn't receive much international coverage. But as the French newspaper *Le Monde* noted on February 7, his comment stirred up "political opponents and Twitter for days."

That statement should do much more than that. OUR WHOLE WORLD NEEDS TO BE ALARMED!

We have to see these comments in the context of Macron's alliance with Germany and its betrayal of America and Britain.

"I believe that Germany's leaders may have already agreed to a deal with Russia, a modern Hitler-Stalin pact where Germany and Russia divide countries and assets between themselves."

GERALD FLURRY, 2008



Macron's chief political opponent, Marine Le Pen, condemned Macron's comments and warned about *Germany*. The Aachen Treaty that France signed with Germany is already designed to "share our nuclear power," she posted on X. "When we warned of Emmanuel Macron's intention in 2019, we were accused of conspiracy theory. The Europeanization of our nuclear weapons would be madness! Emmanuel Macron doesn't understand the implications."

But in fact, Macron *does* understand the implications.

In 2018, he called for a "true European army" to protect Europe "with respect to China, Russia and even the United States of America." That is what he thinks of the United States, the country that sacrificed thousands and thousands of soldiers to save France in World Wars I and II.

Only Germany, Italy and the Netherlands have access to nuclear bombs under the NATO nuclear-sharing agreement. After Britain left the EU, France is the only EU nation with its own nuclear weapons. But if Europe is to possess an army that can defend itself "even against the United States," then IT CANNOT RELY ON AMERICAN NUKES.

As is often the case, the French president is saying things that Germany dares not say. "I don't know what this discussion is about today," Chancellor Scholz told Germany's *Die Zeit*. "I think it is very important to uphold trans-Atlantic cooperation. That is why my government has decided to continue nuclear sharing with the U.S. and in NATO."

But there are others in Europe who would like to take advantage of Macron's offer. In an interview with *Zeit Online* on February 20, former German Defense Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg said: "We need to discuss the offer from France. But I have the impression that the chancellor would prefer to stifle the debate."

Like Macron, Germany is actively promoting the construction of a European military. However, it does not want to give the impression that this army is in *opposition* to NATO and the U.S.

BUT IT IS. THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THIS IS ABOUT!

Germany doesn't want to give up America's nuclear bombs. But Macron's support for Europeanizing France's bombs gives Germany more negotiating power with America. Germany can in effect say, *We don't need your nuclear bombs; we can have France's or develop our own bombs with French support.*

This means the U.S. has lost power over Germany's security. What then is left for America to do other than try to uphold good relations with Germany on the latter's terms?

As I have often warned, Bible prophecy indicates that German relations with America are about to worsen to the point that Germany will use American bombs against their maker!

France's betrayal is playing a crucial role in this prophecy.

Macron Loves Germany

Europe's quest for nuclear independence has been debated for decades. Germany's second defense minister, Franz

Josef Strauss, specifically discussed Europeanizing France's bombs in his book *The Grand Design*. Macron's love for a unified Europe, and for Germany, is bringing this debate to the next level.

On January 22, Macron went to the German Bundestag to deliver a eulogy for the deceased German political legend Wolfgang Schäuble. Remarkably, he gave much of his speech in the German language.

Macron quoted Schäuble as saying, "Often difficult issues can only be resolved if Germany and France pull together." He then added: "This inseparable link between Germany and France is the formula, the equation that allowed our two countries to flourish after the Second World War."

Again, it was America and Britain that saved France from Germany in the two world wars. But the French leader today loves Germany and is increasingly distrustful and even hostile toward America and Britain.

Many in Germany were fascinated by Macron's speech because he is more enthusiastic about a German-led European empire than many Germans are!

Guttenberg said, "It was one of the most cleverly formulated [speeches], in the language of the old enemy, if you will. ... It was not just an outstretched arm but really an offer in this great emergency situation in which we now find ourselves ... to say, *Let's do it together.*"

MACRON LEARNED "THE LANGUAGE OF THE OLD ENEMY" TO DEMONSTRATE HIS SUBMISSION TO GERMANY.

Macron is offering Germany the leading role in a European nuclear military, but is blinded by a false love of Germany. In 2018, Macron told the German parliament: "If you do not understand the words from France, remember that France loves you." It is a cozy affair, as though

nothing bad ever happened in their history.

Macron and others seek to build a genuine United States of Europe. This is nothing less than a revival of the Holy Roman Empire.

Claiming Charlemagne

European history has many instances of people trying to establish a European empire: Charlemagne, Napoleon, Adolf Hitler and others. These were all *terrifyingly bloody times* in Europe! This was the tyranny of a resurrected Holy Roman Empire in World Wars I and II.

America helped set France free from that empire. Instead of showing gratitude, France is now helping to raise it up again.

Our booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire* states, "After centuries of German and Austrian dominance, the Holy Roman Empire revived again for a brief interval of French dominance. It was the Roman Empire in disguise. Napoleon set out to carry on the ideals of Charlemagne"

Macron also looks to Charlemagne for inspiration in resurrecting this same empire!



"Often difficult issues can only be resolved if Germany and France pull together. This inseparable link between Germany and France is the formula, the equation that allowed our two countries to flourish after the Second World War."

EMMANUEL MACRON

Both Germany and France claim Charlemagne. They even have a prize named after him. Many German and French leaders, including Macron, have received this prize for their efforts to unite Europe.

On May 8, 1997, German President Roman Herzog was awarded that prize and said: “For 1,000 years, the destiny of our Continent has revolved around the choice between a cohesive or fragmented Europe. Charlemagne, after whom our prize is named, made his own particular choice, the first unification of Europe.” This is exactly what Macron is working toward.

Charlemagne was the first to really unite Europe. But how did he do that? “At such an hour, the truth must be told,” Herzog said. “Only by wading through a sea of blood, sweat and tears did he reach his goals.” That is a phenomenal statement! In Charlemagne’s day, unification required a lot of bloodshed!

Why do European leaders cling to such a bloody past? And to think—today we have far more destructive weapons, including nuclear bombs!

James Pinkerton wrote in 2018, “The EU is ultimately about European greatness in the spirit of Charles the Great, better known as Charlemagne. And he, of course, was no peacenik.” No, he was not a peaceful man. Charlemagne did unite people, but they had to obey his will and whatever he wanted. It was in no way democratic.

Europe today is also not a democratic endeavor. Germany is gaining more control, and France is empowering it. They want to reproduce Charlemagne’s accomplishments, and he was a TYRANT! Throughout history, the Holy Roman Empire has killed 40 to 50 MILLION people! Europeans today are looking to Charlemagne and disregarding this sea of blood!

Praising the evil of Charlemagne leads to the endorsement of other military leaders. Macron has praised Nazi collaborator Philippe Pétain. This man led the Vichy government in World War II after Germany conquered France, and actually gassed some Jews himself. That is a terrible history.

Prophecy for Today: Iron and Clay

To really understand what is going on, we have to turn to God’s Word. God prophesied today’s relationship

between France and Germany and recorded it in your Bible. It not only reveals the rise of a European superpower, but also France’s specific role in it.

As the late Herbert W. Armstrong taught, 90 percent of Bible prophecy pertains to the latter days beginning with the second half of the 20th century. This is the time that Jesus Christ spoke of in His Olivet prophecy (Matthew 24). Today, mankind is capable of causing “great tribulation” and threatening the existence of all humanity with nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (verses 21-22). Compare Christ’s prophecy with our world today and you would have to agree that we are living in these days.

Why Is Germany Sending Weapons to Ukraine?

THE EUROPEAN UNION OVERTOOK the United States as the biggest supporter of Ukraine in 2023, according to the German Kiel Institute for the World Economy. And Germany is seen as by far the largest European donor. In the first two years of the war, Germany’s weapons deliveries to Ukraine included two Patriot launchers, 14 self-propelled howitzers, 18 Leopard 2 main battle tanks, 52 self-propelled anti-aircraft guns, 90 infantry vehicles and a variety of drones—and much more is promised.

But this is not the whole picture, as much as Germany would like other nations to believe it.

From the beginning of the war, Germany has consistently *delayed* international weapons deliveries and sanctions against Russia. The weapons it did deliver often came weeks and months later than they were requested, and only *after* Western partners pressured Germany to send them. Additionally, Germany has refused to participate in an international coalition to provide Ukraine with fighter jets and, even after months of pressure, denied deliveries of its Taurus cruise missile. It has also shut down France’s proposal to send troops.

Germany has essentially ensured that Ukraine would have enough to survive, but never enough to seriously hurt Russia or to win. This points to the existence of a secret German-Russian deal—a modern-day Molotov-Ribbentrop pact—one that *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry has been talking about for years.

The question is, in light of such a deal, why is Germany sending any aid at all?

Firstly, Germany is Europe’s biggest economy, and many in Eastern Europe, terrified of Russia, have expected and even demanded German support

for Ukraine. By sending weapons that may slow Russia’s invasion of Ukraine without preventing its ultimate victory, Germany is walking a fine line. But it does not do so without personal benefit.

One of the biggest profitters of this war is Germany’s largest arms manufacturer: Rheinmetall. Its share price almost doubled last year. This year, its sales are expected to exceed €10 billion (US\$10.8 billion) for the first time ever. On March 14, Rheinmetall announced a plan to drastically ramp up production of artillery shells and other munitions by opening new factories in Germany, Lithuania and Ukraine. Rheinmetall is not only arming Ukraine, but also filling the stockpiles of Europe’s militaries. As Europe’s old equipment is shipped to Ukraine, new equipment takes its place.

Germany’s military support for Ukraine doesn’t compare to the €100 billion special fund that enables Germany’s *own* military advancement. Even when Germany buys from abroad, Rheinmetall finds a way to benefit. Last August, it started construction of a state-of-the-art F-35 factory in Weeze,



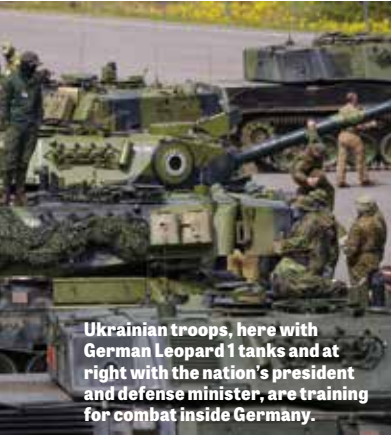
In this prophecy, Christ referenced prophecies from the Old Testament, in particular the book of Daniel (verse 15). Clearly, He believed that those prophecies had to be fulfilled before He would return in glory and majesty.

Through the Prophet Daniel, God revealed a succession of world-ruling empires from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to God's intervention in world affairs, which is just ahead of us. This was portrayed, in symbol, by a great statue of a man, composed of various metals, moving chronologically from the head down to the feet. You can read all about this in our reprint article "[The Daniel 2 Image](https://www.thetrumpet.com/go/Daniel2)" ([theTrumpet.com/go/Daniel2](https://www.thetrumpet.com/go/Daniel2)).

The legs and feet of this image are made of iron, symbolizing

the Roman Empire and its various resurrections, including successive phases of the Holy Roman Empire. This empire has brutally crushed its enemies throughout history.

In this prophecy, the final rulers over the last world-ruling empire are 10 kings, a European conglomerate of nations. They are represented by the 10 toes of this statue. And note this detail: "And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be PARTLY STRONG, AND PARTLY BROKEN. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay" (Daniel 2:42-43).



Ukrainian troops, here with German Leopard 1 tanks and at right with the nation's president and defense minister, are training for combat inside Germany.



Germany, to help produce the F-35 Lightning II in cooperation with the United States-based Northrop Grumman and Lockheed Martin.

Rheinmetall is also developing a next-generation battle tank that addresses some of the lessons from Ukraine. The current Leopard tank deployed in Ukraine revealed that its heavy design means excessive wear and tear in long, drawn-out battles. The war also proved that the bottom and especially the top of tanks need to be far better protected. Modern tanks also need to be equipped with their own set of drones and augmented with new technologies empowered by artificial intelligence to face rapidly changing battlefields.

The Franco-German joint venture KNDS is also working on a new battle tank for the German and French armed forces that applies these lessons. When agreement on the supertank was announced in March, it was also announced that KNDS would create a unit in Ukraine to locally produce ammunition as well as spare parts for French and German systems in use in

Ukraine that include Leopard 2 tanks, the wheeled Caesar 155-mm howitzer, the tracked PzH 2000 howitzer and the Gepard self-propelled anti-aircraft gun. These experiences are certain to help the weapons manufacturers improve.

A lesser-known example of a company profiting from the war is Germany's sensor manufacturer Hensoldt, which supplied Ukraine with its IRIS-T air defense system. During the course of the war, Hensoldt noted a threefold increase in certain departments, such as remote sensing and electronic warfare.

But the biggest German contribution in the future to the warfare in Ukraine may be through the use of AI. *Time* wrote on February 8 that Ukraine has become an "AI war lab." Later that month, the German tech firm Helsing GmbH signed a deal with Ukraine to incorporate AI into Ukraine-made drones and other unmanned aerial vehicles.

Germany has also sent generals to Ukraine for a visit, is in regular communication with its military leaders, trains some of its soldiers, and studies the war closely. Germany is getting a good idea of what weapons, munition and military

Learn about Germany's agenda in your free copy of ***Germany's Conquest of the Balkans***.



facilities are needed to sustain a large-scale war and how effective its current weaponry is. At the same time, it is rapidly expanding arms production. Russia is also learning vital lessons from the Ukraine war and expanding its military alliances and arms production.

While we may not know all the reasons for Germany's arms deliveries to Ukraine, we can be certain that the real beneficiary will not be Ukraine: It will be the *German and Russian military empires*. So says Bible prophecy!

The secret deal that Germany and Russia have made is aimed at enabling each other to build an empire. After the war against Ukraine began, Mr. Flurry wrote: "These two nations are working to empower themselves and each other at the expense of Europe and the U.S.-led world order. Both want to tear down that order and build themselves into great empires! Those empires will inevitably clash, but for now it is in both Germany's and Russia's interest to weaken everyone else and strengthen themselves and each other. With this in mind, Germany's duplicitous behavior is easy to understand" (*Trumpet*, July 2022).

Our world is suffering because of this German-Russian pact! But as Jesus Christ said, "[T]hey that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matthew 26:52). God will crush every nation that puts its trust in military might—and will soon bring the whole world to repentance.

JOSUÉ MICHELS

MAY-JUNE 2024 **5**

In the latter days, God prophesies that this “iron empire” will be mixed with clay. What is that about?

As I explain in my booklet *Daniel Unlocks Revelation* (request a free copy): “The clay represents some of the lost tribes of Israel, and God wants to shape and mold them (e.g. Jeremiah 18:6). Yet Israel refuses. Here, in this beast power, Israel is mixed right in with the Gentiles. They are able to come together in an emergency, but the unity won’t last. IT IS A DIVIDED EMPIRE. ... The fact that Israel is mixed in—like France, for example—makes it INHERENTLY WEAK. It will not last long.”

Though few people know it, France is one of the lost 10 tribes of Israel! (For more information, request our reprint article “[France in Bible Prophecy](#),” or read it at [theTrumpet.com/go/France](#).)

Like the other Israelite nations, France has departed far from God. It is now caught in a very dangerous situation that will turn out to be its worst nightmare. You can already see this in the fact that France apparently knows NOTHING about Germany’s deal with Russia. This ignorance is also prophetic.

France’s Shock

Another end-time prophecy illuminates this vision. It was given by the patriarch Jacob all the way back in the book of Genesis.

“And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you IN THE LAST DAYS” (Genesis 49:1). This is for the *last days*, the same time period that Christ referred to!

Verse 3 reads: “Reuben, thou art my firstborn” Who are the descendants of *Reuben* in these last days? God wants us to know! We can show you in our reprint that “Reuben” is the name God uses for end-time prophecy regarding France. To understand this prophecy for “the last days,” we have to understand some crucial history.

Because of some terrible acts he committed, Reuben lost the birthright blessings that would have been due him as Jacob’s firstborn son. Those blessings instead went to his brother Joseph (1 Chronicles 5:1-2).

Genesis 37 recounts how Reuben—the progenitor of the modern-day French people and the name used for France in biblical prophecy—and his brothers treated their brother Joseph. The other brothers actually wanted to kill Joseph, but Reuben intervened. Instead of outright killing him, Reuben suggested casting him into a pit in hopes he could still save him and return him to his father. But his brothers still wanted him dead. Unbeknownst to Reuben, Judah then convinced his brothers to instead sell Joseph into slavery.

The whole time, Reuben tolerated his brothers’ hatred—and when he finally intervened, he was halfhearted. Here is our explanation in “[France in Bible Prophecy](#)”: “At first glance it may seem as though Reuben acted well. He proposed an alternative to killing Joseph by throwing him in a pit. But is that what was expected of Reuben? Is that all he could do as

the firstborn son, the leader of the children? At the time within ancient Israel, the firstborn received privileges his brothers and sisters did not. His heritage was larger, and he received a greater portion of blessings. He was next to his father in power and authority. Therefore Reuben was actually responsible for what happened to Joseph. His job was to act the way his father would have if he had been there—not to compromise with his younger brothers in their actions against Joseph.

“Reuben did not act with courage and dignity. Afraid of his enraged brothers—so afraid he didn’t even remain with them to see what they finally decided to do with Joseph (verse 29)—all Reuben could think of was compromise. Compromise was not fulfilling his duty and responsibility as the firstborn. Reuben simply failed.”

Later, Reuben returned to retrieve Joseph and found him missing. Notice his reaction: “And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?” (verses 29-30).

He rent his clothes because he was SHOCKED at his brothers’ betrayal! He had failed to save his brother and knew he was responsible. He feared his father’s response. But his remorse came too late!

This is history, and it is *in the context of end-time prophecy*. THIS HISTORY IS GOING TO BE REPEATED. Together with Genesis 49, this gives a clue of what France, modern Reuben, will do in this end time.

But to understand the whole picture, we also have to know who *Joseph* is in prophecy.

Joseph in Prophecy

Joseph became father to Ephraim and Manasseh. The birthright promises that had been taken from Reuben were passed

down to Ephraim and Manasseh. Read Genesis 35:11 and 48:17-19, which foretell Ephraim becoming a “company” or “multitude of nations”—the British Empire—and Manasseh becoming the single greatest nation on Earth, the United States. You can prove this fact by requesting a free copy of *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, by Herbert W. Armstrong. In fact, as Mr. Armstrong explained, America and Britain rose to power at the beginning of the 19th century—*just after France under Napoleon collapsed!*

This really is the master key to understanding biblical prophecy, Mr. Armstrong wrote. “That key is knowledge of the astonishing identity of the American and British peoples—as well as the German—in biblical prophecies. This very eye-opening, astounding identity is the strongest proof of the inspiration and authority of the Holy Bible! It is, at the same time, the strongest proof of the very active existence of the living God!” (*The United States and Britain in Prophecy*). These prophecies come ALIVE with this understanding!

If you study this closely, you will find that all end-time prophecies revolve around these nations, as well as the Jewish nation in the Middle East (biblical Judah). France also plays a crucial role.



“That key is knowledge of the astonishing identity of the American and British peoples—as well as the German—in biblical prophecies. This very eye-opening, astounding identity is the strongest proof of the inspiration and authority of the Holy Bible! It is, at the same time, the strongest proof of the very active existence of the living God!”

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

France Empowering Germany

Next to the United States and Britain, France is the most powerful Israelitish nation today—and IT IS RIGHT IN THE MIX OF THIS DEVELOPING EUROPEAN EMPIRE THAT IS A MODERN INCARNATION OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE!

France joined with the victorious Allies in World War II. After the war, it agreed to the goal of ensuring that Germany would never again be able to wage war. Yet today, it is *empowering* Germany!

To whatever extent other Israelitish nations like Belgium, Denmark, Iceland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden or Switzerland will play in this prophecy, it will be France that bears the responsibility—*just as Reuben did anciently!*

Revelation 17 shows that eight more nations, or kings ruling groups of nations, will join their endeavor. Together there will be 10 kings. “These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast” (verse 13). They will contribute their power to the Holy Roman Empire and an overarching ruler—undoubtedly a German. (Read *A Strong German Leader Is Imminent* for proof.)

Prophecy speaks of another great man coming on the scene who will be more powerful and, thanks to today’s weapons of mass destruction, kill far more people than Charlemagne ever did.

History shows what a deadly perpetrator and instigator of bloodshed Germany has been. The Germans are a great people, but the Holy Roman Empire has led them into all kinds of horrors. And today this empire is rising again—with France’s help.

Macron is already willing to share France’s nuclear bombs with Germany! These two nations are working together on powerful tanks, fighter jets and many other armaments. IN SOME WAYS YOU COULD SAY FRANCE IS ALREADY GIVING ITS “POWER AND STRENGTH UNTO THE BEAST”—A GERMAN-LED WAR MACHINE.

Germany in Prophecy

God prophesies that He will use Germany to punish the descendants of Joseph. Modern Germany is referred to in prophecy as *Assyria*. Isaiah 10:5 and 7 read: “O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. ... Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.”

God doesn’t talk here about the “ten toes,” or the European combine. He just says He will “deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders” (Micah 5:6). This is why we are so concerned about GERMANY. They will come into our land and into our borders!

Germany today is working together with Russia *against* America and Britain. But France fails to see how devious these plans are! It is blind to where its relationship with Germany is leading!

This shows just how fraught this iron-and-clay relationship is—it cannot last.

There will come a point when Germany goes into full attack mode against America and Britain. Many prophecies reveal this. At that point, France will think, *What have we gotten ourselves into?* But then it will be too late!

Once they see the “beast” power they have empowered and recognize what utter devastation they have helped cause, the French people, like Reuben anciently, *will be utterly shocked!*

Biblical prophecy illuminates the true significance of events unfolding in Europe today. Only with that understanding can you grasp what you are seeing and know the stunning conclusion to which they are leading.

The End of Betrayal

After a morally weakened and divided America and Britain have been attacked and enslaved by a European combine, the prophesied “kings of the east” will turn against European military forces (Revelation 16:12). An Asian alliance led by Russia will amass an astonishing 200 million-man army (Revelation 9:16). Never in history has such a large army been amassed and never till this day could it be assembled and coordinated.

Germany’s actions are going to provoke these kings of the east, and it will all end very quickly.

But notice: Just as these two world powers are about to clash, something astonishing happens—*the best news you could ever hear!*

In the midst of the greatest world crisis ever in history, Jesus Christ will return and these armies will turn their attention *against* Him (Revelation 19:19). This event is prophesied throughout the Bible! Europe’s 10 kings that include France and Germany along with this 200 million-man army will turn to fight Christ and be utterly destroyed!

The “king of fierce countenance”—the leader of the beast power—will try to fight Christ and will be “broken without hand” (Daniel 8:23, 25). The armies will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them (Revelation 17:12-14). All of these evil forces will be soundly defeated!

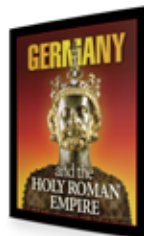
THE CONCLUSION OF THAT BATTLE WILL MARK THE BEGINNING OF A NEW, PEACEFUL AGE FOR THE WHOLE EARTH!

The days of the kings of this world are almost over! The God of heaven is about to set up His Kingdom! It’s getting so close! Get this vivid picture of prophecy into your mind. It is more real than anything out there in the world! It is certain—it is sure—every word will be fulfilled! A new and wonderful civilization is about to burst upon the world scene. The time for God to return and begin to rid the world of suffering is here.

We need to watch Europe, watch France, and watch Germany and the Holy Roman Empire—because all these prophecies are about to be fulfilled! We must study them, recognize what is happening, and learn how we can receive God’s protection, because God is about to use this empire to punish America, Britain and the Jewish nation to break their rebellion against Him. He will then break the German-led war machine—so that all people of all nationalities can live peaceably under His rule! ■

France or Germany, who will end up on top?

Bible prophecy foretells that a rising Europe will crave strong, authoritarian leadership. Find out why that will come from Germany and what this means for the world in ***Germany and the Holy Roman Empire***. Order your free copy today.



ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST CRUCIAL shipping lanes has become the battleground of an intensifying war! Houthi terrorists backed by Iran are terrorizing commercial ships transiting the Red Sea.

This crisis has worsened considerably since I wrote “The Battle for the Red Sea” in our February issue ([theTrumpet.com/28737](https://www.theTrumpet.com/28737)). Europe is most affected and has sent warships into the area. This brings them into direct confrontation with Iran—which, incidentally, is on the cusp of producing multiple nuclear bombs.

This could lead to the fulfillment of a Bible prophecy I have drawn attention to for decades: “And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over” (Daniel 11:40).

Note: This prophecy is for “the time of the end.” The context of Daniel 11 revolves around Jerusalem. The Jewish people currently rule over this city, but others want control of it.

Since the 1990s, I have identified the king of the south as radical Islam, led by Iran. This prophecy reveals that radical Islam will PUSH at the king of the north—a German-led European empire—and that the Europeans will counterattack, DESTROY IRAN, and take their allies captive. (Read more about this in my booklet *The King of the South*.)

No one else has made such a forecast based on this passage. And to most observers, a clash between Iran and Germany seemed doubtful—UNTIL NOW.

Europe's Response

A March research paper from the European Parliament, “Maritime Security: Situation in the Red Sea and EU Response,” clearly identifies Iran as the power behind the terrorists and outlines the risks to Europe.

“The Houthis, who are a part of Iran’s ‘axis of resistance’ (a network of Iranian proxies and allies in the Middle East coordinated by the Iranian Quds Force), have vowed to continue attacks on commercial ships ‘with Israeli interests’ until the war in Gaza ends,” the paper says. “Iran has deployed a warship to the Red Sea, praised the Houthis for ‘supporting Palestinians and standing up to Israel,’ and is allegedly aiding them by providing intelligence and weapons.”

This is one of the world’s most important shipping lanes, the report notes: A fifth of global container traffic and 40 percent of Asia-Europe trade transit the Red Sea and the Suez Canal.

The report continues: “On 12 January 2024, the [United States] and [United Kingdom], supported by other allied nations, started direct strikes on Houthi targets in Yemen, which failed to reduce Houthi attacks on commercial shipping. On 18 February 2024, Houthi missiles struck a UK-owned cargo ship, which became the first ship to be sunk by Houthi attacks.”

Europe does not trust the U.S. and the UK to handle the problem. On February 19, it launched its own mission: EUNAVFOR Operation ASPIDES.

The mission’s area of operations covers a large part of the northwestern Indian Ocean, specifically the stretch of sea between the Bab el-Mandeb strait and the Strait of Hormuz, as well as international waters in the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf. Italian, German, Belgian, French and Greek navies are taking part in the mission.

Germany in particular is upset and angry over the economic loss caused by Iran. All its commercial ships have had to detour around South Africa. For this reason alone, this COULD become the big PUSH of Daniel 11:40. We don’t know yet, but this certainly looks like it could fit that prophetic description in a spectacular way. We need to watch the situation closely.

And there is another trend that could suddenly, drastically intensify this crisis: Iran is expected at virtually any moment to attain nuclear capability and finish production of seven nuclear bombs!

Nuclear Weapons

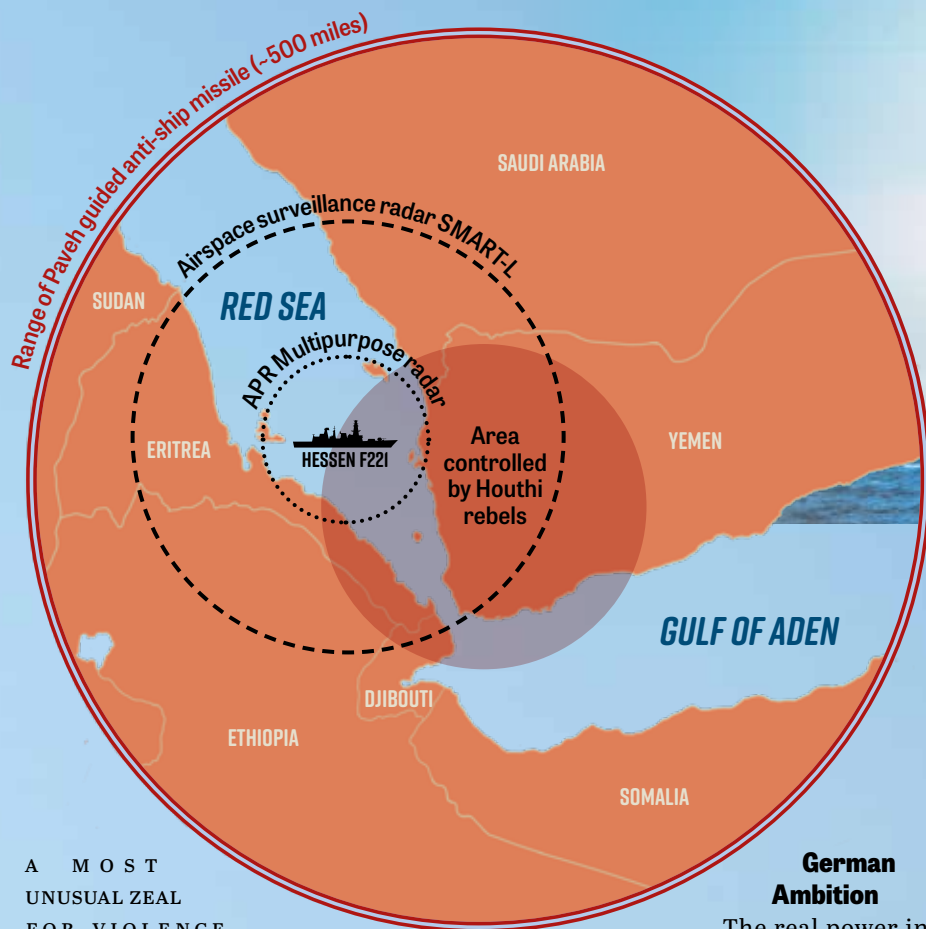
Many analysts have warned that Iran as a nuclear power poses a signal danger. In the mullahs’ religious view, their version of the Messiah will hasten his return in the event of a catastrophic war, even if Iran provokes it.

This ideology has inspired suicide bombers around the world. THIS IS

Is the Red Sea Crisis About to Fulfill Bible Prophecy?

The signs are alarming! **BY GERALD FLURRY**





Germany's advanced frigate Hessen entered the Red Sea in February.

A MOST UNUSUAL ZEAL FOR VIOLENCE, UNKNOWN TO MOST OTHER CULTURES. Consider: These people are willing to kill themselves even if their death only takes a *few* other lives. Don't you think they would much rather use nuclear bombs and cause far greater havoc?

NO NATION ON EARTH THINKS LIKE IRAN AND WOULD BE SO EAGER TO USE NUCLEAR BOMBS!

Europe is well acquainted with terrorism, and its nations are within range of Iranian missiles. When Iran is ready to unleash nuclear weapons on Israel, it could also fire them at Europe.

You can understand the alarmingly high stakes of Europe's mission in the Middle East!

Humanity's number one problem today is human survival! Yet almost *none* of the leaders in the Western world even *talk about* this horrific probability. This is a problem we **MUST** confront—and, though very few people are willing to consider it honestly, *there is a solution.*

German Ambition

The real power in the European Union is

Germany. Frankly, Germany is using the EU as a cloak for its own ambitions. If the Red Sea crisis escalates into a war, it will effectively pit Germany against Iran.

Before the EU approved its naval mission, Germany had already sent a frigate to the Mediterranean near the Red Sea to await deployment. Vice Adm. Jan Christian Kaack explained, "As we are going into a fierce battle, only a ship that can assert itself with its weaponry comes into question, one whose crew is 100 percent trained to deal with the threat. The Hessen frigate we have selected is prepared for this. It is our gold standard, so to speak." Kaack called this "the most serious deployment of a German naval unit for many decades."

The frigate has 240 sailors, and they are now operating in the Red Sea, defending commercial ships against the Houthis—proxies of Iran. In the first few days, the frigate made news for

misfiring missiles. Still, the specialist journal *MarineForum* noted that the Hessen is "one of the best we have in our inventory—fully equipped, ammunitioned and manned at the highest possible level of training. What the ship and crew lack is war experience."

Though it has a high-class military industry, Germany lacks war experience. But don't be fooled: It is gaining more and more such experience and is learning quickly.

Germany led the way into the Red Sea, and Europe followed. Germany is preparing for war!

Granted, one frigate certainly cannot take on Iran alone. Yet that is just one piece in Germany's and Europe's growing military arsenal.

Consider that this year's "Steadfast Noon" exercises were held over Italy, Croatia and the Mediterranean Sea—away from Russia but closer to the Middle East. Thirteen NATO members participated, including Germany. These exercises were preparation for using American nuclear weapons! If the threat of nuclear war rises, Germany and Italy could use these bombs against Iran.

GERMANY AND IRAN ARE BOTH PREPARING FOR NUCLEAR WAR.

Iran is **PUSHING**. Remember, the Houthi puppets are directed by Iran, and IRAN IS PURSUING NUCLEAR WEAPONS! Will this be the big push that triggers far greater wars? It certainly *could* be. Right now, it looks to me like it is. We will have to see.

Struck by two missiles, the cargo carrier *Rubymar* became the first vessel sunk by Houthi attacks.

Rising Provocations

When Europe moved into the Red Sea, the Houthis responded boldly. Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, from Yemen's Supreme Political Council, posted on social media on February 20: "Europeans, do not play with fire. Take a lesson from Britain." He warned the EU against "supporting the American devil."

Clearly the Houthis are speaking for Iran!

Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon says the word "push" in Daniel 11 means to STRIKE, or to wage WAR. This is a *violent* word. Could the Houthi attacks be part of that push?

Iran is increasingly violent. Ultimately, Germany's response will be even more violent: It will take out Iran completely! This will shock the world! But when people finally wake up to the danger, it will be too late for most of humanity physically. They will be caught in the most violent war in history!

Libya, Ethiopia and Egypt will ally with Iran, and we expect that to happen shortly. Ethiopia is right on the southern part of the Red Sea; you can see why Iran would want to add it into its alliance to gain greater control over that area. Iran also tried to get Sudan to give it a naval base, but it wouldn't comply. Still, the move made even more clear exactly what Iran is attempting to do: Sudan is also right there alongside the Red Sea.

You see how serious this situation is growing. It certainly *COULD* grow into that big push, and it could come soon. The threat of nuclear war makes it all the more important to take this seriously.

If Iran isn't stopped, this world is about to become far more dangerous. And this prophecy shows that they *will* be stopped—but *even that* will not turn out well because the power that is taking over has its own deadly ambitions!

increased their military spending: in 2022, a total of €240 billion; in 2023, €280 billion; and this year, an expected €350 billion (US\$377 billion).

Those are some astonishing increases!

By comparison, China's draft budget revealed that funding for national defense will reach \$233 billion this year. The United States military budget is about \$825 billion for 2024. But unlike China, Europe has a world-class military industry and can buy from the best in the world. And unlike the U.S., Europe is able to drastically increase its military budget.

Reuters wrote on March 11: "Biden's Meager 1 Percent U.S. Defense Budget Increase Buys Fewer Ships, Jets." This supposed increase doesn't even cover inflation, nor is it enough to restock supplies sent to Ukraine.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported on March 11 that European states almost doubled imports of major arms (up 94 percent) between the periods of 2014–2018 and 2019–2023. The same report notes that France just overtook Russia as the second-largest military exporter. On one of its websites, the EU shows that its member states issued over 31,000 licenses for arms sales in 2022 for a combined value of over €176 billion. "With that, the EU remains an important exporter of military equipment and technology," it states, "sharing about a quarter of global international trade in arms."

About a quarter of the world's international arms trade is made by the EU. How much power will this institution have if it concentrates its efforts on a single target?

Europe is in prime position to become a military superpower, buying the latest and the best weaponry. **AND LEADING THESE EFFORTS IS GERMANY—THE POWER THAT STARTED TWO WORLD WARS!**

The U.S. remains militarily dominant. Aside from its huge military budget, it accounts for 42 percent of international arms trade. But when you consider the nation's astronomical debt, its high expenditure in merely maintaining military bases, personnel and equipment—you see a superpower in decline. Also keep in mind the deep political and social divide this nation is plagued with, as well as the fact that it is unwilling to use its power (article, page 20). The U.S. didn't stop the Taliban from taking over



“The Hessen frigate we have selected is prepared for this. It is our gold standard, so to speak. [This is] the most serious deployment of a German naval unit for many decades.”

VICE ADM. JAN CHRISTIAN KAACK

We could be about to see the trigger that starts this war. This should make us extremely urgent.

Notice where the conflict leads. After conquering the king of the south, this European power “shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps” (Daniel 11:41-43).

Those nations allied with Iran *will fall with it*. This prophecy shows that

Secretly Rising Superpower

This European mission wants to be independent of the U.S. and NATO. They claim to fear that the U.S. mission could escalate the situation. But that is *not* their real motivation.

Europe is acting alone because **IT DOES NOT WANT TO ACT WITH AMERICA AND BRITAIN**. Europeans don't want to be *restrained* by American leadership.

Don't think Europe is unable to act on its own. All of Europe is undertaking a massive arming spree!

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told *Euronews* in February that since the invasion of Ukraine, EU member states have

Afghanistan; it will be even more unwilling and incapable of stopping Germany from taking control of the Middle East.

How has Germany gotten all this power? Didn't the Allies pledge that this nation would never again rise militarily after World War II? Remember, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt said, "It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world"?

Events have changed dramatically since then! Read my article in last month's issue, "Germany's Astonishing Military Rise" (theTrumpet.com/29110).

"We Germans have to get involved," *Bild* chief reporter Peter Tiede wrote. "Thirty-four years after the unification, it is time to behave as what we are: a POWER" (emphasis mine). They are vaulting themselves right back into becoming a war-making power! Shouldn't the history of two bloody world wars concern us more? It certainly OUGHT to!

Germany has a LONG HISTORY of war, even back to ancient times. The Germans are a great people, but they have repeatedly instigated horrendous wars.

The only thing Germany and Europe now need, truly, is POLITICAL WILL. With the right leadership, the situation in the Continent can change rapidly and drastically.

'War Economy'

Do we really know what's going on in Germany? I don't think we do. Many people in the West think Germany is our close friend, but *it is not*. We have said that for some 75 years.

What we are seeing today is exactly what the late Herbert W. Armstrong foretold. In May 1953, he warned that "10 powerful European nations will combine their forces," referring to the 10 kings prophesied in Daniel 2 and Revelation 17! The European Union currently has 27 nations, but it will pare down to 10 kings, led by Germany.

In August 1978, Mr. Armstrong warned, "The Europeans are far more disturbed about their safety and relying on the United States' military power to protect them than Americans realize!" If that was true then, how much worse is it today?

European industry commissioner Thierry Breton said, "We need to change the



paradigm and move into war economy mode." *War economy*. They are preparing for war! They are about to become far more powerful under German leadership.

European weapons manufacturers prioritize European orders in times of crisis. But right now, any proposals need approval not only from the European Parliament but also from all 27 national governments, and these have often been reluctant to cede power on defense and military matters. You can understand why it must be reduced down to 10 nations, with one in charge! Germany wants 10 nations that are absolutely committed to following its lead.

In the days of King Solomon, Israel ruled over the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. It amassed tremendous wealth and built an astonishing empire that safeguarded global trade and sustained peace. Israel imported goods from far and wide, and sold chariots, horses and

other exports. Solomon knew he had to control the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea (1 Kings 9:26-28).

Germany already virtually controls the Mediterranean, and now it wants to control the Red Sea, and it will! But Germany's rule will not lead to prosperity, because its people have not yet learned to submit to God. *Even the Israelites* fell into misery after they rejected God. Without God, no world ruler can bring peace—they will always bring evil.

Given what is happening in the world, we ought to recognize that man cannot solve his problems. Only God can. Jesus Christ will have to intervene, or no flesh would be saved alive! (Matthew 24:21-22). If we do not heed God right now, destruction is coming. Thankfully, God *will* intervene, bring an end to the German war machine, put down all rebellion, and establish a truly just worldwide government. ■

When Iran pushes, who will push back?

The Bible prophesies that Germany will be the one nation to finally stand against Islamic extremist Iran. To learn what the Bible warns will be the result, order your free copy of Gerald Flurry's ***Germany's Secret Strategy to Destroy Iran***.





The Global War on Free Speech

Astonishing advancements in government overreach **BY RICHARD PALMER**

YOU COULD SOON FIND YOURSELF IN jail for life because of something you said. You could be placed under house arrest and blocked from going online because of something the government fears you *might* say in the future. You could find yourself denounced to authorities by a “friend,” who would collect a bonus from the government for turning you in. And you could find the police on your doorstep because of a statement you made in the privacy of your own home.

Laws that would do this, and more, are under consideration in countries with long histories of freedom, democracy and rule of law.

Perhaps most startling of all, American states have already passed some of these restrictions—despite the First Amendment and the world’s most robust protection of free speech.

Will the First Amendment Save You?

If you live in Washington State, you are already a governor’s signature away from having neighbors paid to snitch on you. The state House and Senate passed a bill in March that will create a hotline where callers can receive up to \$2,000

by reporting “hate speech.”

The law empowers the government to “provide compensation ... to persons targeted or affected by hate crimes and bias incidents.” A “bias incident” includes speech where “criminal investigation or prosecution is impossible or inappropriate.” So you could make a perfectly legal comment but still be reported for a bounty. Is Washington trying to set up its own Stasi?

New York Governor Kathy Hochul has announced plans to expand her state’s hate crime laws. She also has set up a phone number and a website to report hate crimes and “bias incidents.” Michigan’s House has passed Bill 4474, which would make it a felony to cause someone to “feel terrorized, frightened or threatened.” “Misgender” someone, and if he says he feels threatened, you could face five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

In Massachusetts, six eighth graders have been accused of making “hateful and racist comments” in a group chat, including a mock slave auction. If that is accurate, clearly these kids need some punishment from their parents and perhaps the school. But they are facing *criminal charges*.

Policing Private Conversations

If you live in the United Kingdom, you already have to watch what you say online—even in private group chats. A former police officer was jailed for 20 weeks over a joke he told in a private WhatsApp post. A man who filmed his dog giving Nazi salutes was fined £800 (US\$1,000) because he posted it online. Police have investigated journalists for refusing to use someone’s preferred pronouns.

If you’re in Scotland, you *really* need to watch out. Starting April 1, a comment made in the privacy of your own home could land you in jail. The Hate Crime and Public Order Act has officers and prosecutors policing “hatred” against people of certain ages, disabilities, religions, and those who are transgender or homosexual. Government advertisements are prompting people to report each other to police or at convenient and discreet “third-party reporting centers” located in a salmon wholesaler, a caravan park, a mushroom farm or a sex shop. If you misgender someone or insist that marriage can only be between a man and woman, the Scottish government wants to hear about it.

If you’re in Ireland, you could soon be subject to a new bill, well on its way to becoming law, that criminalizes the possession of “hate speech.” You can go to jail for something you say—or *even something you receive*. If the *Trumpet* magazine or *Trumpet Brief* e-mail is deemed hateful by a bureaucrat in Dublin, you could be living in a prison cell for five years.

Pre-Crime

In one bill, Canada is legislating against retroactive crimes, future crimes and thought crimes. Its C-63 Online Harms Bill would enact a life sentence for “incitement to genocide.” According to activists, “misgendering” is violence, and refusing to allow transgender people into the bathroom of their choice is *genocide* because you are trying to erase all trans people. Will Canada adopt this definition?

If a judge finds that you expressed “detestation or vilification” of a protected group, you could lose up to \$40,000 and go to jail for five years.

If the government thinks you might commit a hate crime *in the future*, it can put you under house arrest for a

year and block your communication—including the Internet. Access the Internet anyway, and you could go to jail.

This bill also applies retroactively. Someone you annoyed might be trawling through your social media posts for something that could send you to jail and force you to pay him \$20,000 to compensate for the “hate” you subjected him to.

Overseeing all this activity is the Digital Safety Commission, which can block any content, hold secret hearings, and has no oversight. Unlike police, it can investigate and punish you without a court warrant. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association says this board has the power to “interpret the law, make up new rules, enforce them, and then serve as judge, jury and executioner.”

Politicians are justifying this bill as a way for government officials to catch and punish online child abusers and child pornographers, but these same powers can clearly grant other government officials the power to target their political opponents and everyday people.

It makes you wonder what current Canadian leaders are planning. These

People “know exactly what is protected by freedom of expression.”

GERMAN FAMILY MINISTER LISA PAUS

same powers could be used against liberals when conservatives win a future election. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has famously dressed in blackface and could himself be convicted for some of the things he has said or done in the past under these nebulous definitions and unaccountable enforcement bodies. Do the leftists who currently control the legislature and judiciary believe they will *never* have to give up that control?

Of all the bills, Canada’s is furthest from becoming law and could be substantially amended. But Canada’s left has spent years pushing in this direction. If it can’t go all the way this time, expect it to try again later.

Policing Thought Patterns

These English-speaking countries have long traditions of free speech. In Europe, that tradition is much shorter, and policing and prosecution of words and thoughts is already much more forceful.

In February, the European Union’s Digital Services Act went into force, obliging social media giants to delete anything the EU deems “disinformation.”

To counter the rise of the “far right,” governments are getting much more involved in policing speech. Last month, a 16-year-old German girl was pulled out of chemistry class by three police officers because she shared a TikTok video of Smurf cartoon characters supporting the Alternative für Deutschland. Some AfD members are outright neo-Nazis, but this draconian crackdown on speech by those currently in office could be even more dangerous.

“We should treat right-wing extremist networks like organized crime groups,” German Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said in the Bundestag in February at a parliamentary debate. “Those who mock the state must have to deal with a strong state ...” She wants the government to go after the bank accounts of “right-wing extremists” with a high “potential for action and social influence.” Some of



“Those who mock the state must have to deal with a strong state ...”

GERMAN INTERIOR MINISTER NANCY FAESER

these “right-wing extremists” are genuinely dangerous; others simply want less migration and fewer climate-change restrictions. But the German government will be determining where to draw the line and when to shut you down.

At the same parliamentary debate, Thomas Haldenwang, head of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, said the government must not allow right-wing “thought and speech patterns to become part of our language.”

At another event, Family Minister Lisa Paus targeted people who express “hate” on the Internet that “falls below the threshold of criminal liability.” People “know exactly what is protected by freedom of expression” and therefore express thoughts that are, for now, still legal. Paus said they must be stopped.

When even the anti-Nazis in Germany are debating the regulation of “thought and speech” patterns, you know it could be just a matter of time before your life—and your nation—changes dramatically.

A Global Force

Why are so many governments oppressing free speech so drastically at the same time?

In many of these countries, this is an attack on objective truth. Say that a man in a dress is still a man, that mass immigration has downsides, or that homosexual “marriage” hurts children and society, and someone in power who labels these *demonstrably true* facts as “hate” can shut you down. A government that silences such statements is at war with reality.

These pending and active laws—especially statutes policing what you might say in the future—exert powerful forces not only on your speech but also on your thoughts. They drastically reduce the amount of knowledge that ever reaches you to inform your opinion. They affect what you do and think in your own home. And when reality conflicts with the views of those controlling the government, these laws enforce conformity.

Around the world, government coercion is roaring back in a huge way.

For as long as men have exerted governance over each other, the powerful have had the impulse to shape reality according to their will. The 1650–1500 B.C. Hittite law code—one of the oldest—states: “If anyone rejects a judgment of the king, his house will become a heap of ruins.” In the ancient world, freedom of religion, and largely therewith freedom of speech and thought, was very rare. Very few ancient laws explicitly forbid free speech *because there was no such concept*. There was no rule of law either. If a ruler disliked what someone said, he simply ordered men, usually armed, to ruin him financially, destroy his property, or execute him.

Powerful men have policed free speech across civilizations, continents and generations. China’s first ruler to

use the title “emperor,” Qin Shi Huang, implemented what might be the world’s first recorded book burning in 213 B.C.: Confucian literature and historical records made prior to his reign were destroyed. A subsequent history that survives to our day, by Sima Qian, states that his regime buried 460 scholars accused of owning forbidden documents.

Free speech occasionally pops up in history as a tool for the underdog, a plea from the powerless. When they took over, sometimes they instituted it, but more often it went out the window. Perhaps the closest the ancient world came to free speech was Greece. Athens threw off its tyrants and established a democracy where citizens (freeborn men whose parents were both born in the city) could speak freely. But there was no “human right” to free speech—voters could punish the speaker with exile or death.

Free speech is almost inextricable from freedom of religion. For most of the last 2,000 years in Europe, church and state worked together to police speech and thought. The Bible was kept out of the common language of ordinary people by force of law, preventing disagreement with Vatican-dictated applications of Scripture. The Council of Nicaea officially established the trinity as a core doctrine of the Roman church. Immediately afterward, Roman authorities began burning anti-trinitarian books. In the 13th century, the Catholic Church encouraged the Albigensian Crusade. Authorities burned any Albigensian books they could find. Soon, they went after Albigensians themselves, putting up to a million of them to death.

Protestants initially held similar views on dealing with heretics. Martin Luther presided over a book burning and wanted preachers he disagreed with to be banned by the state.

Of course, this approach to censorship is not unique to Christianity. Muslim armies in India burned Buddhist texts and Buddhists monks in the 12th and 13th centuries.

The free speech the West has enjoyed and benefited from the last 200 years is *precious and rare*. And humanity is losing it, sinking back into the misery and ignorance that ensues when those in power control the reading, speaking and thinking of the masses.

Why Do Men Seek to Control Others?

This urge to dominate the actions, words and very thoughts of others—and to dominate reality itself—is a perverse expression of human nature. The human mind is actively hostile toward the laws of nature and nature’s Creator, and has been since the very first choices of the very first human generation (see Genesis 2 and Romans 8:7).

The Bible traces this nature in man back to a real, actual, intelligent, powerful single source: Lucifer. This great being said, “I will be the most high” (the correct rendering of Isaiah 14:14). He exalted his *will* over *reality* to the point of fighting his very Creator to try to seize the ultimate authority in the universe.

The first human beings, and every human since, have followed after *this same desire*.

This inbuilt desire to dominate the communication, music, relationships, religion and minds of others has a clear source. Restraining it is only possible with the Creator’s intervention in human history. Read the laws received by the nation of Israel in the 15th century B.C. and see *how powerfully they differ* from the chiefdoms, warlordships, tribalisms of the rest of the world and the rest of human history.

At the start of the modern era, America’s Founding Fathers recognized this self-evident but long-smothered truth: Not only the chiefs and kings and warlords but *all men* have rights that are *self-evident* and *unalienable*. Why? Because and *only because* these are *endowed by their Creator*. Their belief in free speech traces directly from this ancient book—the Bible. Therefore, they reasoned, human governments are *just* only insofar as they secure these rights to safety and happiness.

States passed their own religious freedom laws, like Virginia, which condemned the “impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who, being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others.” This entire constitutional civil foundation came from *the Bible*. And to preserve these fragile freedoms, they proclaimed “firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence.”

This precious and rare (though incomplete) understanding of the laws of nature’s Creator enabled traditions and institutions of comparative freedom to spring up in both Britain and America. These were additionally accompanied and protected by “accidents” of geography providing good land, seas and oceans from those that would stamp them out.

The worldwide plunge into censorship, then, is a *reversion* into what has been powerfully and crushingly *normal* throughout human history. It is a withdrawal of the unappreciated blessings God has given to the world, largely through British and American influence.

This freedom has enabled a great deal of Bible teaching to go out to the world. But the British and the Americans have also led the world in *abusing* this freedom. With the government unable and unwilling to restrain morals—and rejecting personal, familial and religious restraint—these peoples have used free speech to excuse the most depraved pornography, music and entertainment that have flooded the minds of millions.

In a society run directly by an all-powerful and all-knowing God, free speech would not be an issue. No truth would ever be suppressed. But run by men, protection against the inherent urge to dominate others and impose their own flawed ideas is essential.

For two centuries Britain and America brought that protection to much of the world. That time is now over. As we explain in our free book *America Under Attack*, we can expect God to intervene to preserve that freedom for just a little while longer, and then this window will close, for now.

But this subject also points to a great hope of freedom for all mankind. Why would God intervene in world history like this? Why open a window of time where free speech is available in much of the world? It points to the fact that God, though unknown to most of mankind, is working out a plan. And He wants *you* to know that plan—changing world history to allow the truth of that plan to go out. ■

Do you know what real freedom is? Request Gerald Flurry’s free booklet **No Freedom Without Law** and learn how slavery is far more common than you think.



‘MURDER WITH A BORROWED KNIFE’

China is using fentanyl against America in the ‘supreme art of war.’

BY JEREMIAH JACQUES

2 MG OF FENTANYL IS ENOUGH TO KILL A PERSON.

MANY PEOPLE FEAR THAT A war with China may be coming,” Peter Schweizer writes in his new book *Blood Money*. “But the war is already here.” He explains that though no Chinese boots are on the ground and no People’s Liberation Army warplanes are in the skies, this war is killing 200 Americans *each day*. That’s almost one person every 7 minutes. *Every year*, the slain add up to more than the American combat deaths in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan *combined*.

This war is raging in every corner of the United States, from Alaska and Hawaii to Maine and Florida. It kills rich and poor, young and old, black and white. It’s often called America’s “fentanyl crisis.” But since the Chinese Communist Party is involved in *every step* of this stunningly destructive attack on America, it would be more accurate to call it the New Opium War.

No Drug Like Fentanyl

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is about 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine. Inside the bloodstream, it produces a rapturous high. This means fentanyl is extremely addictive and

astonishingly high-risk, in terms of overdoses. Even tiny trace amounts, such as the few grains at the tip of the knife above, are enough to kill an adult.

“There’s never been another drug like fentanyl before,” said chemical and pharmaceutical expert Josh Bloom. “For street drugs, this absolutely destroys anything else in terms of lethality and danger.”

Jim Crotty, the Drug Enforcement Agency’s former chief of staff, emphasizes that fentanyl is “the most pernicious, the most devastating drug that we have ever seen.”

Making fentanyl is also far easier and cheaper than making heroin, since it’s entirely synthetic and doesn’t require growing poppies or dealing with related agricultural complications. The plant-based opium required to make a kilogram of heroin costs around \$6,000. The precursor chemicals needed for a kilogram of fentanyl costs only about \$200.

Since this “most pernicious” drug is so inexpensive to make, and since a little goes a long way, traffickers mix it into all kinds of other drugs. Fentanyl is everywhere. And though many of its American victims knowingly rolled the dice with this vicious poison, the *majority* of those killed by it didn’t know they were taking it.

“Many victims believe that they have purchased an FDA-approved drug such as Xanax or Vicodin, when in fact the product is a counterfeit pharmaceutical laced with fentanyl,” Schweizer writes. In other cases, fentanyl “is laced into other illegal drugs, such as marijuana or cocaine, without their knowledge.”

In 2020, 18-year-old Californian Tyler Gordon bought some pills from a local drug dealer that he was told were FDA-approved Percocet. After taking one, he overdosed and could not be resuscitated. The toxicology report listed his cause of death as “acute fentanyl toxicity.”

The next year, a 1-year-old North Carolina boy named True Lash ingested some of his mother’s fentanyl—perhaps just a few grains of powder that had accidentally gotten onto his tiny fingers. By the time medical crews arrived, it was too late. True was one of 133 American children under 5 years old *that year* who died from unintentionally ingesting fentanyl.

In 2022, several U.S. military cadets traveled from West Point to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for some spring break partying. Four of them took what they were told was cocaine. Shortly afterward, all four suffered cardiac arrest. Three others tried to give them CPR, and in the mouth-to-mouth process, were also exposed to trace amounts of fentanyl. All seven would likely have died had first responders not arrived so quickly. That year, 73,654 other people in the U.S. were not so fortunate.

Last year, four New York City children, ranging from 8 months to 2 years old, were hospitalized after inhaling trace amounts of fentanyl that had been hidden under a napping mat at their daycare center. Three were resuscitated with Narcan, a medication used to reverse overdoses from opioids. But 1-year-old Nicholas Dominici did not recover. “I love him, I miss him, I want him back,” his mother told the BBC. “But there is nothing that will give me back my son.”

Over the last decade, such tragic stories have filled the pages of American news publications. And new ones are published every single day, without fail.

It’s no wonder that some U.S. Department of Homeland Security officials have argued that fentanyl should be categorized as a “weapon of mass destruction.” And it’s no wonder that

even Mexican cartel members, callous to so much evil and suffering, have a sober fear of fentanyl. They refer to it as *el diablo*, “the devil.”

It may sound in some ways like just another drug problem, just another symptom of America’s sick society. But the truth is that this particular crisis would be addicting, weakening and killing far, far fewer people if not for an active strategy employed by the Chinese Communist Party.

Schweizer’s book is based on meticulous research from restricted Chinese military journals, leaked private e-mails, Chinese corporate data, leaked records from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Homeland Security, internal documents from Mexican law enforcement and American criminal court documents. And it all shows that the Chinese Communist Party is involved in basically every step of America’s fentanyl problem.

Enter the Dragon

The U.S. fentanyl crisis does not begin south of the Rio Grande but 7,000 miles east of the American heartland—in Shijiazhuang, China. Companies in Shijiazhuang produce some 40 percent of the synthetic precursor chemicals that illicit U.S. fentanyl is made from. Another 55 percent of those chemicals are manufactured in several other cities across China.

Many of the Chinese companies churning out precursors, such as Xuyang Biotechnology and Skyrun Industrial, are state-owned. They receive grants, tax breaks, subsidies—and orders—from the Chinese Communist Party. And it is important to know that in China, even firms that are not officially “state-owned” still operate at the discretion of the authoritarian government and function as weapons of statecraft.

Occasionally, U.S. officials muster the political clarity and will to sanction a certain Chinese company for manufacturing fentanyl precursors. But since the Chinese Communist Party runs it all from higher up, they can quickly change the company name or shift its operations to a different firm. If the U.S. outlaws a certain precursor chemical, Chinese Communist Party officials order their scientists to tweak the chemical compound ever so slightly.

The “brand new chemical” is technically not illegal but is every bit as potent, addictive and destructive to American users, and that’s the point.

Many think that making precursors is where China’s involvement in the U.S. fentanyl crisis ends. It is actually only the beginning.

From Shijiazhuang and other cities, China ships these precursors across the Pacific Ocean to Manzanillo, a major port northwest of Mexico City. The international terminal at this port, like several others in Mexico, is not run by Mexican companies but by a Chinese one called CK Hutchison Holdings. Hutchison also controls the railroad terminals in Manzanillo. Its employees keep a steady flow of trains hauling car after car of precursors up to Culiacán, a small town in northern Mexico.

Around 2,000 Chinese nationals, many of them chemists, have a permanent presence in Culiacán. They work with Mexican cartel members to convert those precursors coming up from Manzanillo into the toxic cocktail called fentanyl.

China’s involvement in this attack doesn’t stop there.

After the fentanyl is successfully synthesized, it needs to be pressed into pill form for easy smuggling, distribution and ingestion. Here again, the Chinese lend the Mexicans a helping hand. Chinese companies smuggle pill presses into both Mexico and the U.S. The Department of Justice has also pointed out that China’s “ambiguous export regulations” enable “traffickers to use vague manifest descriptions to describe pill press machines to avoid scrutiny from U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel.”

Many of the pill presses made by China include the specific metal cast dies that are needed to imprint the pills with counterfeit codes, such as “10/352.” That’s the imprint put on genuine Percocet pills. Eighteen-year-old Tyler Gordon very likely saw that code on the fentanyl pill—presented to him as a Percocet—that ended his life.

Curiously, the facts show that Chinese firms sell these pill presses to cartels for

just around \$1,000 per unit, basically at cost. If they’re selling these presses at little to no profit, what do the Chinese gain from these transactions? The chilling answer is this: They measure the success of their fentanyl venture not in dollars but in American lives.

At this point in the process, the precursors are cooked into fentanyl, and the fentanyl is pressed into enticing pills. Even here, the Chinese are not finished twisting the knife.

To smuggle the pills across America’s Swiss-cheese border and distribute and sell them, cartel members need means of communication that American lawmen are unable to tap. For this they use WeChat, a messaging app owned by Chinese tech giant Tencent. The Mexicans rely on WeChat because they know that, even though it is vigilantly monitored by Chinese authorities to

SOX FENTANYL IS A SYNTHETIC OPIOID UP TO 50 TIMES STRONGER THAN HEROIN.

suppress political dissent, the Chinese turn a deaf ear to chatter about getting fentanyl inside Americans. The cartels also know that the Chinese refuse to share communications with the U.S.

“It is all happening on WeChat,” said retired DEA agent Thomas Cindric, who had focused on the fentanyl war. “The Chinese government is clearly aware of it.”

The final step of the process is giving cartel blood money an appearance of legitimacy so it can be spent on weapons, bribes and anything else that will expand their vicious drug empires. And here again, the Chinese eagerly step up. Chinese operatives launder *billions* of fentanyl dollars for cartels each year. And they do so at rates far lower than cartels got from Colombian launderers back in the cocaine era. “With the Colombians, it had been an 18 percent to 13 percent commission,” said Cindric. “The Chinese are doing it for 1 to 2 percent on average. And the speed at which they do it is unbelievable. The Chinese absorbed the risk. You know it will get paid.”

The alarming truth is that America is being ruthlessly attacked.

AMERICANS 12 AND OLDER WHO HAVE USED ILLICIT DRUGS AT LEAST ONCE **1/2**

China is involved in basically every aspect of the illicit and devastating trade, and it is for the purpose of ruining as many American lives—grief-wracked, wounded or killed—as possible. Schweizer sums it up chillingly: “Fentanyl is being covertly and systematically aimed at the citizens of our country by a major foreign power—the most lethal peacetime attack in human history.”

Why is China working so furiously to poison Americans and destabilize our society? Because the Chinese want to overtake America as the world’s leading nation. And they have a long history of working toward such goals with underhanded and wicked methods.

‘Murder With a Borrowed Knife’

In his book *The Art of War*, the ancient Chinese strategist Sun Tzu encouraged the use of disruption, deception and subterfuge to defeat enemies. He emphasized the use of indirect tactics, when possible, rather than overt military confrontations. “The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting” is one of his book’s most famous tenets.

This was written more than 2,000 years ago, but it remains foundational to the thinking of modern Chinese leaders and operatives.

In 2003, the Chinese government published its official Three Warfares policy. This was designed to guide the minds of People’s Liberation Army soldiers, sailors and officers at every level. And it includes Sun Tzu’s phrase about “subduing the enemy without fighting” no fewer than 10 times, along with many details about applying it to the modern landscape.

Starting in 2006, every member of China’s People’s Liberation Army has been required to thoroughly study *The Art of War* as a textbook. This is meant to provide a clear vision for China’s overarching military strategy.

In 2010, Chinese military planners published a manual called *Disintegration Warfare*, the cover of which quotes that same Sun Tzu tenet, and the pages of which provide still more detail

about how China can accomplish it.

China is using fentanyl to subdue the enemy without fighting. Around half

of the Americans killed by this dark, underhanded warfare are of military age. “This is the equivalent of removing two or three divisions of Army or Marines off the rolls every year,” said U.S. Marine Col. Grant Newsham (Ret.). This is chilling, but the truth is the Chinese don’t specifically target military-age individuals. They are thinking ahead to total war and are waging it already through fentanyl’s wide and messy spray of devastation, wrecking families and destroying communities. With each new addict, overdose or grief-crushed survivor, the enemy is a little more subdued, without actually fighting.

The people of China also universally study an ancient set of tactics called the 36 Stratagems. These are methods of deception, misdirection, exploitation for use in war and politics, which complement Sun Tzu’s teachings well. These 36 stratagems permeate modern Chinese culture, with children learning them in their earliest years and re-encountering them over and over in nursery rhymes, books, magazines, music, TV shows and film. Among the most frequently discussed of the 36 translates to “Murder with a borrowed knife.” This means inflicting damage on an enemy by involving a third party, fomenting civil war or finding other insidious means of attack that give the attacker a degree of plausible deniability. And it describes China’s murderous role in America’s fentanyl scourge perfectly.

A Dark New Era

In his March 30, 2018, *Key of David* program, “The Times of the Gentiles,” Gerald

Flurry said: “Surely if we stop and think about this, with China doing all that and making all these deals and paying all that money, what is their goal? What is their ambition? Surely we must see a strong motivation there to take over the world, to conquer the world, and some of the Chinese leaders will even tell you that.”

That episode’s title comes from Luke 21:24, in which Jesus Christ warned that in our modern era, the world would enter into a nightmarish new period: the times of the Gentiles.

The Scriptures make clear that this new epoch would occur when the power of Israelitish nations America and Britain declines, and other countries such as China become globally dominant. We are in that era now, and China is increasingly twisting the knife to further erode U.S. power, including its diabolical fentanyl offensive.

As America increasingly succumbs to its societal rot, numerous crippling addictions and political dysfunction, China will continue to do all it can to hasten its fall and boost Chinese power. Bible prophecy makes clear that these efforts will culminate in China working with other global powers to besiege America.

It is plain that some horrifically dark days lie ahead. But the darkness will not last long.

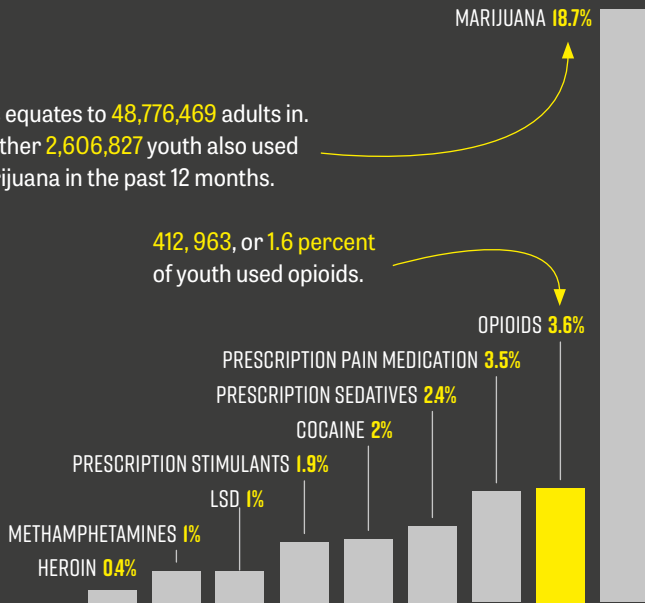
In His forecast about the “times of the Gentiles,” Christ said, as China and other powers keep weakening America and strengthening themselves, “men’s hearts” will be “failing them for fear” (verse 26). But in the very next verse, He promises that the fear will give way to the best possible event: “And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” (verse 27). These brutal times of the Gentiles—which the world is now already in—will come to an end with the return of Jesus Christ! ■

GET A PREVIEW OF ASIA’S FUTURE

America’s time as the world’s lone superpower is over. Competing blocs of nations are striving to master the world’s resources. Bible prophecy explains where Asia fits in and who will win the contest. Request your free copy of *Russia and China in Prophecy*.

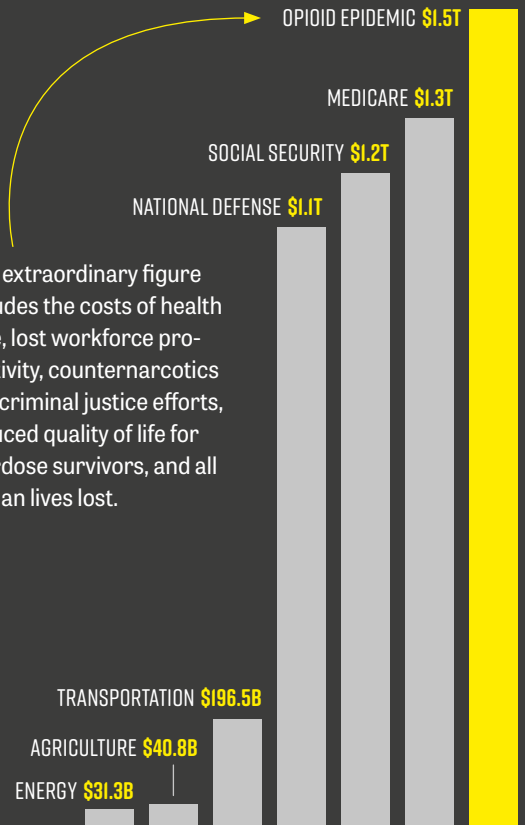


This equates to **48,776,469** adults in. Another **2,606,827** youth also used marijuana in the past 12 months.



412,963, or 1.6 percent of youth used opioids.

This extraordinary figure includes the costs of health care, lost workforce productivity, counternarcotics and criminal justice efforts, reduced quality of life for overdose survivors, and all human lives lost.

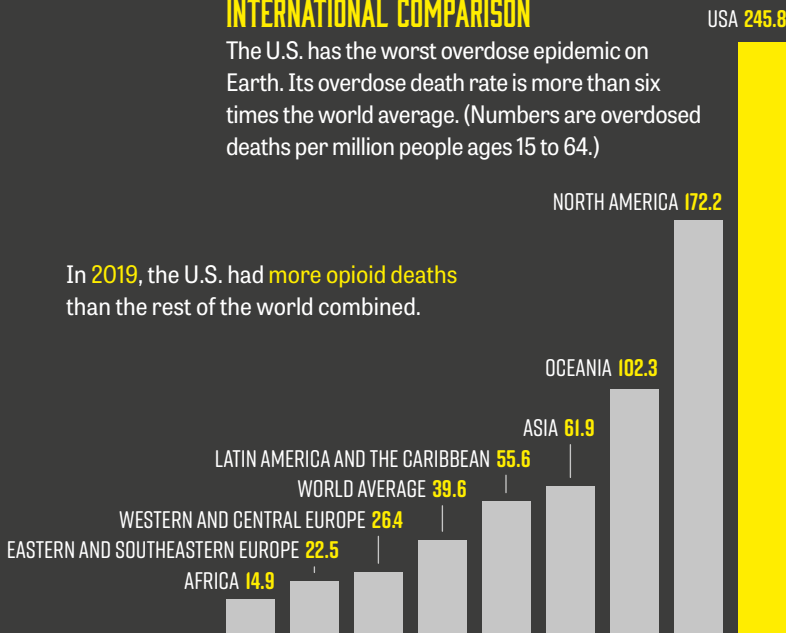


SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Marijuana is the most commonly used drug in the United States. More than 18 percent of American adults admit that they have ingested marijuana in the past 12 months.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

The U.S. has the worst overdose epidemic on Earth. Its overdose death rate is more than six times the world average. (Numbers are overdosed deaths per million people ages 15 to 64.)



In 2019, the U.S. had **more opioid deaths** than the rest of the world combined.

ECONOMIC COSTS

The U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee estimates the opioid crisis costs the nation nearly \$1.5 trillion each year. That's more than the U.S. spends on Medicare, Social Security or defense.

AMERICA'S OVERDOSE EP

Americans are exposing themselves to a chemical attack. This ongoing assault has killed more than 1.2 million people in the past 25

A SPIRITUAL LESSON IN THE FENTANYL CRISIS

The unintended consequences of sin

BY JOEL HILLIKER

AMERICA'S LOVE FOR drugs has nasty unintended consequences. Doctors love dishing out drugs: Every year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says, they provide or prescribe a *billion* drugs. More than 70 percent of office visits involve drug therapy. In the past month, half of Americans have used a prescription drug; a quarter have used three or more; 1 in 8 have used at least five. Millions of these patients misuse these drugs—or use illegal drugs. The National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics says more than 1 in 5 Americans age 12 and up misused drugs in the last year. That is nearly 60 million people.

China sees all this. And because it is looking to supplant the United States as the world's dominant power, it recognizes this plague as an opportunity.

The Chinese Communist Party supports companies and agents that manufacture specific chemicals at scale, ship them to a port in Mexico, run them by rail right up to the American border, and convert them into mass amounts of cheap, deadly fentanyl. They work with drug cartels to interlace it into other drugs both counterfeit FDA-approved and illegal, find ways to evade border safeguards, and deluge the U.S. with this poison (“Murder With a Borrowed

Knife,” page 15). This *one drug* is killing an average of 200 Americans *per day*.

Obviously, this is far easier and less risky for China than trying to directly attack the greatest military power in world history. Why launch a frontal assault when you can just use Americans' weakness against them?

This strategy would not exist if Americans weren't so drug-dependent. It is *we* who are putting these substances into our bodies.

Drug abuse is a self-destructive vice. This is a painful example of how the consequences can ripple out well beyond the abuser. Here a foreign government is actively weaponizing this vice and multiplying its destructive potential. The array of effects—including the annual deaths of tens of thousands of military-age Americans, economic losses, sunken productivity, personal and family devastation—are incalculable.

This is not an abstract, impersonal force wreaking this ruin. *Individuals* are making choices that are not only weakening them personally but also creating a breach that an enemy nation is exploiting to *weaken the nation* just as surely as a military defeat would. More Americans die from drug addiction *each year* than died in the whole 20 years of the Vietnam War.

Put simply, VICE CREATES VULNERABILITIES. Weakness compounds to make us even weaker, in unforeseen and far-reaching ways. Examples of this

principle are everywhere in our lives, individually and nationally.

This is, in fact, a *biblical* principle, expounded throughout Scripture. God actually warns of an inescapable law at work that is hastening America's collapse.

Broken Pride

America has by far the world's most expensive military. Of the top 10 highest-spending nations, America has invested about as much as the other nine combined. It has imposing air superiority and naval dominance. It boasts leading-edge technology and exceptionally skilled special forces. It can project tremendous power to anywhere on the globe at unprecedented speed.

Given such advantages, Americans tend to feel impervious to dangers, invincible. How could the most powerful military ever be defeated?

A crucial answer lies in a prophecy in Leviticus 26.

Here God promises blessings to the nation that keeps His laws, including favorable weather, abundant crops, material prosperity, peace and security, military victories, divine protection and favor. He then warns of *curses* on the nation that disobeys Him. Among these, here is one of the most grievous: “And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. And I WILL BREAK THE PRIDE OF YOUR POWER ... And your strength shall be spent in vain ...” (verses 18-20).

Yes, America has tremendous power and strength. At one time, it had great *pride* in that power. The dramatic story of *the reasons* appears in Herbert W. Armstrong's book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*. God gave America unmatched power as part of the birth-right blessings He had promised to the patriarch Abraham—"the greatest national power any nation or empire ever possessed. We had great *pride* in that national power—in our national prestige," Mr. Armstrong wrote.

But as a curse for Americans' disobedience to Him, God has *broken* that pride. When *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry discusses this prophecy, he uses the expression "broken will." "This is an end-time prophecy, and God says that He has **BROKEN OUR WILL**," he said in a 2015 *Key of David* episode. "We have the power and God gave it to us, and now He has *broken our will*, where we're afraid to use it."

Evidence abounds that sin has fatally weakened this nation. This is a catastrophic curse that undermines our national power and causes us to spend our strength in vain. You do not even need to believe the prophecy to recognize this inescapable truth. America's *national will* has been broken.

Let's set aside the realm of drug abuse for a moment longer and assess the state of the world's costliest armed forces.

The Military's New Mission

One of Joe Biden's first acts after assuming the presidency was to direct the military to begin allowing transgenders to openly serve. When the policy was implemented in June 2021, leaders insisted it would fortify the fighting force.

"People are the strength of our Army," Maj. Gen. Douglas F. Stitt, military personnel management director, explained that month. "Our ability to assess and retain qualified personnel provides a more diverse and stronger Army, while inclusivity creates a more effective force and enhances overall readiness." Some insisted this would boost military recruitment. "This gives the Army a bigger applicant pool to consider," Stitt said.

In the time since, the military and intelligence community have worked diligently to promote lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, "questioning" and "intersex" activities as well as "diversity, equity and

inclusion" initiatives. Recruits to the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency, part of the Defense Department, must receive training that includes the "gender unicorn" and "transgender terminology index." In March, an internal newsletter sent to personnel across the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Central Intelligence Agency and intelligence services featured an article titled "My Gender Identity and Expression Make Me a Better Intelligence Officer." Literally millions of American tax dollars have been spent on "sex reassignment" and "gender confirmation" surgeries for soldiers.

Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines says, "Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility are the cornerstone of our mission." As grave threats multiply worldwide, America's military says its top concerns are to "tackle the climate crisis" and "to improve diversity, equity and inclusion across the force," with an emphasis on uncovering "possible racial disparity." The Navy has a "drag queen" as a recruiter. Military bases have hosted drag shows. After one such show, a military spokesman told Yahoo! News, "Ensuring our ranks reflect and are inclusive of the American people is essential to the morale, cohesion and readiness of the military."

There is *no* evidence that these efforts have done anything but *eviscerated* morale, cohesion and readiness. Hordes of capable personnel have left the service as it has become inhospitable to traditional morality. The nation's image abroad has been sullied by the promotion

of male military leaders masquerading as women. And it is difficult to see how soldiers are better prepared to conquer enemies by being trained to view *diversity* as the cornerstone of their mission and to focus on inclusive pronoun use.

Despite all assurances to the contrary, military recruiters are struggling to meet quotas. In the latest Defense Authorization Bill, the number of active-duty service members was the lowest it had been since World War II. Since the military has traditionally been a magnet for strong, masculine males—who tend

NEARLY 1 IN 10 U.S. ADULTS HAVE HAD A FAMILY MEMBER DIE OF DRUG OVERDOSE

to be more politically and morally conservative—this is no surprise.

This begins to illustrate how the prodigious strength of the world's most expensive military can be spent "in vain."

It shows why America has been consigned to watching Russia—with a mere 10th of its military budget—invade Ukraine for the past two years (while its economy has grown). It shows why China—with a third of America's military spending—is speaking openly about ignoring U.S. security guarantees and taking over Taiwan. It shows why Iran—which spends 3 percent of what America does—continues to promote piracy and sabotage in the Red Sea despite U.S. efforts to stamp it out.

Here is a plain, clear example of sin's corrosive, weakening effect.

A NATION ENSLAVED

Why do children want to take drugs and destroy their minds? The mind is the only thing that really sets us apart from animals. What is lacking in their lives that would make them want to do that to themselves? Why even take a *chance* on something so destructive? Because their wills are so weakened, they must have something to fill the void their parents have left—in most cases. Of course, drugs don't truly fill that void at all—they only bring people into slavery of the worst possible kind.

Drug addiction destroys the **WILL**! Sex addiction destroys the **WILL**! The worse the addiction, the weaker the will to resist, to fight evil.

Our young people today have even lost the will to participate in the military to protect our *nation's freedom*. History shows the terrible consequences of a damaged will: When a nation's will is broken, it becomes weak and ineffective—and, oftentimes, *enslaved* by an enemy nation!

— Gerald Flurry, excerpted from *No Freedom Without Law*



Americans, steeped in sin, have elected corrupt leaders. These civilian leaders, morally depraved and neck-deep in sin, have installed military leaders who are sick with the same problems. Together they have pursued their perverse ambitions with religious fervor, prioritizing their articles of faith over national security, ignoring the disastrous effects of their decisions.

It is stunning how little people consider the moral dimension to national and international affairs. We must recognize the connection between *our individual choices* and *national security*. People want to pretend that morality is entirely separate from public matters, that there is no connection between character and leadership. But the evidence surrounds us: The connection is unbreakable.

How Balaam Destroyed Israel

An example from ancient Israel tells. Balak, king of Moab, feared the Israelites and wanted to curse them. For this, he hired a false prophet named Balaam. God would not allow the prophet to curse Israel directly. But Balaam found an *indirect* means by which to fulfill Balak's request. Essentially, it was the same strategy the Chinese are using to weaken America with deadly drugs.

The account in Numbers 22-25 shows the Israelite men taking an immoral interest in the pagan, Moabite women. Numbers 31:16 and Revelation 2:14 show that *Balaam was behind this*: He had convinced the Moabite king to "cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication." He managed to *turn the Israelites' moral weakness against them*. Not only did they break the Seventh and Tenth Commandments, but those women led them into Sabbath-breaking and worshiping pagan gods. One sin led to another, and it brought down God's wrath on the whole nation.

Israel was overcome not by military conquest but by indirect moral sabotage.

Using roundabout means of attacking an enemy is a time-tested strategy of warfare. In the fifth century B.C., Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu eloquently described the practice. "There is no art higher than to destroy your enemy without a fight—by subverting anything of value in the enemy's country," he wrote.

79% OF AMERICANS RESIDE IN A COUNTY THAT HAS AT LEAST ONE LICENSED MARIJUANA RETAILER

Among the specific means he advocated: "Cover with ridicule all of the valid traditions in your opponent's country." "Implicate their leaders in criminal affairs and turn them over to the scorn of their populace." "Do not shun the aid of the lowest and most despicable individuals of your enemy's country." "Spread disunity and dispute among the citizens." "Turn the young against the old." The Chinese who are flooding America with fentanyl are executing the strategy expertly.

The real master at subversion, though, is a far more ancient military strategist. In Scripture he is called "the tempter," "the accuser," a liar and murderer (Matthew 4:3; Revelation 12:10; John 8:44). He is also called "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," and "the god of this world" (Ephesians 2:2; 2 Corinthians 4:4). He is always trying to entrap us in sin that saps our strength. He has filled his world with traps aimed at weakening us and subverting and undermining our will.

Peter's Warning

The Apostle Peter warns against the corrosive, destructive nature of sin. He describes how God punished the angels that sinned, destroyed the world in Noah's day, and reduced promiscuous Sodom and Gomorrah to ash, and he says these ancient examples are *for us*. We live in *modern* Sodom. In some ways you could argue that it is worse.

Peter then describes several sins that will provoke God's judgment. Among them: "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin ..." (2 Peter 2:14). Truly we live in a world so habituated in sin, especially sexual sin, that people *cannot cease* from it!

"They are hooked on sin like heroin—like the homosexuals in Genesis 19," Mr. Flurry writes. "THEIR WILLPOWER IS DESTROYED. That is what sin does to a person—it saps you of the *will* to live righteously" (*The Epistles of Peter—A Living Hope*). Consider that: Sin doesn't merely bring the immediate consequences associated with that specific sin—it saps your

will. It destroys your *willpower*. Thus it tends to have a multiplying effect. Giving into one sin leads to another.

Verse 15 warns against people "following the way of Balaam." This false prophet was himself enticed by Balak's riches into directly defying God.

Peter continues, indicting people who "promise them freedom, but they themselves are *slaves of corruption*; for WHATEVER OVERCOMES A MAN, TO THAT HE IS ENSLAVED" (verse 19; Revised Standard Version). How vividly this describes our world! People everywhere promise *freedom* through immorality and lawlessness. But they themselves are enslaved to sin and sapped of will; thus, Satan is able to draw them into ever-more-depraved sins.

Observe God's inescapable law in action. Sin brings curses. Sin breaks the will, and the resulting weakness leads to worse sin and more grievous curses.

Recognizing this truth on the national scale will help you apply it in your individual life. Think about it, and you will likely find areas where you are sabotaging yourself, giving Satan leverage over you because of weakness. When you LACK WILL, you cannot do what God asks of you. When you fail, make a bad decision or sin, then your resolve, your confidence, your will, is weakened. Making that wrong choice the next time grows easier.

Thankfully, the reverse is also true. One good decision strengthens your determination to make the next one. Virtue builds spiritual confidence, which supplies strength for forging more virtue. "[T]he *righteous* are BOLD AS A LION" (Proverbs 28:1).

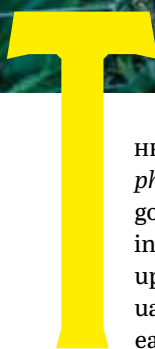
America is on the wrong side of this formula. Its broken will is hastening its fall. Already the nation's enemies are beginning to move from acts of sabotage to much more direct attack. We can expect this trend to intensify.

Fathom this lesson, and apply it personally. Obey God, and enjoy the blessings He promises: "[Y]e shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid" (Leviticus 26:6). ■

WHEN OKLAHOMA LEGALIZED MARIJUANA ...

It got a lot more than it asked for.

BY JUSTICE BROWN



THE HOME STATE OF THE *Philadelphia Trumpet* is in the midst of a gold rush. It enables hardworking, blue-collar workers to hang up the long hours of their manual labor jobs and clock in for an easy living. It's a new American dream that many of us have seen personally, often with its own seven-leaf icon.

In mid-2018, Oklahoma had zero marijuana-growing licenses and zero marijuana sales locations. Six years later, it has granted thousands of \$2,500 licenses (14,000 at the peak) and has more retail marijuana stores than Colorado, Oregon and Washington combined. California (population 39 million) has 1,244 dispensaries; Oklahoma (population 4 million) has 2,683.

The rush is on.

Oklahoma voters voted yes to State Question 788 on June 25, 2018, which led to the legalization of marijuana for “medical” use. It made Oklahoma the 30th state to approve some form of medical marijuana. But as a *Scripps* news report at the time said, “unlike many other states, Oklahoma’s law doesn’t specify medical conditions the drug is approved for—doctors can prescribe marijuana for any condition.”

The law says patients with licenses can keep up to 8 ounces of marijuana in their home—enough for roughly 480 joints—and carry 3 ounces with them. They can also possess up to 12 marijuana plants. In one growth cycle

of 60 to 90 days, 12 plants can produce roughly 5,040 joints’ worth of the drug. This law effectively legalized recreational marijuana in Oklahoma.

At the same time, another trend has been taking place that might at first seem unrelated.

Land Grab

In a Sept. 23, 2023, hearing about the situation in Oklahoma, Sen. James Lankford observed that the year after the state passed this marijuana law, “Oklahoma had more land sales to foreign entities than any other state in the nation.”

Not far from the *Trumpet*’s offices, the properties you drive by and see in the distance are owned not by Oklahomans or even Americans, but by foreigners with foreign motives.

Foreigners are seizing an opportunity—an opportunity to do what?

The Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics states that 75 percent of licensed grow facilities are *Chinese-owned*. It estimates that Chinese entities now own more than 1 million acres for growing illegal marijuana. This means that much of the time, the state government isn’t even getting its cut. In some cases, state inspectors have been turned away from these foreign-owned properties by Asian men carrying firearms.

Chinese Mafia

The people living and working on these properties and in these grow-houses are,

at this very moment, suffering slave-like conditions, human trafficking and sex trafficking.

And there is an unending supply of victims. Many people in these situations came across America’s open southern border. Last year, at least 24,000 Chinese crossed the border illegally, more than the previous 10 years combined.

One infamous example from 2022 hints at what is going on. Just a 45-minute drive from the *Trumpet*’s campus, four Chinese workers on a 10-acre marijuana farm in Kingfisher County were murdered by Wu Chen. The perpetrator was arrested

in Florida and extradited to Oklahoma. He was terrified of going to prison in this state because “the Chinese mafia has a large presence in Oklahoma.”

When Oklahomans voted for marijuana, they were also voting for foreign-owned land, gangs, human trafficking, sex trafficking, fentanyl, ketamine, violence and murder.

It potently illustrates the unintended, far-reaching consequences of giving in to self-destructive pulls and vices.

America has never suffered such a dangerous foreign threat *within* its borders. But God said this would happen. He inspired the Prophet Isaiah to write a song—recorded in Isaiah 5—that characterizes the United States and other modern descendants of the ancient Israelites as a vineyard. God planted, cared for and created a protective hedge around the vineyard and labored to help it produce fruit and give it the best chance to succeed.

But look at our fruits. Because of our rebellion against Him and our wicked lifestyles, including lifestyles we literally voted for, God says in this prophecy that He will remove His protection. “... I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: And I will lay it waste ...” (verses 5-6).

Threats are now pouring over, across and through the hedge. And now, here in the center of the nation, Oklahomans can see the threat from China firsthand. ■



Rwandan refugees walk past cholera victims, a deadly side effect of the 1994 genocide.

Rwanda 30 Years On

What a small East African nation can teach the world **BY MIHAİLO S. ZEKIC**

ONE HUNDRED DAYS. ONE HUNDRED days of a maelstrom of carnage swallowing up your country, your city, your block. One hundred days of neighbor turning on neighbor, of family turning on family, of people you know transforming overnight—some into the hunted, some into hunters. One hundred days of the rest of the world sanctimoniously wagging its finger while your country slaughters itself.

This is the situation Rwanda was in 30 years ago. After President Juvénal Habyarimana's plane was shot down near Kigali, Rwanda's capital, the Hutu-dominated government launched a preplanned genocide against the Tutsi people. In the hundred days between April 7 and July 15, 1994, hundreds of thousands of Tutsis, Twa and moderate Hutus lost their lives in medieval butchery. How many died is disputed. Scholars estimate the total to be between 500,000 and 800,000. The Rwandan government and the United Nations place the figure at over a million.

April 7 marked the 30-year anniversary of the conflict. What are its lasting impacts? How far has Rwanda come?

An Overnight Holocaust

Even compared to other tragedies in Africa, what happened in Rwanda was horrific. Just being caught with a Tutsi identification card was enough

for police to execute a person. But the authorities didn't do all the work; radio broadcasts encouraged Hutu civilians to hunt down their Tutsi neighbors and slay them. Assailants used machetes and other handheld tools to hack people to death. Men with HIV/AIDS raped women to intentionally infect them.

Adeline, a survivor who gave her testimony to the UN, recounted one episode in June 1994. She and her sister were taken hostage by Hutu "husbands" who were treating them as sex slaves. Militias were combing every last village to snuff out every last Tutsi. Adeline's mother-in-law helped her escape. Her sister, however, didn't make it. Distraught, Adeline turned herself over to the Interahamwe, one of the most notorious death squads, to be killed.

"Instead of killing me," she recounted, "another [member of the] Interahamwe took me to a disused house and raped me. He showed me his grenades and bullets and asked me to choose which death I would prefer. I picked up a grenade and threw it on the ground hoping it would blow me up, but it didn't explode. He then called in his friends to punish me." They abused her for days on end.

Hundreds of thousands of individuals went through ordeals like Adeline's.

When crises like this happen, people often call on the UN to send in a peacekeeping force, or at least do *something*. Rwanda was a special case. The UN

already had a presence of 2,500 peacekeepers to monitor a peace agreement signed the year before between the Rwandan government and Tutsi rebels. Once the mass slaughter started, the UN jumped into action—but not to save Tutsis. No, they scrambled to *get out of the country*. Per UN regulations, the peacekeepers could use force only in self-defense or to evacuate foreigners. In early April, the Rwandan government massacred 10 Belgian peacekeepers, prompting Belgium to evacuate its forces. Other countries contributing to the UN mission soon followed suit. The UN presence shrank from 2,500 troops to 270.

In one notorious example, on the first day of the genocide, roughly 2,000 Tutsis tried to find refuge at the *École Technique Officielle*, a Catholic secondary school on the outskirts of Kigali. Hutu extremists tracked them down and would have slaughtered them immediately, if it weren't for the Belgian UN troops guarding the building. But when Belgium ordered its soldiers back home on April 11, the soldiers complied. Extremists came soon after and slaughtered almost everybody.

"I remember one of us asking them [the UN troops] to give us a few guns so [we] could protect ourselves," Venuste, a survivor, recalled. "But they still refused."

Aftermath

The genocide ended when the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a rebel group, overthrew the government in July. The new regime, surveying the bloody rubble left behind, brought some stability. But as could be expected, that didn't mean the wounds healed immediately.

As the RPF advanced, thousands of Hutus, including many responsible for genocide, moved across the border to Zaire (today the Democratic Republic of Congo, or DRC), fearing reprisals. In 1996, the new government under Paul Kagame invaded Zaire to deal with the vestiges of the former regime. In what became known as the First Congo War (1996–1997), the RPF killed what human rights groups estimate were as many as 200,000 Hutus in Zaire.

The war ended when Zaire's dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko, fled the country. His successor, Laurent Kabila, obtained power through Rwandan sponsorship.

But wary of Rwanda's new influence in the country, he ordered foreign troops out of the country and started sponsoring Interahamwe remnants. Rwanda responded by going to war on Kabila's government. This led to the Second Congo War (1998–2003), also known as Africa's World War. This involved the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Sudan, Chad, Zimbabwe and myriads of militias, costing an estimated 5.4 million lives. Most of these were killed by disease and malnutrition associated with the conflict. Even still, the Second Congo War was man's deadliest conflict since World War II.

All this stemmed from those fateful 100 days in 1994.

Recovery within Rwanda itself was much less violent. But a genocide with such a large number of participants meant a large number of incarcerations. By 2001, Rwanda's justice system had some 115,000 cases pending trial. To alleviate some of the pressure on the justice system, the government established *gacaca* (grass) courts, localized courts presided by prominent individuals in communities. The fairness and impartiality of the *gacaca* courts varied. By 2010, roughly 1.5 million cases went through the *gacaca* system.

Reconciliation

This history is not all doom and gloom. Rwanda has made genuine attempts to reconcile its population within its borders and move on from catastrophe. With such a large population complicit in genocide, Kagame's government couldn't put everybody behind bars. The government gave mass amnesty to prisoners who confessed to acts of genocide and publicly asked for forgiveness. In March 2004 alone, 30,000 people received pardons that way.

The government also has worked hard to foster a new national identity to erase the divisions that led to the horrors of 1994. This included abolishing the ethnic classification system through ethnic identification cards. This system was a relic of Belgian colonial rule. Some say there is not much difference between Hutus and Tutsis to begin with; they speak the same language, live in the same general areas, and keep the same religion. The government abolished this colonial-era caste system, making each

citizen a Rwandan first and foremost. Rwanda's 12 prefectures were replaced with five larger provinces, each containing a larger intercommunal mix.

One of the most visible ways Rwandan society has moved forward is through the establishment of many genocide memorials. The memorial in Kigali, which opened in 2004, became the final home of the remains of roughly 250,000 genocide victims. Since then, the educational services the memorials produce have become a core component in the education of about 2.5 million Rwandan students each year. The memorial now houses the Genocide Archives. The memorial's outreach programs assist neighboring countries like Kenya and South Sudan in dealing with their domestic issues. Perhaps most significantly, the memorial provides a place where survivors and perpetrators can meet each other in a safe environment and begin the healing process.



Portraits of some of the genocide's 500,000 to 800,000 victims hang in the Kigali Genocide Memorial.

"It's a home to the survivors, but again, it's a place for perpetrators," Dieudonné Nagiriwubuntu, the Kigali Genocide Memorial's manager, told the *Trumpet*. "So it applies where the whole family of Rwandans come and see the reality of what happened, but also see the home-grown solutions initiated by the good leadership to restore peace and reconciliation in Rwanda."

This kind of work has produced some positive fruits within Rwanda. In a 2020 survey cosponsored by the UN and the Rwandan government, 73.1 percent of respondents stated they feel the wounds of the genocide have healed; 94.8 percent

agreed that "Today Rwandans can leave their children in any family within their neighborhoods"; 97.4 percent stated they'd be comfortable marrying somebody from another ethnic group.

Rwanda's example is not perfect. Since the genocide, Rwanda has effectively been under a one-party dictatorship that has used its strict genocide denial laws to go after opponents. Like every endeavor of man's, peace always comes with a caveat.

This is because real peace can ultimately only come from God. In summing up mankind's experiments to bring peace on Earth, the Bible states, "The way of peace they know not ..." (Isaiah 59:8; see also Romans 3:17). The Bible prophesies that real peace won't happen until God establishes His direct rule over all the Earth (Isaiah 9:6-7; Micah 4:1-4). Even then, this peace won't occur until people realize that peace goes hand in hand with embracing His purpose for making man in the first place. "[This

world] has failed utterly to reveal to the world the purpose of human life or explain its true meaning," Herbert W. Armstrong wrote in *The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like*. "It remains ignorant of the true values. It does not know the way to peace!" Mr. Armstrong said that "the way to peace" is "made possible only through the Holy Spirit, providing spiritual comprehension."

The Bible is also a book about laws of cause and effect. Its message can be summed up in Deuteronomy 30:19:

"... I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

There is a law of peace—a way of peace. The closer Rwanda and other nations follow that law, the more peace they will have.

One aspect of the law of peace is forgiveness. Jesus Christ set the example for this. As He was being crucified, Jesus said regarding His murderers: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

"People want to hate other people, and kill other people," *Trumpet* editor in chief



Why the Royal Family Is Struggling

The recent bad news has a hidden cause. **BY RICHARD PALMER**

FOR MONTHS THE RUMORS SWIRLED. She was suffering vaccine-related injuries. She had fled the country. She had died. What we knew for sure was that Catherine, princess of Wales had gone into the hospital on January 16 and had barely been seen since. Photos released by the royal family were not telling the whole story. People on the Internet went crazy with speculation.

The truth was more mundane, and more tragic. On March 22, she announced, alone, that, subsequent to her abdominal surgery on January 16, cancer was discovered. She has begun chemotherapy.

This came only a few weeks after Buckingham Palace announced that King Charles III has cancer. In both cases, the type of cancer has not been announced. In January, Sarah Ferguson, the duchess of York, was diagnosed with a form of skin cancer.

Meanwhile, the drama surrounding Prince Harry's rift with the royal family continued. He flew to Britain to briefly visit the King after the cancer diagnosis.

"There were hopes the 39-year-old's visit from California would help repair damaged relationships between himself, his father, and his brother, the prince of Wales," the *Independent* stated, "but these hopes were soon dashed when it became clear he would not be seeing William during the trip" (February 9). Prince Harry spent less than 24 hours in the country.

More trouble awaited him on his return to America. Like his infamous uncle Prince Andrew, Harry is facing the possibility of being dragged down by a celebrity sex scandal. Prince Harry is named in a \$30 million lawsuit that accuses rapper Sean "Diddy" Combs of sex trafficking and sexual abuse. The court filing says people attended Combs's

parties with sex-trafficking victims due to his "access to celebrities such as famous athletes, political figures, artist [sic], musicians and international dignitaries like British royal Prince Harry." Harry is not accused of taking part in the parties or of wrongdoing; it seems likely the lawsuit named-dropped him just to grab more headlines. But it is more bad news.

But the royal family has not merely been a victim: It has brought some of this trouble on itself.

Betraying Israel

"I remain deeply concerned about the terrible human cost of the conflict in the Middle East since the Hamas terrorist attack on 7 October. Too many have been killed. I, like so many others, want to see an end to the fighting as soon as possible."

This statement is similar to many others from celebrities and activists. But this one came from Prince William, heir to the throne, and timed for the day before the key debate in Parliament over whether to pressure Israel into a ceasefire.

Britain's monarchs *never* get involved in politics. The throne is supposed to be something all, regardless of their political views, can support. Politicizing it risks the survival of the monarchy itself, or so the theory goes.

Prince William is probably articulating deep personal convictions. Many clearly share his view. Most are well meaning—they read the stories of suffering children and families in the bombed-out streets of Gaza and want the crisis to end. But the sufferings and deaths of a large number of children in Ukraine, Syria and places beyond has failed to elicit a similar reaction, which betrays a clear anti-Israel bias in those who pressure Israel so soon after it suffered the horrors of Oct. 7, 2023.

If a thousand *British* people had been murdered, many more tortured and raped, and 130 still, right now, were being held hostage, it is hard to imagine Britain's leaders demanding a ceasefire and respite for the terrorists. Any ceasefire before Hamas's total defeat will leave them capable of perpetrating more atrocities in the future—as they are clearly willing to do.

To say that "too many have been killed" supports Hamas's propaganda about the conflict. The many casualty figures

it has published are demonstrably false. Israel has instead been killing *Hamas fighters*; civilians are being caught in the killing at a lower rate than just about any other modern conflict. Given that Hamas is actively placing women and children in harm's way, the conduct and effectiveness of the Israeli forces is a phenomenal achievement.

Prince William's statement puts the monarchy on the side of Hamas, against the victims of October 7. This is helping to divide Israel from Judah, which will have real consequences.

Protection Withdrawn

"I believe that now that the Queen has died, Britain's demise will accelerate," wrote *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry in 2022. "We are about to see a very sad ending for that throne" A few years prior, he had warned that "we would see a rapid decline in Britain's royal family." Why?

King Charles III was crowned a year ago. That ceremony declared that Charles was "set apart and consecrated" by God "for the service of his people." If that is the case, it is worth considering God's view on this throne.

The Bible declares that "the powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1). But the royal family in Britain had a special link with God. A symbol of that link was the stone of Scone—traditionally believed to be Jacob's pillar stone (Genesis 35:14). But Britain rejected that tradition, and England rejected the stone, sending it back to Scotland in 1996.

About 10 months later, Princess Diana died in a car crash. "Did the royal family of David's throne lose some of its protection from God?" Mr. Flurry asks in his book *The New Throne of David*. "I don't know for certain, but it is interesting that it happened within a year of England surrendering the stone."

Now, over 16 years later, it is clear that much of God's protection *certainly* has been removed.

Would a loving God be behind a mother dying in a car crash? Or a mother with some very young children

getting cancer? The answer to this question is tied directly to the reason why this throne is declining.

The Hope in the Throne

In the Garden of Eden, God offered to show man the way to live the happy and joyful way—the way that would lead to eternal life. This choice was symbolized by the tree of life. But mankind chose to decide for himself what is good and evil. God gave man the freedom of choice, but that freedom requires him to live with the consequences. Mankind has had 6,000 years to experience those consequences and learn the hard way, through pain and suffering, that it needs God.

But mankind was not doomed. The overwhelming majority lived and died without knowing God, but the Bible reveals they will be resurrected and will have an opportunity to choose again, having experienced the results of choosing to go their own way. This time, the vast majority will choose life.

But even during these 6,000 years, God has not left mankind completely alone. He still shapes events to give the most people the best opportunity, in the long run, to choose life.

One key way He does this is through a throne.

God made a dramatic promise to Israel's King David: He told him that when his son Solomon ruled, "I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (2 Samuel 7:13). Many scriptures repeat this promise: 1 Chronicles 28:7; Psalm 89:4 and Isaiah 9:7, to name just a few.

Luke 1:32-33 show that, ultimately, this throne will be assumed by Jesus Christ. But He is not ruling on it right now. Instead, He is sitting on His Father's throne (Revelation 3:21). He will not sit on David's throne until His future return to Earth.

The kingdom of Judah was conquered in 585 B.C., and it seemed that the throne of David disappeared. Yet God had promised that it would last forever. Some argue that Christ fulfilled this promise at His first coming, but the

kingdom of Judah was conquered centuries before He came on the scene.

Herbert W. Armstrong showed in his book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* that God did not let David's throne die. He moved it to Ireland, then later to Scotland, and still later to England. Britain's royal family is, in fact, descended from King David.

God said of Solomon, "I will be his father, and he shall be my son" (2 Samuel 7:14). In a world cut off from God, He had a father-son relationship with Solomon.

Centuries later, an evil king on that throne of David was trying to stamp out true religion, yet God refrained from destroying that royal house "because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever" (2 Chronicles 21:7). This throne was to be a *light*, a *lamp* pointing to God's promise to rule the world and to bring all mankind into this Father-son relationship. And so, those who sat on the throne were given a measure of protection, so that light would remain.

That is the way it was for centuries. But rulers on this throne have consistently failed to point man back to God. So in these last days, God has made a change in how He works with this throne—moving that light to a different descendant of David. That change took place in 2017, on January 16—the same date Princess Catherine went into the hospital. You can read more about this in our free book *The New Throne of David*.

So the protection for the British royal family is gone. Like everyone else in this unhappy world, they are cut off from God, left to solve their problems alone. The tragic news of the last few months is a result of and a reflection of that reality.

But the light remains. And the royal family, like everyone else, will have the opportunity to come to know the true God. That light still points to God's intention of offering all mankind the opportunity to choose life and to be part of His eternal Family. ■

Learn how God has kept the throne of David alive even in our day. Request Gerald Flurry's free book ***The New Throne of David***.



"I believe that now that the Queen has died, Britain's demise will accelerate. We are about to see a very sad ending for that throne"

—Gerald Flurry, 2022

The "Kingdom of David and Solomon Discovered" exhibit will be in Edmond, Oklahoma, until Jan. 31, 2025.

Biblical Archaeology Heralds the Greatest Event in History

An exciting message proclaimed by the stones of Jerusalem
BY GERALD FLURRY

IN 1967, A COALITION OF ARAB states attacked the Jewish nation of Israel. It sparked the Six-Day War, in which the Jews achieved a miraculous victory and gained control of the Old City of Jerusalem. This opened up the field of archaeology in that city.

Benjamin Mazar, a professor at Hebrew University, formed a partnership with Herbert W. Armstrong, chancellor of Ambassador College in Pasadena, California, to establish one of the most significant excavations ever undertaken in the Holy City. It was unprecedentedly massive. They called it "the big dig."

I happened to begin attending Ambassador College that year, 1967. I was thankful to be there when that partnership began.

Mr. Armstrong supported many archaeological activities in Israel before his death in 1986. In 2006, our organization picked up Mr. Armstrong's mantle and began working with Dr. Eilat Mazar, Benjamin Mazar's granddaughter. Ever since, we have participated in and sponsored many activities, archaeological

and otherwise, in Jerusalem. In 2022, I founded an organization based there: the Armstrong Institute of Biblical Archaeology.

In February, at our offices in Edmond, Oklahoma, we opened an exhibition of many exciting recent finds from Israel, called "Kingdom of David and Solomon Discovered."

Mr. Armstrong said it was a great honor to be a part of that big dig. We too see what we are involved in as a great honor—and a great responsibility.



Herbert Armstrong (left) visits Benjamin Mazar in Jerusalem.

Benjamin Mazar said, "Pore over the Bible again and again, for it contains within it descriptions of genuine, historical reality." This is something his granddaughter also believed, and we know it to be incontrovertibly true.

I believe these archaeological activities are beautifully described in one of the psalms. It is about digging in the dirt and uncovering stones—biblical archaeology. But it is about even more: It shows the connection of these activities with the greatest event in history: the coming of the Messiah!

God's Biblical Archaeology

This psalm is important for our present time. The more I study it, the more I realize how much there is that we must understand.

"But *Thou, O Lord*, sittest enthroned for ever, And Thy name is unto all generations. *Thou wilt arise, and have compassion upon Zion, For it is time to be gracious unto her, for the appointed time is come. For Thy servants take pleasure in her stones, And love her dust*"

(Psalm 102:13-15; Jewish Publication Society, Tanakh 1917 edition throughout).

God's servants take pleasure in the stones and love the dust of Jerusalem! What a marvelous poetic description of biblical archaeology. We consider our support of these projects to be the fulfillment of these verses.

Now note the very next thing mentioned in this psalm: "So the nations will fear the name of the Lord, And all the kings of the earth Thy glory; When the Lord hath built up Zion, When HE HATH APPEARED IN HIS GLORY" (verses 16-17).

That is talking about the coming of the Messiah!

The description of this epic event establishes the time frame of this passage: It is in *the latter days*. That is part of the "appointed time" referred to in verse 14. We live in this "appointed time" today!

People have many different reasons for studying archaeology. My purpose and cause for supporting it has always been different from most people. That purpose is described in this psalm.

Psalm 102 is not just about biblical archaeology, IT'S ABOUT GOD'S BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY. This is an activity that leads to the arrival of the Messiah!

THIS WILL BE THE GREATEST EVENT EVER TO OCCUR IN THE UNIVERSE! It is discussed in the Hebrew Bible probably a hundred times or more. How much have you thought about it? It really is something we need to stop and ponder deeply.

Look at the sequence in this psalm: Verse 14 says, "Thou wilt arise, and have compassion upon Zion" Verse 15 discusses God's servants taking pleasure in Jerusalem's stones and loving her dust. Then verses 16-17 talk about the nations fearing God, "When the Lord hath built up Zion, When He hath appeared in His glory." You see these two subjects are unusually tied together.

Verse 17 itself covers both subjects in one verse: the Eternal building up Zion—which He is doing even now through archaeology—and the coming of the Messiah.

Consider why biblical archaeology and the coming of the Messiah are so closely tied together.

Verse 14 makes clear that this psalm will be understood in this *appointed time*. The Messiah is to come in these last days! That hope overwhelms everything else!

The Hebrew Bible explains in many verses the events that will occur *just before* the coming of the Messiah. It is clear that worse times are coming. But even as we approach that time, the vision of hope grows.

God's servants take pleasure in her stones. The more you understand about the Messiah's arrival, the more excited you will be about those stones! The servants take pleasure in them, and love the dust, because of this vision.

Stones That Speak

We worked with Dr. Eilat Mazar for well over a decade. We learned so much from her; she was a marvelous teacher.

When I reflect on her work, I don't find anybody else who comes close to the quantity or quality of her discoveries in Jerusalem. I believe God had a hand in helping her accomplish what she did.

She once said, "I am interested in history, not just about stones. I am interested in stones that can speak. I don't care about stones that have nothing to talk about, that are speechless. Who cares about speechless stones?" That is quite an archaeologist! You don't hear too many talk like that today.

LET THE STONES SPEAK! Does that sound odd? It wasn't just Dr. Mazar saying that. In Psalm 102, GOD HIMSELF SAYS THE STONES ARE SPEAKING!

Verse 22 continues: "That men may tell of the name of the Lord in Zion, And His praise in Jerusalem." The context shows

that GOD IS EMPHASIZING WHAT HAPPENS IN JERUSALEM. That is important because when the Messiah comes, He is going to sit on King David's throne in that city.

There are many other biblical archaeologists that do terrific work all over Israel; some of them are truly outstanding. But in this context, it seems to me that God emphasizes Jerusalem, and that is where Eilat Mazar really shone! As far as I'm concerned, nobody compares to what she achieved. She focused on a very rich place to dig.

David's Legacy

In 2005, Rachel Ginsberg wrote a piece about Dr. Mazar titled "Reclaiming Biblical Jerusalem." She recognized the significance of Dr. Mazar's discovery of David's royal palace. You learn a lot when you study that discovery.

"Dr. Eilat Mazar, world authority on Jerusalem's past, has taken King David out of the pages of the Bible, and put him back into *living history*," Ginsberg wrote. "Mazar's latest excavation in the City of David, in the southern shadow of the Temple Mount, has shaken up the archaeological world." This journalist could see that the stones are shouting! What a message they proclaim. God wants us to look to David and learn from him. Let the stones speak! That is what Psalm 102 is all about.

This is *living history*. It brings the Bible to life! Dr. Mazar and her grandfather



were going around with a Bible in hand, being guided by that history, and look at all they discovered! Eilat knew so much about unearthing artifacts and discoveries—and did she ever find a large number of them! Visit our current exhibit, and you will see the truth of my statement. I hope you will take advantage of the exhibit. If you cannot visit in person, then take our virtual tour (posted on ArmstrongInstitute.org).

Look into David's life. He has the longest biography in all the Bible. He conquered the Jebusites and took control of Jerusalem. That city had been associated with great men of God, back to Abraham and Melchizedek. David

truly was audacious. He was bold. What faith that man had, even as a teenager! David fought for God. He really did *love God!* He made his mistakes, but he turned his life around. And he has a magnificent reward awaiting him in the near future.

The walls of David's palace were 20 feet thick in some places. That is real engineering. After uncovering all of that, Dr. Mazar realized the palace was attached to the Stepped Stone Structure, which is as tall as a 12-story building! "The fact that the two structures were part of the same construction was an astonishing discovery for us," she wrote. "Laid before our very eyes was a structure massive in proportions and innovative in complexity. It bears witness to the impressive architectural skill and considerable investment of its builders, to the competency of a determined central ruling authority, and most notably to the audacity and vision of that authority."

This was truly a royal palace—a palace fit for a warrior king! And Dr. Mazar believed that she had uncovered only 20 percent of it. David was a royal warrior who fought battles time and again to prepare everything so it could be

peaceful for his son Solomon. Oh, how he led Israel—and prophecy says he is going to lead them again in the future! What a future that will be!

Those are stones that really do speak! They have a lot to say, and their message is all about royalty.

In talking about the palace, Dr. Mazar said, "There may be times when it will take 10 years for people to adjust to, support and even accept the idea, but I am not going to wait for them." She was a lady in a hurry. She knew she had to move fast to complete her work. She kept moving in spite of the critics, of which she had plenty. But in many ways, she had the spirit of David! And she



Dr. Eilat Mazar

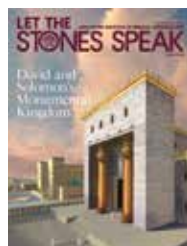
helped bring David alive.

Grasp the facts of what we have put together in our "Kingdom of David and Solomon Discovered" exhibit, and you will be moved. It is something to behold, something to be excited about and inspired by. What God is communicating in His biblical "big dig"—His wonderful work—is breathtaking! And it is for *everybody*.

This is a subject of monumental importance! The coming of the Messiah is not merely about Jerusalem or Israel: IT ENCOMPASSES THE WHOLE WORLD! We need to etch that vision into our minds. When you do, it will motivate you as nothing else ever has.

There will be serious problems in this end time—but follow through on this archaeological work, and this vision will give you great hope—the hope we all need in a hopeless world.

The Prophet Isaiah prophesied that God would "plant the heavens," referring to the universe (Isaiah 51:16). This work in Jerusalem will eventually reach out into the universe. It is the most exciting and wonderful vision you could ever understand! ■



► **RWANDA** FROM PAGE 25

Gerald Flurry wrote. "They killed the Son of God—and He forgave them. Without forgiveness, not one of us would have an opportunity to receive eternal life" (*Trumpet*, September 2015). Mr. Flurry wrote that in the wake of the 2015 mass shooting at a historical African-American church in Charleston, South Carolina. He was commenting on how some expected Charleston to erupt in race riots; instead the survivors, even those who had lost family members, publicly forgave the murderer, Dylann Roof. Mr. Flurry pointed to Charleston as an example of how to solve America's divisions.

Of course, division and hatred are widespread across our planet. The Apostle John wrote that "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). And God wants the whole world to learn what it means to have true peace.

"In His Sermon on the Mount," Mr. Flurry wrote, "Christ said, 'Blessed are the PEACEMAKERS: for they shall be called the children of God' (Matthew 5:9). This is part of the Beatitudes—the BEAUTIFUL ATTITUDES Christ gave, which are at the HEART of Christianity. He said blessed are the people who make PEACE! They shall be called the children of God" (ibid).

Rwanda still has its fair share of problems, but its program of forgiveness and reconciliation is bearing visible fruits.

"It is not an easy thing to talk about reconciliation, to talk about forgiveness," Nagiriwubuntu stated. "But it is a possible thing. It is a possible journey. So I may say that in Rwanda, it's working and it is on a very good track. But it is still an ongoing process."

Real peace ultimately points to the God of peace—because God's work on Earth today is ultimately about bringing real peace to every man who has ever lived. Isaiah 9:6 calls Jesus "The Prince of Peace." Verse 7 says God's ambition is that "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be NO END."

"There is A WAY that leads to peace," Mr. Flurry wrote. "Whether we realize it or not, this is the ONLY SPIRIT that will ever solve our race relations" (ibid).

Forgiving one's enemies—learning to love them—has everything to do with this way of peace. God reveals this way of peace in His written Word. It is up to us to apply it. ■

The stones speak

Will you listen? To understand what archaeological finds are telling us about the kingdom of David and Solomon, order the special exhibit edition of *Let the Stones Speak* or visit ArmstrongInstitute.org for a virtual tour.

Five-Star Service

The give way in action



FOR OUR 25TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY, MY WIFE AND I MANAGED to pull together a bunch of points off different travel programs and get a deeply discounted stay at a five-star resort in Mexico, the nicest we have ever experienced.

As beautiful as the facility was, what made it truly special was the staff. They took customer service to another level: kind, courteous, friendly and genuinely happy. They wanted every detail of our stay to be perfect.

We were uncomfortable at first with how attentive they were: placing the napkin in our laps, moving our chair on the beach, providing turndown service in the evenings. At the property's nicest restaurant, we were stunned by our waiter's British accent. He had lived in London for *eight years* to attend school and study hospitality. They take their jobs seriously, and the excellence they have attained was inspiring.

I thought of the Queen of Sheba being deeply impressed by her visit to Jerusalem. The account in 1 Kings 10 shows how she was struck by Solomon's wisdom, by the royal standard of nutritious food, the order of officers and distinguished persons seated at the king's table, the tremendous service and immaculate uniforms of his waitstaff. You can imagine the symphony of their movement.

The Inn at Little Washington, a three-Michelin-star restaurant in Virginia, hosts many dignitaries. Years ago, the head chef hired the artistic director of the Washington Ballet to lead a dance and movement class for his staff. "You're either adding or detracting every time you walk into a room," he said. "There's no such thing as neutral. I want them to be conscious of their own importance. One person can destroy the experience, just like in a movie where an actor is miscast or in a ballet when someone is not in sync" (*Washingtonian*, Sept. 26, 2012). *Fast Company* wrote that the Inn's staff "discreetly tries to detect and record the emotional state of each person in a dinner party on a scale of 1 to 10. Their goal is to get you up to at least a '9' before the long drive home. This simple rating system allows the staff at The Inn to make very subtle adjustments to service throughout the night—so that even someone who arrives for dinner in a serious funk will likely wind up walking on country air before the night is through."

Surely that is the kind of standard Solomon set. When the queen saw it, she was *overwhelmed!* This was a *queen*—a hard woman to impress. She said that as glowing as Solomon's reputation was, it wasn't half as superb as the reality. "Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom," she gushed (1 Kings 10:8). These men were genuinely *happy* to be part of something so special. And this experience actually turned this queen to God! (verse 9).

At the *Trumpet's* offices, we often host guests. We sponsor a concert series of the highest quality. We train our staff to exhibit kindness and attentiveness, to treat every visitor as special, and to strive to create "Queen of Sheba" experiences. Our guests often make comments like this by one recent concertgoer: "There

are other places with gorgeous chandeliers and magnificent windows and fountains, but Armstrong Auditorium overflows with virtuosity and beauty that goes beyond the visual."

These efforts are about more than merely successfully working a concert. They build a mindset of caring about people, paying attention, trying to serve them and lift them up. That is the blessed, happy way of life (Acts 20:35).

Staying at that resort in Mexico taught me a few things. You might consider these anytime you host. Really, they would benefit all our relationships.

Make every person feel important. The staff there *always* greets you when you walk past. At the coffee shop the first morning, my wife ordered a coffee. The next day, the barista recognized her and remembered her order and her name. Don't just see a customer or workmate: See a *person*, and care about that person.

Be attentive for ways to serve. At an outdoor restaurant, I set my sweater under the table. When we got up after the meal, a waiter who wasn't even serving us picked it up and handed it to me. That takes vigilance and foresight.

Care about the details. Upon our return from a walk in the local town, the gatekeeper would offer us a cold bottle of water and a cool washcloth for our faces. Even little things contribute to a perfect experience.

Be genuinely happy to serve. Sincere graciousness is wonderful. Travel-rating agencies expect hotels to make the customer experience outstanding, even perfect. They do so because *that way works*. It is, essentially, the *give way*. Whether they realize it or not, on a human level, they are pointing to the unselfish love of God.

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth" (1 Corinthians 13:4-6; New International Version). These are qualities we should strive for in our relationships. That is a high standard of conduct. It is, in fact a *perfect* standard, a *five-star* standard. ■

WORLDWATCH

EUROPE

theTrumpet.com/more/europe

This year was a good time to invest in the **German** arms industry. Germany's largest arms manufacturer, Rheinmetall, is opening new factories in **Ukraine, Lithuania** and Germany, the company said on March 14, to drastically increase production of artillery shells and other munitions. Before the war in Ukraine, Rheinmetall sold about 70,000 shells each year: It wants to sell 1.5 million in 2026. In the last year, the company's share price almost doubled ([article, page 8*](#)).

NATO is also benefiting from an influx of investment. **Romania** began construction in March on the largest NATO base in Europe. The base will occupy over 7,000 hectares, the size of a small city, and will have a capacity of 10,000 soldiers and their families. The project will cost around \$2.7 billion and will include runways, weapons platforms, military aircraft hangars, schools, shops and a hospital.

Turkey and **Greece** officially joined the German-led European Sky Shield Initiative on February 15. Established shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it links together Europe's short-, medium- and long-range missiles to better shoot down enemy planes and missiles. Europe is clearly changing thanks to Russia's invasion of Ukraine: It is militarizing at a rapid clip. Read about this in our Trends article "[Why the Trumpet Watches Europe's Push Toward a Unified Military.](#)"

It is also becoming more right-wing. Fringe-right party Chega dramatically increased its voter support in March 10's

TOPSHOT The steel frame of the Francis Scott Key Bridge sits on top of the container ship Dali after the bridge collapsed in Baltimore, Maryland, on March 26. The bridge collapsed after being struck by the Singapore-flagged Dali, plunging multiple vehicles and people into the frigid harbor below.

general election in **Portugal**. Chega, which started in 2019, saw its share of the vote rise from 7.4 percent to 18 percent. Its number of seats rose from 12 in the 230-strong parliament to 48. Now Portugal has only two ways of forming a government: Invite Chega to be a partner, or have a bland, ineffective left-right coalition. Either way, Chega wins.

Meanwhile, if elections were held today, Germany's nationalistic, far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) would come in second, the Associated Press reported on March 18. The AfD is the top party in the eastern states of Saxony and Thuringia, with about 35 percent support in each. Its appeal to male voters age 24 and younger is particularly high, the report says. Europe's politics is either paralyzing or shifting right. Watch for this to pave the way for the rise of a strongman. Gerald Flurry's booklet **A Strong German Leader Is Imminent** explains.



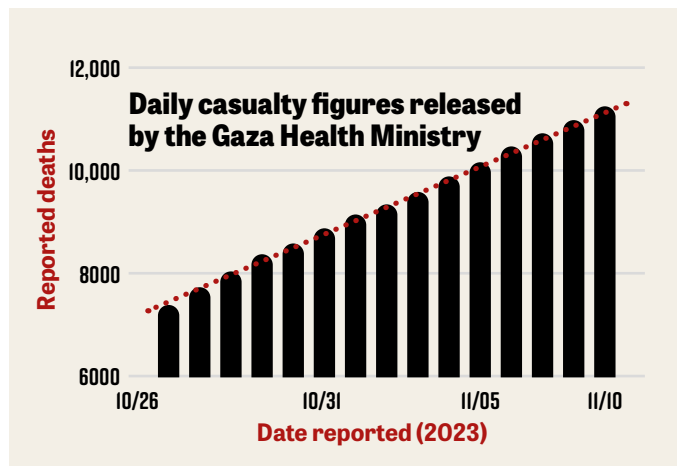
MIDDLE EAST

theTrumpet.com/more/middle-east

Since **Libya**'s civil war ended in 2020, the country has been in a near-constant state of political paralysis, with three different governments holding sway in the country. But on March 10, the three rival governments agreed on a framework to form a unified government. Details are limited, but the agreement appears to include the formation of a

"technical committee" to iron out divisive issues. The hope is that these small steps will lead to elections, delayed since 2021.

It is not unheard of for countries shaken by oppression or unrest to have warring factions unite, only for the "unity government" to fall apart from infighting, creating an even bigger problem. Libya is still a divided country. If a vote is held and a candidate with enough guns doesn't like the result, what's to stop him from starting the war again? The nation's





producer of uranium. That year, Niger recorded roughly 2,430 tons of uranium production, while Iran produced an estimated 24 tons. “While Iran has uranium mines that can supply its current nuclear program,” the *Journal* wrote, “Tehran has long said it wants to have a much larger industrial-scale civilian nuclear infrastructure. That would require large amounts of uranium, which experts say the country probably lacks. Securing Niger resources could plug that gap.”

Iran's existing nuclear program is already close to enriching enough uranium for a nuclear bomb. But access to Niger's uranium could give it enough stock for a much bigger nuclear arsenal.

Since Hamas's war on Israel started last October, Hamas's Health Ministry claims that over 30,000 Gazans have died in Israel's ground invasion. These numbers do not differentiate between combatants and civilians. Israel claims to have killed over 13,000 militants. This would lower Hamas's “civilian death toll” by nearly half. But *Tablet* published an analysis on March 7 suggesting many of these numbers are manufactured. From October 26 to November 10, Hamas released what it claimed were daily casualty figures. *Tablet* graphed the numbers and found the increase was with what it called “almost metronomical linearity.”

“One would expect quite a bit of variation day to day,” *Tablet* wrote. “In fact, the daily reported casualty count over this period averages 270 plus or minus about 15 percent. This is strikingly little variation. There should be days with twice the average or more and others with half or less.”

Hamas's numbers cannot be corroborated. Many international commentators take these numbers at face value, but Hamas is almost certainly

doctoring its data.

“Much propaganda is circulating regarding Hamas's attack on Israel and Israel's subsequent war effort,” we wrote in our **January Trumpet issue**. “Some of it is well meaning but uninformed. But much, if not most, of it is part of a deliberate attempt to hide facts and obscure the roles of both Hamas and Israel.” *Tablet's* analysis demonstrates this. ■

ASIA

[theTrumpet.com/more/asia](https://www.tablet.com/more/asia)

As Russia's war on Ukraine continues into its third year, the position of the nation and President **Vladimir Putin** are strengthening.

In early February, Russia's air force roared back to life after converting FAB-1500 bombs into glide bombs. The 1.5-ton FAB-1500 was originally built in Soviet Russia for dead-dropping from airplanes but has now been outfitted with pop-out wings and guidance systems, enabling Russian pilots to strike from dozens of miles away with a reported accuracy of 16 feet. Geostrategist Peter Zeihan on March 12 called it “probably the most significant transformation in Russian military power in the last 30 years.”

On March 11, Putin signed a new budget increasing Russia's defense spending to 6.8 percent

of gross domestic product, up from 4 percent last year, greater than the planned budget for social expenses and a record high for Russia in the modern era. This shows that Putin's war plans are nowhere near their end.

Six days after signing the landmark budget, Russia's Central Election Commission announced that Putin won the presidential election with 87 percent of the vote, the highest majority in an election in Russia's post-Soviet history. Western powers denounced the election since Putin kills or imprisons competitors and journalists, and employs myriad means of censorship, repression and vote manipulation. Yet Putin's fifth official term as head of Russia, and sixth de facto term, begins on May 7 and extends to May 2030. This enables Putin to surpass Joseph Stalin as the longest-ruling leader of Russia.

After over a year of pessimism about Russia and speculation that Putin would be ousted or Russia would lose its war on Ukraine, the scales seem to be tipping in Russia and Putin's favor. *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry has forecast since 2013 that Putin will survive all opposition and go on to fight far larger wars in the future. To understand the Bible prophecies Mr. Flurry based this forecast on, order your free copy of ***The Prophesied 'Prince of Russia.'*** ■

political crisis will likely be solved with bullets, not ballots.

Daniel 11:40-43 show that in the end time Libya will ally itself with the king of the south, a prophetic name for modern Iran. For this to happen, Libya's status quo of political paralysis needs to change. The recent talks could herald that change. Read ***Libya and Ethiopia in Prophecy.***

The *Wall Street Journal* reported March 17 that the West African country of **Niger** signed a preliminary agreement with **Iran** on uranium export. Niger was a partner of the West until a military coup last year. The new junta evicted French peacekeepers but let several hundred American troops stick around. The **United States** caught wind of the Iranian deal and protested. Niger claimed that the U.S. was meddling in its foreign affairs and declared America's presence “illegal.” The U.S. withdrew on March 16.

According to the World Nuclear Association, as of 2022 Niger was the seventh-largest



ANGLO-AMERICA

theTrumpet.com/more/anglo-america

After landslide wins in Georgia, Mississippi and Washington, **Donald Trump** clinched the Republican presidential nomination on March 12, capping off a stunning political comeback that many thought impossible, especially as Democrats attempted to frame him for insurrection and invalidate his candidacy in multiple states. **Joe Biden** was also nominated on March 12, setting up an apparent Trump-Biden rematch election.

The Supreme Court played a role in the legal fight. The Colorado Supreme Court had attempted to remove Trump from ballots in the state, but the Supreme Court's 9-0 reversal kept him on it, and Republican primary voters there and across the nation chose him over his nearest rivals by an overwhelming majority of 1,121 delegates.

Daniel 8:10-12 prophesy of a time in the modern age when truth will be cast down. Leftist attempts to frame Trump for insurrection are part of this trend, as are attempts to censor online news articles about problems with the 2020 election and other issues. Newsguard Technologies announced on March 1 that it is now using

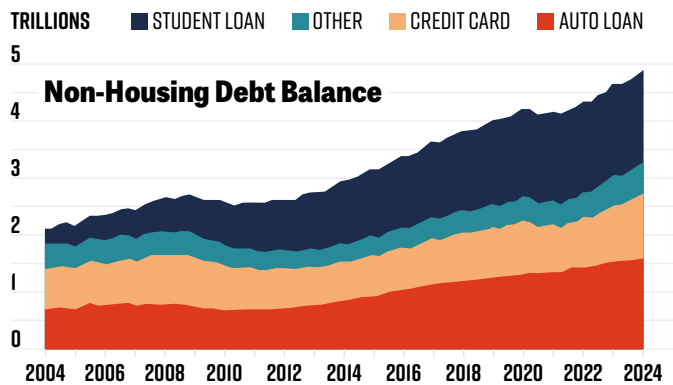
* Find links to freely access all the articles and booklets referred to on this page at theTrumpet.com/go/ww2405.

artificial intelligence algorithms to prevent people from seeing information online that challenges government denials of election fraud.

Some government employees want to go beyond censorship and start abolishing whole branches of government that oppose the leftist agenda. An undercover video released by the O'Keefe Media Group on March 13 shows a Department of Defense employee in the office of Secretary of Defense **Lloyd Austin** saying privately that he wants the Second Amendment repealed and enforced by the National Guard, the Senate and the Electoral College abolished, and the border opened further. Such comments show that many leftists are not trying to

protect America's Constitution or borders.

Border Patrol agents have encountered more than 7.2 million illegal aliens at the United States southern border since Joe Biden took office. A fact sheet recently distributed by the White House refers to these immigrants as "newcomers" instead of "illegal immigrants," and a U.S. Customs and Border Protection document in March revealed that the Biden administration secretly flew 320,000 illegal aliens from foreign airports to 43 airports in the U.S. from January through December 2023. The Biden administration is not only turning a blind eye to illegal immigrants; it is spending taxpayer dollars to fly them into America.



FEATURED FEEDBACK



I'm sharing this with quite a few people. My granddaughter has a project in reference to "The Battle for the Red Sea" (theTrumpet.com/28737), so I was able to give her the article I received from you to help her with producing it.

Dolores Swerdloff NEW JERSEY

There is no magazine out there that provides the truth and tells it like it really is the way the *Trumpet* does. At a time when we are given a very slanted, fit-the-narrative-of-what-our-government-wants-us-to-hear coverage by the media, you folks give us the truth.

Dianne Novak KANSAS

The hatred we see toward the Jewish people—we've learned absolutely nothing, and I'm so unhappy about that.

P.J. Coyle ONTARIO

THE PHILADELPHIA Trumpet

PUBLISHER AND EDITOR IN CHIEF

Gerald Flurry

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Stephen Flurry

MANAGING EDITOR

Joel Hilliker

ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR

Philip Nice

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Brad Macdonald, Richard Palmer, Jeremiah Jacques, Dennis Leap

DESIGNERS

Steve Hercus, Cassandra Verbout, Reese Zoellner

CONTRIBUTORS

Abraham Blondeau, Josué Michels, Andrew Miiller, Brent Nagtegaal, David Vejil, Callum Wood, Mihailo S. Zekic

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS

Deepika Azariah, Aubrey Mercado

ARTISTS

Melissa Barreiro, Gary Dorning, Julia Goddard, Emma Moore

PREPRESS

Wik Hearma, Reese Zoellner

INTERNATIONAL EDITIONS

Deryle Hope

FRENCH

Luc Lapensée

GERMAN

Emmanuel Michels

SPANISH

Deryle Hope

For a free subscription to the *Philadelphia Trumpet* in the U.S. and Canada, call 1-800-772-8577

(ISSN 10706348). May-June 2024, Vol. 35, No. 5 is published monthly (except bimonthly May-June and November-December issues) by the Philadelphia Church of God, 14400 S. Bryant Road, Edmond, OK 73034. Periodicals postage paid at Edmond, OK, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: THE PHILADELPHIA TRUMPET, P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, OK 73083.

U.S. HOW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION HAS BEEN PAID: The *Trumpet* has no subscription price—it is free. This is made possible by the tithes and offerings of the membership of the Philadelphia Church of God and are tax-deductible in the United States, Canada and New Zealand. Those who wish to voluntarily support this worldwide work of God are gladly welcomed as co-workers. © 2024 Philadelphia Church of God. All rights reserved. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A. Unless otherwise noted, scriptures are quoted from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

CONTACT US: Please notify us of any change in your address; include your old mailing label and the new address. The publishers assume no responsibility for return of unsolicited artwork, photographs or manuscripts. The editor reserves the right to use any letters, in whole or in part, as he deems in the public interest, and to edit any letter for clarity or space. WEBSITE theTrumpet.com E-MAIL letters@theTrumpet.com; subscription or literature requests request@theTrumpet.com PHONE United Kingdom: 0-800-756-6724; Australia: 1-800-22-333-0 MAIL Contributions, letters or requests may be sent to our office nearest you: UNITED STATES P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, OK 73083 CANADA P.O. Box 400, Campbellville, ON L0P 1B0. CARIBBEAN P.O. Box 2237, Chaguanas, Trinidad, W.I. BRITAIN, EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST P.O. Box 16945, Henley-in-Arden, B95 8BH, United Kingdom AFRICA Postnet Box 219, Private bag X10010, Edenvale, 1610, South Africa AUSTRALIA, PACIFIC ISLES, INDIA, SRI LANKA P.O. Box 293, Archerfield, QLD 4108, Australia NEW ZEALAND P.O. Box 6088, Glenview, Hamilton, 3246 PHILIPPINES P.O. Box 52143, Angeles City Post Office, 2009 Pampanga LATIN AMERICA Attn: Spanish Department, P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, OK 73083, U.S.

Playing With Fake Fire

When churches fail, does the Bible fail with them?

JERUSALEM'S CHURCH OF THE HOLY Sepulchre is built around the structure many believe to have been the tomb of Jesus, called the Aedicule. According to legend, every year on the day before Easter, a beam of light shines into the Aedicule. This beam sparks a miraculous flame called the "holy fire." The Eastern Orthodox Church claims to be the custodian of this tradition. Every year, the Orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem enters the Aedicule to collect the fire and share it with pilgrims waiting outside. As proof of the miracle, before the patriarch enters the Aedicule, attendants search him in public to show he carries no lighting device. This tradition has been going on for well over a millennium.

But if believers want a modern-day miracle to build their faith on, the problem is, *this miracle is a fake*.

Greek investigative journalist Dimitris Alikakos published a book titled *Redemption—The Case of the Holy Fire* in 2019. In it, he claims the holy fire springs up not from a miraculous beam of light but from a man with a lighter. Some of his journalistic methods were deceptive. But among other testimonies, he managed to obtain a video, now on the Internet, of Archbishop Isidoros, custodian and abbot of the holy sepulchre, stating how the candle gets lit. Alikakos asked Isidoros: "You go in, light [the fire] over the Holy Sepulchre, and leave [it] to be found lit by the patriarch. Is it so or not?" The answer? "So it is." Later in the interview, Isidoros admitted, "It's not a miracle."

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem took Alikakos to court on March 20. According to Balkan Insight, the lawsuit claims, "As a result of the book's publication, many Orthodox believers have increasingly doubted their priests."

"The plaintiffs have tried to hide the truth," Alikakos told the media. "I feel great joy and satisfaction that their video testimonies were heard in court today, where they confess that the holy fire lights up naturally," as opposed to supernaturally.

One may think that this is an issue for Orthodox Christians only, but it raises an important question: Why is the Western world traditionally Christian in the first place? Why do most of the West see the Bible as their founding spiritual document? It is because of the Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican and other "establishment" churches.

These churches, in many respects, built Western civilization. They have been the moral standard looked to since ancient

Roman times. Like the Bible itself, they claim to be the timeless, authoritative representatives of the infallible God. People look to the Bible as an authority because these churches have claimed it as an authority for centuries.

Then, one of these institutions exposes itself as lying for over a thousand years. Its tradition of miracles is a fraud.

Could anybody blame congregants for "increasingly doubting their priests"? And what about religion as a whole? If the miracle of the holy fire is a fake, what about Noah's Flood or the parting of the Red Sea or Jesus walking on water?

If churches fake their divinity, where does that leave the Bible? If you can't believe the churches, can you believe the Bible they claim to preach from? Why believe the Bible if the only reason to do so is because of a church that tells lies?

Of course, the Bible nowhere says a special beam of light would come annually and start a miracle fire. The holy fire, like many a medieval myth, is a superstitious tradition of men. "[I]n vain do they worship me," Jesus said, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7). Acts 5:38 states that if "this work be of men," even if it has a religious facade, "it will come to nought."

Supposed miracles like the "holy fire" are works of men. Men fail. Men lie. And even if packaged in a Christian-sounding veneer, Jesus brands this kind of worship as "vain."

But what about the Bible itself?

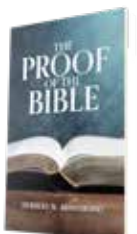
"Have you ever PROVED whether, as the Book itself purports, it is the authoritative Word of the Creator God?" theologian Herbert W. Armstrong asked in *The Proof of the Bible*. "Rather, have you not simply assumed, from what you have heard, read or been taught, that it is either authentic, or else the religious writing of a small ancient Jewish race, groping in the darkness of human ignorance and of superstition, trying to develop a concept of God?"

Unlike the cryptic ceremony surrounding the holy fire, the Bible has nothing to hide regarding its authenticity. The Apostle Paul commanded in 1 Thessalonians 5:21, "Prove all things" *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* translates *prove* as "test, examine, prove, scrutinize," and "recognize as genuine." God thunders in Malachi 3:10 to "*prove me now*."

"Isn't it about time—and the point of rational wisdom—that you PROVE this important question once and for all?" Mr. Armstrong wrote. "Because, IF the Bible is in fact the inspired, authentic Word of a living, all-knowing, all-powerful God, then your eternity will be judged by it" (ibid).

If the Bible tells the reader to prove its authenticity, that implies the Bible is provable. There is no time machine to send people back to see the Exodus or the crucifixion for themselves. But if one is willing to invest time in study with an open mind, the proof of the Bible *exists*. But it's up to you, the individual, whether to accept it. ■

Request your free copy of *The Proof of the Bible*.



UNITED STATES

NATIONWIDE

BUZZR Nationwide 6:30 ET, 5:30 CT,
4:30 MT, 3:30 PT, Sun

TBD 8:30 ET/PT, Sun

NATIONWIDE CABLE

CHARGE 6:30 ET/PT, 5:30 CT, 7:30 MT, Sun

COMET 8:00 ET, 7:00 CT, 6:00 MT, 5:00 PT, Sun

CW PLUS 9:30, 6:30 ET/PT, Sun, 8:30,
5:30 CT/MT, Sun; 5:30, ET/PT, Mon-Thurs,
4:30 CT/MT, Mon-Thurs

FAMILY 7:30 ET, PT, 6:30 CT, 8:30 MT, Sun

NEST 7:00 ET/PT, 6:00 CT, 9:00 MT, Sun

RETRO 8:30 ET, PT, 7:30 CT, 9:30 MT, Sun

This TV 6:30, Sun

CANADA

NATIONWIDE CABLE

VISION TV 4:30 p.m. ET, Sun

CHCH 11:30 ET, Sun

ALBERTA

Medicine Hat CHAT 8:30, Sun

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Kamloops CFJC 9:00, Sun

Prince George CKPG 9:00, Sun

Vancouver CHEK 8:30, Sun; CHNU 11:30,

Sun/10:00, Tues; KCPQ 7:00, Sun

Victoria CHNU 11:30, Sun/10:00, Tues

MANITOBA

Winnipeg CIIT Joy TV 11:00, Sun

ONTARIO

Toronto WUTV 10:30, Sun

Windsor WKBD-TV-COMET TV 8:00, Sun

QUEBEC

Montreal WVNY 10:30, Sun

CARIBBEAN

BAHAMAS FOX W Chan. 216, 10:30, Sun

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Nationwide 10 BOLD 7:30, Sun

Adelaide TV44 11:30, Sun; 3:00 p.m., Mon

PHILIPPINES GMA 5:30, Sun;

Pinoy Hits 7:45, Sun

NEW ZEALAND Nationwide Eden TV 6:00, Sun;

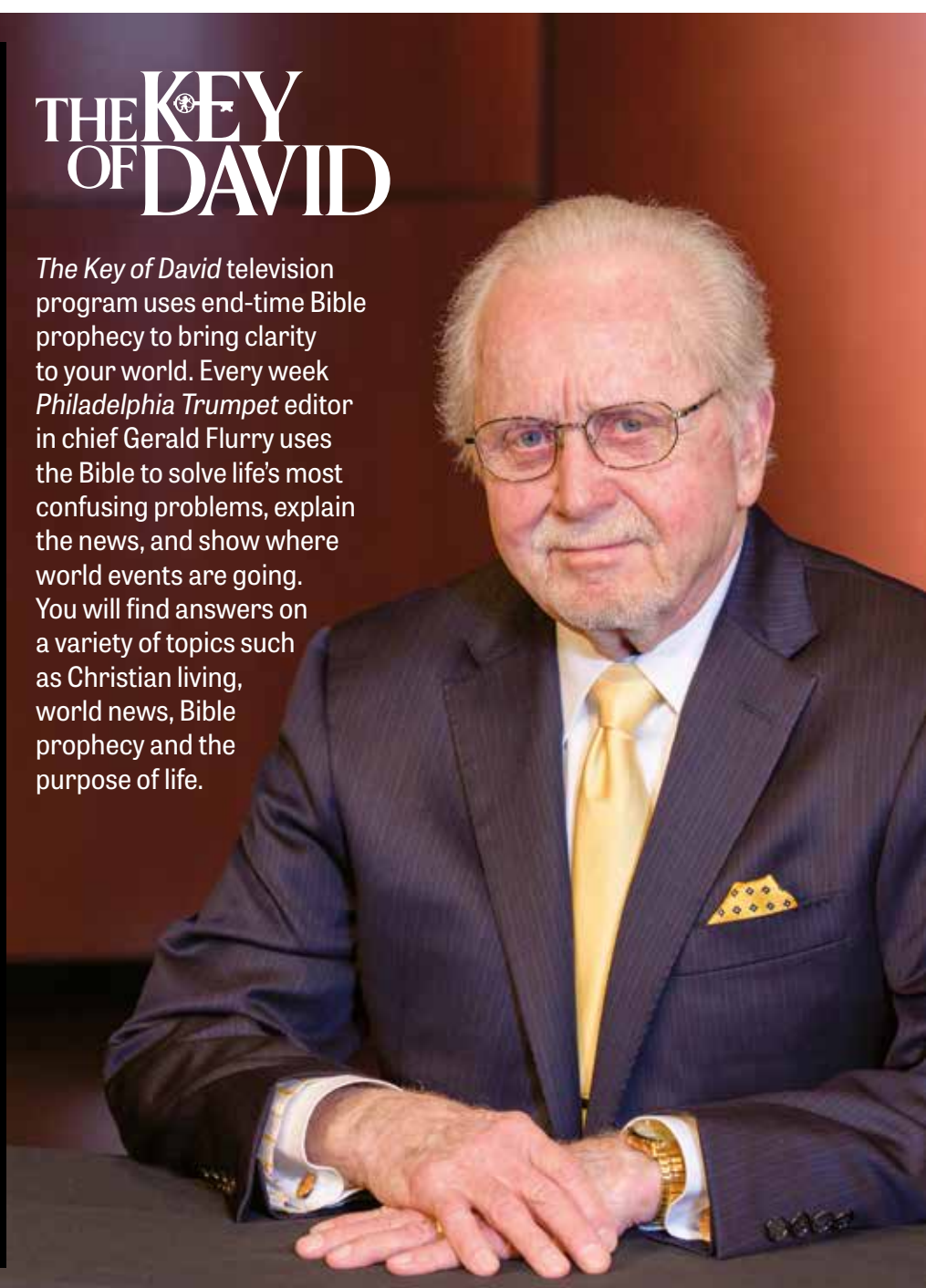
Eden+17:00, Sun

ALL TIMES ARE A.M. LOCAL TIME UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

REGIONAL STATIONS LISTED INSIDE

THE KEY OF DAVID

The Key of David television program uses end-time Bible prophecy to bring clarity to your world. Every week *Philadelphia Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry uses the Bible to solve life's most confusing problems, explain the news, and show where world events are going. You will find answers on a variety of topics such as Christian living, world news, Bible prophecy and the purpose of life.



To order print versions of our literature

U.S. AND CANADA
1-800-772-8577

UNITED KINGDOM
0-800-756-6724

AUSTRALIA
1-800-22-333-0

E-MAIL
request@theTrumpet.com

ONLINE
www.theTrumpet.com/library

Limit three pieces of literature per order

MAIL
P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, OK 73083

Write to the regional office near you.
Addresses on page 34.

NO CHARGE • NO FOLLOW-UP • NO OBLIGATION