

THE PHILADELPHIA **Trumpet**

Iran is invading Israel

**Can America afford
its military?**

Heart of end-time prophecy

Where language came from

**The *Trumpet* in person:
Online Appearance Campaign**



Macron v. Trump

**France is rejecting America—
and empowering a German-led Europe**

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THE KEY
OF DAVID

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

TrumpetDaily

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

Trumpet

News and analysis updated daily
theTrumpet.com

TrumpetBrief

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

France Rejects America— and Empowers Germany!

One day soon the French will come to realize that they are making the greatest mistake in their nation's history.

LAST ISSUE, I WROTE TO YOU ABOUT THE WAY FRENCH PRESIDENT Emmanuel Macron is betraying Britain and America—exactly as the Bible prophesied. This time I'd like to show you how he is *empowering Germany* and helping resurrect the Holy Roman Empire.

President Macron visited Berlin on Nov. 18, 2018. One week earlier he had hosted leaders around the world and used the occasion to be openly hostile to the United States. But during his trip to Germany on November 18, there were no harsh words or criticisms. "If you do not understand the words from France, REMEMBER that FRANCE LOVES YOU," he told the German parliament (emphasis mine throughout).



GERALD FLURRY

Macron has never said anything like that to Britain or America. Instead, he has called for a "true European army" to protect Europe "with respect to China, Russia and *even the United States of America*." France certainly does not love the United States.

Why would the French president say "France loves [Germany]"? There is an important reason we all must grasp!

THESE WORDS FROM MACRON WERE, I BELIEVE, A SIGNAL THAT FRANCE WILL NEVER AGAIN HAVE THE WILL TO STAND UP TO GERMANY. The French today want to be close friends and allies

Macron recognizes that Germany lacks strong leadership right now. He knows Europe needs a strongman. And he thinks he can do the job. He believes that if he bashes America and woos Germany—Europe's economic powerhouse—then he will become the new Charlemagne.

with Germany, and they are prepared to go to great lengths to support Berlin. That is what Macron means by saying, "France LOVES [Germany]." It is really a *groveling* statement. Germany is Europe's master, and it is as if France is *begging* to share in Germany's power!

Is this why Macron praised Nazi collaborator Philippe Pétain? Pétain ruled Vichy France during World War II. He collaborated with Adolf Hitler and even sent Jews to the gas chambers. Is Macron signaling that he is willing to play the part of Pétain to give way to Germany?

The Bible prophesied that France would betray Britain and America. France is doing so right now by turning to Germany.

An Anti-American Army

France is already taking concrete steps to build a European army alongside Germany. Perhaps this is why Macron is so bold as to criticize the U.S. His criticisms imply that Europe no longer needs NATO, because it is building its own army.

Germany has been working on this European army for years. Most of the Dutch Army has already been integrated into the German Army. Thousands of Dutch soldiers now serve in German panzer divisions, under German command. Significant chunks of the Czech and Romanian armies have also agreed to join the German Army and are currently moving under the German command structure. Now we see military cooperation between France and Germany increasing.

Did you know the European Union joint military budget is already three times higher than Russia's budget? And it is about half of America's.

France and Germany are also collaborating on the development of new weapons and weapons manufacturing. Germany's Leopard II is already regarded as one of the best tanks in the world. It is used by 18 different countries. Germany aims to have a new tank by around 2030, and experts are already predicting that it will be the world's most powerful. And France and Germany are working on it together. The project, called the European Main Battle Tank, is a joint venture between French and German companies.

These two countries are also working on an artillery system called the Common Indirect Fire System. French and German companies are also collaborating on a new fighter jet, which they aim to have ready by 2035 to 2040. Experts are predicting it will also be one of the best in the world, outperforming America's F-35.

France and Germany already have a strong record of accomplishment from working together. A previous joint venture, the Eurocopter Tiger (EC 665), is one of the most powerful attack helicopters in the world. This is already built and ready to go.

France really does love Germany—you can see it in these important joint ventures!

“So as with the fate of Macron’s government in France, the future of the EU might well depend on the willingness of its rulers to get tough—that is, converting the democracy deficit into an outright tyranny surplus. Could they? Would they? The only thing we know for sure is that it’s happened before.”

James Pinkerton, *American Conservative*



For decades we have forecast the rise of this European military superpower that Germany and France are now building. In May 1953, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote, “[T]en powerful European nations will combine their forces.” The European unification project is going to consolidate to 10 nations that Germany can really dominate. You can read about this power in Daniel 2 and 7, and Revelation 13 and 17. Mr. Armstrong discussed these scriptures time and time again. I explain them in my free booklet *Daniel Unlocks Revelation*.

Today, these powers are combining just as Mr. Armstrong said they would!

In Revelation 9:7-9, the Apostle John describes some of the weapons of this coming power. John saw these weapons in vision and wasn’t familiar with what he was seeing. He had never seen mechanized vehicles or modern technology. He described what he saw using terms he was familiar with, such as “locusts,” war horses and lions. “[T]he sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle,” says verse 9. This is talking about airplanes, jet fighters and helicopters that can go all directions and inflict punishing destruction!

If you look back in European history, you will see previous instances when people tried to establish an empire in Europe: Adolf Hitler, Napoleon, Charlemagne and others. Those were all *terrifyingly bloody* times in Europe! That was the TYRANNY of the Holy Roman Empire! In World Wars I and II, America helped to set France free from the empire. But instead of showing gratitude, France is now helping to raise it right back up!

A Prophesied Strongman

It might not seem like it, but Europe has made important strides toward becoming a new empire. It has a massive, rich economy. It has a powerful military and nuclear capability. It has a commanding global presence. NOW ALL EUROPE NEEDS IS A STRONGMAN TO LEAD IT.

Last issue, I wrote about Germany’s need for a strongman. Since then, France and much of the rest of Europe have also been crying out for new leadership. After Macron gave

his November 11 speech criticizing U.S. President Donald Trump and America, his nation has been rocked by riots. Across France, hundreds of thousands have marched, blockaded roads, and destroyed property, demanding change from the government. Paris was shut down for weeks on end as rioters burned cars, smashed windows, and clashed with police.

The riots were sparked by anger at a rise in fuel taxes (to pay for Macron’s war on climate change), but it is clear that the people are angry about much more than that. “The demands of the protest-

ers have grown more radical as the weeks have passed,” wrote the *Times*. “Many are calling for THE OVERTHROW OF MR. MACRON and A NEW POLITICAL SYSTEM to be introduced” (Dec. 11, 2018).

“I didn’t want this completely corrupt political class anymore,” one protester told the *Wall Street Journal*. “We’ve had the left; we’ve had the right. We’ve had everything, and it’s the same policy. You have the sense that there’s no democracy anymore” (Dec. 9, 2018).

This rejection of the whole system of government is reflected in the graffiti and slogans smeared on walls and buildings across France. “Don’t vote, all rotten,” reads one. “Neither Macron, nor Marine,” reads another, referring to the French president and Marine Le Pen, Macron’s extremist rival.

This is a game-changing trend for France and Europe. Many people in France are tired of democracy and want a whole new political system—AND BIBLE PROPHECY SHOWS THAT THEY WILL GET IT!

On Dec. 11, 2018, an Islamist gunman opened fire at a Christmas market in the French border city of Strasbourg. The terrorist killed five and wounded 11. The attack took place within the secure area of the market. France at the time was already on high alert and had imposed extra measures to stop terrorism. Clearly this didn’t work! Such security failures only intensify France’s desire for a new, stronger leader—one who can actually protect them against radical Islam.

France is just the latest country to be swept up in a wave of populist anger that is rising across the whole of the European Union. In many countries, people are protesting against the EU and voting for anti-EU parties.

This is why the majority of people in Britain want to get out. Clear-thinking British see it is an undemocratic project and recognize that it is domineered by Germany. The main reason they voted to leave was their sense that they lacked the freedom they should have.

On Dec. 13, 2018, the *American Conservative* published an article by James Pinkerton that addressed the protests in France and pointed out that the European Union is fundamentally

not a democratic project. In general, voters don't want to hand over power to a superstate. Every time they have been asked in referenda, they have issued a clear "No!" However, as Pinkerton pointed out, "[T]he dream of a united Europe will always endure, at least in the minds of WOULD-BE CHARLEMAGNES."

French President Macron is clearly a would-be Charlemagne!

But Pinkerton went on to write, "Of course, such an imperium requires a fist—the more mailed, the better." To create such an empire in Europe, you must use an iron fist! That is the only way it has been achieved in the past.

Pinkerton continued: "So as with the fate of Macron's government in France, the future of the EU might well depend on the willingness of its rulers to GET TOUGH—that is, converting the democracy deficit into an outright TYRANNY surplus.

"Could they? Would they? THE ONLY THING WE KNOW FOR SURE IS THAT IT'S HAPPENED BEFORE."

Yes. MANY TIMES BEFORE!

That is a powerful observation. Pinkerton made this observation simply by analyzing Europe's history with tyranny and despotism. He is talking about exactly what the *Trumpet* has been saying for decades—and that Mr. Armstrong said for decades before us! There really shouldn't be any mystery about what we are witnessing in Europe. The empire rising in Europe is the same one that has risen repeatedly throughout Europe's history! But who studies this history anymore?

In an earlier article, Pinkerton wrote, "Here in the U.S., the EU is often seen as some sort of woolly-headed utopian pipe dream. However, the core of the EU has always been something different—something hard-nosed, not soft-hearted. 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" (July 11, 2018).

He certainly was not! Charlemagne waded through blood to conquer Europe and convert Europe's peoples to Catholicism! We explain this history in our free book *The Holy Roman Empire in Prophecy*.

Pinkerton went on to write that he believes Macron wants to be Charlemagne. I agree! Macron recognizes that Germany lacks strong leadership right now. He knows Europe needs a strongman. And he thinks he can do the job! He believes that if he bashes America and woos Germany—Europe's economic powerhouse—then he will become the new Charlemagne. That is why he is willing to sacrifice so much to be on even better terms with Germany. He doesn't mind his nation making sacrifices and bowing to Germany, if he gets to be that strong leader.

The Bible says that the "iron-fisted" strongman Pinkerton discussed is coming. Daniel 8:24 tells us that "his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power." He will have real power—even more power than Europe's worst tyrants. This leader is going to bring POWER AND MIGHT to all those military weapons! It will shock and stun this world! AND ACCORDING TO BIBLE PROPHECY, HE WILL BE A WORSE TYRANT THAN EITHER CHARLEMAGNE OR HITLER!

This verse goes on to say that "he shall destroy wonderfully [or mightily], and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the

mighty and the holy people." The whole world is going to suffer at the hand of this man!

There is an *evil spirit being* behind this movement, this last head of the Holy Roman Empire. That spirit is already visible in Macron's hatred of America.

But the Bible also tells us this coming strong leader WILL NOT BE FRENCH!

Isaiah 10:5 says, "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation." God uses this strongman to punish the people of Israel. And this strongman is a descendant of Assyria. We prove who Assyria is and tell you all about that punishment in our book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, by Herbert W. Armstrong. GOD SAYS, "[H]E MEANETH NOT SO, NEITHER DOTHS HIS HEART THINK SO; BUT IT IS IN HIS HEART TO DESTROY AND CUT OFF NATIONS NOT A FEW" (verse 7).

This strongman will COMMAND the army Macron is helping to build right now! But it will be a *German* that takes it to war.

"Macron's bold stance for an independent European army has left him with no choice but to enter a deal with the devil: German industry," we wrote on our website (Nov. 28, 2018). Once Macron gets locked into that, he will have to remain in lockstep with the Germans if he is to be part of the Holy Roman Empire. It will soon become clear that Macron won't be that strong leader—but by that time it will be very difficult for the French to get out.

'Broken Without Hand'

There is good news here that we must remember. Daniel 8:25 states: "And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand." This coming strongman is going to be DESTROYED "without hand." He is going to be confronted and put down by God Himself! God is going to SMASH this final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire—the army Europe is building *right now*—and bring its bloody history of atrocities to a just end!

France is going to end up suffering under this power, like so many other countries. It will be the greatest shame the French have ever experienced—betraying their brothers and turning to Germany. But Jesus Christ is going to smash that empire and rescue them from that shame.

God says these nightmares are all about to end! All the evil you see in this world is leading DIRECTLY into the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, and that's the best news you could ever receive! ■

Who will lead Europe?

The leadership deficit in Europe is growing more critical all the time. The Bible's prophecies provide extraordinary detail about the man who will step up to the challenge. You can learn about them by requesting your free copy of Gerald Flurry's booklet *A Strong German Leader Is Imminent*.



THE TRUMPET, IN PERSON

Live Personal Appearance Campaigns bring the *Trumpet's* message of warning and hope to hundreds—maybe even you. BY PHILIP NICE



WATCH A PREVIOUS CAMPAIGN

Portions of campaigns by *Trumpet* editor in chief and *Key of David* presenter Gerald Flurry and *Trumpet* executive editor and *Key of David-UK* presenter Stephen Flurry are available at the following links:

Living Hope in Bible Prophecy

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
July 16-17, 2017

theTrumpet.com/16150

French President Demands a European Army

COLUMBUS, OHIO
Nov. 11-12, 2018

theTrumpet.com/17914

Repent You and Believe the Gospel

LONDON, ENGLAND
Oct. 21-22, 2018

theTrumpet.com/17823

DEAR SUBSCRIBER
Gerald Flurry speaks at
a Personal Appearance
Campaign in Toronto,
Ontario.

YOU CAN SEE THE *TRUMPET* LIVE. Not just read it, not just hear it, not just view it, but attend it and experience it in person. How? By attending a *Trumpet* Personal Appearance Campaign.

Since 1994, *Trumpet* editor in chief and *Key of David* presenter Gerald Flurry has delivered dozens of personal appearance campaigns to *Trumpet* subscribers in about 20 cities across the United States, with two additional appearances in Canada and South Africa. *Trumpet* subscribers in Atlanta, Detroit, Houston, New York, Phoenix, Toronto and beyond have heard Mr. Flurry deliver live lectures focusing on world events, the hope contained in Bible prophecy, and what more *Trumpet* subscribers can do beyond reading the *Trumpet* and watching *The Key of David*.

"The audience was very positive and receptive," Mr. Flurry wrote after a Los Angeles-area campaign in a Jan. 25, 2018, *Trumpet Brief* e-mail message. "It was wonderful to have that face-to-face contact with some of our readers."

Mr. Flurry's son, *Trumpet* executive editor Stephen Flurry, has conducted campaigns in London, England, and Belfast, Northern Ireland. In the midst of the London campaign, he wrote in a *Trumpet Brief* e-mail, "These campaigns are aimed at stirring [*Trumpet* readers] to conviction and action" (Oct. 23, 2018).

Trumpet Personal Appearance Campaigns are patterned after the campaigns conducted by Herbert W. Armstrong. In addition to founding the *Trumpet's* predecessor, the *Plain Truth*, and presenting the *World Tomorrow* television and radio programs, Mr. Armstrong traveled around the world delivering the same message in person at lectures to as many as 24,000 people at a time.

Although *Trumpet* campaigns are smaller, they accomplish the same purpose, using the same pattern. More importantly, they deliver the same sober yet hopeful biblical prophetic message that Mr. Armstrong delivered throughout his 50-year ministry prior to his death in 1986. Mr. Flurry's campaign subjects have included the hope in Bible prophecy, "God's master plan for you personally," God's intervention in world events, the uselessness of Bible prophecy unless it builds faith, the living Savior

Jesus Christ, what Christ is doing today, boldly coming before God's throne, how physical family represents God's Family, the transcendent potential of human beings in the afterlife, the inspiring vision of the book of Hebrews, evolution, God's Sabbath and holy days, and Christ's admonition to "watch and pray always."

One event coordinator in Houston characterized Mr. Flurry's lectures as "masterfully put together and delivered," adding, "I know that God inspired that. It was a noticeably strong message both nights, and the people responded positively to that."

"I was amazed how he painted a picture of this way of life," another coordinator said after a campaign in Chicago. "He reminded me of Mr. Armstrong by addressing the audience like a loving grandfather helping to guide the way."

What is it like to attend a *Trumpet* Personal Appearance Campaign?

Trumpet subscribers arriving at the hotel ballroom to attend the lecture are greeted by campaign coordinators and other volunteers who are members of the Philadelphia Church of God, of which Mr. Flurry is the pastor general. These volunteers and their families help prepare for the lectures by setting up tables, chairs, banners and backdrops, and setting up and operating audio-video equipment. When *Trumpet* subscribers arrive, the volunteers welcome them, scan tickets, and provide information about free literature and follow-up Bible studies. One volunteer said his fellow volunteers had a "bubbly excitement" for the opportunity to contribute to the work of the *Trumpet* directly and in person. Most drive for more than an hour, with some driving hundreds of miles one way or taking off work in order to volunteer.

Each campaign consists of two lectures on two days, typically Sunday afternoons and Monday evenings. Following a short video presentation, Mr. Flurry delivers a 90-minute lecture. Afterward, many subscribers take the opportunity to meet Mr. Flurry. He converses with them for a couple of hours about world events, prophecy, the Bible and, in some cases, becoming more involved with the work of the *Trumpet*. Other Church ministers also make themselves available to chat with subscribers.

“I was very impressed with the co-workers that I visited with,” one minister said after a campaign. “They seemed to have a good bit of knowledge about world events and what we teach doctrinally. More importantly, most had attitudes that seemed very teachable.”

Trumpet subscribers can also visit with Church member volunteers as they staff tables offering free literature, including dozens of books and booklets written by Mr. Flurry and free subscriptions to *Royal Vision*, the Christian-living sister magazine to the *Trumpet*. Sign-up sheets are also available for subscribers interested in attending follow-up Bible studies. The studies take place the

attended from England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, Germany and the Netherlands. One guest said, “I really enjoyed this evening. I just love the way the world’s crisis is merged with the Bible and the teaching. And I think a lot of the churches out there are not giving the correct teaching and [are] leading the flock astray.”

“Everyone was very attentive during the 90-minute lecture, and we conversed afterward for about two hours,” Stephen Flurry said. “I am so glad that each of them made the effort to attend, and it was a thrill for me to speak to them and to know that God might be working in their lives.”

instructions on how to register. (Like the *Trumpet*, all Philadelphia Church of God publications, programs and campaigns are completely free.) Once you are registered, you will receive details on the time and location of the campaign, typically the ballroom of a quality hotel. Questions can be directed to pac@theTrumpet.com.

What if none of the upcoming campaigns come to your part of the world?

For *Trumpet* subscribers around the world who want the Personal Appearance Campaign experience, there is good news. Executive editor Stephen Flurry will present an online campaign on February 24 (4 p.m., GMT). You can watch it live at theTrumpet.com.



weekends following the campaign, in the same cities, and are given by Church ministers on subjects designed to build on Mr. Flurry’s lectures. Subjects have included living faith, the book of Hebrews, the Sabbath and current news. As a result of attending campaigns and subsequent Bible studies, some *Trumpet* subscribers have become members of the Philadelphia Church of God, lending their full support to Mr. Flurry and the Church. Some have even become campaign volunteers themselves.

“We aim to be a stronger witness,” Mr. Flurry said regarding attendees of the campaigns and Bible studies. “Hopefully a few will become members in the Church, which has a big impact on God’s work.”

“This evening was an eye-opening event,” one guest said after attending Stephen Flurry’s campaign in London. “It taught us so much that we didn’t know before, and things we’ve been taking for granted. So it was a very good evening. I wish more of these can be organized.”

At the London campaign, people

Gerald Flurry gave two campaigns in 1994, 10 in 1999–2000, and 10 more in 2006–2008. In spring 2017, the Church purchased a corporate jet, largely to enable him to meet more supporters of the *Trumpet* and to restart the Personal Appearance Campaigns. Since then, he has conducted campaigns in Chicago, Illinois; Los Angeles, California; Houston, Texas; Phoenix, Arizona; Columbus, Ohio; Greenville, South Carolina; and Toronto, Ontario.

Mr. Flurry has scheduled more appearances for 2019, including New York and Central Florida. Stephen Flurry plans to present lectures in Glasgow, Scotland (mid-March), Manchester, England (May) and in other cities later in the year.

How can you attend a *Trumpet* Personal Appearance Campaign in your city?

If you have a *Trumpet* subscription and Mr. Flurry schedules a campaign within about 200 miles of your mailing address, you will receive an invitation letter about a month prior to the campaign with

“[E]ach person matters immensely,” Stephen Flurry wrote in his Oct. 23, 2018, *Trumpet Brief*, “and our staff members have been praying that the message will really sink in for everyone who hears it.

“Hopefully this in-person experience will help dozens of people who have been comfortable just reading and following the message to act on it, to devote themselves to God. If they only follow the message and agree with it, they are missing out! God has immense blessings for those who turn to Him, and not just protection from the disasters that are about to explode here in Britain and around the world: much more than that. He also has an amazing, blessed, abundant way of life in store for those who submit to Him, and an amazing future greater than anything you can imagine. Of course, only those few whom God specially calls and works with even have the opportunity to respond to His message. But maybe that includes dozens of those who joined us here in London last night and tonight.

“And maybe that includes you.” ■

A MESSAGE FROM STEPHEN FLURRY

The *Trumpet's* executive editor presents a live **Online Appearance Campaign** on *theTrumpet.com*.



Are you really getting the *Trumpet's* message? You are holding this magazine in your hands. You are reading about Europe's search for leadership, about radical Islam's push in all directions, about Asia's economic superpower, and about the Americans, the British and the Jews decaying morally, economically and strategically.

You are reading about how these enormous, complex and fateful events will affect your life. And you are reading passages from the Bible that show that these events were prophesied thousands of years in advance. But are you really getting the *Trumpet's* message?

There is something more you need to do.

Hundreds of thousands of people in more than 130 countries read the *Trumpet*. But few act on it. Maybe this includes you. They follow the message, they agree with it, but they have yet to take the next step. The same God who inspired the Bible's amazing prophecies also inspired it to show you what to do next. Only those few whom God calls and works with even have an opportunity to respond to His message. But maybe that includes you.

Find out what the next step is. Watch the *Trumpet's* special online Personal Appearance Campaign with Stephen Flurry on Sunday, February 24.

WATCH LIVE

Visit *theTrumpet.com* on Sunday, February 24, at:

11:00 A.M. ET

10:00 A.M. CT

8:00 A.M. PT

4:00 P.M. GMT

For **updates** and to watch live on February 24, visit *theTrumpet.com*.

Questions? E-mail: letters@thetrumpet.com

INVADING ISRAEL

Iran's war against Israel is heating up rapidly: Iran is moving beyond threats and mobilizing for hostilities. **BY BRENT NAGTEGAAL**

JERUSALEM

ON NOV. 13, 2018, ISRAEL PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government was on the edge of collapse. In one 25-hour period, the Iranian-backed terrorist group Hamas launched over 400 rockets, missiles and mortars into Israel from the Gaza Strip. It was the largest single-day barrage ever. For those Israelis within range of the missiles, it was the last straw. I spoke to Israelis who experienced the attacks, and most of them emphasized the need to push back against Hamas to stop the incessant fire. Living under the constant threat of war and the stress of having less than 10 seconds to get to a bomb shelter is clearly taking a toll.

During the rocket barrage, Netanyahu convened his war cabinet to decide Israel's response. After six hours of intense discussion with defense and intelligence officials, Netanyahu unexpectedly decided to *stand down* Israeli forces and enter into a ceasefire with Hamas.

This was a hugely unpopular move both among the public and within his coalition. Defense Minister and coalition partner Avigdor Lieberman resigned over the inaction, reducing the ruling coalition's majority to only one seat. Netanyahu's position as prime minister was in peril.

Netanyahu is a savvy politician; he understood that his decision would jeopardize his 10-year tenure as prime minister. Still, he decided not to act forcefully against Hamas. Why?

It now seems clear that Netanyahu viewed the Hamas attack as just *one front*

GAZA STRIP

ISRAEL

WEST BANK

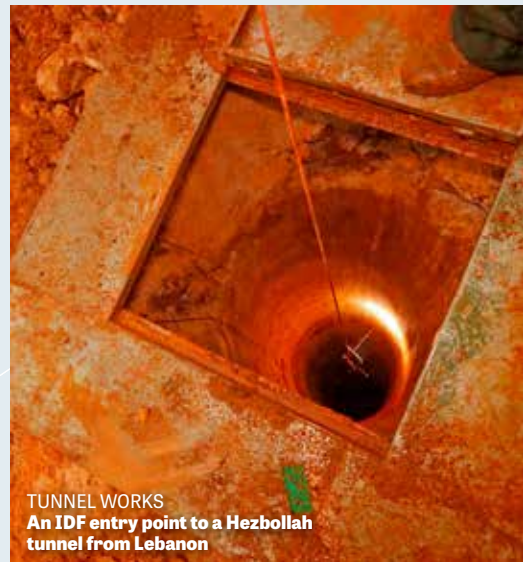
LEBANON

in Iran's broader war against Israel. He recognized that dedicating resources to the fight against Hamas would leave the rest of Israel vulnerable to Iranian attack, especially the northern border communities. Since the Gaza rocket barrage, we have learned that Iran, via Hezbollah fighters, was preparing an even deadlier offensive: a ground invasion.

Invasion Tunnels Discovered

Three weeks after Hamas's rocket barrage, Israeli forces revealed that they had discovered a massive underground attack tunnel from Lebanon that penetrates the Israeli border. It was the first publicly disclosed discovery of Operation Northern Shield, a mission two years in the making, intended to detect and neutralize a network of sophisticated secret tunnels built by Hezbollah for the purpose of launching a ground invasion into northern Israel.

Netanyahu reportedly discussed the tunnels during his six-hour war cabinet meeting in November. Apparently it was part of his rationale for not going to war with Hamas. He was concerned Hezbollah would open a second and



TUNNEL WORKS
An IDF entry point to a Hezbollah tunnel from Lebanon

far more dangerous front by sending numerous terrorists into Israel through these tunnels.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) posted a photograph of the tunnel on December 4. It shows a 6-by-6-foot tunnel 80 feet below ground, equipped with ventilation, electricity and communication lines. It runs 130 feet into Israeli territory. Unlike the Hamas attack tunnels, which are dug through sandy soils in Israel's south, this tunnel was carved through solid rock.

Further proof that the tunnel was Hezbollah's handiwork came soon after Israel inserted a robot inside the tunnel to investigate. It sent back stunning footage of a man approaching the robot from the Lebanon side of the tunnel. He leans in to look, which puts his face close to the camera. The robot then sets off a small explosive device, startling him, and he flees back the way he came. Within days, Israeli intelligence and others revealed the man to be Imad Fahs, a mechanical engineer who commands both a Hezbollah observation unit and a tunnel unit. Fahs obtained a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from K. N. Toosi University of Technology in Tehran, Iran. He also reportedly trained with Mexican drug cartels near the United States border.

The construction shows it is not merely for a quick entrance into Israeli territory to kidnap civilians or soldiers in order to grab a bargaining chip in future negotiations. This large, sophisticated, structurally sound tunnel (and surely others like it, yet to be



EXCAVATION
IDF soldiers and excavators search for tunnels near the border with Lebanon.



UNDER FIRE
A rocket launched from the Gaza Strip on Nov. 13, 2018, destroyed this house in Ashkelon.

discovered) is for the mass movement of Hezbollah terrorists—evidence of a large-scale, Iranian-backed enterprise to threaten civilians in northern Israel.

The tunnel confirms a long-publicized mission of Hezbollah to conquer Israeli communities in the Galilee region.

In “Hezbollah’s Operational Plan to Invade the Galilee Through Underground Tunnels,” Israeli Brig. Gen. Shimon Shapira (Ret.) summarized Hezbollah’s decades-old plan to invade northern Israel, a plan that was explicitly described by Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah in 2012 as the “Conquest of the Galilee.”

Shapira summarized Hezbollah’s plan this way: 1) train Hezbollah forces to take control of isolated Israeli communities along the northern border; and 2) construct tunnels under Israeli territory, close to Israeli communities, to facilitate infiltration by several hundred fighters, and not just to abduct soldiers or civilians.

According to Shapira, Hezbollah forces studied the tunnels that North Korea constructed in the event of an invasion into South Korea.

The tunnels prove that Iran and Hezbollah’s longtime and oft-repeated threats to conquer Israel are not merely rhetorical but are as real as the rock through which the tunnels are carved.

However, the tunnels are only one aspect of Iran’s plan. According to the “Conquest of the Galilee” plan, the invaders are to cross into Israeli territory under the cover of a mass barrage of Hezbollah missiles fired into Israel.

Missile Threat Is Real

It would be a mistake to think of Hezbollah as just a regular terrorist group.

Hezbollah has no tanks or planes, but its army of fighters, its missile stockpile, its small arms and its combat training make it a formidable force. The last round of war it unleashed on Israelis in 2006 killed 44 Israeli civilians. Since then, it has become far more powerful.

During the 2006 34-day war, Hezbollah fired about 200 rockets per day and had a stockpile estimated at 12,000. An estimated 99 percent of those were short-range rockets, a few dozen of which were medium-range or long-range types.

Today, Hezbollah’s stockpiles have multiplied 10 times. The IDF estimates that the group has 120,000 to 130,000 rockets, including thousands of medium-range and hundreds of long-range types that can reach anywhere in Israel. Israeli intelligence estimates that instead of firing about 200 per day as in 2006, Hezbollah could launch 1,500 per day.

Israel has never experienced such a terrifying barrage of missiles. While it has the most successful antimissile shield on Earth—including the Iron Dome, David’s Sling and the Arrow 3—the sheer volume of such an attack would be overwhelming.

This is especially true given recent reports of Iran acquiring precision strike capabilities in its own missiles—and reports that it has shared the technology with Hezbollah.

On Oct. 16, 2018, at 2:04 p.m., a Fars Air Qeshm Boeing 747 landed at Beirut

Airport, allegedly carrying GPS-retrofitting technology bound for nearby Hezbollah missile sites. The components would enable Hezbollah missiles to strike within a 10-meter radius of their intended targets.

U.S. intelligence tagged this plane in April 2018 and followed its movements. In July, it flew from an air force base in Tehran, landed in Damascus and then continued to Beirut. In August, it again flew from Tehran to Beirut. It landed in Beirut again in early December.

Over the last two years, Israel has carried out more than 200 strikes against Syria to keep Hezbollah from gaining capabilities such as this. Iran had been flying weapons to Damascus and then trucking them into Lebanon. But now it appears that Iran is flying weapons directly from Iran to Lebanon by cargo plane.

Hezbollah has stated that it has precision missiles. On Sept. 20, 2018, even prior to the Fars Air Qeshm flight, Nasrallah said, “The resistance now owns precision missiles.” Then, right before Israel launched Operation Northern Shield, he released a video showing scenes of Hezbollah fighters preparing to launch rockets, and the targeting of numerous strategic Israeli locations such as the Dimona nuclear facility and the IDF military headquarters in Tel Aviv. The video includes the threat, “Attack, and you will regret it.”

This video followed numerous boasts by Nasrallah that any Israeli actions

Can America Afford Its Military?

When debt payments exceed defense costs, empires fall.

BY ANDREW MILLER

AMERICA CAN NO LONGER AFFORD to protect its strategic interests. Since the end of World War II, the United States has used its global military and political presence to contain the spread of communism, to oppose Islamic terrorism, to ensure the free flow of oil, to protect the world's most important trade routes and to prevent nuclear-armed madmen from launching World War III. Yet this period of relative peace and unprecedented prosperity is about to abruptly end. Why? One reason is that America simply lacks the financial resources to continue defending its interests and enforcing world peace.

The reason for this sobering state of affairs goes deeper than finances.

An astonishing Bible prophecy reveals that God raised up America to be a superpower—a lion among the nations. The same prophecy shows that just as America reaches the zenith of its power, God cuts off its armaments and throws down its strongholds. He is going to literally break America's economic and military power.

The fact that God is stripping away the financial resources that have allowed America to fund the most powerful military in history is divine chastisement. America will soon be spending more on its debt than its military. This means the United States will have to drastically scale back its armed forces, allowing hostile foreign powers to fill the void.

Rising Debt

The federal budget deficit has ballooned to \$779 billion, and the national debt has skyrocketed to \$21 trillion. This crisis has prompted President Donald Trump to call on each cabinet office to slash 5 percent from its budget by fiscal year 2020. To meet this target, the U.S. military, according to Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan, will have to slash its budget by \$33 billion. While the Pentagon could lower its budget by 5 percent simply by cutting wasteful spending, newly released figures from the Congressional

Budget Office (CBO) show that much more drastic cuts will be necessary.

As entitlement spending and interest payments on the national debt consume an ever increasing portion of the federal budget, the government will be forced to reduce its defense spending to 1930s' levels. The U.S. will have to close overseas bases and bring troops home. Vital trade routes and strategic resources will come up for grabs.

Harvard professor Niall Ferguson has warned that empires often fall when the costs of servicing their debts exceeds the costs of defending their interests. Rising debt drove the Roman Empire and Soviet Union to bankruptcy, rendering their militaries incapable of halting the fragmentation of their empires. The U.S. is dangerously close to such a tipping point.

The CBO recently disclosed that the interest on the national debt rose to \$371 billion in 2018. That is a 20 PERCENT JUMP OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR. It is also about half of what the nation spends on its military. Based on current budget projections, the government will actually be spending more on interest than on defense within five years. And within 10 years, it will be spending 85 percent of all tax revenues on Social Security, health care and interest payments. That means basic defense spending is projected to fall from 3.1 percent of gross domestic product in 2018 to 2.6 percent in 2028. The last time military spending fell so low was during the Great Depression, when Nazi Germany was rising.

And if interest rates rise faster than expected, the nation could reach this tipping point much sooner. America could soon find itself spending over \$900 billion per year on interest—and struggling to finance both a massive

welfare state and a functioning military without racking up even more debt, or printing its way into hyperinflation.

If China and the European Union continue to boost their defense spending toward 2 percent of GDP, their military capabilities will quickly catch up to the United States'. Chinese military spending is projected to pass the U.S.'s by 2035, and the European Union has the ability to do likewise with the right kind of political leadership. When America's military power finally snaps, no human power will be able to oppose Asia and Europe on the world scene.

Closing Bases

Most people do not think of the U.S. as an empire in the traditional sense. It has no vassals and no colonies. But it has more

FOREIGN U.S. MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

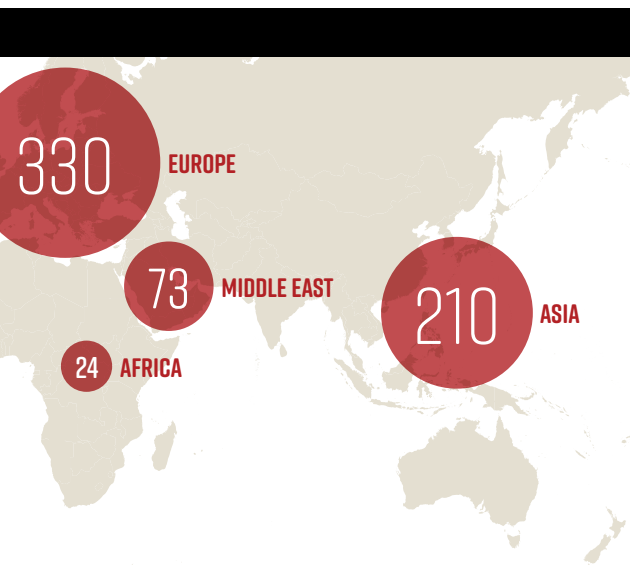


bases in foreign lands than any other people, nation or empire in history. According to David Vine of American University, the U.S. maintains roughly 800 military installations in 80 foreign countries. American troops in Europe hold back an expansionist Russia. Troops in Asia keep China from dominating the Pacific Ocean. Troops in the Middle East contain Iran and ensure the free flow of oil. And troops stationed on ships throughout the world guard vital trade routes like the Strait of Malacca, the Strait of Hormuz, the Bab el-Mandeb, Gibraltar, the Turkish Straits, the Suez Canal and the Panama Canal.

These overseas troops and military bases cost taxpayers over \$156 billion

per year, almost one fifth of all U.S. military spending. If the nation is forced to reduce spending, overseas bases will likely be among the first to go.

“As Sen. Rand Paul often points out, bankruptcy is the Sword of Damocles hanging perilously close to Uncle Sam’s neck,” Hunter DeRensis wrote in the *American Conservative*. “What would transpire if Social Security checks stopped showing up in mailboxes and Medicare benefits got cut off? When presented with that choice, will the average American choose his social safety net or continued funding for far-flung bases in Stuttgart, Okinawa and Djibouti? Even the most militaristic congressperson will know which way to vote, lest they find a mob waiting outside their D.C. castles” (Nov. 20, 2018).



Shuttering foreign bases may buy the U.S. several months of financial solvency, but it will also transform America from a global hegemon, projecting power around the world, into a weakened, vulnerable nation just trying to defend its borders.

Many people on both sides of the political spectrum would love to see America bring its troops back. Many on the left view America’s overseas military as oppressive colonial outposts. Many on the right view them as a needless burden on taxpayers, or as a distraction from the threat of drug cartels and illegal migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. Neither side truly views this incredible military capacity and presence as

blessings from God for the protection of America and the world. Because of this, and because of sin, God will strip away the power He gave to America, leaving the nation defenseless. Once America loses the ability to protect and control the world’s most strategic trade routes and maritime choke points, foreign powers will seize these powerful prizes. America’s homeland will be vulnerable to economic siege by hostile enemies.

Prophesied Destruction

The late Herbert W. Armstrong explained in his landmark book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* that the Anglo-Saxon peoples who settled the United States and Britain are descended from ancient Israel. This astonishing truth means that all the Bible’s end-time prophecies concerning Israel are primarily directed at the United States and Britain. These prophecies describe the *wealth and dominance of America today—and then prophesy of a nightmare soon to come.*

“An important additional proof of modern Israel’s identity is found in a fantastic, detailed and *most specific* prophecy found in Micah 5:7-15,” Mr. Armstrong wrote. “It is speaking specifically about the ‘remnant’ of Israel—modern Israel *today*—wherever it is. It describes the *wealth*, the beneficent dominance among nations, and then the

coming *downfall* of the American and British Commonwealth peoples in detail!”

The Prophet Micah wrote that the “remnant” of Israel would be “as a dew from the Lord” and “as a lion among the beasts of the forest.” This symbolism describes the *last generation* of Israel as a superpower, as two brother nations with the wealth and power to *help establish* peace and stability for all human life on this planet (verses 7-8).

What is next? “And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots: And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds: And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand;

and thou shalt have no more soothsayers: Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands” (Micah 5:10-13).

Today, Americans worship the work of their hands. Because of this, God says that at the moment America reaches the zenith of its power, He will cut off its weapons systems and throw down its bases. He will break not just the pride of America’s power—which He has already done (Leviticus 26:18-19)—but its very power!

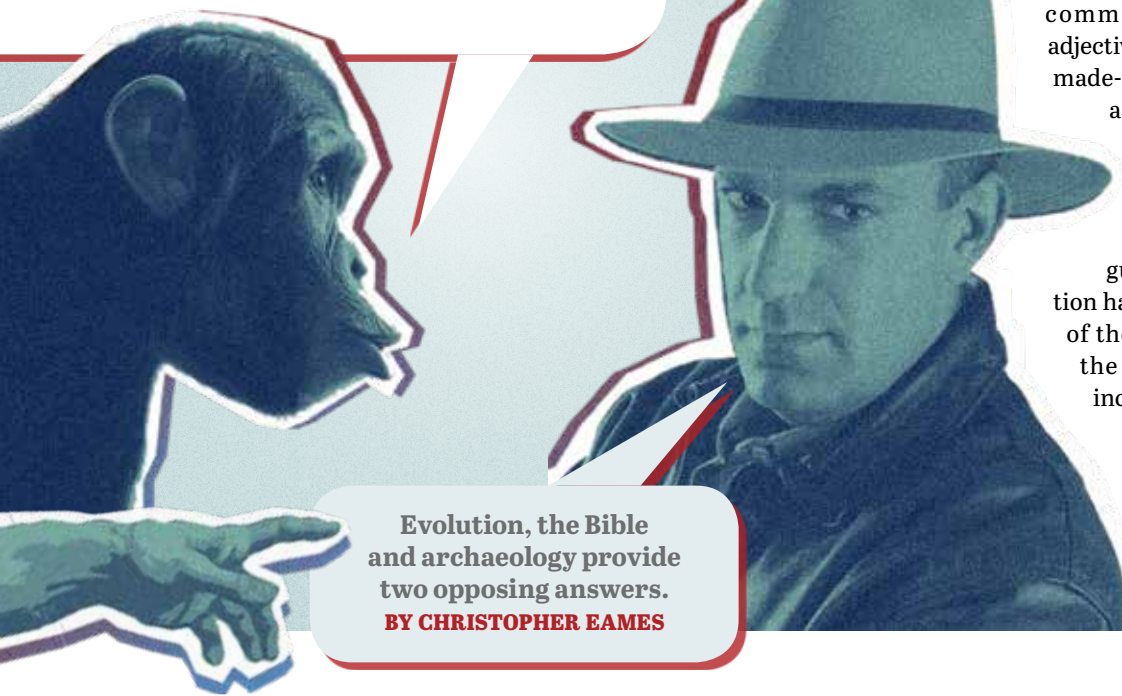
The United States and Britain in Prophecy explains numerous means and tools that God will use to accomplish His purpose—including economic troubles, loss of foreign assets and weather disasters.

Mr. Armstrong added: “As the ‘pride of our power’ continues to be **BROKEN**, as the British continue to lose their foreign sea-gates and possessions around the Earth, as America signs away ownership of the Panama Canal—control over this vital sea-gate—as our gold supply drains away from this nation, weather upsets increase, this focal prophecy alone represents giant **PROOF** as to where the modern ‘remnant’ of the peoples of Israel reside today!”

It is because America has turned away from God that He is stripping away its ability to finance its military. The U.S. is borrowing trillions of dollars from other nations. This rising debt will have a catastrophic end: the sudden collapse of America’s military power. This tragedy may seem like a simple matter of fiscal mismanagement, but it is actually correction from God designed to cause people to *acknowledge their transgressions*, repent and seek Him (Hosea 5:15).

This chastisement will affect the United States and Britain first, but then God will correct all nations. It is only after this corrective punishment that people will humble themselves and cry out to God for deliverance. At this point, God promises to “*wipe away all tears*” from people’s eyes (Revelation 21:4). Until then, only those who voluntarily repent before this horrendous calamity strikes will be accounted worthy to escape (Luke 21:35-36). Individuals must make their own decisions, so it is vitally important to understand what the Bible reveals about America’s collapse. ■

Where Did Language Come From?



Evolution, the Bible and archaeology provide two opposing answers.
BY CHRISTOPHER EAMES

IF EVERYBODY'S DOING IT, THAT MAKES it OK. Well, no. But that does make it a *cultural universal*—the anthropological term for something done, in some form or other, by every human culture around the world. This includes religion, music, art, marriage, war, families, gender roles, laws, taboos, personal names, etiquette, morals and so on. The cultural universal can be difficult for evolutionists to try to explain. In a world where societies are supposed to have migrated, evolved, changed, developed and faced various extinctions separately, how could it be that *every* culture does these things?

One primary and obvious cultural universal is *language*. And not just language in general. Many basic elements of language are also cultural universals, used by all humans.

Language is one of our greatest human attributes. The makeup and combined use of the human tongue, larynx and related oral and nasal passageways enable the range and uniqueness of human speech, which is greater than that of any other creature. “Animal language” is a closed system, with a small,

finite number of simple, expressible “ideas.” Human language is an open system, infinite in what can be expressed.

Where did human language come from? How did we begin talking and writing? How does evolution explain it, and what does the Bible say? Does archaeology give us any leads as to the earliest development of language?

The Commonality of Language

Aspects of language that are cultural universals include synonyms and antonyms, metaphors, abstract concepts, “bad” words, classifications of various things, personal names and time. Based on his close study of 30 different languages, linguist Joseph Greenberg derived a list of at least 45 separate linguistic “universals.”

Recent scientific studies have helped show that language is *hardwired* into the human brain. Scanned brains showed common sensitivities to “language universals.” Sound patterns in languages “reflect shared linguistic constraints that are hardwired in the human brain already at birth,” according to the Northeastern University College of Science.

For example, one study showed participants foreign or made-up words and asked what imagery the words invoked. For example, participants were asked which of the made-up words *baluma* and *takete* represents a round object, and which an angular. They almost always gave the same answer. Another common tendency is to arrange adjectives in the same order, even in a made-up language. There is also our ability to discern words from non-words. The list goes on.

Evolutionary View

Attempts to explain language development using evolution have produced two main strains of thought, both centered around the fact that human language is incredibly complex. Indeed, there is nothing even close to it in the animal kingdom.

Theory one (the “Continuity Theory”): Because language is so complex, *it cannot have developed suddenly*. It must have developed gradually from our primate ancestors. Thus,

primordial “grunts” and “squawks” gradually developed into more precisely vocalized, meaningful words and sentences. Dating for this is wild—perhaps beginning around 2.5 million years ago and culminating in general linguistic “modernity” around 100,000 years ago, at which point different human languages began diversifying. Most linguistic scholars believe the Continuity Theory to some degree.

Theory two (the “Discontinuity Theory”): Because language is so complex and unique to humans, *it must have developed suddenly*. Had it developed gradually from primate ancestors, then we would expect some forms of human-like language among great-ape “cousins” or among other primates. Language must have rapidly developed, perhaps around 150,000 years ago.

The famous American linguist and philosopher Noam Chomsky adheres to the Discontinuity Theory, believing that a single, swift mutation caused the ability for human language to be realized. “[S]ome random mutation took place, maybe after some strange cosmic ray

shower,” he stated in 2000, “and it reorganized the brain, implanting a language organ in an otherwise primate brain.”

Chomsky cautioned against taking this statement too literally, but insisted it could be a more accurate description of events than other evolutionary explanations. And though his views are generally unpopular, scientists admit that his ideas on language development are being “validated” by new experiments, proving language to be an “innate,” hardwired ability of the human brain.

Within these two theories are a number of other explanations for how language developed—be it initially through gesturing, by replicating sounds of animals or tools, or a development of natural grunts made while heaving objects or getting injured. There is an ocean of theories, few conclusions, and a host of unanswered questions.

Biblical Origin of Language

The Bible doesn’t describe an original development of language. Rather, language is shown to be a trait of God Himself. In just the third verse of Genesis 1, we read, “And *God said*, Let there be light ...” In the creation account that follows, each feature of our planet was formed with a divine verbal command.

The Bible states that animals were created “after their kind” (verses 21, 24-25). Humans, though, were not—they were created after the *God kind*: “in our image, after our likeness” (verse 26). As such, man was given the divine ability to *think* and translate thoughts into *words*. After creating man and woman, God immediately *spoke* to them, “Be fruitful, and multiply ...” (verse 28).

The first reference to *writing* may be in Genesis 4:26, which can be translated as “to read, to publish the name of the Lord.” Whatever the case, writing is inferred as developing early in human history.

Another significant biblical point about language is that God allowed man flexibility and creativity in developing his vocabulary, coining new words. God brought the animals to Adam “to see what he would call them; And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So Adam gave names to all ...” (Genesis 2:19-20; New King James Version).

The biblical view explains not only why *all* mankind (and *only* mankind)

has language, but also why mankind universally shares the smaller unique aspects of language.

The biblical account makes no significant mention of language development after creation until at the tower of Babel. “And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech” (Genesis 11:1). After the Flood, the growing multitudes gathered in the plain of Shinar in order to establish a powerful, compact civilization and to build a tower that would reach unto heaven—a tower that, later accounts explain, would enable man to survive another flood, in defiance of God.

Verses 6-8 state: “And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth ...”

God foresaw the rapid development of evil designs among a people of one language living in one place. So He intervened to confound the language, forcing man to spread out around the world with those of his own language.

This explains early major changes in languages and the existence of “language isolates”—languages with no known connection to or development from other languages. From those primary, separate languages, minor developments of languages and dialects occurred naturally over thousands of years, bringing us to the point today where there are over 7,000 different languages around the world.

The biblical account explains why language is exclusively human and why it is hardwired into our brains and vocal anatomy: because God deliberately designed it as such.

What does *archaeology* tell us about this cultural universal?

Early Language

According to the biblical account, man has been speaking and writing for around 6,000 years—the full course of his existence. Archaeologists have dated the earliest discovered, generally accepted use of written language to around 5,500 years ago.

This definitely supports the biblical record. If humans really started to evolve in “speaking” 2.5 million years ago, and reached linguistic “modernity” 100,000 years ago, then nearly 95,000 years is a long time to wait before recording the spoken word on “paper.”

And it wasn’t just one single, isolated culture that began writing 5,500 years ago. From this time and just after, *several* peoples and cultures from different areas in and around the Middle East and Asia started writing. In fact, the dates for early writing across certain countries are so similar that scientists argue over which language developed first.

Some of the earliest examples are the Indus script (India, undeciphered, around 3500 B.C.), Sumerian cuneiform (Iraq, 3100 B.C.), Proto-Elamite cuneiform (Iran, undeciphered, around 3100 B.C.), and Proto-Egyptian hieroglyphs (around 3300 B.C.). The earliest-discovered texts are generally in the form of pictographs—simple images representing ideas that gradually morphed into even simpler yet more abstract signs.

Debate abounds regarding the dating, and even authenticity, of earlier discoveries of writing, such as the European Vinča symbols (dated roughly to 5500 B.C.). Excluding these controversial items, the general consensus for writing is that it originated in the fourth millennium B.C.

Biblical Account and Archaeology

The Bible first describes language in the context of God *speaking* in order to create the Earth. An interesting creation myth from Egypt centers around the god Ptah, the Egyptian creator-god of the universe. According to the seventh century B.C. Shabaka Stone, Ptah gave *spoken commands* to bring the world into being and to bring up dry land from the waters that covered the Earth. The similarity to the earlier Hebrew account reflects a similar memory of Earth’s origin and of claims that speech was already established at the start of man’s existence.

The biblical account of the tower of Babel and the resulting development of languages was recorded by various cultures around the world. Variations on the idea can be found in such far-flung places as Korea, Mexico, Kenya, Estonia, Guatemala, Greece and Alaska. These cultures join with the ancient Middle

Eastern traditions held by the Sumerians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syro-Phoenicians and Hebrews. (Read our in-depth article on the parallel tower of Babel accounts at theTrumpet.com/16106.) According to biblical chronology, the incident and spreading of languages probably occurred around 2250 B.C.

An ancient Sumerian epic, dating to around 2100 B.C., called “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta,” has dialogue regarding the sending of tribute to build a tower at Eridu in Sumer. (*Sumer* is the equivalent of the biblical “Shinar,” within which the tower of Babel was built. Additionally, there are further parallels between the city Eridu and biblical Babel, including a partially completed tower.) Partway into the long inscription is this passage: “Chant to him ... the incantation of Nudimmud: ‘... the whole universe, the well-guarded people—may they all address Enlil together *in a single language!* ... for the ambitious lords, for the ambitious princes, for the ambitious kings—Enki, the lord of abundance ... shall *change the speech in their mouths*, as many as *he had placed there*, and so the speech of mankind is truly one” (emphasis added).

Here we read, in the context of attempting to build a tower, an incantation to try to cause people to *all speak the same language*. We see that the “lord of abundance,” Enki, had “placed” many languages among the nations—and this incantation was intended to enable mankind to work together in one language. Other translations of the text bear even closer resemblance to the biblical confusion of languages. Here is another translation of the same passage: “Once ... the whole universe, the people in unison, spoke to Enlil in one tongue. ... Then Enki, the lord of abundance ... changed the speech in their mouths, brought contention into it, into the speech of man that had been one.”

The connections with the biblical account are clear. It is consistent with the Earth being of one language

at the time of the Flood with Noah’s family. The confusion of languages by divine intervention in Genesis 11 is evident. And in this Sumerian story, the ruler, to accomplish his goals, wanted a restoration of language unity after it had been changed and confused. These connections are reinforced by the similarity in date between this text and the biblical chronological date for the tower of Babel episode.

Again, traditions of a “tower of Babel” confusion and spread of languages can be found all over the globe. One could almost call it a “cultural universal.”

Conclusions

So what does it all mean?

As maligned as the biblical account is, it fits the material discoveries. Only deliberate *creation* satisfactorily explains how language is hardwired into human beings. It explains how our language is so entirely different and infinitely more complex than that of any animal and is worlds apart from our supposedly “closest cousins,” the great apes. The general biblical time frame for man’s existence matches with the general chronology of the earliest archaeological discoveries of writing, stemming from exactly the same parts of the world from which mankind is said to have emerged. The biblical account of the development of different languages, starting at the tower of Babel is found in different national histories all over the world. A common idea points to a common *experience*—the reality that our forefathers really *were* dispersed according to their new languages. Even the biblical account of Earth being created by the *spoken word* is corroborated by archaeological discovery.

A small scientific movement provides evidence for the world’s languages going back to one original mother tongue: “Edenic.” Comparing words for various items across languages reveals core similarities—“shadow-like” trace elements pointing back to what the original language of man may have been and

sounded like. Researchers in this field have pointed to this “Edenic” language, from which various languages were divided, as being very similar to Hebrew. (A thorough text on this subject is *The Origin of Speeches*, by Isaac Mozeson.)

The evolutionary concept of language, however, is entirely speculative. It provides no concrete answers—only raises more questions. Really, the Discontinuity Theory—which is far less popular but is gaining some validation through scientific linguistic experiments—is closer to the biblical account.

According to the evolutionary hypothesis, language should be evolving from its “primitive” forms thousands of years ago as society “progresses.” Instead, languages worldwide have been measurably *devolving* from higher, more complex forms. Just as the physical world is subject to degradation and degeneration, so is *language*. Witness the change from Shakespearean, King James Old English to today’s emoji-riddled text language and barely coherent street slang. Akkadian, the *lingua franca* of ancient Mesopotamia, is an early cuneiform script that “should” be extremely simple based on its age. It is actually incredibly complex (and only redéciphered in the 19th century). Similar examples exist around the world.

The Bible has much to say on the history of language. It also describes the *future* of language. Zephaniah 3:9 prophesies of a time when mankind will return to *one* language, just as in the days following the Flood. But this will be a somewhat different language. It reads: “For then will I turn to the people a *pure language*, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.”

This describes a time following the coming of the Messiah, when mankind will *not* have the same inventions of evil as at the tower of Babel. The corrupt, devolved languages of our day are to be replaced by a *pure* language, from which mankind will together serve God with one mind.

The history of language helps prove the veracity of the Bible. Together with other cultural universals, the biblical account of man’s common heritage, going back to the original single created family, is made plain. ■



For more information on the veracity of the Bible, and to prove it for yourself, request our free booklet ***The Proof of the Bible***. Also read ***Does God Exist?***



The Heart of Prophecy for the Last Days

It's one of the most mysterious, yet powerful, verses in the Bible! **BY STEPHEN FLURRY**

REVELATION 17:10 IS ONE OF THE GREATEST PROPHECIES IN all the Bible! “Contained within this one verse is the heart of prophecy for these latter days.” That is what my father, Gerald Flurry, writes in *Daniel Unlocks Revelation*. The *heart* of prophecy! The core understanding of end-time prophecy is packed into this one verse:

“And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.”

Five are *fallen*—one *is*—and another is *not yet come*. What does this mean? To understand, let us first examine the overview of Revelation 17.

Mystery, Babylon the Great

“And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication” (Revelation 17:1-2).

In Bible prophecy, a woman symbolizes a church. This passage is about a religion or church, one that is led by Satan! It is a church that fornicates with the kings of the Earth. Verses 4 and 15 show that this woman is fabulously wealthy and presides over many nations that speak different languages. This is a worldly church that mixes religion with politics. She is like a prostitute selling her ability to influence people to political governments in return for more power. She successfully gains powerful influence over great nations.

“So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns” (verse 3). Revelation repeatedly uses the term “beast” to symbolize a powerful empire, for example in Revelation 12 and 13. Related imagery appears in Daniel 7. (These symbols are thoroughly explained by Herbert W. Armstrong in his booklet *Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?*, which we will send you free upon request.)

The Revelation 13 beast pictures the Roman Empire. Verse 3 notes that this beast was wounded but then healed. Though the Roman Empire was overrun in A.D. 476, it was *healed, resurrected*, in the Imperial Restoration of Justinian in A.D. 554. From that point forward, the empire’s relationship with the Roman Catholic Church made it something quite different.

This church-state union is known in history as *the Holy Roman Empire*. And this is specifically what is portrayed in Revelation 17. The seven heads of this beast symbolize *seven resurrections* of this empire that are to occur. The picture of a *woman riding the beast* shows that these resurrections were *guided by a church*.

“And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (verse 5). Verse 3 also notes that this beast is full of blasphemy (as do Revelation 13:1 and 6). This is a great *FALSE* church that claims to be Christian but is steeped in the pagan religious mysteries of ancient Babylon. It is a universal religion of Babylonian customs and traditions overlaid with a veneer of “worshiping Christ.”

This church is also called the *mother* of harlots. Hundreds of *daughter* churches came out of her in protest. *But they all came from her*. They squabble with her over her right to rule them, yet their pagan teachings and festivals *came from her*.

This prophecy was recorded 1,900 years ago—yet it describes what has happened in the centuries since *perfectly*, and in *detail*!

The name “Babylon” means *confusion*. The religion of Babylon was known as a “mystery religion.” Look at the traditional Christian world. There are hundreds and hundreds of denominations, all differing, yet all sharing the same origin, the same mother, and the same teachings and festivals tracing back to paganism—and all wrapped in a cloak of “Christianity.”

We are accustomed to this state of affairs in traditional Christianity. But when you think about it, it is full of confusion!

“And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration” (Revelation 17:6). This church

has a very dark history of persecuting and even *killing* many of those who actually were true Christians. Your Bible prophesied this *1,900 years ago*, and that has been the history ever since!

The Seven Resurrections

“And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns” (Revelation 17:7). The detail and precision in this prophecy are astounding! Yet many people are perplexed by it and assume the meaning is unknowable.

But why should we marvel? God unlocks these mysteries to true Christians who submit to Him and let the Bible interpret itself. As my father writes in *Daniel Unlocks Revelation*, we can understand this if we put the pieces together and **FACE THE FACTS!**

“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is” (verse 8). The beast symbolizes the Roman Empire. Its seven heads symbolize seven resurrections of that ancient system under a great false church: the “Holy” Roman Empire.

Verse 8 describes this beast emerging from the “bottomless pit.” Verse 9 compares the seven resurrections to mountains. In other words, the history of this empire has peaks and valleys. In *The Outline of History*, H. G. Wells wrote: “The Roman Empire staggers, sprawls, is thrust off the stage, and reappears, and—if we may carry the image one step further—it is the church of Rome which plays the part of the magician and keeps this corpse alive.”

Compare these scriptures to a snapshot of European history over the past 1,500 years.

In A.D. 554, East Roman Emperor Justinian recognized the supremacy of the pope. The old Roman system sprang back to life, now as the “Holy” Roman Empire! The wound of Revelation 13:3 was healed!

In A.D. 800, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as emperor of the Romans. The pope even pronounced him “the 73rd emperor of the FOURTH world empire.” He recognized that this was yet another resurrection of the Roman Empire, that fourth world-ruling system of Daniel 7, Revelation 13 and Revelation 17!

In A.D. 936, Otto the Great became king over the united German tribes when he was crowned at Aachen, the capital used by Charlemagne. In A.D. 962, his army entered Italy at the request of Pope John XII, who was under siege and who crowned Otto Holy Roman emperor at the Vatican. The revived church-state combine dominated central Europe.

In 1438, the throne of the Holy Roman Empire was revived by the monarchs of the Habsburg dynasty, who went on to hold the throne continuously until 1740.

In 1804, with Pope Pius VII in attendance, Napoleon Bonaparte crowned himself emperor of the French Empire. The territories he conquered included those of the Holy Roman Empire.

In 1870, Giuseppe Garibaldi revived the Holy Roman Empire

for the sixth time. This sixth resurrection culminated in the Hitler-Mussolini axis (1936–1945).

In 2019, the same Holy Roman Empire is emerging out of the pit once again! This seventh resurrection is now taking shape.

One Is, the Other Is Not Yet Come

Now consider again this astounding verse: “And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space” (Revelation 17:10).

The five that “are fallen” extend over a period of 1,260 years, just as God prophesied in Revelation 13:5. (Forty-two months equal 1,260 days. Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6 establish the principle of substituting a *day for a year* in prophecy. In this case, these 42 months equal *1,260 years*.) From Justinian’s Imperial Restoration in A.D. 554 (first king) to the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1814 (fifth king) is precisely 1,260 years!

The Apostle John lived hundreds of years before the Holy Roman Empire began. But in Revelation 17, God carried him forward in

a vision to the time of that empire’s *sixth* resurrection, which culminated in the Hitler-Mussolini axis. The reason God carried John forward to the sixth resurrection is that *the full meaning of this prophecy would be REVEALED during the time of the sixth resurrection*: the time when “ONE IS.” God revealed this prophecy to His servant *during* the sixth resurrection, and that man warned of *another* resurrection that was “not yet come.” That man was Herbert W. Armstrong.

Here is what my father writes in his booklet *Prophecy Again*: “This revelation is about the period when Mr. Armstrong, God’s end-time Elijah, was doing this work of God. ... During World War II, we saw the Hitler-Mussolini axis, but then it disappeared from the scene. It ‘was not’! And yet, God says, ‘it is’! The Axis powers lost the war, but as Mr. Armstrong preached time and again, they just went underground—into ‘the bottomless pit’ (verse 8). They’re still there—they’re just *underground*.”

Verse 10 is not *only* about the last two resurrections of the Holy Roman Empire. *It’s also about the last two eras of God’s Church!* God revealed the full truth about this prophecy through Herbert W. Armstrong, whom He also used as the human leader of the sixth era of God’s Church (Revelation 3:7-13). Mr. Armstrong *warned* about the seventh and final resurrection, but the seventh head had NOT YET ascended out of the bottomless pit when Mr. Armstrong died in 1986.

Revelation 17:10 is the heart of prophecy for *our time today!*

The Feeble Sixth Head

Another fascinating detail in this prophetic passage is the way God characterizes the *sixth* head of the beast in verse 8: it “*was, and is NOT*.” The reason for this description is because the Hitler-Mussolini axis “was not in any sense the power-wielding old Roman Empire,” Mr. Armstrong wrote in *Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?*

We tend to think of the sixth head of the beast as being much worse than the previous five resurrections because



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of the widespread carnage caused by modern warfare: 60 to 70 million people killed, hundreds of millions wounded. But in terms of a *world-RULING* empire ascending out of the heart of Europe, the Hitler-Mussolini axis was actually quite feeble and short-lived compared to the previous five resurrections, which conquered the established western part of the world.

Hitler's regime was not as powerful or wide-ranging. He conquered Europe for about four years. But he never conquered Britain. And once his ally, the Empire of Japan, bombed the United States into the war, Hitler's war machine was no match for America's industrial might.

God knew the sixth head of the beast would be meager and insignificant, comparatively speaking, because it would ascend out of the bottomless pit at the very time America and Britain together would reach *their* peaks in power. This involves yet another breathtaking prophecy in your Bible, in Genesis 35:10-11.

It was the descendants of biblical Ephraim (the British Empire) who, with the help of European allies, vanquished the fifth head of the Holy Roman Empire, driving Napoleon into exile in 1814. Napoleon attempted a comeback the following year and was crushed by the British at Waterloo. As British historian Paul Johnson writes, "Waterloo was one of the most decisive battles of history and brought to an end the entire Revolutionary and Napoleonic period." It was decisive because the 1,260 years that enclosed the "five [that] are fallen" had ended!

Then in the 1940s, it was the modern descendants of the biblical brothers Ephraim and Manasseh (Britain and the United States) who crushed Hitler's dream of dominating Europe and then the world.

Just think on the *detail* of this stunning prophecy!

The Seventh Resurrection

Over the past 70 years, the Holy Roman Empire has once again been in a historical valley. But now it is emerging out of the pit once again. The seventh resurrection is taking shape. The European Union today is an oversized group of 28 nations, but it is about to downsize to 10 nations or groups of nations. Revelation 17:12 says, "And the ten horns which thou sawest are *ten kings*, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast."

That is referring to a "United States of Europe" led by 10 kings, who are of one mind (verse 13). Those 10 kings, or heads of state, are led by one fearsome leader, prophesied in Daniel 8.

Herbert W. Armstrong predicted that a united Europe would arise out of crisis under the leadership of a strong German leader. He wrote in the November-December 1954 *Plain Truth*: "Germany inevitably [will] emerge as the *leader* of a united Europe. It will require some *spiritual* binding force to inspire this *confidence*—to remove these *fears*—and that spiritual binding force *must* arise from inside Europe! *All Europe* is actually *ready*—just waiting for the *confidence-inspiring leader*"

That seventh resurrection is rising *right now*. It's just waiting for that strong, confidence-inspiring German leader to unite Europe into a single power. As Mr. Armstrong wrote, it will require a *spiritual* binding force to inspire that confidence.

My father wrote in the October 2018 *Trumpet*: "Bible prophecy makes clear: Soon, Europeans will get exactly what they are asking for, another Charlemagne-type leader. This man will come

to power and set himself up as a strongman over all Europe. He will effectively hijack the European Union! ... Regardless of who the strongman is, it is clear that we are seeing a revival of the Holy Roman Empire in Europe in a way that has not been promoted before. ... When this man comes to power, it will affect every human on this Earth in the most horrible ways—unless God protects you! But God only protects those who repent."

We are facing the worst crisis in mankind's history. In the past, when Europe has been led by a strongman and allied with the Vatican, it has plunged the Continent and even the world into war.

But there is also *great hope* in these prophecies. The same Bible that accurately forecast the last 1,500 years of European geopolitical history and the current resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire also forecasts that this resurrection will be the *last one!*

Notice the conclusion of my father's article: "We cannot predict or set dates; only God the Father knows the day or the hour (Matthew 24:36). But God warns us that we had better know when it is at the door! (verse 33). We must be watching and praying.

"The great hope of all of this is that just beyond that time of tribulation is the greatest, most inspiring event to ever take place"

The prophecies of Revelation 17 came to pass, from A.D. 554 to A.D. 2019, in fearsome, violent, living color. The next resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire will wreak worse destruction in less time.

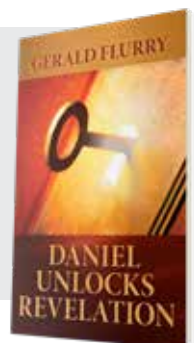
We have been proving the prophecies of Revelation 17. We have seen how they came to pass, from A.D. 554 to A.D. 2019, in fearsome, violent, living color. The Bible prophecies that the next resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire will wreak even worse destruction in even less time. Other Bible prophecies specify that this "time of tribulation," because it is so destructive, continues for an even shorter period than the Hitler-Mussolini axis.

But notice Revelation 17:14: "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

The seventh resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire will be the *shortest* resurrection—and the *last resurrection*. Why? Because the Lamb, Jesus Christ, will smash it! This evil empire, this combination of a false church and a beastly state, will finally be destroyed *permanently*. The Bible prophecies that He will then establish *His* government on Earth.

What a powerful, sobering but hopeful vision is contained in Revelation 17. Six kings have now fallen. One is about to come. He will continue, but only for a short space. ■

God ends the Holy Bible with Revelation, a book of intense, vivid, extraordinary symbols and warnings of widespread destruction. Its prophecies are impossible to understand—until you realize that the book of Daniel unlocks the book of Revelation. Request your free copy of Gerald Flurry's booklet **Daniel Unlocks Revelation.**



THE REIGN OF GENTILE KINGDOMS

CHALDEAN EMPIRE (BABYLON) 625–538 B.C.

- 1st kingdom of Daniel 2:32, 37-38, with a head of gold
- Like a lion, the 1st beast of Daniel 7:4
- 1st head of prophetic Babylon

MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE 558–330 B.C.

- 2nd kingdom of Daniel 2:32, 39, with breast and arms of silver
- Like a bear, the 2nd beast of Daniel 7:5
- 2nd head of prophetic Babylon

GRECO-MACEDONIAN EMPIRE 333 B.C.

- 3rd kingdom of Daniel 2:32, 39, with belly and thighs of brass
- Like a leopard with four heads, the 3rd beast of Daniel 7:6
- 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th heads of prophetic Babylon

ROMAN EMPIRE 31 B.C.–A.D. 476

- 4th kingdom of Daniel 2:33, 40-43, with legs as iron
- Strong like iron with 10 horns, the 4th beast of Daniel 7:7
- 7th head of prophetic Babylon

VANDALS A.D. 429–533

- 1st horn of Daniel 7:7
- 1st horn of Revelation 13:1

HERULI A.D. 476–493

- 2nd horn of Daniel 7:7
- 2nd horn of Revelation 13:1

OSTROGOTHS A.D. 493–554

- 3rd horn of Daniel 7:7
- 3rd horn of Revelation 13:1

The Bible is a book of prophecy. It reveals world-shaking events soon to change your life. One such event is the rise of the “beast” of the Apocalypse. This terrifying beast is a prophetic symbol. To understand the truth about this beast, you must let the Bible interpret its own symbols. To do this, you must study Daniel 2, Daniel 7, Revelation 13 and Revelation 17 together.

DANIEL 7



DANIEL 2



- The beast of Daniel 7:7 and the Revelation 13:1-2 beast both represent the same history. Both have 10 horns and represent successive kingdoms of the Roman Empire.

- The first three horns were not ridden by the woman and were destroyed at the behest of the pope, symbolized by the little horn of Daniel 7:8, 20-22, 24-27.



REVELATION 13

IMPERIAL RESTORATION

- A.D. 554
- 4th horn of Daniel 7:7 and Revelation 13:1
- 1st head of Revelation 17:3, 7

FRANKISH KINGDOM

- A.D. 774
- 5th horn of Daniel 7:7 and Revelation 13:1
- 2nd head of Revelation 17:3, 7

HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

- A.D. 962
- 6th horn of Daniel 7:7 and Revelation 13:1
- 3rd head of Revelation 17:3, 7

HABSBURG DYNASTY

- A.D. 1520
- 7th horn of Daniel 7:7 and Revelation 13:1
- 4th head of Revelation 17:3, 7

NAPOLEON'S KINGDOM

- A.D. 1805
- 8th horn of Daniel 7:7 and Revelation 13:1
- 5th head of Revelation 17:3, 7

ITALY & FASCIST REGIMES

- A.D. 1870–1945
- 9th horn of Daniel 7:7 and Revelation 13:1
- 6th head of Revelation 17:3, 7
- The “one is” of Revelation 17:10

UNITED EUROPE

- Today
- 10th horn of Daniel 7:7 and Revelation 13:1
- 7th head of Revelation 17:3, 7
- 10 horns of Revelation 17:3, 7, 12
- 10 toes of Daniel 2:41–43

SEVEN RESURRECTIONS OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

- A beast like no other. Revelation 13 depicts the Roman Empire as an empire possessing the strengths of all its predecessors. This is represented in the collective seven heads of prophetic Babylon.

- The seven horns of Revelation 13:1–2 that are not uprooted represent the same resurrections of the Holy Roman Empire as the seven heads of the Revelation 17 beast.

REVELATION 17

- The beast and the whore of Revelation 17 picture a beastly empire ridden by a false church.

- The 10 toes of Daniel 2:41–43 and the 10 horns of Revelation 17:3, 7, 12 represent 10 concurrent rulers of the last resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire.

“Jesus Christ is about to return and destroy the Holy Roman Empire forever. As Daniel prophesied, ‘And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever’ (Daniel 2:44). All of Satan’s present plans will fail miserably in the end.” —GERALD FLURRY



Are You Already ‘Born Again’?

No—but the truth is even more inspiring! **BY GERALD FLURRY**

MANY CHRISTIANS THINK OR assume that they are born again. They are not. *But the truth is even more inspiring!* This truth is revealed throughout the entire Bible, but nowhere is it more inspiring than in the epistles of Peter.

When the Apostle Peter wrote these letters, God’s people were being persecuted and scattered all over the world. They were still spreading the gospel, but some of them were losing hope. Jerusalem was about to experience a holocaust, and Peter himself was about to be martyred.

Yet in this dark period, Peter was not depressed. The epistles he wrote at that time are the most hope-filled epistles in the Bible. Why was he so hopeful?

Peter’s Living Hope

Peter began his first epistle by addressing the “elect” who were “chosen and destined by God the Father” (1 Peter 1:2; Revised Standard Version). Notice his focus on God the Father. This is very different from what you hear in most “Christian” churches, which focus on “Jesus.”

Here is a crucial verse: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ [the Son], which according to his abundant mercy hath *begotten* us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (verse 3). Two sentences into his epistle, Peter focuses us on a *lively hope*. The RSV translates it “a *living hope*.”

And where does that *living hope* come from? The fact that God the Father has “begotten us.”

Most Christians don’t understand this: They believe they are already “born again.” They think this “birth” is metaphorical or in the mind. As you will see, THAT IS NOT WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES. Peter understood what God’s Word reveals. His hope was *not* that he was already “born again” because he had accepted Jesus. It was *not* that he would go to heaven after he died and become like an angel. His *living hope* was that the Father has *begotten us*.

THE HOPE IS IN THE BEGETTAL. This transcendent hope is the *only* real hope there is!

What does *begettal* mean? Herbert W. Armstrong often used the example of human reproduction. Each human being was literally begotten by their physical father, grew in the womb of their mother, and was born into a family. It is exactly the same with spiritual salvation. True Christians are *literally BEGOTTEN* by GOD THE FATHER when He gives us His Holy Spirit. We become literal sons of God, and we are going to *LITERALLY BE BORN* into God’s Family!

Christians don’t realize what a *tremendous event* it is to truly be “born again”! It means becoming His children—literal God beings in the literal God Family! It starts with being *spiritually begotten* in this life—and it ends with being *spiritually born* as a child in the glorious Family of God!

When you truly believe God, repent, obey and become baptized in His true Church, God gives you a portion of His Holy Spirit, which is His power, His life. Spiritually, you become like a fertilized egg: There was no spiritual life there before, *but now there is!* All because the Father begets you.

If you continue to grow spiritually, you will definitely be born spiritually into the spiritual Family of God. **THE FATHER WILL MAKE SURE OF IT!**

Jesus’s ‘Born Again’ Teaching

Here is how Jesus Christ Himself described being born again: “Except a man be BORN AGAIN, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Many Christians think being born again is figurative—and many think the Kingdom of God is figurative. NOT TRUE! They are both REAL!

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT” (verse 6). DO YOU BELIEVE CHRIST’S PLAIN WORDS? When you are born the first time, of the flesh, *you are flesh*. But when a person is BORN AGAIN, of the spirit, that person will BE SPIRIT! He will actually be composed of spirit. Someone who says he is “born again” and is *still flesh and blood REFUTES CHRIST!*

In fact, it is impossible for you to enter the Kingdom of God without being literally SPIRITUALLY BORN into the Family of God! You will never see, you will never experience, the Kingdom of God if you are not born again. And you will never be born again unless you are first spiritually begotten by the Father.

When speaking with Nicodemus, Christ compared being a powerful, invisible spirit being to the wind. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit” (verse 8). Christians who believe they are already “born again” because they have new beliefs or a new attitude are not like the wind. They are not composed of spirit, they are not in God’s Kingdom and they are not born into the Family of God—yet!

Nicodemus did not understand what “born again” means. The religious leaders Christ preached to did not understand. The crowds of people who

listened to Him did not understand. And believe it or not, hundreds of millions of Christians today do not understand!

The Apostle Paul agreed with Christ. “As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly,” he wrote. “And as we have borne the image of the earthy, *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*” (1 Corinthians 15:48-49). As human beings, we can be spiritually begotten, but we cannot be SPIRITUALLY BORN—born AGAIN—until we are resurrected as spirit beings in the actual Family of God. This is coming: It will happen in “the twinkling of an eye” (verses 50-52).

IT IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTAND THE FATHER’S ROLE IN THIS PROCESS. Christ said, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him ...” (John 6:44). Only those whom the Father specifically calls can become true Christians, and they only become true Christians *when He begets them*. Jesus Christ (previously the Word) became God’s Son when He begat Him (Luke 1:35) and became His firstborn Son when He was resurrected (Colossians 1:15; Romans 1:4; 8:29).

God is the Father of the Family. Jesus Christ is His Son. He is “the firstborn among *many brethren*” (Romans 8:29). Who are those brethren, those fellow children of God? True Christians!

Like Jesus Christ was begotten of God and resurrected as His Son, you and I can be begotten of God and be resurrected as His sons. “[A]nd I will raise him up at the last day,” Christ said (John 6:44).

How inspiring! Christ is the resurrection. But the begetting comes from even higher: from God the Father Himself!

Peter *saturated* his mind with this astounding truth! That is how he wrote these hope-filled epistles at such a terrifying time.

God’s Children

As 1 Peter 1:5 shows, God was inspiring Peter to write for “the last time.” *Lange’s Commentary* states that “Peter thought immediately impending was that last time.” At that time, he did not realize this prophesied period would not occur until *our* lifetimes.

What happened to Peter and what happened to the inhabitants of Jerusalem shortly after he wrote his epistles

was horrific. Peter died a violent death. Thousands of other Jews were murdered. And this terrible violence right after Jesus Christ’s first coming is *a warning and a prophecy for us* prior to His Second Coming! Our massive sins are leading to a massive destruction far worse than even the A.D. 70 holocaust in Jerusalem.

In addition, the life of a true Christian is full of difficulty. In verses 6-7, the apostle writes to God’s people, “Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

True Christians struggle against sin, against Satan and against society. They suffer persecution. Yet they “greatly rejoice” (verse 6). Why? Because “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” has “begotten us again unto a [living] hope”! (verse 3). And if we endure and grow through trial, at the return of Jesus Christ *we will be born* into God’s Family!

When we are born again, we won’t be human beings. We won’t be like the angels. We will be GOD’S LITERAL CHILDREN! Jesus was made “a little lower than the angels” to make it possible for us to be forgiven of our sins (Hebrews 2:9). He empowers us to spiritually struggle and develop and overcome our sins and *grow*. Then Jesus Christ was resurrected and became God’s firstborn Son, far above the angels (Hebrews 1:5, 13). What about us? Hebrews 2:5-8 tell us God has made us a little lower than the angels, but He has placed the universe not under them but under us! “Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him” (verse 8).

As human beings, we are certainly lower than the angels. But when we are made spirit, we will be ABOVE the angels. YES, EVEN THOSE RESPLENDENT SPIRIT BEINGS WILL BE IN SUBJECTION TO US!

Verse 10 states that God is “bringing many sons unto glory.” Human beings will be born, not as angels, but as literal children in God’s Family. We will then have the appearance, power,

glory, bodies and minds like God’s! Jesus Christ will change our bodies to “be fashioned like unto his glorious body” (Philippians 3:20-21; Psalm 17:15; 1 John 3:1-2; Revelation 1:14-16). How glorious! Faces that shine like the sun at full strength! Eyes like flames of fire! When the Apostle John saw merely a vision of the firstborn Son of God, he collapsed as if he were dead! (Revelation 1:12-17).

The truth about being born again has all the glory and majesty you could imagine! It is *filled* with HOPE—LIVING HOPE!

Those who are begotten by God and remain faithful to Him are going to become spirit beings—God beings! It is going to happen. God *already* considers His plan for His people accomplished (verse 6). This is *why* God created human beings. Before He created the first people, He stated WHY: “Let us make man **IN OUR IMAGE, AFTER OUR LIKENESS**” (Genesis 1:26).

Once you are begotten by God the Father, you have the Holy Spirit. You *know* you are *on your way*. You are going to be *born*—BORN AGAIN—this time into the *Family of God!*

This is what Peter saw. This is why he was so filled with hope, why he really mastered that hope. This is why God inspired him to show us where that hope lies: in being begotten by God the Father, growing by the power of the Holy Spirit, and being born into the God Family! ■

PINCH YOURSELF!



Did you feel anything? If you did, you have just proved you are not “born again”—yet. Learn what the Bible says, with your free copy of Herbert W. Armstrong’s booklet ***Just What Do You Mean ... Born Again?***





BRAVE NEW WORLD (MADE IN CHINA)

Chinese-funded roads, ports and bridges are transforming this Asian giant into an economic powerhouse—fulfilling prophecies penned 2,700 years ago. **BY JEREMIAH JACQUES**

MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS seem to be underway everywhere. In Pakistan, a new deepwater port is being linked to a vast road and rail network. In Montenegro, the country's first border-to-border motorway is being laid. In the remotest part of Kazakhstan, a bustling town is springing up from scratch around a massive new rail terminal. In Laos, a new bridge has broken the world record for the longest span between two piers. And in Rwanda, a new railway is connecting the landlocked country to Tanzania's port of Dar es Salaam.

The common factor in all these projects is that they are parts of an initiative by one nation: China.

In a 2013 speech, Chinese President Xi Jinping mentioned the ancient Silk Road. This was the network of trade routes—some established as early as 200 B.C.—that facilitated movement of goods and ideas across Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Europe. Then Xi announced China's plan to rebuild that ancient network. "This will be a great undertaking," he said.

The Chinese promptly put the plan into action, which is what the projects in Pakistan, Montenegro, Kazakhstan,

Laos, Rwanda and more than 60 other nations are all about. Beijing is sparing no expense to better connect the world to China. It calls this project the Belt and Road Initiative, or BRI.

The initiative consists of a land-based economic "belt" that will include six corridors linking east and west, and a maritime "road" of ports stretching from the South China Sea to Africa's east coast.

It will link 60 percent of the global population, span three continents, and also connect to Latin America as a "natural extension." At an estimated cost of \$5 trillion, it is the most ambitious infrastructure venture in history.

The scope is astounding. And it all has one underpinning purpose: to give China dominance over world trade.

Many analysts are seeing the alarming implications of this seismic shift toward China. But there is something *far more momentous* about China's moves toward dominating global trade that few recognize: It was prophesied in Bible scriptures written thousands of years ago. And now these prophecies are being fulfilled.

Airports for Autocrats

For nations with authoritarian governments, the allure of China's loans

and aid is particularly enticing. That's because unlike the United States or many European nations, China doesn't make its investments conditional on "good governance."

China itself is an egregious abuser of the human rights of its people and has no concerns about autocrats in other nations tyrannizing their people. So while Western powers sermonize and punish authoritarian governments by withholding aid or even working to remove them from power, China has no compunctions about constructing airports for autocrats, dams for dictators, and terminals for tyrants.

China "is seen as more flexible and less bureaucratic," the Brookings Institution wrote in 2017. "Given this situation, the emergence of China as a major funder of infrastructure projects has been welcomed by most developing countries."

The Chinese have signed BRI contracts with numerous authoritarian governments, military regimes and several of the world's most corrupt nations, including Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. China is also pulling in countries that are mired in conflict, such as Yemen, Afghanistan and Iraq.

The corruption and conflict make it unlikely that many of these nations will be able to repay China's loans. In early 2018, the Center for Global Development found that Djibouti, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, the Maldives, Mongolia, Montenegro, Pakistan and Tajikistan are all at high risk of being unable to repay. Several other countries could be added to the list.

So why does China continue to hand out massive loans to such nations? Because the BRI—and much of China's related policy—is about more than just economics.

Debt-Trap Diplomacy

Sri Lanka was among the most enthusiastic nations to welcome China's quick cash. It accepted billions of dollars in loans for such projects as the Magampura Mahinda Rajapaksa Port in Hambantota.

This port is at a key location for China's maritime "road." But for the Sri Lankan economy, the project was a bust. Instead of fueling growth, the port (and other Chinese-funded infrastructure projects) plunged Sri Lanka into unsustainable debt.

By 2016, one third of Sri Lanka's total government revenue went toward servicing Chinese loans, and the country was forced to apply for debt relief with the International Monetary Fund. From there, the situation only got worse.

As pressure intensified and options narrowed, Sri Lanka's government determined that the only course of action was to hand China a controlling stake in the Rajapaksa Port for 99 years. The transfer set off alarms in Sri Lanka and beyond because it represented a Chinese victory with potential military applications. "The acquisition provided Beijing with a deepwater port in the region in which it can dock its navy, off the coast of its key regional competitor, India," *Foreign Policy* wrote on Oct. 29, 2018.

Sri Lanka is often cited as the textbook example of China's "debt-trap diplomacy." But it is not the only country where Chinese investment is going pear-shaped for the debtor nation and creating conditions for Chinese conquest.

China's Geostrategic Conquests

Thanks to Chinese cash, the East African nation of Djibouti is already hosting China's first overseas military base. But the country has borrowed more Chinese money than it can pay back and is now headed toward a debt-to-GDP ratio of 88 percent. Analysts worry that China could use its growing leverage to convince Djibouti to oust the United States military from Camp Lemonnier, America's only permanent military base in Africa. Such a move would represent a huge loss for the U.S. and a major victory for China.

In Pakistan, Chinese-built infrastructure stretches all the way from Gwadar Port on the Arabian Sea up to the Pakistan-China border. For China, this is not just an invaluable crossroads where the "belt" meets the "road." It is also a safeguard against one of China's greatest fears: a potential U.S. naval blockade in the South China Sea. Before development of port and road-rail networks through Pakistan, such a blockade would have posed an existential threat to China. But now China has an alternative route established for importing goods—particularly the Middle Eastern oil and gas on which it heavily depends—into China. Pakistan also owes China

more than \$6 billion for these projects, and is paying exorbitant interest rates on some of the loans. "That kind of debt gives China some leverage," Chris Chappell of *China Uncensored* said on Aug. 1, 2018. Thanks largely to that leverage, China has already taken control of Gwadar Port, with a 40-year lease. And now the Chinese are constructing a naval and air force base nearby.

The Maldives, located right along the "string of pearls" route, is also heavily indebted to China, thanks mostly to the multimillion-dollar China-Maldives Friendship Bridge. As the Maldives' economic troubles intensify, many fear that it will soon have no choice but to hand some key assets over to China.

In Montenegro, feasibility studies said it was not economically viable to build a highway from the Port of Bar through the nation's rough terrain to Serbia. In 2014, China dismissed those studies, stepped in and gave Montenegro a loan to build a long stretch of it. Now the motorway is unfinished, and the tiny European nation is in serious financial trouble. If the situation in Montenegro plays out as with Sri Lanka, Beijing could have "a port of entry into Europe from the Adriatic," Reuters wrote.

And the list of nations where China's control is growing goes on.

BRI's 'Natural Extension'

The BRI originally focused on Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Europe, the regions connected by the ancient Silk Road. But in 2017, Xi Jinping said China sees Latin America as a "natural extension of the Maritime Silk Road."

Six months later, China formally invited Latin American and Caribbean nations to join the initiative. Panama, Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago, and Bolivia have already signed on. More countries are poised to follow.

Even before unveiling the BRI, the main thrust of China's approach to Latin America had long been in the same vein: infrastructure financing and development. Starting in 2005, China extended \$150 billion in financing to build ports, roads and railways in the region. Several of such projects are being retroactively rebranded as BRI successes, prompting criticism that China's BRI is merely pouring old wine into new bottles. But

the branding of the projects matters far less than China's determination to integrate Latin America into its globe-girdling enterprise.

China is rebalancing the world economy with the BRI and related initiatives. And its progress on this front takes on extraordinary significance when viewed through the lens of Bible prophecy.

'The Times of the Gentiles'

Bible prophecy says that in the "end time" shortly before the return of Jesus Christ, a global era called "the times of the Gentiles" will begin. Christ Himself used this term in Luke 21:24, saying: "[J]erusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until *the times of the Gentiles* be fulfilled."

In our July 2014 issue, *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote about this quickly approaching era. "These 'times of the Gentiles' are yet to be fully realized," but "we are in the outer edges of this catastrophic storm," he wrote.

The term *Gentile* refers to "non-Israelite peoples," he wrote. The Israelite peoples constitute "a lot more than the little nation in the Middle East." He explained that in end-time prophecy, "Israel" refers mainly to modern-day America and Britain. (For a thorough explanation, order a copy of our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, by Herbert W. Armstrong.)

Mr. Flurry continued: "Once you understand who Israel is, then you can understand how the Gentiles—the non-Israelite peoples—have started to take charge of the world *right now*."

For decades, the U.S. and UK have brought much stability to the world. But in "the times of the Gentiles," they will lose global power to two main blocs of non-Israelite nations. "While there are many Gentile nations around today, when this prophecy is completely fulfilled there will be two *major* powers," Mr. Flurry wrote. One of these will revolve around Germany, and the other around Russia and China.

China's increasing power and connectivity is shifting global power away from the Israelite nations and toward these other nations. Prophecy shows that as this shift continues, China will briefly cooperate in a history-altering way with the German-led Gentile power.

A 'Mart of Nations'

Some 2,700 years ago, God inspired the Prophet Isaiah to write about a vast trade bloc that would be formed in our lifetimes. “[S]he is a mart of nations,” the prophet wrote (Isaiah 23:3).

Verse 1 describes a leading nation in this trade bloc called “Chittim.” Chittim, or Kittim, is an ancient name for China: “Genesis 10:4 lists the sons of Japheth’s fourth-born son: “The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, *Kittim*, and Dodanim” (New King James Version),” Gerald Flurry explains in his booklet *Isaiah’s End-Time Vision*. “*Kittim* is synonymous with the *Chittim* of Isaiah’s prophecy. ... After their migration through Central Asia, the Kittim made their appearance in modern-day northeastern China and Mongolia under the name of *Khitan* in the fourth century A.D.”

Isaiah 23 names “Tyre” as the other main power in this “mart of nations.” Mr. Flurry explains that this city represents “the *commercial center*” of modern Europe. He writes: “The *spiritual center* of the [modern European] Holy Roman Empire is called *Babylon* in your Bible (Revelation 17:5; 18:1-3). But here in Isaiah, the Bible refers to Tyre (and its allies Zidon, etc) as the *commercial center* of this European power. By understanding the spiritual and the commercial powers, you can understand what a colossus is rising in Europe.”

The prophecies also mention ancient names for modern Japan, Russia and

other nations, showing that they too will be part of this enormous trade bloc.

To see China and Europe linked in these Bible prophecies about the end time—and then to see the BRI linking them economically today—is astounding. The groundwork is now being laid for this powerful “mart of nations,” prophesied of millennia ago, to come together!

Even more astounding is what the Bible shows this “mart of nations” will do in the years ahead.

Superpower Under Siege

“The Bible contains many prophecies of that European power attacking America—and many other prophecies of America being *besieged*,” Mr. Flurry writes. He explains that this besiegement will be accomplished by the mart of nations. “All of them are going to besiege America, Britain and the Jewish nation,” he writes.

“China and the giants of Asia,” he writes, will form a “brief alliance” with the European bloc. “Should Europe, the resurrected Holy Roman Empire, find a way to take advantage—even for a moment—of key resources and strategic holdings of China, Russia and Japan, it would have more than enough power to besiege the Anglo-Saxon nations ...

“This is why Isaiah’s prophecy of an end-time ‘mart of nations’ that includes both European and Asian powers is so intriguing. And why the trend of collusion between these two great economic blocs is worth watching.”

He draws special attention to Latin America, mentioning prophecies by the late educator Herbert W. Armstrong about this region’s role in end-time events. “Herbert Armstrong long prophesied, and we expect, the alliance between Europe and South America to grow extremely strong,” Mr. Flurry writes. Europe already wields deep influence in parts of Latin America. And once China enters a “brief alliance” with

Europe, the influence China is now building will translate into even greater European control over the region.

Mr. Flurry points out that the situation will eventually result in a European subjugation of Latin America, saying, “The Latin

American countries will become vassal states to Europe!”

With this level of control in Latin America, the European and Asian powers will be geographically positioned to lay siege to the United States. “With a German-led Europe ... possessing great maritime power, North America will be surrounded on the east by Europe and the south by Latin America” (ibid).

Deuteronomy 28:52 provides more details about the besiegement of the United States and United Kingdom by the “mart of nations” conglomerate: “And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.” When God was actively blessing the U.S. and the UK, He gave them control over numerous sea “gates,” including the Panama Canal, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Hong Kong (Genesis 22:17; 24:60). Now, every one of these strategic locations is under China’s control or quickly headed that way.

The importance of China’s growing dominance of world trade, and its strengthening links to Europe, is revealed in these Bible prophecies.

We are already at the outer edges of “the times of the Gentiles.” And China is now the world’s second most powerful economy, with the BRI poised to further expand its might. Control of the world’s sea “gates” is being handed over to the Chinese. This is all setting the scene for the prophesied siege against America.

In the near term, these developments point to a grim future for America and some of its allies. The “mart of nations” and the conflict associated with it *confirm the prophecies of the Bible*.

And what else does the Bible prophesy, just beyond this economic siege and the fall of the United States and Britain? THE MOST HOPE-FILLED ERA IN HUMAN HISTORY. “[T]hat trading partnership won’t last long,” Mr. Flurry writes. “Soon they will clash, just before Jesus Christ returns and destroys both of them” (ibid). Christ is going to return to Earth, put an end to mankind’s self-destruction, and usher in an age of peace and prosperity for the peoples of China and all the world!

“Thank God,” Mr. Flurry writes, “there is great news beyond the bad news.” ■

WHAT IS CHINA BUILDING?

China's rising economic empire will affect your future. Learn more in Gerald Flurry's free booklet **Isaiah's End-Time Vision**.





GLOBAL PLANS
(From left)
Commander of
the Russian Navy,
President Putin
and Russia's
defense minister

The Kremlin's Strategy for World Domination

Vladimir Putin and his generals are following a blueprint laid out by a neo-fascist political scientist to replace the United States as the world superpower. **BY ANDREW MILLER**

THE KREMLIN IS FOLLOWING A detailed plan to replace the United States as the world superpower. Astonishingly most American leaders do not understand this reality. Like former United States President Barack Obama, they dismiss Russia as a “regional power” attacking nations like Ukraine from a position of weakness, instead of strength. Their assessment could not be more wrong. The 2014 conquest of Crimea was actually a calculated step in Russia’s strategy for world domination.

And this strategy was drawn up years in advance.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is following a blueprint laid out in a 1997 book by neo-fascist political scientist Aleksandr Dugin: *The Foundations of Geopolitics* (pictured). This book is required reading for every Russian military officer above the rank of colonel. Yet despite its importance, it has never been officially translated into English. Just as world leaders ignored Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* in the 1930s, they are ignoring this manifesto today. This will prove to be a tragic mistake.

Dugin glorifies Russia’s czarist and Stalinist past, and espouses an ideology

of “national bolshevism.” This ideology fuses Russian nationalism, Bolshevik socialism, Eastern Orthodox Christianity, and a touch of mysticism.

The Foundations of Geopolitics reads like a to-do list predicting Putin’s behavior in international relations. While there are still some boxes unchecked,

Russia is striving to make progress toward its ultimate goal: unseating the United States as the world’s lone superpower. This should not come as a surprise to anyone who truly understands Bible prophecy.

“Russia is the most dangerous and aggressive nuclear superpower in the world today,” writes *Trumpet* editor

in chief Gerald Flurry in his booklet *The Prophesied ‘Prince of Russia.’* “Surely that means Russia must be discussed in Bible prophecy. If you know its ancient biblical name, you can find prophecies about this nation in the Old and New Testaments.”

These prophecies reveal the outline of Russia’s strategy for world domination, and much more. So while American leaders are naive to ignore *The Foundations of Geopolitics*, they really need to study *The Prophesied ‘Prince of Russia’* alongside their Bible. It reveals how



Russia is going to play an instrumental role in the downfall of the United States. And that the devil is behind it all.

Atlanticism vs. Eurasianism

Dugin’s manifesto begins by claiming that land-based and sea-based powers are in a state of permanent struggle against each other. Land-based nations like Germany, Iran and Russia represent “Eurasianism,” while sea-faring nations like the United States and Britain represent “Atlanticism.” For Eurasianism to defeat Atlanticism, Dugin claims that an anti-American coalition of nations must be established, including Germany, Iran, Japan and other countries in Europe and Asia.

This theory was inspired by Karl Haushofer, the German geopolitician who popularized the term *lebensraum* (living space). After Hitler came to power, Haushofer advised an alliance between Germany, Russia and Japan. Since Dugin holds America responsible for the collapse of the Soviet Union, he especially wants Russia to ally with Germany against the United States.

This plot to undermine America is not just a crackpot theory concocted by a Russian mystic. The famous British geopolitician Sir Halford Mackinder delivered a lecture in 1904 titled “The Geographical Pivot of History.” He argued that whichever nation rules Eastern Europe would rule both Eurasia and the world. German geopoliticians like Friedrich Ratzel and Karl Haushofer seized upon Mackinder’s theory. Now Russian geopoliticians like Lt. Gen. Nikolai Klokov and Dugin are doing the same. If a Russo-German alliance can subjugate Eastern Europe, it will have power enough to challenge America and Britain.

Specifically, Dugin believes Russia needs to recapture its former Soviet satellites. Dugin advises the Russian government to annex Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Ukraine and all nations with an Eastern Orthodox majority.

Putin agrees. He invaded Georgia in 2008. He invaded Ukraine in 2014. He effectively annexed Belarus and Kazakhstan with the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union in 2015. Now he is working toward additional annexations to create a Russian-dominated empire capable of working with other European and Asian powers against America.

“In principle, Eurasia and our space, the heartland Russia, remain the staging area of a new anti-bourgeois, anti-American revolution,” Dugin writes in *The Foundations of Geopolitics*. “The new Eurasian empire will be constructed on the fundamental principle of the common enemy: the rejection of Atlanticism, strategic control of the U.S.A., and the refusal to allow liberal values to dominate us.” Yet rather than provoke a direct military confrontation with the U.S., Dugin advises Russian leaders to build power and influence through alliances with other Eurasian powers.

These ideas are guiding Vladimir Putin—and it is all happening just as Bible prophecy forecasts.

The Old Testament book of Ezekiel refers to an end-time personality called the “chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.” Students of Bible prophecy know that the peoples of Meshech and Tubal settled in modern-day Russia. So the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal is the leader of Russia in the end time. In Ezekiel 38:1-2, God instructs His watchman to prophesy against this leader.

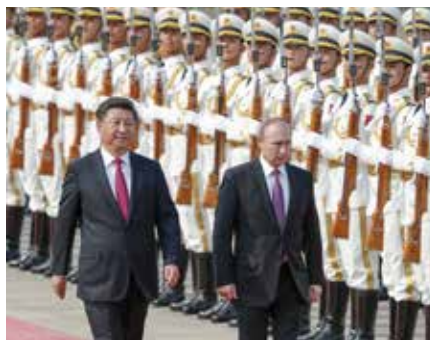
“God’s watchman warns the nations of Israel in particular about the danger of Russia and China, and how events in these nations are all going to end,” Mr. Flurry writes in *The Prophesied ‘Prince of Russia.’* “God specifically warns three nations of Israel—America, the British peoples and the Jewish state in the Middle East.” He later explains how Putin is a former KGB agent animated by a spirit of vengeance against the U.S. and out to restore the Russian empire. Dugin’s book explains the tactics Putin is using to accomplish this goal; Mr. Flurry’s booklet explains Putin’s role in prophecy and the ultimate inspiration behind the Kremlin’s actions.

Moscow-Berlin Axis

The Foundations of Geopolitics promotes the formation of a Moscow-Berlin alliance, a Moscow-Tehran alliance and a Moscow-Tokyo alliance. General Klokov noted in the 1990s that the greatest periods of peace in Russian history were during times when Russia was allied with Germany. He is rumored to have recruited Dugin to write *The Foundations of Geopolitics* as a training manual for Russian officers based on his



CURRYING FAVOR
 Putin meets with (from top) Germany’s Gerhard Schröder, Iran’s President Rouhini and China’s President Xi.



Rather than provoke a direct military confrontation with the U.S., Dugin advises Russian leaders to build power and influence through alliances with other Eurasian powers.

advocacy for a Russo-German alliance.

“The task of Moscow is to tear Europe away from the control of the U.S. (NATO), to assist European unification, and to strengthen ties with Central Europe under the aegis of the fundamental external axis Moscow-Berlin,” writes Dugin. “Eurasia needs a united, friendly Europe.” In return for Germany’s rejecting NATO and joining a Russian alliance, Dugin proposes that Russia help Germany gain political dominance over

the Catholic and Protestant nations of Europe. He notes that both France and Germany have a “firm anti-Atlanticist tradition” that Russia can exploit to accomplish this objective.

International relations expert George Friedman gave a speech at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs in February 2015. He explained that the U.S. government works to prevent a German-Russian alliance because the combination of German technology with Russian natural resources could create a power bloc with the capability to challenge America’s position as the world’s lone superpower. Russian politicians and military strategists understand this, and projects like the Nord Stream Pipeline are designed to utilize German technology to transport Russian natural resources into Europe.

As Dugin writes in *The Foundations of Geopolitics*, Russia and Germany “must decide all disputed questions together and in advance.” The goal of the Russian General Staff is to ally with Germany to destroy NATO and defeat America.

Bible prophecy shows that these two powers will initially have great success in accomplishing this goal, before they turn on each other. “The Germans made a pact with Russia before it started World War II,” Mr. Flurry writes in *The Prophesied ‘Prince of Russia.’* “This treacherous history is going to repeat itself in the near future. IT IS THE WAY THEY DO BUSINESS!”

In his September 2018 *Trumpet* article, “Germany and Russia’s Secret War Against America,” Mr. Flurry elaborated on this point by prophesying that cooperation between Germany and Russia is setting the scene for a huge “seething pot” to spill over and scald the people of America and Britain (Jeremiah 1:13-15). Everyone in America needs to see what is really happening in Germany and Russia.

Moscow-Tehran Axis

Russia recognizes that Iran is the most influential nation in the Middle East. In order to lure Iran into an alliance with Russia, Dugin counsels giving Iran parts of Georgia and Azerbaijan. Despite the differences in religion, Dugin proposes that Islam’s traditionalist nature makes the Islamic Republic of Iran a natural ally of Russia and a natural enemy of America.

“The idea of a continental Russian-Islamic alliance lies at the foundation of anti-Atlanticist strategy,” he writes. “On the whole, the entire Islamic zone represents a naturally friendly geopolitical reality in relation to the Eurasian empire, since the Islamic tradition ... fully understands the spiritual incompatibility of America and religion.”

A strong alliance with Iran would give Russia access to the Persian Gulf and fulfill a centuries-old Russian dream of possessing a warmwater port on the Indian Ocean. To help Iran gain more strength over the Middle East, Dugin writes that Russia must help undermine Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Dugin even recommends dismembering Turkey if possible.

The Kremlin wants a pro-Russian regime in Iran to oppose the United States. While Putin may not be keen on giving up parts of Georgia and Azerbaijan, he is keen on helping Iran undermine American interests in the Middle East.

“Russia’s deep involvement in the Middle East has allowed the brutal Syrian regime to retain power,” Mr. Flurry writes in *The Prophesied ‘Prince of Russia.’* “It has also been instrumental in helping Iran to continue pursuing nuclear weapons. ... Notice Hosea 7:9 in the Moffatt translation: ‘FOREIGNERS eat away his [Israel’s] strength ...’—foreigners like Russia, China, Iran and Germany—and ‘grey hairs are on him here and there, unknown to him.’”

America’s foreign policy is a disaster. Yet people are unaware of it because they are ignoring the warnings of the Bible.

Moscow-Tokyo Axis

The cornerstone of Dugin’s foreign policy in Asia is a proposed alliance between Russia and Japan. In return for Japan allying with Russia, he proposes giving Japan the Kuril Islands. Dugin also suggests stirring up anti-American sentiment in Japan to pull the nation away from the United States. He writes that the anti-Americanism of the Japanese, “who remember well the nuclear genocide and the disgrace of political occupation,” must be unleashed.

Interestingly, Dugin advocates dismembering China to help pave the way for Japan to dominate the Far East. Yet he has backtracked on this policy recommendation since his manifesto was

published. Putin disagrees with him on this point.

Since Vladimir Putin became president of Russia in 1999, he has worked to forge a strong Russian alliance with China. So while Dugin still insists that Russian relations with Germany, Iran and Japan are more important than Russian relations with China, he has toned down his vocal support for secession movements in Tibet and Manchuria.

Americans would be naive to assume that the KGB disappeared along with the Soviet Union. They would also be naive to think that a former KGB agent in the Kremlin is not a dangerous enemy.

While many Russian analysts realize that China’s growing power in East Asia represents a long-term threat to Russia’s control of Siberia, they also realize that if Russia and China work together in the short term, they can unseat the U.S. as the world superpower. If Germany dominates Europe, Iran dominates the Middle East, and China dominates East Asia, Russia will need an alliance with each of these powers to secure a place of global prominence.

The Bible foretells Russia’s alliance with both China and Japan. “For many years the Russians have been allied with China, at least to some degree,” Mr. Flurry writes in *The Prophesied ‘Prince of Russia.’* “But there will also be other powers involved. Ezekiel’s prophecy says the Russian-led army will include ‘Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya ... Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people ...’ (Ezekiel 38:5-6). *Gomer* refers to Japan, which wields some of the world’s most advanced weaponry and technology. *Ethiopia* and *Libya* should be translated ‘Cush’ and ‘Phut.’ Some of Cush and Phut migrated to African nations, but the rest settled in parts of India. The context of this passage shows that it refers to modern-day Indians (and perhaps Pakistanis) rather than Africans.”

All of these nations are currently coalescing against America.

Race War in America

Russia’s strategy focuses on weakening America. In *The Foundations of Geopolitics*, Dugin advocates spreading anti-Americanism around the world by making the U.S. the “main scapegoat” for everything. He also writes that Russia should use its federal intelligence services to divide America from within. He lists “Afro-American racists” as a demographic Russia should use “to provoke all forms of instability and separatism within the borders of the United States.”

“It is especially important to introduce geopolitical disorder into internal American activity, encouraging all kinds of separatism and ethnic, social and racial conflicts, actively supporting all dissident movements—extremist, racist and sectarian groups, thus destabilizing internal political processes in the U.S.,” he writes. “It would also make sense simultaneously to support isolationist tendencies in American politics.”

Dugin is not the first Russian strategist to recommend stirring up racial tensions to undermine America. Putin’s old boss in the KGB, spy chief Yuri Andropov, used a similar strategy in the 1970s when he worked to inflame racial tensions in the U.S. to distract it from countering Russian hegemony. Putin learned this lesson well.

Americans would be naive to assume that the KGB disappeared along with the Soviet Union. They would likewise be naive to think that a former KGB agent in the Kremlin is not a dangerous enemy. “This man is not just an authoritarian leader,” Mr. Flurry wrote in the March 2017 *Trumpet* issue. “He is an evil, ruthless, vindictive agent with Soviet-style methods of psychological warfare, assassination and war! As one Russian journalist put it, Putin ‘is a supersize model of the KGB.’” Dugin has advocated stirring up race riots in the United States, and Putin is very familiar with this tactic.

Anciently, the Prophet Isaiah wrote this regarding the terrible consequences of America’s grave national sins: “Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire; your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers” (Isaiah 1:7). God will use Gentiles to punish those descended from ancient Israel for their sins.

SANCTIONED
Iranians protest
the U.S.'s renewed
sanctions in
November.

U.S. exerts more economic pressure on Iran

The United States ratcheted up economic pressure against Iran on Nov. 5, 2018, reinstating yet another batch of sanctions. These sanctions target Iran's most crucial industries—oil, gas and shipping—which earn most of the revenue and hard currency the nation desperately needs right now.

When President Donald Trump announced on May 8, 2018, that the U.S. was withdrawing from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

Iran got far closer to a nuclear bomb than realized

Information gathered by Israel's raid on a clandestine Iranian nuclear archive in Tehran on Jan. 31, 2018, has revealed the extent of Iran's nuclear weapons program, which had been underestimated.

According to Congressional testimony from David Albright, a physicist, former International Atomic Energy Agency inspector and one of the experts invited by the Israeli government to analyze the archive, "Iran conducted many more high-explosive tests related to nuclear weapons development than previously known." He told *Foreign Policy*

nuclear deal, he gave Iran's trading partners 180 days to wind down their business ventures. Most of them scaled back their business dealings with Iran accordingly, including all major companies from Europe, where leaders have largely opposed President Trump's actions.

The intended effect of these sanctions on Iranian leaders is to "squeeze them until the pips squeak," as U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton explained. "[It's] their choice. The

in November that if Iran restarts its centrifuges, it could enrich enough weapons-grade uranium to build its first nuclear weapon in seven to 12 months.

Albright's Institute for Science and International Security assessed that, by the end of 2003, Iran had managed to build the infrastructure for a "comprehensive nuclear weapons program" intended to produce five nuclear warheads, each with a 10-kiloton explosive yield.

Its report also indicates that there are still plenty of unknowns about what still remains of Iran's nuclear program: "The program's

mullahs in Tehran either change their behavior dramatically or face economic disaster."

Iran appears restrained; its economy was forecast by the International Monetary Fund to contract by 3.6 percent by the end of this year. The U.S. appears to be surging in power and in favor among Iran's enemies in the Middle East. Europe appears weak; its "diplomatic bravado" of appeasing Iran and trying to mitigate the effects of the sanctions, as the *Straits Times* wrote Nov. 6, 2018, "did not survive first contact with reality."

This renewal of American power is prophesied, but it's prophesied to be temporary. In Daniel 11:40, the Bible prophesies of a time in the near future when Iran will be unrestrained and implementing an aggressive foreign policy. At that prophesied "time of the end," Iran will "push" not at the U.S. but at a European power. That power will respond not with diplomacy, but with an overwhelming, "whirlwind" military attack. *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry expounds on this prophecy in his free booklet *The King of the South*. ■



GOING NUCLEAR Workers at a uranium conversion facility in Iran in 2005

remains, and likely some activities, have continued up to today. The question of where all this equipment and material is now located is more urgent to answer."

Bible prophecy does not say exactly whether Iran will develop a nuclear bomb or not, but it does state that Iran will trigger a devastating war that will involve nuclear bombs. That time might be much closer than previously realized. ■



China intensifies battle against U.S. dollar

Less than a year after China launched an oil futures contract denominated in the Chinese currency, the contract has been embraced by global commodities traders.

China launched an oil futures contract on the Shanghai International Energy Exchange denominated in yuan on March 26, 2018. Its trading volumes have now surpassed those of the Dubai Mercantile Exchange, making it the world's third-most popular benchmark.

Due to the success, "China will now pursue de-dollarization head-on," wrote *Project Syndicate* on December 3.

For some 50 years, the *Trumpet* and our forerunner, the *Plain Truth*, have forecast that a financial crisis originating in the U.S. will transform the current world order. *Plain Truth* editor in chief Herbert W. Armstrong wrote, "If the dollar is devalued, inflation will almost surely result—and eventual economic collapse for the United States" (co-worker letter, March 26, 1968).

Mr. Armstrong's forecast was founded on Bible passages such as Leviticus 26, which reveal that if those who are descended from the ancient Israelites (which includes the modern Americans) reject God, He will curse them.

If China's contract keeps luring nations away from the dollar, the conditions for the prophesied collapse of the U.S. economy could rapidly develop.

To understand more about the accuracy of Mr. Armstrong's Bible-based forecasts, order your free copy of *He Was Right*. ■

Islamist revives terror in France

An Islamist terrorist killed five people and wounded 11 more in the French border city of Strasbourg on Dec. 11, 2018. The attack happened in the oldest Christmas market in France, dating back to 1570. It attracts 2 million visitors each year.

Cherif Chekatt, 29, entered the market's secure zone and began attacking people, apparently at random, with a knife and an automatic pistol. He then took a taxi driver hostage and fled. Authorities tracked him down in the city two days later, and he was killed as they tried to arrest him.

The attack caused massive disruption. A few miles away, the European Parliament building was locked down with members of Parliament, officials and journalists locked inside. Across the city, thousands of others had to stay put, including 5,000 spectators stuck at a basketball game until 1 a.m.

Eyewitnesses reported that Chekatt shouted "Allahu akbar" as he opened fire. Islamists have a history of attacking Christmas markets. In 2000, a well-developed plan by al Qaeda to attack the same Strasbourg market was uncovered and stopped. Two years ago, an



ON ALERT
Police officers stand guard after a shooting in Strasbourg, France.

Islamist terrorist killed 12 and wounded 56 in an attack at a Christmas market in Berlin.

In 2015 and 2016, Islamist terrorists killed more than 200 people in France, including (but not limited to) a mass shooting at a satirical magazine's office; shooting, grenade and suicide

bombing attacks at restaurants, bars, concerts and a soccer stadium; and a 21-ton truck ramming hundreds of people. December's attack reminded the nation that Islamist terror is still very real—and has the potential to prompt Europe to take dramatic action in the Middle East. ■

Germany chooses 'mini Merkel'

Germany's ruling party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), met on Dec. 7, 2018, to choose its course for the future and its new leader. Chancellor Angela Merkel, who had led the party since 2000, aims to remain chancellor until the next election. The new CDU leader is her heir, in line to succeed her as chancellor if the party wins the next federal election. The new leader could even have a shot at forcing Ms. Merkel out of her job sooner.

In the end, the vote came down to a simple choice. On the one hand Friedrich Merz, a strong critic of Merkel, wanted to move the party much further to the right. On the other hand, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer was Ms. Merkel's preferred candidate. Kramp-Karrenbauer has some differences from Merkel, but not enough to keep some from calling her "mini Merkel."

Kramp-Karrenbauer won 51.8 percent of the vote.

But Germany's politics are in turmoil. According to some polls, the Social Democratic



MORE OF THE SAME
Kramp-Karrenbauer (left) celebrates with Merkel after winning the CDU vote.

Party—which is traditionally Germany's main left-wing party and one of the top two parties in the nation—dropped to fourth place in December. One INSA poll put the far-right Alternative für Deutschland at 15 percent of the vote and the far-left Left Party at 10 percent. That means 1 in 4 Germans wants to vote for these radical, smash-the-system groups.

Facing all this turmoil, the CDU voted for more of the same.

Kramp-Karrenbauer's election is not going to stop any of the political turmoil roiling in Germany. If anything, it will make it worse, as the elites opt to keep the same course, while many on the street want a new direction. ■

Anti-Semitism still rising in Europe

Nearly 90 percent of European Jews believe anti-Semitism has increased in their home country in the past five years, according to a Dec. 10, 2018, report by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

Twenty-eight percent of those surveyed claim they have been harassed at least once in the past year. Of these, 79 percent said they did not report the incidents to the police, because they felt that nothing would change.

More than 16,000 Jews in 12 EU countries participated in the agency's online survey, making it the largest survey of its type. The 12 countries are home to an estimated 96 percent of Europe's Jewish population.

In the survey, 38 percent of Jews said they had considered leaving their home countries altogether because they felt it was unsafe to be a Jew in Europe.

A CNN-ComRes poll of 7,000 native Europeans from Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, Poland, the United Kingdom and Sweden found that 10 percent had



NOT JUST HISTORY
Swastika graffiti mars a French graveyard.

an unfavorable attitude toward Jews. In Poland, the figure was 15 percent, and in Hungary, it was 19 percent. Of those surveyed, 20 percent said they believed the Jews were too influential in political affairs around the world, and 33 percent of Austrians surveyed said that Jews have too much influence over financial matters. It also found that 34 percent of Europeans surveyed said they knew nothing or very little about the Holocaust.

European history in the 1920s and 1930s reveals anti-Semitism as a precursor to war. It began with anti-Semitic rhetoric, then violent attacks, then war and systematic mass murder. That is exactly what is stirring in Europe today. Just like in the 1930s, gradual acceptance of anti-Semitism has led to an increase in violence against Jews, and many European Jews fear what will come next. ■

TERRITORIAL
Ukrainian Navy
ships are detained by
Russian forces in the
Kerch Strait.



Russia ramps up aggression on Ukraine

The Russian Navy captured three Ukrainian naval ships on Nov. 25, 2018, after opening fire on them in the Kerch Strait, marking an escalation in tensions between the two nations that have been mired in conflict since 2014.

The Kerch Strait, off the eastern edge of the Crimean Peninsula, is a vital shipping route connecting the Black Sea to the Sea of Azov and two of Ukraine's most important ports. The Crimean Peninsula was part of Ukraine's sovereign territory

until 2014, when Russia forcibly and unlawfully annexed it. In May 2018, Russia completed construction of a 12-mile-long bridge across the Kerch Strait, connecting Crimea to Russia.

A 2003 treaty designates the Kerch Strait and Sea of Azov as shared territorial waters for Russia and Ukraine. But since completing the bridge, Russia has sporadically blocked access to Ukrainian vessels transporting grain and steel exports to and from eastern Ukraine, effectively creating temporary

choke holds on the Sea of Azov.

Due to Russia's ongoing and unlawful aggression there, Kiev-based analyst Taras Revunets told the *Trumpet* on Nov. 26, 2018, that the Kerch Strait has become "the South China Sea of Europe."

In 2005, Russian President Vladimir Putin called the

demise of the Soviet Union "the greatest geopolitical disaster" of the 20th century. He has been working ever since to reverse that demise and to restore Russian power to its Soviet levels.

In August 2008, Putin showed the world that he was willing to use force to re-create the Soviet Union's geography when his forces invaded the former Soviet republic of Georgia, defeating all resistance. *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote in the October 2008 *Trumpet* that the attack "was the first military strike of a rising Asian superpower," and said, "there

will be more!" He continued: "Will a crisis occur over Ukraine?

That area is the breadbasket of Russia, and surely it is willing to wage war over that as well."

Time proved that forecast accurate, with Russia's March 2014 invasion and annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula. Putin has redrawn the borders of Europe—twice. And now, as evidenced by the Kerch Strait incident, Russia continues to tighten its grip on former Soviet territories.

You can learn more about Putin's crucial role in Bible prophecy in Mr. Flurry's booklet *The Prophesied 'Prince of Russia.'* Mr. Flurry explains that Putin is personally described in ancient Bible prophecies in Ezekiel 38 and 39, and that his rule indicates that "[w]e are entering into the worst crisis ever in man's history." But, Mr. Flurry adds, these prophecies are "super-inspiring at the same time." ■



Chinese theft of trade secrets fulfills prophecy

A Nov. 1, 2018, report by the United States Justice Department shows that billions of dollars worth of patented American technology was stolen by a Chinese state-owned company. The victim, Micron Technology Inc., said the theft of its patented dynamic random-access memory (DRAM) chip technology was worth up to \$8.8 billion.

This technological theft is far from an isolated incident. For more than a decade, China has fueled its economic growth largely with systematic theft of American commercial technology and intellectual property. In addition to Micron's DRAM chip technology, the Chinese

have been caught stealing U.S. intellectual property regarding jet engines, wind turbines, biopharmaceutical products and genetically modified rice.

Even when China's operatives are caught, its leadership remains undeterred. FBI agent John Bennett told the *LA Times* on Nov. 16, 2018, that Chinese leaders "don't care if they get caught or if people go to jail. As long as it justifies their ends, they are not going to stop."

Despite getting caught from time to time, as with the Micron case, China's efforts as a whole are largely successful. Experts say that, altogether, China's intellectual property theft costs the U.S. between \$225 billion



and \$600 billion each year.

Deuteronomy 28, sometimes called one of the Bible's "blessings and curses" chapters, lists specific ways God promised that He would bless the nations of Israel if they obeyed Him, and specific ways He would curse Israel if they rejected Him. ("Israel" here refers mainly to the United States and Britain.

This is explained in our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, by Herbert W. Armstrong.)

Verse 33 states: "The fruit of your land, and all your labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed away." In China's ongoing theft of American intellectual property and trade secrets, it is clear that this prophecy is being fulfilled.

To understand more about China's role in Bible prophecy, please order your free copy of *Russia and China in Prophecy.* ■



Climate report is junk science

A report released by the United States Global Change Research Program on Nov. 23, 2018, blames extreme weather disasters on man-made global warming caused by burning fossil fuels. But the conclusions drawn in this report are based on biased science. An analysis published by the Heartland Institute in March 2018 brings some clarity to the subject.

The Heartland Report critiques a previous volume of the U.S. government's "Climate Science Special Report." It explains that the primary tools

climate scientists use to make predictions are computer models. But these models oversimplify the Earth's climate system, even to the point of ignoring the basic fact that the heating effects of carbon dioxide are not linear. The first 20 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere produce more warming than the next 400 parts per million. This means that carbon dioxide has already warmed the atmosphere almost as much as it possibly can. These simulations also ignore many of the Earth's climate systems that mitigate rising carbon dioxide

levels, such as increased plant growth. As atmospheric carbon dioxide levels rise, plant growth increases. As plant growth increases, atmospheric carbon dioxide levels fall.

The Heartland report also notes that because physical processes in the atmosphere are not well understood, scientists make guesses about the values of the variables in the equations they use, such as when they are predicting storms. This is why weather predictions made more than two weeks in advance are often hopelessly inaccurate. It is also why climate scientists cannot decide whether warmer ocean surface temperatures increase or decrease the frequency of hurricanes.

The oldest book in the Bible, the book of Job, states that God balances the vapors of the clouds and warms the Earth with a south wind (Job 37:16-17). He commands the clouds to do His will, whether for mercy or for correction (verses 12-13). Several chapters in the book of Job cover God's explanations of how the mechanisms that control Earth's

climate are under His control. They are vast and complicated, beyond human comprehension. "God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend. For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength. He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work. Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places. Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the north. By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened" (Job 37:5-10). ■

Children abusing children—why?

Exposure to pornography is leading to an alarming number of sexual assaults being perpetrated by children against others their own age and younger, according to medical experts at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. Heidi Olson, the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Coordinator, told news station KHSB in November 2018 that what shocked those who collected the data was that "almost half of our perpetrators are minors." Hospital nurses are finding that many young perpetrators admit they are acting out violent assaults they have seen in pornography.

Despite its mainstream acceptance, pornography is harmful to mental health. Jesus Christ said, "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." The Apostle James wrote, "when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin" (Matthew 5:28; James 1:15). The evil fruits of society's lust for pornography continue to multiply—to the point that educators see the effects even on our children. ■

Americans dying younger

The life expectancy for the average American is falling and has been since 2014. That is according to a report released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on November 29. The cause? Drug overdoses and suicide.

On average, 129 Americans commit suicide every day, according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. And the CDC reported that an average of 200 people died from drug overdoses each day in 2017. Since 1999, overdose rates have jumped 255 percent. These overdose and suicide rates show that people are lethally hopeless. Civically, morally, legally,

economically, militarily, nationally, internationally, human civilization itself is failing.

There is indeed a void in human life, and not just among the addicted and the suicidal. Herbert W. Armstrong described this void in the August 1962 *Plain Truth*: "[W]hat God created in the first Adam was *not yet complete*. Man was made carnal, material—but he was made to *need* the Spirit of God. Without this *spiritual life* from God, man experiences a sense of emptiness—a hunger and thirst for that which will satisfy."



This is why our world is filled with so many distractions like sports, entertainment, illicit sex, and worthier-yet-still-unfulfilling pursuits like greatness in business, politics, science and the arts. This is why some turn to drugs. It is why some turn to suicide. They are trying to fill the void. But without the missing piece—the Spirit of their Creator—they cannot do it. ■

► **INVADING ISRAEL** FROM PAGE 9

against Hezbollah targets inside Lebanon would result in catastrophic losses for Israel.

And Israel knows that Nasrallah is telling the truth.

Leading to World War III

Iran and Hezbollah have been promising to destroy Israel for so long, it is easy to dismiss their words as empty threats.

But these tunnels prove that Iran is actually enacting its plan to invade Israel and conquer its territory. Iran is so committed to its plan that it funds Hezbollah's efforts to the tune of \$700 million per year even while the Iranian economy is suffering under harsh financial sanctions.

Our modern, sophisticated, enlightened societies like to believe that we have evolved way past the time of nations

These tunnels prove that Iran is enacting its plan to conquer Israel. Iran is so committed to its plan that it gives Hezbollah \$700 million a year even while Iran's economy is suffering under harsh financial sanctions.

being hell-bent on the destruction of others. However, what we are witnessing in the north of Israel is Iran's manifest desire to do just that. Remember, Hezbollah is not an independent force; it readily acknowledges that it receives all its funding and mission objectives from Iran.

It should be beyond clear by now that Iran cannot be induced into becoming a responsible, peaceful nation in the world community. Decades of efforts to do this have failed miserably. The fruits of Iran's long-standing radical agenda, including its unabashed funding of terrorist proxies, such as Hezbollah, are clear to anyone who considers the facts.

While Israel may be able to thwart Iran's attempts in the short term, Bible prophecy shows that Iran will not give up its genocidal ambitions against Israel, nor its quest for dominance in the region, until it is stopped by overwhelming force. War is inevitable.

As *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry has said for more than two decades, radical Islam, led by the fanatical Islamic regime in Iran, fulfills the role of the biblical end-time "king of the south"

(Daniel 11:40). This king leads a group of Islamist nations and is described in that verse as having a foreign policy that *pushes* at other nations—not just with words, but with deadly force.

Daniel 11:40 reads, "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." In this prophecy, which is clearly for the "time of the end," the king of the south pushes against the "king of the north," whom we have identified for over 70 years as the quickly rising German-led Europe.

As Mr. Flurry writes in his booklet *The King of the South*, the word translated "push" means "to wage war. *Push* is a violent word!" While there are likely many

ways that Iran could push at Europe, including the control of Middle East trade routes and terrorism, the context of Daniel 11:40 shows a contest over Jerusalem is part of it. Verses 40-44 reveal that the European power will march its armies into the Middle East to combat the pushy king of the south. In verse 41, the "glorious land" refers to Jerusalem.

Europe's foray into Israel will be motivated by a successful Iranian-backed

Palestinian campaign to violently take half of Jerusalem out of Israel's control. Another prophecy, Hosea 5:13, states that Israel will actually reach out to the king of the north for help. That it seeks relief from the very nation that perpetrated the Holocaust is another indication of the intense pressure Iran and its proxies will put on the Jewish state.

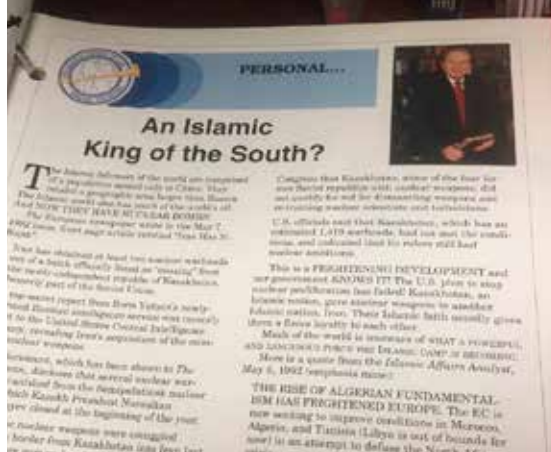
Reaching out to Europe instead of reaching out to God, however, will not solve their problems.

Germany will answer Israel's call and march its armies into the Middle East—not out of compassion for the Jews, but because of its own lust for control of the Holy City. While feigning the role of peacekeeper, these armies will come into the "glorious land," but when they arrive, they will actually turn on the Jews in a sinister double cross. Their play for Jerusalem will echo the Crusades of the Middle Ages.

Unlike the Crusades, this final battle over Jerusalem has a hope-filled end. Another latter-day prophecy, in Zechariah 14:1-2, shows how half of Jerusalem falling to the Arabs—an event which prompts Israel's call to Germany—is actually the first domino to fall in a succession of events leading to the return of Jesus Christ and the end of bloodshed on Jerusalem's streets. (This is explained in detail in Mr. Flurry's booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy*. Request your free copy.)

Armed with the understanding of these prophecies, we can know that when we see Iran pushing at the Jewish state, we are close to this colossal, world-redefining event! ■

THE TRUMPET HAS BEEN SAYING THIS SINCE 1992



Editor in chief Gerald Flurry first forecast Iran's dominance of the Middle East more than 26 years ago. To learn about the Bible prophecies he used, request your free copy of ***The King of the South***.



Does God Want You to Retire?

True Christians don't finish working until they die—and actually, not even then.

D ID YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS NO WORD FOR *RETIREMENT* IN the Bible? The concept cannot be found in Scripture.

The closest thing to it is in Numbers 8:24-26: There God instructed that full-time priestly tabernacle responsibilities end at age 50. Remember, this was physically demanding work with large livestock. Priests older than 50 continued to assist and serve as advisers or supervisors, but the full-time physical labor was done by the younger men. However, this was not *retirement* as practiced today.



JOEL HILLIKER

Retirement as we understand it is quite a recent concept. The first nation to introduce a social insurance program for the aged was Germany—in 1889. The emperor, William I, told parliament,

“Those who are disabled from work by age and invalidity have a well-grounded claim to care from the state.” The nation initially set retirement age at 70. Life expectancy at the time was less than 50 years.

For most of human history, people expected to work until they died. If they became too infirm to do so, the family was supposed to care for them. But in modern society, people believe that once you've “put in your time,” you deserve a decade or two of work-free lounging, traveling and golf.

One factor driving the push for retirement is an aversion to work. A true Christian, however, has a positive attitude toward work and views it as the blessing it is. Work provides opportunity to design, produce and maintain, to embrace challenges, to interact with and serve others. God works (John 5:17), and wants us to do the same.

Obviously there is nothing that says you have to stay in the same job your whole life. But disengaging from a life of service and turning wholly toward simply seeking your own enjoyment is a trap, and ungodly. That's not to say an older person cannot enjoy extra leisure or family time—these are wonderful blessings in the sunset years of a productive life. But one must beware wanting to withdraw from serving and contributing.

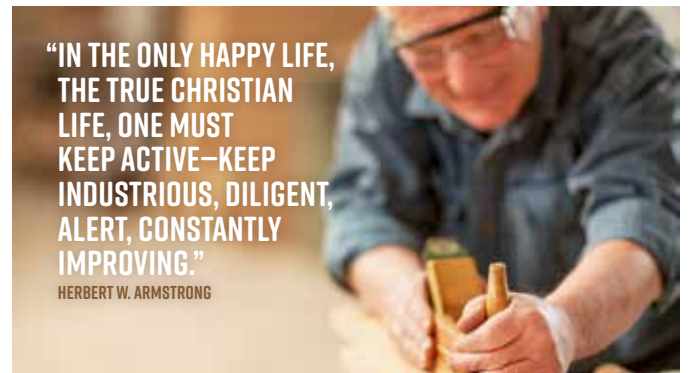
“In the only **HAPPY** life, the true Christian life, one must keep active—keep industrious, diligent, alert, constantly improving,” Herbert W. Armstrong wrote in the November 1965 *Plain Truth*. He decried the modern premium on idleness and laziness—the push for more leisure and the desire for retirement. “[T]HAT'S NOT FOR ME!” he wrote. “Today I'm the oldest one in this dynamic work of God, humanly speaking. Around me are brilliant, intelligent, capable, industrious, hardworking younger

men—and many coming out of college every year. Part of my job is to continually *keep ahead of them!* God gave me a head start in years. But if I'm not on my toes constantly, some of these alert and eager young men, now approaching middle age, would leave me far behind as a has-been, and I might be *forced* to retire”—which he had no interest in!

Another major reason retirement has grown popular is the notion that a person's productive years end around age 65. This reflects a terrible prejudice in Satan's society against the aged. “People seem to assume that after the 50s, the human mind is supposed to decay,” Mr. Armstrong wrote in the December 1976 *Plain Truth*. “Perhaps some few, accepting the myth, have bogged down and grown senile. That is a tragedy. It happens only to the mind that has not been **USED**. A mind **IMPROVES** with use and age. Wisdom comes with experience and **AGE**.”

“In my personal experience—and why *shouldn't* I share the benefit of that experience and knowledge with my millions of readers—I have produced my greatest accomplishment since I hit the calendar age of 80. Of course that's not my *actual* age—only what the calendar says. The most important **KNOWLEDGE** has been learned since then. I speak today with more vigor, effectiveness and power than in my 40s.”

Mr. Armstrong did his greatest work after “normal” retirement age. The work of his Church didn't really go worldwide until after he turned 60. His experience paralleled many others whose greatest accomplishments occurred after age 65, including Winston Churchill. Moses started his real life's work at age 80, and he never retired.



Work produces goods and services for others, it produces physical and mental growth and development in yourself, and it provides a way to financially support others and to support God's work (Matthew 6:21).

One should still save for old age. After all, some are *forced* into retirement because of declining health or other reasons. Lack of planning has caused great heartache for many elderly. God definitely promotes wise financial planning to secure prosperity for your family. “A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children” (Proverbs 13:22). This requires lucrative productivity and excellent planning. An ideal to strive for is to be financially *capable* of not working, but continuing to work by choice, even if only part-time—certainly to stay productive and keep your mind and body active—as long as able.

Adopt a lifelong mentality of embracing work. God works, and He made us to do the same. After all, we are preparing for an *eternal* life of noble, fulfilling, productive *work!* ■

Appreciation! I am deeply indebted to your ministry for the tons of life-enriching, Bible-based literature I receive regularly in the post. I am moved by your generosity and brand of gospel outreach. My perspective and worldview have changed for the better. I am building a better relationship with my Creator, my family, my career, my neighborhood and my ministry. I sincerely appreciate your love and support. May the good Lord continue to reward your ministry efforts in Jesus's name.

Joshua Abah NIGERIA

Your articles are profoundly revealing and accurate on the fulfillment of biblical prophecies. I am always excited to read them because I also follow world events closely. It was here in Port Moresby only a few days ago that both the U.S.A. and China confronted each other at the APEC leaders conference. The issue was the geopolitical influence in the Pacific. While watching this display by the president of China and the vice president of the United States, I was reminded of all the lead articles the *Trumpet* editors have taken us through all these years of the eminent nearness of the "end times" and Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am following the events in Germany and the Brexit debate. May God continue to bless your wonderful work.

R. Yaki PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Thank you for your dedication, due diligence and commitment to excellence. A compelling issue indeed; this issue (January 2019) is your best ever, in my opinion. Once I started to read, I could not stop until I finished it.

The information is timely and accurately captures the state of our world: The sin of man is running wild, and the convergence of end-time events are in a rapid-fire mode.

Mark Mullen ALBERTA, CANADA

I love the newsletter and articles and have really enjoyed reading them the past several years. I have one comment/request. The Bible quotes in King James make it harder to read than it should be. I'm 38, and I have no experience with the KJV wording, and I have to sit and really think through the "thy's" and "thees," etc. That wording is from a time when people spoke that way, and we do not speak that way anymore, so it adds a barrier to our understanding. The NIV would be much better for comprehension for everyone. But of course I'll keep reading no matter what.

Lynn

Thank you for reading, and for your input. We use the King James Version because it is the *most accurate* Bible translation. The New International and other more modern



translations tend to introduce errors because of license taken by translators. But we will endeavor to use other accurate translations when it will clarify the meaning.

Re: Trumpet Brief: France's Prophesied Betrayal of America

Wow, what an amazing read! How can people criticize this, it is just prophesy that is put plainly! I think it especially intriguing that they are now calling for a European army! I can't wait till the next one! I need more!

Youth SOUTH AFRICA

I enjoy reading the *Trumpet*. It is biblical and accurate on Bible prophecy. You seem to know today what is coming tomorrow, and it has proved right. I am always blessed by your publication. I cannot find words to thank you adequately for what you provide.

John Muttiah ONTARIO, CANADA

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TOP PODCAST
Satan Tightens His Grip on the Radicals
theTrumpet.com/18039

Please Remember This Magazine

It may be a matter of life or death. **BY JOEL HILLIKER**

LOTS OF PEOPLE SAY THEY BELIEVE IN A GOD OF LOVE. THEY readily recognize God's love in sending His Son to pay for the sins of mankind. But the God of the Old Testament seems to be different: all plagues and punishments and prophecies.

This magazine focuses on biblical prophecy. So much of that prophecy involves tragedy and violence.

Can you recognize the God of love in those prophecies?

Throughout history, people have considered God's prophecies to be unloving. They rejected His prophets and oftentimes executed them. They rejected their warnings, as many still do today.

Jesus Christ condemned hypocritical religious leaders who said, "If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets" (Matthew 23:30; New International Version). These same men were plotting to kill Christ!

In verse 34, Christ prophesied that people would continue to reject God's message: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and *some of them ye shall kill and crucify....*"

Christ attracted great crowds and healed countless people. But at the end of His ministry, how many people actually followed His teachings? Only 120 (Acts 1:15).

Why is prophecy—so hated by human beings—so important to God? God *is* love (1 John 4:8). Through His Word, God loves us by showing us how to live happy, meaningful, abundant lives. Anything contrary leads to misery and death (Deuteronomy 30:19; Proverbs 10:17). Human beings always seek happiness their own way, contrary to God's way. As a loving father, He warns them of what their actions are leading to.

Prophecy is God's way of showing you the end results of your actions. For disobedience to His way, He prophesies suffering and death. For obedience, He prophesies joy and long life! It is a matter of cause and effect.

In the Old Testament and New Testament, God prophesies catastrophic suffering and death because of widespread sin. Jesus prophesied about it as a time of "great tribulation." These prophecies are certain, but so too are prophecies describing a small group of people whom God will *protect* during that ordeal (e.g., Revelation 12:13-14). These individuals have *heard* God's warning, *accepted* His correction, and *turned from* the way of death. The

God of love has no need to inflict the Great Tribulation on them.

The *Trumpet* goes to hundreds of thousands of subscribers, but only a handful have *committed* themselves to God's way of life. Yet we at the *Trumpet* have tremendous hope because of a prophecy in Revelation 7. Just after this New Testament book prophesies the unprecedented mass-scale suffering of the Great Tribulation, it prophesies this: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes These are *they which came out of great tribulation*, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9, 14).

Even during the horrifying period of Satan's greatest wrath, the God of love will bring out of the tribulation a multitude *so great it cannot be numbered*. They will have accepted God's correction, *repented*, and been spiritually washed by Christ's shed blood, and God will protect them.

Undoubtedly, these will be people who are familiar with God's warnings. They will be *people like you*, who read God's prophecies in the Bible and in the *Trumpet*, but who do not act on them until they see some of the worst prophecies actually happening. They will witness the nightmarish fulfillment, step by step, of what they had read: economic disaster, encirclement by enemies, civil war, cities destroyed by weapons of mass destruction.

They will finally recognize that the *God of love* warned them. They will turn to Him in heartfelt repentance. When they do, God will mercifully protect them from further harm. They will live to see the fulfillment of an even greater prophecy: the return of Jesus Christ and the dawn of the Kingdom of God.

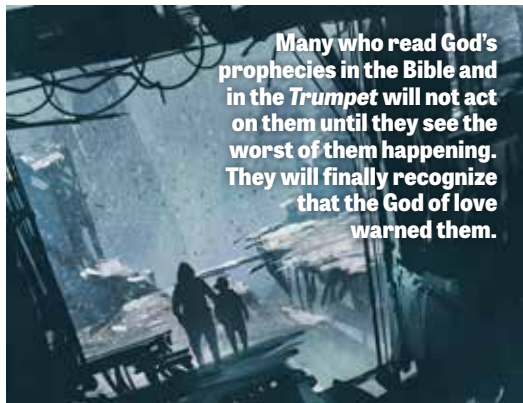
If you continue to subscribe to the *Trumpet*, watch the *Key of David* television program, and order books and booklets but do

nothing *personally* about the warnings of Bible prophecy, you are actually described in a prophecy. In Ezekiel 33:30-32, God tells His prophet, "And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not."

Which choice will you make? If you heed the warning of God's prophet today, you can be protected. But we ask that if you choose to *ignore* it, *do not forget* it. When you experience it, remember this prophecy from the God of love: "[W]hen this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them"! (verse 33). That means you.

We hope and pray every day that you will be among those who repent *before* the Tribulation that Jesus Christ prophesied. But if you do not, *remember this message*. Remember, God *warned you* in an attempt to protect you. Remember, even *during* that Tribulation, if you repent, He will protect you along with the rest of this great multitude. This is a sure promise, prophesied by the God of love. ■

You can request a free one-year subscription to the *Philadelphia Trumpet*. See the back cover for details.



Many who read God's prophecies in the Bible and in the *Trumpet* will not act on them until they see the worst of them happening. They will finally recognize that the God of love warned them.

Armies at Armageddon

The greatest prophet of all time, Jesus Christ, told His disciples that just before His return to Earth, the world would be dominated by non-Israelite nations. He said the people of “Jerusalem” would “fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: *and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*” (Luke 21:24). Bible prophecy often uses Jerusalem, the capital of ancient Israel, to symbolize all Israel.

This means all the nations that have descended from the ancient Israelites will be conquered and trodden underfoot by Gentile powers: Russia, Germany, Iran, China and Japan. But just because God will punish Israel first, doesn’t mean the Gentiles are off the hook. God is Creator of all nations. So, while Dugin and Putin may think Russia will emerge as the next world superpower, the Bible reveals that Germany will betray Russia. After America loses its superpower status, a German-led European empire will conquer North America. Then it will launch a preemptive military strike against Russia and its Asian allies. The Apostle John prophesies that Russia and China will amass an army of 200 million men to counter this European attack. The Asian and European armies will gather at Armageddon before joining forces to counter a threat in Jerusalem (Revelation 9:1-16).

Every human being would face extinction in a devastating nuclear war between Europe and Asia, unless Jesus Christ Himself intervenes (Matthew 24:22). Fortunately, the Bible records a definite promise from God that Jesus Christ will intervene to end the madness. The vast majority of people don’t realize it, but human beings simply are incapable of justly ruling themselves. They need to be humbled to the point where they are willing to do things God’s way. The vast majority of people are so dangerously self-willed that it is going to take a nuclear holocaust to drive them to repentance.

God will protect those who voluntarily repent and leave behind the sins of this world. They will not have to suffer these horrendous curses (Revelation 18:4). Tragically, the rest of humanity must learn the hard way. But the good news is that the presence of the “chief prince of Meshech and Tubal” is a sign that Jesus Christ is about to return. After 6,000 years of evil and suffering, people will finally be ready to listen to God and be taught His way of life! ■

Want to know where the world is heading?

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

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Eugene KMTR-DT 9:30, Sun; KLSR/KEVU 10:00, Sun
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Pennsylvania, Erie WSEE-DT/WICU-DT 9:30, Sun
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Rhode Island, Providence WPXQ 6:00, Fri
South Carolina, Anderson WYCW 9:00, Sun
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South Dakota, Rapid City KLCO-DT 8:30, Sun
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Tennessee, Chattanooga WFLI 10:30, Sun
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