

SPECIAL ISSUE

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THE PHILADELPHIA

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TRUMPET

Turning Point

Why the change in popes is more important than you realize

SPECIAL ISSUE

“A gigantic turning point in the history of man.”



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COVER *The triumphant Cardinal Ratzinger waves to Catholic faithful—now as pope. Digitally retouched Reuters photo.*

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A Pope a Prophecy

The day Pope Benedict XVI first walked out onto that famous Vatican balcony, it seems the world split into two camps.

One camp was represented by the masses of ecstatic people below, in St. Peter's square, who had just come running from miles around to catch a glimpse of their new pope. It was heard in the voices praising Benedict for his humility, his gentleness, his self-effacing personality.

The other camp rushed to publish headlines like "God's Rottweiler" and "From Hitler Youth to Papa Ratz." Uncomfortable with absolutes, these people clearly felt threatened by what they see as a stern, uncompromising ultraconservative.

The first group hurried to his defense. "Yes, the pope is a Catholic," said the *Wall Street Journal*. "Yet that unsurprising result has clearly shaken many secular liberals—and more than a few liberal Catholics—who feel that they have been somehow cheated of an opportunity. . . . Pope Benedict, the man, will be a convenient target for critics whose hostility is really directed against the Catholic Church and its moral teachings."

So—which camp is the *Trumpet* in? Neither.

What you are going to read in this *Trumpet* issue is totally different.

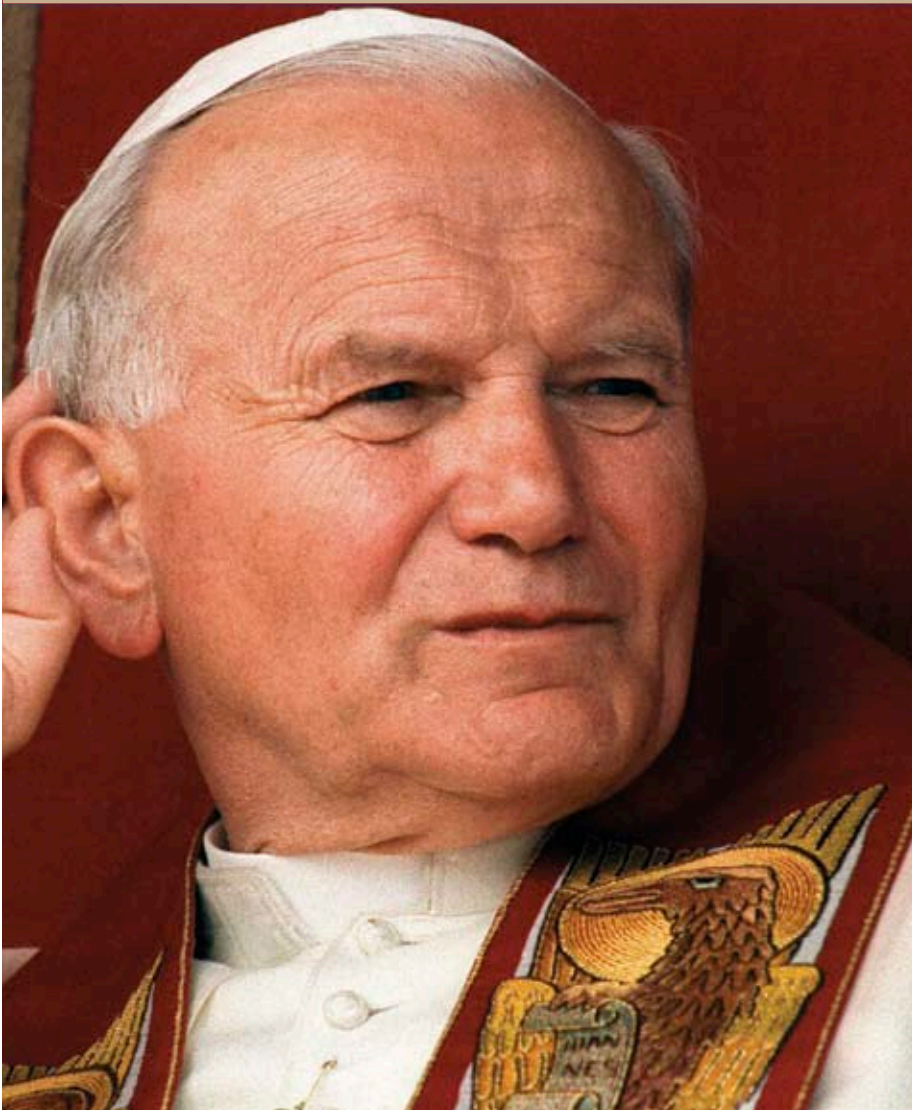
As our longtime readers are aware, we advocate some of the very moral teachings for which the new pope is being criticized. Many accuse us of being uncompromising and ultraconservative.

Our concerns about Pope Benedict XVI are much different—and far deeper—than those who wish the pope would permit abortion or the ordination of women priests.

Our view of Benedict—and even of his much-hailed predecessor—is not based on a mistrust of authority or a hostility toward morality. It is based on prophecies spelled out in the Holy Bible of a powerful religious leader who would come on the scene in our day.

By all appearances, Benedict XVI looks the part. If he is, time is exceedingly short. And this world, split between liberals who sneer at the pope and conservatives who defend him, urgently needs the strongest warning it has ever heard.

Herein is that warning.



AP/GETTY IMAGES

How He Set the Stage

Credited with being a consummate actor by virtue of his early amateur stage career, Pope John Paul II has set the stage for one of the greatest acts of history this planet will ever know. BY RON FRASER

RELIGION AND POLITICS: THEY were the two subjects that people in polite society were told to avoid when I was growing up. Yet, when studying the history of the Holy Roman Empire in

high school, I began to understand that politics and religion go together as naturally as butter goes with bread.

Since ancient Babylon, when Nimrod and his mother-wife, Semiramis, sought to establish the first imperial state un-

der the control of a universal religion, each—church and state—has either sought to use the other for mutual gain and influence, or one has competed with the other to hold sway over entire nations or even whole empires. The Holy Roman Empire is the quintessential example in both the former and the latter sense.

Wars fought at the behest of, with the connivance of, or with the sponsorship of the state, in the name of religion, have splattered the pages of history with the blood of millions. The great Islamic sweep of the Ottoman Empire was enacted in the name of Mohammad. Similarly, in the Crusades, knights galloped into battle with the symbol of Roman Catholicism, a bright red cross, garnishing their flags, banners and breastplates. In more modern times, German troops went into battle in World War I sporting belt buckles inscribed “Gott mit uns”—*God with us*.

Constitutionally—despite the best efforts of those who would seek to separate the state from religion, as in the principal American documents of state and, more recently, the European Union constitution—the power of religion to influence the masses remains a constant to this day.

Throughout history, no religious institution has been more attuned to using its influence to sway public opinion in matters of state than has the Roman Catholic Church. More recently, no pope in modern times has had such powerful influence, internationally, over every strata of society than that Polish pope, Karol Wojtyla, the late John Paul II.

In 1978, the pope took charge of what has been described as the world’s longest surviving international organization. He mounted the papal throne with a sense of universal mission deeply rooted in Roman Catholic prophecy and in certain key events in his life. These served to reinforce in his mind the conviction that his mission had divine authority. It was a globalist, evangelizing, religious mission on the outside with a deeply significant *political* vision at its core!

Crushing Latin Liberalism

Paul VI (1963-78) was the first pope since the Napoleonic wars to travel outside Italy. He spent 30 days of his papal rule in countries other than his home nation.

By contrast, John Paul II was the most traveled pope in history, traveling for 822 days. Here was a pope with a real sense of history and of destiny. He truly believed that his mission was to garner back the

wandering daughters of the church and to reassert the universal moral authority of Roman Catholicism as the only solution to this world's ills. From the beginning, his global travels were geared to this end. He determined to crush liberal dissent that had bedogged the church during the time of his post-war predecessors since the death of Pope Pius XII. Latin America, the one continent on the planet dominated by one single language and one single religion, became a focus. It was here that the liberal intelligentsia had become embedded with a revolutionary zeal that threatened to spread in a destabilizing wave, internationally, to divide the Catholic Church asunder.

His very first international trip as pope was to Mexico. From then on, especially following Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger's appointment as his enforcer, this pope doggedly worked to eliminate liberal thought within the priesthood. The church in Latin America was forced back on to its old "holy" Roman foundation.

Karol Wojtyla's dream was, indeed, a grand vision of the revival of the Holy Roman Empire! That empire would once again incorporate Latin America.

Perhaps no other visit to that region demonstrated this more vividly than the pope's call on Fidel Castro's socialist state of Cuba. Unable to resist the power of John Paul's charisma, Castro acceded to the pope's request to reinstitute Christmas as a public holiday for the first time since the socialist revolution. Unprecedentedly, he permitted the live telecasting of John Paul's papal mass delivered before an enthralled public, starved of religion, in Havana.

With the ground broken by this aging, political pope, the European Union soon opened an office in Havana! The rising EU empire was making ground right up to the back door of the U.S. superpower, something that a former empire, the Soviet Union, had once attempted to do. But it was THIS POPE who was opening the doors!

Joining East With West

At the same time, Karol Wojtyla had a vision for *Europe*, that continental bastion of his ancient religion. He truly believed that Europe was destined to return to its former imperial grandeur under the aegis of Rome. But Europe, at his election as pope, was still divided, east versus west, by an Iron Curtain.

The watershed for this pope's dream of European empire was his first journey back to his home country, Poland, in 1979. Flying in the face of the nation's Soviet masters in his address to the Polish nation delivered at Gniezno during this tour, the pope publicly rejected the artificial divisions of Europe established by the victors of the Second World War at Yalta. The speech galvanized Polish resistance to Communist leadership and sent a shudder through the Kremlin. It encouraged Western leaders in renewed efforts to support the pope in his papal diplomacy. It marked the starting point for the rise of movements for radical political change that would mature over all of Eastern and Southern Europe a decade later.

Ten years on from that first catalytic visit of Pope John Paul to his homeland, a phenomenon that few would have

Karol Wojtyla's dream was, indeed, a grand vision of the revival of the Holy Roman Empire.

predicted at the time of his election occurred: the resumption of full diplomatic relations between the Vatican State and the Soviet Union. Only two years later, the wedge the pope drove between Poland and the Soviet Union resulted in its political and economic disintegration. By 1991, the Soviet Union ceased to exist.

With John Paul's papacy came a renewed vigor within the European Community—an inspired drive to transform what had been publicly touted as a mere trading entity into a political union. The Community began to stretch its wings and commence a rapid evolution into the united Europe that the pope cried out for in his Iron-Curtain-penetrating speeches to the masses—a cry for a Europe that could breathe, as in the past, with two lungs: its historic eastern lung in addition to its already highly developed western one. He lived to see, just 11 months prior to his death, the consummation of that dream.

In May 2004, 10 nations from Southern and Eastern Europe joined their fellows in Western Europe to provide that eastern lung of a uniting Europe. At his death, another five nations waited at the doors of the EU to gain entry. Within a

continent possessed of a history of revolution, John Paul had initiated the swiftest and the largest by far.

Yet this revolution, akin to all such in which the Vatican has been involved, was not to be achieved without the spilling of blood.

A Winning Team

At the conclusion of World War II, the rapid rise of liberal-socialist thought came hand in hand with the spread of atheistic communism, and it seemed the Roman Catholic Church momentarily went to sleep. Then came Vatican II.

An ecumenical council of the Catholic Church, this Second Vatican Council was opened under Pope John XXIII in 1962 and closed under Pope Paul VI in 1965. It brought the church back into the world spotlight and commenced the initiatives that continue to this day to garner the wayward Protestant and Orthodox daughters of the church back into its fold.

Behind the scenes, Germany—the nation that claimed to be the most Christian of nations in the first half of the 20th century, having lost face massively after starting two global wars—was gradually being prepared to regain its historic role as protector of Rome.

It was at this watershed council of the Roman church, Vatican II, that two cardinals met: Karol Wojtyla the Pole and Joseph Ratzinger the German. The friendship they formed there would cement itself into one of the most powerful partnerships in Vatican history.

Three years after commencing his papacy, Wojtyla appointed Ratzinger, a pope-maker of renown, to the powerfully influential position as head of the church's old Office of the Holy Inquisition, stylized now under its politically correct title, the Office of the Doctrine of the Faith. Simply put, Ratzinger became the pope's strong arm—his enforcer. This partnership produced dramatic results, both politically and religiously, for the Vatican, the European Union, and the former colonies of the old Holy Roman Empire. In short, this partnership rocketed John Paul to political stardom. At the same time, Ratzinger's fierce enforcement of traditional Roman Catholic dogma set Rome back on a strong doctrinaire foundation in preparation for its plans to offer the world the old Vatican cure-all for mankind's moral and spiritual ailments—an enforced return to the universal faith



of Rome. Despite the wishes of liberal Catholics and a liberal press to the contrary, this partnership of Wojtyla and Ratzinger set Rome, following decades of weakness after World War II, firmly on course to regaining the power it once enjoyed in the hey-day of the old “Holy” Roman Empire!

“Step by step, in more recent times, with infinite patience, the Roman curia [papal government], gradually and without pause, regained the influence lost, at the same time placing at the service of Germany the spiritual ascendancy enjoyed by the Vatican among the Roman Catholics in Germany and the rest of Europe. Thus Germany the Great, like the Habsburg Empire, was to serve as the secular arm in order to *annihilate the influence of Orthodox Russia in the Balkans* and to *restore the Holy See’s authority in secular France*. That game was lost in 1918 but was resumed in 1939 with the Vatican pursuing the very same end that it is still pursuing today through the European Union” (David N. Samuel, *European Union and the Roman Catholic Influence in Britain*; emphasis mine throughout).

The *Balkans* and *France*—two traditional thorns in Rome’s side over the past century—both figured prominently on John Paul’s agenda throughout his papacy. Witness the flow of history on his watch.

Balkan Stitch-Up

Europe’s bloodiest war in 50 years began in April 1992 with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Bound under the hammer and sickle for over half a century, the dormant nationalistic tendencies that traditionally fueled many a feud within the Balkan nations with hate-filled resentment and suspicion boiled over. Sensing the timing was right to begin extending its hegemony eastward into middle Europe, the European powerhouse, Germany, selected a comfortable pawn and went to bat for Nazi sympathizer Franjo Tudjman, Croatia’s president. In June 1991, Croatia and Slovenia declared independence. By December of that year, against overwhelming opposition from the rest of the world, Germany moved to give Croatia and Slovenia its full backing via public recognition of these European states as separate nations.

Under John Paul’s leadership, the Vatican speedily followed Germany with diplomatic recognition of these two Roman Catholic states as sovereign nations separate from the nation of Yugoslavia.

This action lifted the lid on the seething bitterness that remained in Yugoslavia due to an only-too-clear and graphic memory of the horrors perpetrated on Orthodox and Islam adherents by the Nazis and Vatican henchmen in World War II, in particular via the Nazi vassal state of wartime Croatia. Fearing

Germano-Roman connections that had initiated the breakup of Marshall Tito’s old Communist Yugoslavia.

But what about France?

The Rechurching of France

Once a domicile of popes in bygone years, France slipped from the dominant reli-

No pope in modern times has had such internationally, over every strata of society,



GATHERING UNDER THE WINGS

John Paul II visits his native Poland in 1979. In 104 trips abroad to 125 countries, the late pope greeted

a repetition, the Serbs reacted. A horrible, illegal war ensued in the 1990s, sanctioned by the United Nations, the EU and the Vatican, which readily stood by while NATO won, and the U.S. largely paid for, their Balkan war for them. The end result was a neatly stitched-up Balkan Peninsula, handed over lock, stock and barrel to what some were starting to regard as a type of reviving Roman Empire in EU clothes.

Rome’s effort to “annihilate the influence of Orthodox Russia in the Balkans” was now significantly advanced—under the ever-watchful eye of Pope John Paul II. Following hard on the heels of the revolutions in Eastern Europe that he had initiated in Poland within a year of gaining office, his dreamed-of eastern lung was now starting to take shape, with the vitally strategic crossroads of the Balkan Peninsula now being embraced by the

grasp of the Vatican following the French Revolution. The establishment of a secularist republic, subsequent to the demise of absolute monarchical rule in the 19th century, meant that Rome lost one of its staunchest supporters on the European continent. Next to regaining what the Vatican has traditionally called “Mary’s dowry”—Great Britain—the rechurching of France remains high on the Vatican agenda, with, above all, the re-taking of Jerusalem remaining the plum.

Step by step, since Karol Wojtyla spearheaded the collapse of Soviet influence in Eastern and Southern Europe, his papacy unswervingly maintained its course. With the Balkans in the bag, the stage was then set to lead France back into the Vatican fold. This was largely played out under Wojtyla’s sway using the highly publicized European Constitution as a vehicle for creating controversy within

the EU over whether or not “God” should be written into that document. The idea was to create such a hue and cry from the Roman Catholic nations (in particular the 10 new Catholic nations that joined the EU in May last year) about the absence of any specific reference to a state religion, that the bureaucrats of Brussels

ence to “Christianity” being integral to the European cultural heritage, the constitution’s drafters gave the impression that the document deferred to secularism, France being the chief secularist state within the Union. However, deeply embedded within the text, the clever bureaucrats inserted a key clause that gives the Vatican the right to adjudicate on matters of religion! Thus, Giscard d’Estaing was able to please the Vatican while, at the same time, Wojtyla’s PR machine gave the public the impression that the constitution maintained a secularist approach, thus keeping the controversy alive by hyping up the European Catholic nations’ demands for overt recognition of the Roman religion in its text. Thus it seemed that France was increasingly the odd man out when it came to giving the EU constitution a moral authority.

Silent Victory

Upon the death of the pope, French President Jacques Chirac left no doubt as to where the loyalties of the French government lay. He directed that all flags be flown at half-mast. Liberals reacted. Such jingoism, they claimed, was tantamount to this “secularist” nation paying obeisance to Rome! The controversy continues.

Now, with Germany increasingly treading its own geopolitical and economic path separate from France, the French will soon find themselves facing a stark choice: They will either be pressured into sacrificing their precious “secularism” and bowing to Rome in order to survive politically and economically within a Union of their own creation—or, akin to Britain, they will have to either leave the Union or be booted out!

Karol Wojtyla died before seeing France officially return from its secularist platform to Rome’s fold. However, through his influence over Giscard d’Estaing, he died with the knowledge that Rome had the victory when it came to determining who would dictate the moral platform of the rising European superpower.

“John Paul II spent his life challenging secular thought and culture, which have deepened, particularly in the Western world. It is possible to argue that he had gained an important position during the final days of his life. One of the pope’s major revolutionary successes, which has not been discussed very much or is not known yet, is Article [52] of the

EU constitution That is, the one both France and Turkey have been opposing and saying, it ‘harms secularity,’—but in the end, they could not change it” (*Journal of Turkish Weekly*, April 4).

Here was the master actor Wojtyla at work. While deliberately adding to the brouhaha about the so-called absence of God from the EU constitution, this deflected attention from a most important piece of text Giscard d’Estaing had embedded in the document. “As soon as former president of secular France, Valery Giscard d’Estaing, was elected head of the assembly, the first thing he did was to visit Rome and discuss with the pope the possibility of a reference to Christianity in the constitution. The pope, who opened this subject to almost every EU delegation that visited him in 2½ years, and at times scolded ... them, in the end, did not get what he wanted—there was no reference to Christianity in the constitution. *The pope, however, achieved a silent but more important victory.* The EU agreed to begin institutional dialogue with churches and other religious groups for the first time in its history” (ibid.).

Speaking of churches and religious associations or communities in the member states, the European Constitution states: “Recognizing their identity and their specific contribution, the Union shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches and organizations” (europa.eu.int/constitution).

How important was this “silent” victory? Canon law experts agree it is most profound, virtually assuring the Vatican has the final voice in the EU on matters of religion!

“The Vatican’s strategy was very wise. As the pope seemed to spend all his efforts trying to have a reference to Christianity included in the preamble of the constitution, he was in reality having a hard time on another front. Finally, *the EU pledged to establish ‘open, transparent [and] regular’ dialogue with churches and religious organizations.* Therefore, the churches will be the collocutors [representatives] of the EU on issues that concern the public, according to Paragraph 3 of Article [52]. Consequently, churches can be collocutors of the EU on religious issues that concern citizens. If it is considered that an established institution is needed to be the collocutor of the EU, it is apparent that *the biggest beneficiary will be the Vatican*” (*Journal of Turkish Weekly*, op. cit.). It may indeed have been a “silent” victory for John Paul

powerful influence,
as John Paul II.



AFP/GETTY IMAGES

and influenced hundreds of millions.

would ensure that such a reference was later embedded in the document.

Akin to those men who drafted the foundational document of the European Coal and Steel Community, which has evolved into today’s European Union, the Frenchman who presided over the crafting of the European Constitution, Valery Giscard d’Estaing, is a staunch Roman Catholic. Frankish Catholic influence has been at the fore in the creation of this European superpower from the beginning. Its founding fathers, Jean Monnet, Alcide de Gasperi and Robert Schumann, were all very religious Catholics. In 1951, they crafted the foundational treaty within which the EU had its genesis. Small wonder that, 50 years later, Giscard d’Estaing conferred directly with Karol Wojtyla during the drafting of the EU constitution. The result was typical subterfuge.

Through steering clear of any refer-



II, but it will prove to be, in the hands of the newly enthroned Joseph Ratzinger, a powerful platform on which to build the Vatican goal of dictating the moral code for every single citizen of the European Union!

Thus, we shall see, in the not-too-distant future, the secular approach of France literally overwhelmed by the Catholic majority of the rest of the EU member nations.

Ensuring His Legacy

Yet, perhaps the greatest achievement of all was the way in which John Paul worked tirelessly to ensure that the legacy he established would continue under his successor and expand into the fulfillment of his grand vision.

John Paul worked tirelessly to ensure that the legacy he established would continue under his successor.

Over time, he stacked the deck of the curia with right-wing cardinals of his own choosing. With the ready and willing support of Ratzinger, his was the vision of one who was determined that what he started—a revolutionary right-wing reform, a veritable revival of traditional “holy” Roman religion—would be continued by his successor. Any dissenting influential voices were simply silenced.

“The pope accelerated the downfall of communism in central and Eastern Europe through the people he incited. At the same time, he strengthened ties of Europe, which is moving from an economic union toward a political union, through the constitution that is expected to be adopted, *with institutional religion*” (ibid.). For institutional religion, read *state religion!* For that is what the new pope, Benedict XVI, has foreshadowed by unequivocally indicating that Turkey’s Islamic religion simply bans it from entry into the EU. John Paul prepared the way. Based on both reputation and record, this new pope will enforce it!

One Lone Voice

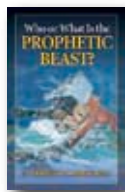
Forty-seven years ago, while listening to my Catholic history teacher expound on the powerful influence of the Holy Roman Empire throughout the past two

millennia, little did I realize that I would witness, in my own lifetime, the rise of that ancient monolith to a size and extent at least on a scale equating with that under Charlemagne, if not, soon to be, even larger. My Catholic teacher, well versed in the turgid history of that old empire, fulsome in his praise of its impact on Western civilization, could never have envisaged the prospect of that Roman Empire becoming the dominant force in politics and religion in the 21st century. No one wrote on the subject. No publisher would have deigned to print a book on even the idea being a remote possibility. Holy Roman Empire in the 21st century? Laughable!

Ours was an age of *reason*, where religion was passé. Dream of the old Holy Roman Empire resurrecting to have an influence on global trade extending today from as far south as Australia, north to the Baltic, with massive investment and powerful influence from Japan to Mexico? CRAZY! *Unthinkable!* Yet—one man did.

As the one lone voice amid the confusion of anti-God intellectual ideology that poured forth within Western society following World War II, Herbert W. Armstrong dared to have the courage to preach, teach and publish the most unfashionable of messages: that the time would come when state and religion would combine in Europe to impose the most powerful influence yet on the entire globe in the form of a final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire! The world largely scoffed at this message, delivered over the duration of his 57-year ministry.

Today, in this 21st century, those with eyes to see no longer scoff! In fact, unbeknownst to them, many of the headlines under which their concerned articles appear, and many of the phrases they use, are almost verbatim those that Herbert Armstrong used clear back 70 years ago when he first began to acquaint the world with this inevitable reality! You need to request the booklet he authored, with remarkable prescience, on this subject six decades ago—*Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?* Request your free copy now and *wake up to the signs of the times!* ■



HERBERT ARMSTRONG 1892-1986



He Was

A look back at the prescient warnings of a lesser-known spiritual leader BY MARK JENKINS

FROM THE VERY START OF HIS work, when the Church was called the Radio Church of God, Herbert W. Armstrong realized in his study of the Bible that he must warn about a coming religiously dominated European superpower just before the return of Jesus Christ to Earth.

In a July 24, 1983, letter he wrote, “The very first issue of the *Plain Truth* magazine appeared February 1934—just 50 years ago lacking about six months. The article starting on the cover page warned of a coming sudden appearance of a resurrected ‘Holy Roman Empire’ in Europe—a union of 10 nations in Europe



TRUMPET

Right

under one government, with one united military force. For 50 years I have been crying out to the world the Bible prophecies of this coming 'United States of Europe'—A NEW UNITED SUPERPOWER PERHAPS MORE POWERFUL THAN EITHER THE SOVIET UNION OR THE UNITED STATES!"

That warning continued, unabated, right up to Mr. Armstrong's death in 1986.

Knowing that the Bible prophesied a final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire, Mr. Armstrong took special care to watch those men who were critical to the planning and formation of the European Union. In the late 1970s, he identified a man we should watch carefully: John Paul II. The appointment of a Polish pope—the first non-Italian pope in over 400 years—was like an electric jolt to the entire world, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. It was clear to Mr. Armstrong that

the return of Jesus Christ was drawing near and that this pope, more than any before him, was setting the stage for the most climactic time in history and preparing the Roman Catholic Church for its role in end-time events.

From our perspective, another man deserves careful scrutiny as well: Herbert Armstrong. The prophecies we often write about—the coming together of the European superpower, the growing alliance between Russia and China, the soon-coming return of Jesus Christ—were covered by him for over 50 years before the *Trumpet* even existed. Our prophetic understanding is grounded in his work. His instructions to watch the pope as we lead up to the return of Jesus Christ provided an education that far exceeds that of any news commentator.

Today, both John Paul and Herbert

Armstrong are dead, but the actions they took have prepared the way for the prophetic fulfillment of the return of Christ. By reviewing these actions—and Mr. Armstrong's comments on Bible prophecy during that critical period—we can see exactly how right Mr. Armstrong was to watch the pope.

John Paul II

Karol Wojtyla prepared the way for Europe's unification, east with west. Read Mr. Armstrong's comments on this pope's first trip to Poland, in 1979, and the eventual outcome: "Many of ... Pope John Paul II's activities point to the fact that he can be the pope that will initiate this European reunion, in a 'United States of Europe.' As a matter of fact, his having come from Poland, and the effect of his visit there, indicate that instead of the coming 'resurrected' Holy Roman Empire including such nations of Israelitish ancestry as Holland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the 10 nations to compose it may include such nations—now Russian satellites—as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia. The latter two are long since, to a considerable degree, independent of the Kremlin. The Soviet Union may soon experience a breakaway of some of the Balkan satellite nations. It does seem that the nations of Israelitish ancestry, in western and northwestern Europe, would likely be excluded from the coming 10-nation 'Roman Empire'" (co-worker letter, Sept. 20, 1979).

In 2004, just as Mr. Armstrong foretold, eight former Eastern bloc countries were admitted to the European Union—including Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia. Romania and Croatia are currently in the application process. As Mr. Armstrong stated, John Paul II precipitated the unification of Eastern Europe with its western counterpart.

The pope also started Europe down the path to *religious* unification. Mr. Armstrong often talked about how a united Catholic Church would drive Europe, even over the objection of its political leadership. "Bible prophecy says this European unification will be also a union of church and state (Revelation 17). Many European political leaders do not want religious domination, or even participation. But they are coming to realize they cannot be welded together into one great European supernation without the unifying power of the Catholic Church" (member and coworker letter, Nov. 22, 1982).

See **RIGHT** page 25 ▶

*Gerald Flurry*

The Dark Side of the Pope's Funeral

IN HIS LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT, POPE JOHN PAUL II wrote, "The times in which we live are indescribably difficult and troubled." We can all agree on that issue. Man is facing his own extermination. Our number-one problem is that of human survival. Never has it been more urgent that we understand what is happening in our world.

Many people believe the Vatican is going to usher in world peace. However, the Vatican has an established record of causing, supporting and guiding many wars as a part of the Holy Roman Empire.

Pope John Paul II was one of the better popes. He led a church of 1.1 billion people. Never has a pope or church been praised more than in the news surrounding his funeral. The media reported almost nothing negative. That is very uncharacteristic of the media. So just what does it mean?

The Vatican has real power. The European Union, of which the Roman Catholic Church is a significant part, is fast becoming the world's next superpower. It will be a resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire.

The previous six Holy Roman Empires have waded through more blood than any other church-state combine in the history of man! Those are provable, historical facts.

Most of those empires have been ruled by Germany and the Vatican.

Germany has caused more bloodshed than any other nation in history—both in and out of the Holy Roman Empire.

It is a documented fact that the Vatican helped *most* of the Nazi leaders escape at the end of World War II! That fact alone proves it was deeply involved on the wrong side of a world war. There was no mention of that in the media's reporting surrounding the funeral.

When these two entities have power and unite, shouldn't we be profoundly concerned? Surely we can see the potential danger!

Even much of the Vatican's recent history has been nothing short of shocking. Since it professes to represent God, shouldn't we at least examine the truth and hold it accountable, as we do other institutions and nations—many of which make no claim that they speak for God?

The Funeral

About 2 billion people watched the pope's funeral on television. Some 4 to 5 million attended his funeral in Rome—or at least made the effort. Some people waited up to 20 hours to view the

body. It was the biggest funeral in the history of man!

It was also the biggest media event in history.

Some 200 world leaders attended from 100 countries. The two leading terrorist-sponsoring nations in the world—Iran and Syria—sent their presidents.

Prince Charles postponed his wedding, and Britain changed an election date.

As one cardinal said, "this exceeds everything"! It did indeed. *Where is it all leading?*

Fox News was criticized for having wall-to-wall coverage of the funeral. One reporter virtually rebuked a critic, stating that the funeral was a big deal whether you were Catholic or not! The media became the ma-

major tool in sweeping people along, and yet almost nobody knows where it is leading.

THE POPE'S FUNERAL WAS A GIGANTIC TURNING POINT IN THE HISTORY OF MAN. The Vatican's power has never been increased by so much, so fast. It now has the power to guide Europe and the Holy Roman Empire—which is one of its greatest desires.

Today the Germans and the EU are once again focusing the people's minds on the Holy Roman Empire. European Parliamentarian Otto von Habsburg once said, "The [European] Community is living largely by the heritage of the Holy Roman Empire, though the great majority of the people who live by it don't know by what heritage they live."

NOTICE, "THE GREAT MAJORITY" DON'T KNOW THEY ARE EVEN NOW LIVING BY THE HERITAGE OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE! But that lack of understanding is changing as the empire grows in power.

People need a more specific focus to stir their imaginations. And they are getting just that. Mr. Habsburg, *a descendant of the Habsburg Dynasty that ruled the Holy Roman Empire for 400 years*, talked about a crown in a museum in Vienna, Austria, which symbolizes a great deal to the Germans. He said, "We possess a European symbol which belongs to all nations of Europe equally; this is the crown of the Holy Roman Empire, which embodies the tradition of Charlemagne." Charlemagne was crowned emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in A.D. 800—many call it the First Reich. Historians say he "waded through a sea of blood" to convert people to Catholicism. But that was long ago, and few understand history from 1,200 years ago.

Mr. Habsburg failed to mention that the Holy Roman Empire also embodied the tradition of Mussolini and Hitler, of the sixth Holy Roman Empire. That history, many people still remember.

The pope's funeral was a gigantic turning point in the history of man. The Vatican's power has never increased by so much, so fast.

TAKING THE BATON

Joseph Ratzinger, who blessed the coffin of the late pope, now holds the reins of the world's most powerful church.



GETTY IMAGES

Europe is once again becoming mesmerized by the crown of Charlemagne—just as Hitler was. After he annexed Austria, he took the crown jewels and brought them to Germany, where he said they would remain forever. Why this acute interest? You and I urgently need to know.

Pope John Paul II said he wanted “to save Europe and the world from the final catastrophe”—the nuclear annihilation of every human being. But the empire his church has been part of has time and again been used as a tool of great destruction. The end-time resurrection of this power will be the most destructive ever—by far! Bible prophecy makes that clear.

Soon the EU will be reduced from 25 to 10 nations or groups of nations with 10 leaders, guided by the Vatican. (We explain this in our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*.) A serious crisis will cause the nations of the EU to see that only the Vatican can unite them.

America and Britain have been mesmerized by the pope's funeral. But if we don't wake up, it is going to usher in our own massive funeral!

The EU is not the friend of America, Britain or the Jewish state in the Middle East. When will we face the truth?

But all these dark events are tied *directly* to the best news this world has ever heard.

Hitler's Pope

Let's look at some specific and recent history that Pope John Paul II would not discuss and certainly never repented of, as the representative of the church. In fact, he did just the reverse.

Here is what we wrote in the May 2000 issue of the *Trumpet*, in an article titled “The Next Pope”: “Outside the Vatican,

things have never looked better. Over the past two decades, John Paul II has become the most visible and celebrated pope in Vatican history. ... Never has a pope been so well received among Christians, Jews and Muslims alike.

“Inside the Vatican, however, there is a different story. The pope, who turns 80 this month and suffers from Parkinson's disease, has *lost control of the Vatican*, according to the London *Times*.

“Senior Vatican officials told the *Times* that the pontiff spends much of the day resting and is in bed by 6 p.m. According to these inside sources, the pope's ailing physical condition has ‘left a power vacuum in the Vatican in which affairs are dominated by Opus Dei, the hardline right-wing faction that has seized control of at least three key Vatican departments: the section responsible for making saints, the congregation that appoints bishops, and the powerful press office’ (March 12). ...

“The article accompanied a more in-depth story submitted to the *Sunday Times Magazine* by author John Cornwell, also on March 12. Cornwell, a *Catholic* who teaches at Jesus College in Cambridge, England, authored *Hitler's Pope* last year, a best-selling book that exposes the Vatican's complicity with Hitler during the Holocaust.

“Cornwell describes life inside the Vatican today as ‘an unhappy community of seething tensions’ where right-wing conservatives appear to be gaining the upper hand. ‘Many who look forward to better days with the prospect of a younger, more vigorous pope,’ Cornwell writes, ‘fear that ultraconservatives are intriguing to ensure the election of a reactionary pontiff to continue the current policies and to take the church *even further to the right*.’ [That fear has absolutely come upon them today.]

“What is happening inside the Vatican is *very* prophetic. We



do not doubt John Paul's desire for peace in the Middle East. Nor do we necessarily criticize the pope's apologies for Christianity's sins throughout the ages (although he should have been more specific).

"But what happens when the *next* pope is elected? Considering John Paul's physical breakdown, a new pontiff might be here sooner than you think. And despite the noble intentions of the *present* pope, history teaches us that the Vatican has also produced its share of *bad* popes. To say it cannot happen again is to be hopelessly naive—and ignorant of even the most recent history.

"The most recent bad pope was Pius XII, the central figure discussed in *Hitler's Pope*. Cornwell was first inspired to write a book about Pius because he was upset by what he considered to be 'unwarranted' criticism against the man. That prompted the Vatican to give Cornwell unlimited access to its treasured (and well-protected) archives. But once Cornwell gained access to the archives, he discovered the darker side of Pius. His research led him into what he called a state of 'moral shock.' The book accuses Pius of appeasing Hitler, ignoring the Jewish plight and turning a blind eye toward other Nazi atrocities.

"One example Cornwell uses to prove his point is particularly telling. It happened toward the end of the war. Pius had been receiving information about Hitler's Final Solution throughout 1942. Jewish groups and Allied officials had *repeatedly* urged him to publicly condemn Nazi savagery. Under increasing pressure, Pius used a December 1942 radio address to refer to the many thousands who 'sometimes only by reason of their nationality or race are marked down for death or gradual extinction.' That was his strongest objection to Hitler's genocidal rampage! Yet he failed to even mention the Führer by name and made no mention of Nazis or Jews. ...

"In October 1943, 10 months after Pius's radio address, 365 of Hitler's SS troops entered Rome's old ghetto and started arresting Italian Jews. They rounded up 1,060 and transported them to a building called Collegio Militare—located less than half a mile from the Vatican. According to Cornwell, Pope Pius was one of the first to be made aware of the Jewish arrests. (German trucks carrying the prisoners even drove by St. Peter's Square so drivers could see the famous church.) The Jews were kept at the holding center for two days—right under the pope's nose—before boarding cattle cars to Auschwitz where 80 percent of them were gassed within a week (the rest became slave laborers).

"During the Jews' two-night confinement down the street from the Vatican, Pope Pius XII did nothing. The most powerful religious man in the world, commanding the allegiance of more than a half-billion Christians at that time, remained silent when a simple protest probably would have saved 1,045 lives. Only 15 of the 1,060 survived the war.

"Television journalist Ed Bradley recounted these events during a *60 Minutes* episode on March 19. Bradley interviewed one of the Jewish survivors, who asked, 'Didn't the pope know where they were taking us? Didn't he ask himself where those railroad tracks ended up? We were right under his window, but his voice wasn't lifted. Nobody came, not even to save a child.'

"A Vatican representative, Father Peter Gumpel, attempted to answer the victim's questions, saying the pope couldn't leave the Vatican because it was surrounded by German troops. He might have been arrested, Gumpel said. In quick reply, Bradley asked, 'But wouldn't that be the kind of action that a true saint would have taken? Wouldn't that have been what Christ would have done?' Understandably, Gumpel stuttered in his response, saying he did not know what Christ would have done.

"But this matter goes far beyond just *defending* Pius XII in the face of harsh criticism. Gumpel is one of the Vatican's senior saint-makers who happens to be in charge of *Pope Pius XII's beatification process* (the final hurdle to being named a saint). For 30 years he has been researching Pius's life to see if he's worthy of sainthood. Put another way, his job is to find damning evi-

America and Britain have been mesmerized by the pope's funeral. But if we don't wake up, it is going to usher in our own massive funeral!



TO SEE THE "FATHER"

Rome's 2.6-million-strong population doubled in early April when scores of Catholics converged to pay respects to their spiritual head.

dence, if any, that would preclude Pius from beatification. *He hasn't found any!*" (emphasis mine throughout).

The effort to beatify Pius XII was an in-your-face attack against the critics—not repentance. Surely we can see this as dangerous thinking inside the Vatican. SUCH HISTORY BECOMES VERY PROPHETIC OF THE VATICAN'S ROLE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. We will pay a deadly price if we don't take heed!

The media give the Catholic Church virtually nothing but praise, in spite of the critics within the church itself!

The article continued: "Near the end of his research, Gumpel told *60 Minutes* he is 'totally convinced that [Pius] did what he

could [to help Jews during World War II], that he was a *holy person* and that *he should be beatified.* [Just what is their standard for judging a pope *holy*?] Asked if Cornwell's research in *Hitler's Pope* would have any bearing on the Vatican's final decision, he said it would 'have no effect whatsoever because it's *totally worthless* from a historical point of view.'

"To cast aside Cornwell's book as totally worthless is remarkable, considering the depth of his research and the unprecedented access he had to the *Vatican's own documents!*

"Is *this* the kind of ULTRACONSERVATISM that is believed to be GAINING CONTROL OF THE VATICAN? Gumpel, WHO HAS PUBLICLY BLAMED THE JEWS FOR KILLING CHRIST [the Bible teaches that our sins killed Christ—we are all guilty], declared the Vatican's resolute stance on Pius's impending sainthood just *two days before* Pope John Paul II arrived in the Holy Land for his much-celebrated tour. DOESN'T GUMPEL'S STATEMENT CAST A DARK CLOUD OVER THE POPE'S APOLOGIES?

"Only *five popes* in the past THOUSAND YEARS have been declared saints by the Vatican."

Gumpel was the spokesman for John Paul II and the Vatican. John Paul, regardless of his health, was in charge and obviously shared those views. And don't forget: This church considers itself God's number-one representative on Earth. Does any serious-minded person think that our God of love agrees with Gumpel?

Didn't this spokesman carry the *heart* of the Vatican hierarchy's views? Yes he did, and that perspective will come back to haunt this world! THAT SPOKESMAN'S VIEWS FORESHADOW SOME HORRENDOUS EVILS TO COME.

THESE CONDEMNING FACTS, WHICH COME FROM INSIDE THE VATICAN'S OWN ARCHIVES, ESCAPE MOST MEDIA OUTLETS TODAY! A *Catholic scholar* was given free reign to research the Vatican archives, which is a very rare privilege in that church's history.

Why is the Vatican so secretive?

Gumpel's comments about *Hitler's Pope* were made when the Vatican was relatively weak. What will the Vatican be saying when the EU becomes the world's number-one superpower? (This is precisely what the Bible prophesies!)

Let the world *beware*. From this source will come Britain's and America's greatest suffering ever—if they don't heed God's warning!

Gumpel gives us a powerful insight into the Vatican's thinking. It is the kind of prophetic insight that clearly shows what we can expect in the near future! We don't have to guess.

Such a powerful church *must* be held accountable. There is some extremely dangerous thinking inside the Vatican.

But it gets even worse.

The Ratlines

Trumpet readers are well-aware that in December 1991, Germany decided to recognize breakaway Yugoslav republics Slovenia and Croatia despite strong opposition from the EU, the United States and the United Nations; and despite the fact that the move again resurrected unsavory memories of Germany's fascist past.

One week later the Vatican also recognized Croatia.

The EU eventually recognized the two states a month later. The UN also backed away from a direct confrontation with Germany. And THE U.S., WHICH AT FIRST BLAMED THE GERMANS FOR PROVOKING YUGOSLAVIA'S CIVIL WAR BY RECOGNIZING THE TWO BREAKAWAY STATES, EVENTUALLY FLIP-FLOPPED TO EVEN SUPPORT GERMANY'S DECISION MILITARILY!

In July of 1997, a United States Treasury document was published accusing the Vatican of hoarding Holocaust gold for the

Croatian Nazi puppet regime during and after World War II. The Vatican dismissed the accusation as ridiculous. But then, when pressured by Jewish organizations to open their archives (which have been closed for 100 years) to dispel rumors of Nazi sympathies, the Vatican refused. Why? Could it be that they have something to hide?

In their book *Unholy Trinity*, Mark Aarons and John Loftus contend that they *do* have something to hide!

Mark Aarons is an international award-winning investigative reporter and author of several books on intelligence-related issues. Based in Australia, he exposed war criminals in that country and prompted changes to Australian federal law. John Loftus, author of four intelligence-related history books, is the former chief prosecutor of the U.S. Justice Department's Nazi War Crimes Unit. As such, he once held some of the highest security clearances in the world.

During World War II, many Serbs, according to these well-informed authors, were butchered by the Croats using medieval methods. "Eyes had been gouged out," they wrote, "limbs severed, intestines and other internal organs ripped from the bodies of the living. Some were slaughtered like beasts, their throats cut from ear to ear with special knives. Others died from blows

Germany and the Vatican primarily started the war in Yugoslavia. This is the so-called Holy Roman Empire in action!

to their heads with sledgehammers. Many more were simply burned alive."

Much more alarming, however, is the "special relationship" between the pope and Croatia at a time when Croatian fascists were slaughtering Serbs. Aarons and Loftus said the atrocities were already under way when Pope Pius XII met with Ante Pavelic, Croatia's leader, in April 1941.

The pope agreed to meet with Pavelic again in May 1943, by which time the Nazi atrocities against the Serbs were without refute. (One Italian journalist interviewed Pavelic in his home and was shocked to find a large bowl of Serbian eyes the fascist had been collecting.) Yet, according to *Unholy Trinity*, "PIUS HIMSELF PROMISED TO GIVE PAVELIC HIS PERSONAL BLESSING AGAIN. *By this time, the Holy See possessed abundant evidence of the atrocities committed by his regime.*"

Any right-thinking person ought to ask why the very highest officials in the Catholic Church, including the pope, would associate with and even protect Croatian fascists. Is that the kind of history more "conservative" Vatican officials today want to hold on to?

The Vatican's connection with this sordid history went beyond a simple blessing from the pope. The Vatican actually helped to smuggle many of the worst criminals of the age! "FOR FUGITIVE NAZIS, ALL ROADS LED TO ROME," Aarons and Loftus wrote.

High-ranking ministers, civil servants, even Ante Pavelic himself, *with help from the Vatican's Ratlines*, were able to disappear into thin air, intelligence sources have confirmed. At the time, the Vatican labeled these escapees "refugees." But they were Croatian fascists who were helping Hitler's regime!



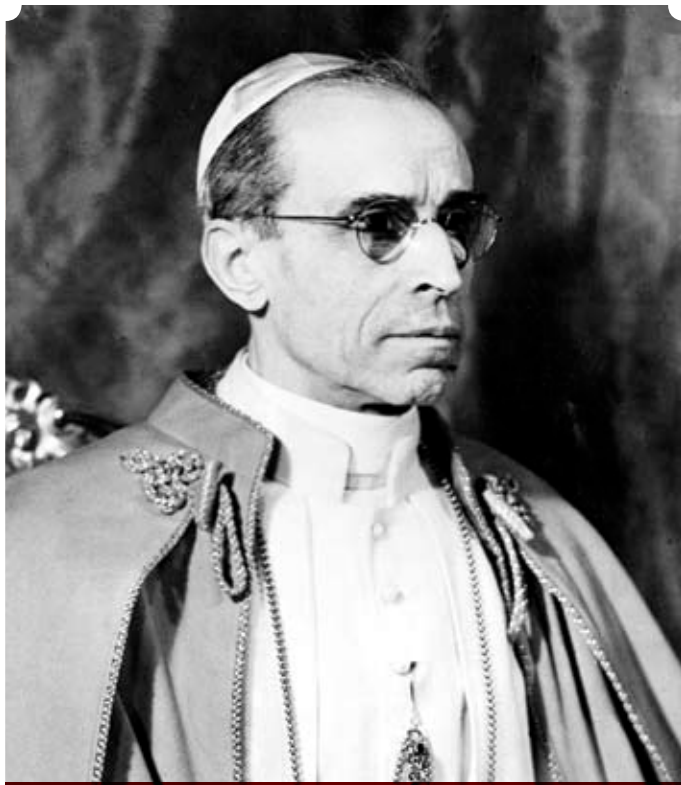
Remember, this all happened at the end of World War II!

POPE PIUS XII WAS BY FAR THE GREATEST NAZI SMUGGLER AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II! And another man who later became pope, Giovanni Montini, was also deeply involved in this crime against humanity!

What if this Holy Roman Empire turns its wrath toward America, first of all, the next time around? That is precisely what the post-World War II Nazi underground has pledged to do!

They know that the U.S. mass-produced most of the armaments that beat them in World Wars I and II.

We can't afford to take this lightly.



AP/WIDEWORLD

PAPAL CULPABILITY

Pius XII appeased and refused to condemn Hitler during World War II, ignored fascist war crimes and moved Nazis after the conflict ended.

These shocking facts reveal that the Vatican was deeply involved with the Germans in World War II. There is simply no other explanation. But most people continue to ignore the truth—to their own great peril!

Aarons and Loftus understand the important history between Croatia and the papacy, dating back to A.D. 700. The Catholic Church has been involved in mass murder since A.D. 514, when the first Holy Roman Empire began. THIS CHURCH HAS MORE TO HIDE—OR REPENT OF—THAN ANY OTHER INSTITUTION IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD!

Germany and the Vatican primarily started the war in Yugoslavia. This is the so-called Holy Roman Empire in action! This power should be feared a thousand times more than the Serbs. Still the world races madly toward disaster because men refuse to face the truth.

Why can't we see that Germany and the Vatican are renewing their ties from World War II? That history reaches back to Charlemagne.

Why would a church that is supposed to teach God's love again ally itself with Croatia and Germany, considering their heinous Nazi crimes? Wouldn't a repentant church or state do just the opposite? Unless they plan for a future somewhat akin to the dream of Adolf Hitler!

Margaret Thatcher was the only high-ranking politician who would even discuss the "German problem." Only she had the understanding and courage to do so! It probably cost Mrs. Thatcher her job.

No politician has yet had the courage to discuss the *Vatican problem*. That attitude can only lead to a bloody disaster.

President Tudjman (at the time of Croatia's breaking away) refused to admit any wrongdoing on Croatia's part in the Nazi slaughter of World War II. Yet Germany and the Vatican defied the world and started a civil war to recognize that Catholic nation!

DOES GOD THINK LIKE A NAZI? Some of the Vatican's deeds make it appear that way!

This is just the small beginning of the resurrected Holy Roman Empire with its bloody past and bloodier future. However, it is politically incorrect to criticize the Vatican or Germany for continuing their horrendous past. That naiveté and cowardice is going to help bring the worst suffering ever on America and Britain.

REMEMBER, ALL THIS INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE VATICAN'S OWN ARCHIVES!

Infallibility

One Vatican journalist noted in 1986 that "anyone who believes this pope is anything but a traditionalist, believing in orthodoxy and discipline, simply has failed to understand the man. He is a liberal only in his understanding, mastery and exploitation of the modern means of communication. When it comes to doctrine, there is simply no room for argument or dissent." John Paul lived up to his "infallibility" tag. London's *Financial Times* said "no pope before him has ever been as infallible as the present" (Oct. 16, 1998).

The Bible clearly teaches that *only* God is infallible. When a pathetic, sinful man claims infallibility in one area, it often spills over into other areas—especially when his power grows.

Just study papal history if you think that is an exaggeration!

Let me remind you once again: This is the bloodiest church in history, now united with the cruelest, bloodiest nation in history! Those are the facts of history.

And it is even more disturbing today, since we are living in the nuclear age.

We need to pause and ponder this mega-explosive potential. All we need do is understand a little *history*. Unfortunately, most of our colleges in America and Britain teach little or no history anymore. That is why we have so little prophetic insight into where these events will lead us.

Pope John Paul II made a major change shortly before he died. In the past, it has taken two thirds of the cardinals to elect the pope. But this "infallible" pope changed that rule to an absolute majority.

What this means is that if two thirds of the electors had not agreed upon a candidate after 12 days of balloting, a *bare majority* would have changed the rules to elect their candidate ("absolute majority" means *more than half*).

Jesuit (Catholic) scholar Thomas Reese notes the obvious significance of this alarming change in his 1996 book *Inside the Vatican*: "There is no longer an incentive to compromise and find a consensus candidate. All that is needed is a candidate who can get an absolute majority of the votes after about 30

ballots have taken place. This change increases the likelihood of a more radical and ideological candidate being elected pope. It means that a pope can be elected who was opposed by just under half the cardinals.”

Obviously, the College of Cardinals would have needed to reach an impasse before resorting to the above procedure. But the point is, it *nearly guaranteed* that a man like Joseph Ratzinger would be elected. And the result of such action might have shocked the world.

Thomas Reese was stunned to find that the Vatican offered no explanation for why John Paul changed the way the next pope could be elected. “It is almost as if *the pope did not realize the consequences of what he decreed*,” Reese said.

POPE JOHN PAUL’S LEGACY WILL ULTIMATELY BE SHAPED BY WHAT HE PREPARED THE WAY FOR. And that legacy is going to be far different than the way it appears today.

All factors are in place for the greatest potential disaster in that church. Bible prophecy says that the new pope, Benedict XVI, is going to be far to the right of Pope John Paul II. And we believe this pope will be the last one.

Church Unity

Benedict XVI will add to the church’s power in another way. We are about to see the Protestant churches return to the Catholic Church—the throne—from which they rebelled.

Bible prophecy says that the new pope will be far to the right of John Paul II. And we believe this pope will be the last one.

A May 12, 1999, Reuters report illustrates my point: “The push for unity between Anglicans and Catholics took another hesitant step forward Wednesday when a commission from both churches asked Christians to recognize the universal role of the pope.

“A document released by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission went further than earlier statements embraced by Anglican representatives in recognizing the pope’s ministry as ‘a gift to be received by all the churches.’

“The study, called ‘The Gift of Authority,’ also relates that the pope has a ‘specific ministry concerning the DISCERNMENT OF TRUTH.’ [This will lead to the pope ruling all Christianity and having the power he has never had before in the history of that church!]

“The 43-page document is not an authoritative declaration from either the Anglican or Catholic churches, but is meant as a study paper for both. *It was released at WESTMINSTER ABBEY*, an Anglican church, but in a part of the building that pre-dated the split in 1534 between the Anglicans and Catholics.

“The archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, urged the world’s 70 million Anglicans to read the document.

“Christians need urgently to be able to speak with a common voice, confident of the authority of the gospel of peace,” Carey said in a statement. ‘I commend the text to all Anglicans for the most serious consideration and debate.’”

This agreement is on the most sensitive issue of all—government, or who has the authority. The Protestant daughters are returning to their mother church. It was all prophesied to happen (Isaiah 47:1-8; see “Returning to the Fold” on page 18).

David’s Throne

There is another ominous sign relating to this Anglican-Catholic study document: It was released from Westminster Abbey, which is where David’s throne is—where kings and queens of the once-great British Empire are crowned.

That is the throne on which Jesus Christ will sit when He returns! (For a detailed study, write for our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, which clearly traces that throne back to King David. Before Herbert W. Armstrong died, he distributed over 5 million copies of that book.)

In Luke 1:32-33, an angel told Mary that her Son, Jesus Christ, would be given that very throne: “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and *the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David*: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

This refers to a throne on this Earth—in Westminster Abbey! JESUS CHRIST WILL NOT RETURN TO A NON-EXISTENT THRONE! Here is the awesome and only hope of the world! Christ is going to rule from that very throne—not the pope’s throne. If we are true Christians, we must look to the throne that Christ will rule from very soon. A Christian is one who follows Christ.

God will hold Britain and America accountable for the knowledge concerning that throne. We are the same people—brothers—and are without excuse.

“The gift of authority”—God’s authority—is given only to those who look to that throne! BRITAIN HAS “THE GIFT OF AUTHORITY” ALREADY *but refuses to accept it*. And the Anglican Church leads the rebellion!

For the Anglican Church to release that study paper from Westminster Abbey is the ultimate insult to God! If it is rejecting God’s authority, then whose authority is it accepting?

Britain should be teaching the world about the imminent return of Jesus Christ to sit on that throne! What a “gift of authority” *that is*. If only the people of Britain understood. They must understand that THERE IS NO POWER IN THE UNIVERSE THAT COULD CHANGE THIS TRUTH. It must be accepted by all humanity. It’s only a matter of *when*.

God has given “the gift of authority” to His true Church because it teaches the truth about David’s throne. And God is going to punish this world until every person accepts the most inspiring truth ever given to man!

Britain’s monstrous sin will not go unpunished! God will punish its people until they learn about David’s throne. Are they going to be a bloody *victim* of the bloody Holy Roman Empire before they accept the truth?

Time is going to radically change our view of the pope’s funeral. And we only have a very short time to wait.

AS THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE GROWS IN POWER, OUR MESSAGE MUST INTENSIFY!

And now the Anglican Church is promoting world rule for the Vatican throne. BRITAIN’S GREATEST HONOR FROM GOD HAS BEEN TO POSSESS AND EXALT THE THRONE OF DAVID. NOW THAT HONOR HAS BECOME ITS MOST DESPICABLE SHAME!

God says that the leaders who do this are going to receive “the burial of an ass”! (Jeremiah 22:19).

Jesus Christ is about to return and sit on David’s throne forever. That is the best news this world could hear today. ■

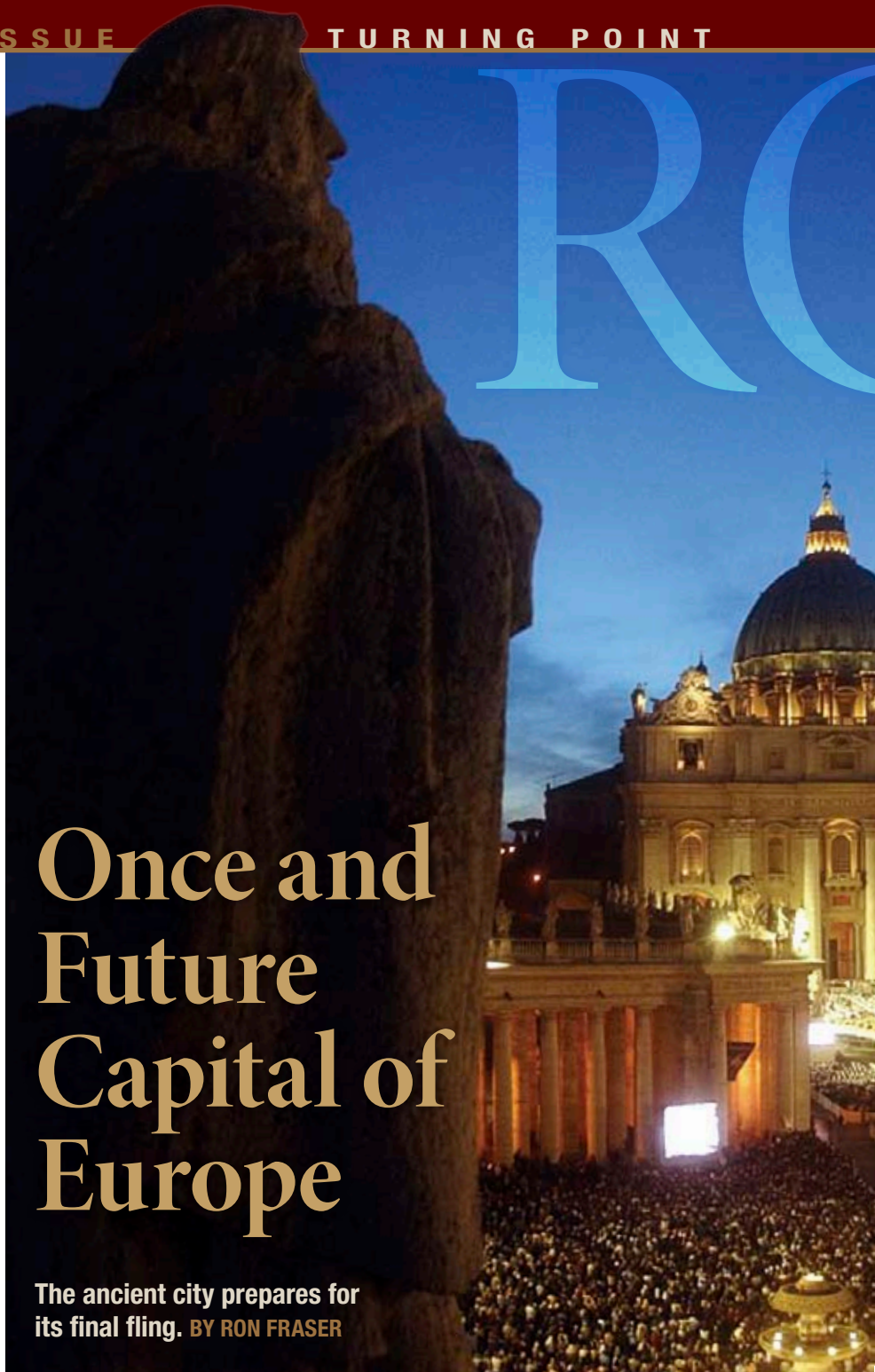


LAST VISITED ROME FOUR years ago. Since then I have watched it from a distance across the Atlantic observing its politics and fascinated by the growing signs of its revitalization. Of course, the pope's funeral had the whole world riveted to the seven-hilled city toward which, tradition has it, all roads lead. Thus the city recently gained multiple millions of dollars' worth of free publicity, worldwide, courtesy of the global media industry. The other religions of the world had to just look on as a religious spectacle—unprecedented since the invention of mass media—held the world enthralled. You name it—Islam, Buddhism, Shintoism, Taoism, Hinduism, Protestantism, or any other “ism” for that matter in the confusion that is represented by this world's religious and ideological cultures—none could hold a candle to the sheer opulence, splendor and garish enchantment of this great Roman event.

Watching Rome and observing the reports of the bustle of construction, refurbishment and cleaning up that is currently going on there, it is apparent that something profound is happening to that ancient city. Pope John Paul II certainly motivated the enhancement of Rome's appearance for his great millennial celebrations as we crossed the threshold from century 20 to 21. But there seems, from all accounts, to be a particular vigor about the continuing renovation of Rome at this juncture. It is shedding its moldy cloak. This ancient and historic city, spiritual capital to the old “Holy” Roman Empire, is modernizing at a frenetic pace. Its fabulous treasures of high art and architecture are being surrounded by a-la-mode structures bespeaking a 21st-century look.

Stimulated by the Vatican's millennial Grand Jubilee year and influenced by the dynamism of the city's mayor, Walter Veltroni, new building construction has picked up apace. Yet, though aggressive, this building initiative has a strong cultural edge to it. As Veltroni explained, “Our plan is to make the most of the historic character of the city, safeguarding it and making it live together with the city's modernity. There is no conflict between the two” (*Condé Nast Traveler*, March 2005).

There seems to be little doubt that the city of Rome is being prepared for its final fling as spiritual capital of this world.



Once and Future Capital of Europe

The ancient city prepares for its final fling. **BY RON FRASER**

City Icons

It is intriguing to observe end-time prophecies coalescing in Rome, Berlin and Paris. These are the Western capitals of the prime nations that are the driving force of the European Union. All other nations fall into place behind the Italo-Franco-German juggernaut. Madrid has increasingly joined this triumvirate since José Rodríguez Zapatero was elected Spain's leader last year. Whereas

the former prime minister was more intent on siding with Britain on important issues, Zapatero has easily fallen in step with the Franco-German combine.

Paris started its great cleanup of centuries of accumulated grime back in the 1960s under Charles de Gaulle. The result was a revelation of architectural brilliance that had been hidden under the soot, grime, dust and mold produced by the city's crowded population, centu-

ROME

AP/WIDEWORLD



MODERNIZED

Rome is preparing for the future—by looking to its past.

ries of coal-fired stoves, and patina of the Industrial Revolution. In this world, no city can compare with Paris's gilt-trimmed brilliance in spring.

Nevertheless, it is not to Paris that the world will look during the time of Europe's final dominance as the final resurrection of the "Holy" Roman Empire.

For some time we have thought that Spain would reassert its power as a prime influence in garnering Latin America

back into Europe's fold. End-time prophecy indicates that global geopolitics will fracture along religious lines. With Latin America being the only continent on the planet with a single dominant language and religion—Spanish and Roman Catholicism—all indications lead to the conclusion that this region, through the old imperial influence of Spain, will be drawn in under the EU umbrella. Yet, with Spain being a committed EU mem-

ber and the weakest of the leading four EU nations, there's obviously no hope of Madrid exerting itself as the capital of the reviving Euro-empire.

Thus it falls to the two other dominant nations in Europe—the one asserting its traditional religion, Italy; the other dominating it economically, politically and, in time, militarily, Germany—to furnish the city icons to which the world can look. It is, then, no mean coincidence that both Rome and Berlin are in the midst of great refurbishment at this time.

Since the Berlin Wall cracked open on Nov. 9, 1989, plans have been afoot to revive Berlin as the political capital of the EU. For years—and to this day—Brussels, Belgium, has had that honor. However, throughout the 1990s and on into the 21st century, Berlin has been one huge construction site, as old buildings were razed, new, futuristic buildings erected, and still others of historic significance—including the infamous Reichstag—refurbished and renewed. Berlin has even put back on display the dusted-off and polished-up statues of Germany's military heroes that were banished following World War II. That city's future as the grand capital of a revived, reunited Germany was cemented when Gerhard Schröder moved the German government headquarters from the innocuous, lackluster Bonn, its Cold War capital, back to the city that was capital of Germany under both Kaiser Wilhelm and Hitler: Berlin.

But it is not Berlin—yet—upon which the eyes of the world rest. It is Rome. Rome, where the greatest media extravaganza ever took place on April 8 with the funeral of Pope John Paul II. Rome, undergoing a massive beautification program, which no doubt will be a fitting backdrop to the machinations of the new pope.

As an Associated Press writer commented, the final days of the pope "sparked a sustained outpouring of reverence both for him and the Roman Catholic Church ..." (April 3). The icon of that religion and its old empire is the city of Rome.

Yet, for all the rich heritage of the seven-hilled city—for all the power and opulence of its dominant church—the wealthiest institution in this world—that old city is prophesied to fall in one hour, at the end of the very hour in history through which we are all living right now (Revelation 18:10). What a spectacular day for this world *that day shall be!* ■

The Perfect

Put together what the *Trumpet* has reported on Joseph Ratzinger and what we have warned about the next pope, and in Benedict XVI you have just the man to fulfill some of the most Earth-shaking prophecies of all time. **BY RYAN MALONE**

THE WORLD HAS A NEW POPE. And what a pope he is.

Joseph Ratzinger is now Benedict XVI. The *Trumpet* has been watching Ratzinger closely for several years. His name first made our magazine in the September-October 1997 issue. There we spoke out about how this Bavarian cardinal had combined with Pope John Paul II “as a formidable force to limit the voice of the liberal theologians both within the confines of the church and in public discourse.” Ever since John Paul II appointed him in 1981 to the Vatican’s most powerful office after his own—prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith—it was clear the Vatican was serious about rooting liberalism out of Catholicism.

Ratzinger’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (once named the “Roman Congregation of the Inquisition”), we said, “was to prove just as efficient as the old Inquisition in eliminating opposition, as numerous Catholic theologians have found ...”

Indeed, “Ratzinger set himself to disciplining all purveyors of false doctrine. The consummate enforcer,” the *Toronto Star* wrote. “Under his encouragement, the Vatican adopted policies whereby dissent was forbidden ...” (April 20).

Under the Wojtyla-Ratzinger policies, many doctrinally liberal cardinals were removed or reduced in status. The leadership of the Catholic Church in Latin America, for example, was replaced with men who toed the Vatican party line. The pope also appointed conservatives to run what had been liberal churches in numerous other countries such as Australia, India, Austria, Argentina, the Netherlands, Canada and Brazil.

But back then of course, we weren’t necessarily talking in terms of this man actually running the mighty church.

JOSEPH
RATZINGER
b. 1927

Man for the Job

We continued to speak of Ratzinger's influence in a March-April 1998 article, "The Third Way," where we detailed some of his philosophies based on a famous interview with journalist Peter Seewald—philosophies that entailed the church's 21st-century role of saving Christianity from the error of its ways and thus, in Vatican terms, saving greater mankind. Ratzinger stated, "The church must exert herself to bring man to the point where he is up to the challenge of himself, as it were, where he can confront his physical ability with a corresponding moral ability. ... It belongs to man's essence to need authority."

An Ultraconservative Pope

By the year 2000, as John Paul's health declined, it became clear to us that—based on Ratzinger's philosophies and what the Bible prophesied about Catholicism's future, especially as it tied to a revival of the Roman Empire—a German pope was a real possibility. We began to be bolder in our statements, saying that the next pope would be an archconservative and would bring to fruition some of the most dreadful of end-time prophecies.

Our June 2002 issue stated of the next pope: "Right wing he shall be, doctrinaire will be his mindset." John Paul II had increased the Vatican's political power on the world scene—as witnessed by its hand in the fall of the Communist USSR and more recently the breakup of Yugoslavia. It was clear to us that the next pope would "enforce the spiritual power of the church!"

The ultraconservative German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was obviously the perfect man for the job.

Diplomat and Unifying Figure

Ratzinger was known for years as an archconservative—but also as a charming, diplomatic, even shy man. Immediately upon his election as pope April 19, media commentators were heralding his quiet humility. (Ratzinger himself was quick to point out the same when he called himself "a simple, humble worker in the vineyard of the Lord.") Certainly Ratzinger not only has the right-wing doctrinal beliefs, he has the persona to rally support from his religion's believers.

As we stated in our last issue, before he became Benedict XVI, Ratzinger toned down his hard-line image by being more reserved in public and even at times issuing liberal statements to soften his persona. "There was a stigma," we quoted one Vatican insider of Ratzinger. "He rises above that now" (*Time*, January 10). Comparing his meek persona with his doctrinal rigidity, it's almost as if already—as the scripture says—he looks "like a lamb," but his words don't match that appearance.

We also said the next pope would breathe new life into Catholicism—that he would even rally and unite Protestants back into the Catholic fold.

On this account, Benedict XVI is also the perfect man for job.

One analyst said, of Ratzinger's influence on the Roman Catholic Church before his papacy, "For the first time, Catholic congregations in the U.S. South are attracting the sort of people who normally would join evangelical de-

nominations." The analyst wrote, "The popular media have assigned Ratzinger the image of a dour conservative, cracking down on dissenting theologians. Quite the opposite might be the case: As pope, Ratzinger might conceivably become something of a unifying figure in the Christian world" (*Asia Times*, April 5; emphasis mine throughout).

Looking to Jerusalem

We have also said that the next pope would have his sights set on Jerusalem. Ratzinger was known for statements he made concerning a reconciliation of sorts with the Jews. That reconciliation being, "the moment in which Israel too will say yes to Christ" (Ratzinger, *God and the World*). In other words, he envisioned the conversion of Jewry to Catholicism! After all, the "star points to Jerusalem," Ratzinger once wrote (*Salt of the Earth*).

Watch for this new pope to have a more fervent interest in Israeli politics and affairs surrounding Jerusalem.

Steering Europe's Destiny

Another description of the next pope that we have been trumpeting for the
See RATZINGER page 25 ▶

A Tale of Two Bavarians

"Bavaria and the whole of Germany are celebrating Ratzinger's election. I am certain that the new pope will be able to win over and rally all the world's Catholics, not only because he is the most brilliant theologian of all time, but also because of his human and pastoral qualities." These were the words of Bavarian Premier Edmund Stoiber, leader of the Christian Social Union party in Germany.

When Ratzinger was elected the new pope, a multitude of world leaders expressed their support in the same spirit of support.

What's interesting is that both Stoiber and Ratzinger are men the *Trumpet* has been watching for several years now. We said both would likely take the lead of their respective governments. That has happened for one of them.

To whatever extent the Bavarian premier and the new Bavarian pope share a friendship, we know that they share similar views on many issues—religious and political. Both are from the most Catholicized part of Germany—the region that bred European influentials like Otto von Habsburg and Adolf Hitler.

In 2002, as Germany geared up for national elections, our editor in chief wrote of Stoiber, "He could change Europe and the world more than any man in the 21st century."

Now that a Bavarian pope reigns in the Vatican, we must wonder how Europe would change were a Bavarian premier to take the German chancellorship—or, more significantly, a position at the top of the European Union.

We have been looking for a strong church-state connection to take shape in Europe, steered by the *Vatican* and *Germany*. Considering the backgrounds and philosophies of these two men—not to mention their similar grand visions for Europe—Stoiber and Ratzinger could be the ones to make this happen?

With the Bavarian Benedict able "to win over and rally all the world's Catholics," and a rising political twin who will likely lead Germany and even Europe, the Continent's fate in becoming another resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire appears close to being realized.



STOIBER



The death of Pope John Paul II prompted some of the most powerful voices from Protestant denominations to sing praises for the mother church.

It's time we understood what lies behind the historic division between Catholics and Protestants—why the two are now moving toward unity—and where it will ultimately lead. BY STEPHEN FLURRY

Returning to the Fold



VAST DEFERENCE
The archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Church of England, kisses the hand of Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.

WHEN ROWAN WILLIAMS, the archbishop of Canterbury, sat in the front row across from the coffin of John Paul II, he was making a statement of allegiance that would have been unthinkable not many years ago. He was the first Anglican leader in history to attend a pope's funeral. He called the pope "one of the very greatest" Christian leaders of the 20th century (*Daily Telegraph*, London, April 4).

While in Rome, the archbishop made statements signaling that "the rift between Anglicans and Catholics stemming from the Reformation could finally be healed ..." (*Australian*, April 12)—speaking of the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. A *Guardian* headline in London read, "It's as if the Reformation had never happened." The archbishop's actions and words reflect a new type of relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and its protest-

ing, or Protestant, daughter churches.

This relationship between Protestants and Catholics is one we have been following closely over the years. Back in 1963, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote, "Protestant churches everywhere are gravitating toward UNION with the Roman Catholic Church. These religious movements are speeding the fulfillment of the prophecies of the resurrected Roman Empire" (Oct. 27, 1963). In the *Plain Truth* magazine, Mr. Armstrong also boldly stated:

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

“Protestantism will be absorbed into the ‘mother’ church ...” (October 1961).

Today we see this happening. John Paul’s death created an outpouring of allegiance to the Vatican from the Anglican Church and dozens of other Christian groups the likes of which this world has never seen! As our editor in chief commented recently, “I believe the pope’s death will be the *single greatest event to UNIFY PROTESTANTS WITH THEIR ROMAN CATHOLIC MOTHER.*”

Reconciliation in Rome

While in Rome, Rowan Williams conducted a joint prayer service with the cardinal archbishop of Westminster, Cormac Murphy-O’Connor—head of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. Murphy-O’Connor stated that ecumenism, or the drive for church unity, was “a road with no exit” and that “we desire from the depths of our hearts that our churches should come closer” (*Times Online*, April 11).

In an interview prior to the pope’s funeral, the archbishops of Westminster and Canterbury described how the pope’s death had highlighted the existing ties between the Catholic and Anglican churches and their hopes for those ties to become closer. Dr. Williams said that his being at the funeral was “a mark of the deep bonds of personal closeness and intimacy that have come to exist between the office of the archbishop and the papacy” (Press Association, April 8).

The archbishop also said that “although the breach with Rome was ‘not yet at an end,’ there had been an *irreversible reconciliation* between Anglicans and Catholics during the reign of John Paul II for his successor to build on” (*Times Online*, op. cit.; emphasis mine throughout). Williams stated, “The roots we have put down in recent years are far too deep to uproot.”

Heightened Urgency

Although church unity was an ongoing mission throughout his reign, John Paul II appeared to highlight a new urgency toward the end of his pontificate. At the annual meeting to exchange Christmas greetings with church officials last year, the pope reinforced the church’s Christian-unity focus. He told the assembled cardinals, archbishops and bishops that the church had received the “high mission” of being the instrument “*of the unity of all mankind*” (Vatican Information Service, Dec. 21, 2004). “Unity among all people, beginning with believers, is our

priority commitment,” he stated, adding that “it is *urgent* to rebuild full communion among Christians” (Zenit.org, Dec. 21, 2004).

Further, John Paul said, “The ecumenical effort *is being intensified* at different levels, thanks to constant contacts, meetings and initiatives with our brethren of the different churches and Orthodox and Protestant ecclesial communities” (ibid.).

That intensification has been reflected in public shows of unity over the past few months. For example, following the Asian tsunami last December, the heads of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches in Britain held a prayer session together in the Catholic Westminster Cathedral.

The Vatican’s annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January marked a new stage in its collaboration with the World Council of Churches, made up of 342 religious communities around the world. For the first time, the preparation of the document that Catholics used in the Week of Prayer meetings was written jointly by World Council of Churches and Vatican bodies. During this week, Catholic priests traded places behind the pulpit with clergymen of a variety of denominations.

Now, with the death of John Paul II sweeping Protestant churches along in the euphoria of papal adulation, we can expect to see a further cementing of Catholic-Protestant ties. Besides the fact that both sides strongly desire reconciliation, the Bible long ago predicted first the *division*, and then the end-time *reunion*, of this mother-daughter relationship.

The Daughter of Babylon

In Isaiah 47:1, God identifies a “daughter of Babylon”—not the Babylon of old, but a *daughter* that emerges out of that system and exists even during the last days of man’s civilization. In Bible prophecy, where there are references to a *woman*, or *daughter*, the meaning is CHURCH. God’s Church, for instance, is referred to in Scripture as the woman, or bride, who will marry Jesus Christ upon His return to this Earth (Ephesians 5; Revelation 19:7). The woman mentioned in Isaiah 47, however, refers to a great FALSE church.

Revelation 17 pictures this woman as a lewd harlot, arrayed in scarlet-colored clothing, and straddling a seven-headed beast. (This beast represents the seven resurrections of the “Holy” Roman Empire. For more on this subject, request our booklet *Germany and the Holy Ro-*

man Empire.) “And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (Revelation 17:5). It’s the same Babylonian mystery religion of old, but now, in this end time, grown so large that it encompasses the Earth, ruling over many peoples, from many nations, speaking many different languages (verse 15). It’s a global religious system—a *universal* church—that will ultimately guide and rule a geopolitical superpower in Europe. That’s why Isaiah 47:5 refers to her as “The lady of kingdoms.”

And in Revelation 17:5, this daughter of Babylon is represented as a “*mother of harlots.*” She came out of that ancient Babylonian system and produced offspring. It’s important to note that God also considers her protesting daughters *harlots*—just like their mother. They broke away from the mother church, but essentially retained the same character and makeup of their mother.

Roman Catholic *teaching* was not the cause of the Protestant Reformation. It was the obvious corruption and abuse at the top of the Catholic hierarchy that triggered the breakaway. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* states, “[T]he medieval church was essentially an international *state*, and ... the character of the Protestant secession from it was largely determined by this fact.” According to *Britannica*, the “religious elements in the Reformation have been greatly overestimated” (“The Reformation,” 11th edition).

In protesting against their mother, Protestant denominations rebelled against HER AUTHORITY first and foremost. Here is how Herbert W. Armstrong explained it: “The Roman church continued many centuries undivided. But the system of applying the principle of church government was all wrong. It ruled by the will of man, Satan-inspired. It preserved unity by physical force. It was the instrument of Satan. Therefore its fruits were evil!

“The Protestant movement failed to correct what was wrong. Because the Catholic government was a counterfeit misrule, *they abolished the rule*, instead of yielding themselves to the divine government of God. They reasoned that every man ought to do what was right in his own eyes. ...

“Some ... wanted democracy—government by the whole congregation. ...



FREE UPON REQUEST



"They went the way that seemed right in their own eyes. But, devout though they were, they had no firm basis for unity. They split and re-split, and today we have hundreds of Protestant denominations!" (*Good News*, January 1957).

Satan is the author of this Babylonian mystery religion, along with the widespread religious confusion and division it has produced. One may wonder, then, if the devil is now behind this movement toward reunification and unity. More on this later.

Unity Does Not Mean Compromise

All the talk of church unity may lead some to think that the Catholic Church is going to become more liberal—that a middle ground, or compromise, will be found between the Catholic and Protestant faiths.

But John Paul II, in his 1995 ecumenical encyclical, "Ut Unum Sint" ("That They May Be One"), said the objective of ecumenism was to unite other churches under the "Magisterium of the church"—or Roman Catholic Church authority. The document states: "To believe in Christ means to desire unity; to desire unity means to desire the [Catholic] Church." Regarding what appeared to some as concessions within the document, including the acceptance of some "Christian com-

munities" as "churches," a Global News Wire article had this to say: "These concessions represent neither a shift nor a softening of the dogmatic positions long held by the Roman church. Rather, the dogma remains deeply entrenched and the concessions are merely a part of the strategy or means by which 'other Christians' will be led to accept and unite under Catholic dogma" (Nov. 27, 2003).

Church unity, or ecumenism, has a nice ring to it for most people; it is taken for granted that such unity is something to be desired. But to the Catholic Church, unity emphatically does not mean TOLERANCE OR COMPROMISE.

A Vatican watcher stated that the hardliners who were in the Vatican conclave want "ecumenical dialogue between Christian denominations ... to be CONDITIONAL on a clear reaffirmation that only the Roman Catholic Church holds the truth and is the world's supreme moral authority" (Agence France Presse, April 10).

Indeed, the cardinal who emerged from that conclave as Pope Benedict XVI had previously described other denominations of Christianity as "gravely deficient." In 2000, Ratzinger's Congregation for

the Doctrine of the Faith published "Dominus Iesus" to help clarify the church's position on ecumenism. Many outsiders had interpreted John Paul's attempts to extend an olive branch to Protestant groups as a sign that he might be willing to meet them in the middle.

Not so!

The Roman church is 100 percent behind ecumenism, Ratzinger essentially said in the document, so long as Protestants submit to Catholics—not the other way around. The "mother" wants her "daughters" to move back home, but only if they obey the rules of the house.

Just weeks before releasing "Dominus Iesus," Ratzinger distributed a letter, approved by John Paul II, to all the church's bishops worldwide in which he banned the use of the term "sister churches" when used to describe other denominations of Christianity. "It must be always clear ... that the one, holy, catholic and apostolic universal church is not the sister, but mother of all the particular churches," he wrote.

"Anglican Catholics"?

Christians have seen recent Anglican reforms as widening the Reformation breach between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. Two significant stumblingblocks include the ordination of women priests and homosexuals, issues that rage hottest in the U.S., Canada and Australia. The manner in which mainstream Anglicanism is dealing with its liberal members, however, indicates that the church is more interested in its Catholic, "conservative" roots than in further reformation away from the mother church.

Earlier this year, the international Anglican Communion requested the U.S. and Canadian churches disassociate themselves from its councils to reconsider their liberal stand. This in itself could indicate a consolidation of conservative values in the mainstream Anglican Church—more in line with Vatican policies.

Further, in April the archbishop of Canterbury rejected an invitation to attend a joint meeting of U.S. and Canadian bishops. Anglican leaders from other countries have also distanced themselves or cut ties with their North American colleagues. Shunning the wayward liberals of North America raises the possibility that the more conservative Anglican contingent across the Atlantic will rejoin its mother without them. Ironically, the "Anglican split" may actually make it easier for the dominant traditional Anglican Church to be absorbed into the Roman Catholic Church.

In addition, the crisis within the Anglican Church, primarily in North America, is pushing many adherents toward conservatism. The international Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC), ortho-



WOMAN OF THE CLOTH

An Anglican priest blesses her father, Desmond Tutu, in Virginia. Mainstream Anglicans are shying away from ordaining female priests.

dox and traditional in doctrine, has grown from just a handful of members in 1977 to half a million adherents around the world today and is gaining 15,000 members a month (*Halifax Daily News*, Nova Scotia, April 1). Observers expect this growth to accelerate when the TAC is accepted into Uniate communion with the Roman Catholic Church, as the TAC's leader, Archbishop John Hepworth, anticipates. Hepworth says that though Uniate Anglicans will not become Roman Catholic, they will "be accepted as *Anglican Catholics* ... into union with the Holy See" (*ibid.*). "Unity for the [Anglican] church," Hepworth maintains, "is not an option. Unity with Peter [and his successors] is a *biblical imperative.*"

Despite church controversy, the attraction of strong church dogma in line with Catholic doctrine is increasing its pull among many.

It's as if he got his language right out of Revelation 17:5! But think about what he wrote for a moment: *We don't consider them sisters—they're daughters! And rebellious ones at that*, he might have added.

Compare Ratzinger's letter with what the archbishop of Canterbury said prior to John Paul's funeral. He described how, for him, it was the most natural thing in the world to share the "prayers, hopes, grief and thanksgiving of *our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters*" (*Times Online*, op. cit.).

Shame on Rowan Williams! Doesn't he know they're *not* brothers and sisters? THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS THE MOTHER CHURCH! That's certainly the way Pope Benedict XVI sees it.

So when the new pope says, in his first mass after the conclave, that his "primary task" would be to work without fail to unify all Christians, it's important to understand what he really means. As Ratzinger himself wrote in "Dominus Iesus," "[T]here exists a single Church of Christ, which subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter [the pope] and by the bishops in communion with him." And only those churches that subject themselves to the pope's authority are to be considered "true particular churches." Ratzinger said they could use the term "church" to describe Orthodox churches that split with Rome 1,000 years ago, but as for denominations that broke away after the Protestant Reformation, ABSOLUTELY NOT. They are "NOT churches in the proper sense," Ratzinger said in the document. According to him, *they are not even churches*—unless they return to the mother church.

The Vatican's desire for church unity, or ecumenism, is actually a desire for *dominance*. And the only way protesting daughters will be accepted back into the fold is by recognizing the supremacy and absolute authority of the papacy.

Leading Anglicans and Protestants reacted with anger and shock to "Dominus Iesus." Less than five years later, at the pope's funeral, they spoke like repentant daughters, returning from their wayward journey. At the pope's funeral, Bishop John Flack, the archbishop of Canterbury's representative in Rome, said that when John Paul II came to power 27 years ago, "many Anglicans would

not have accepted that he was the leader of all Christians"—inferring that now they would. If only they knew how their outpouring of support and allegiance to the papacy is a sign of the imminent fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

Return of the Daughters

Let's return to the prophecy in Isaiah 47. This mother church is referred to as an end-time daughter of the Babylonian religious system. Verse 1 describes this church as having a throne, which makes its identity obvious.

"Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children" (verse 8). The mother church may have lost its protesting daughters centuries ago, but it has a master plan to ultimately *force* those daughters back into the fold! This prophecy is speaking of a time when the Catholic Church would wield supreme power, boasting that she will not know "the loss of children," or daughter churches. In other words, a time when the Catholic Church would attain a state of "unity" with its Protestant daughter churches.

The only way protesting daughters will be accepted back into the fold is by recognizing the absolute authority of the pope.

This is the prophecy that prompted Herbert W. Armstrong to state, with ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY—and *more than 40 years ago*—that Protestant churches would gravitate toward unification with Rome. *This* prophecy is why the *Trumpet* has followed in Mr. Armstrong's footsteps, making such bold predictions (see, in our November 2000 issue, "A Spanking From the Mother Church"). Now, with the death of John Paul II prompting headlines such as "Anglicans Talk of Unity With Rome," this prophecy is near the point of fulfillment.

But the question yet remains, *why*? Why is Satan—the author of Babylonian confusion and division—intent on bringing all Christian denominations together under the unifying force and power of Roman Catholicism?

What Lies Ahead

As the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4), Satan obviously uses the civil magistrates and rulers of this world to further his purposes. But 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 reveal that he also works through ecclesiastical rulers—false ministers masquerading as servants of Christ—"angels of light," Paul said. The Bible plainly reveals that the devil has his own churches, false ministers, and unscriptural, Babylonian doctrines. When God inspired John to write in Revelation 12:9 that Satan deceives the "whole world," he didn't mean everyone EXCEPT THE 2 BILLION PEOPLE ON EARTH who call themselves *Christian*. (He meant everyone except for His "little flock" of mostly scattered, and often-times persecuted, very elect saints—see Luke 12:32 and Matthew 24:22.)

Here, then, is why Satan is moving the hearts of his ministers in this drive toward unity within the Christian world. For one, it is because of the coming clash between Christianity and Islam, in what will be the final chapter of the "Christian" Crusades. According to the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, in 1970, Catholics outnumbered Muslims by 20 PERCENT. As of 2000—just 30 years later—the tables completely turned with *Muslims outnumbering Catholics* by about 12 percent. In just one generation, we have seen the Islamic religion race past Catholicism to become the world's largest and fastest-growing religion.

Of far greater concern to Vatican officials is the trend inside Catholicism's birthplace: Europe. While the number of Catholic converts has been shrinking in its own backyard, Islam has enjoyed expansive growth all across the Continent.

As we have repeatedly noted in the pages of this magazine over the years, these two religious giants are on a crash course of epic proportions (see "A Headache for Benedict" on page 37). Since the Bible says a Catholic-dominated European Union will eventually conquer the Islamic king of the south with an overwhelming show of force (Daniel 11:40), we know the spread of Islam will not outpace Catholicism for much longer.

One way for the demographic trend to reverse, almost overnight—looking at it strictly in terms of numbers—is for CHURCH UNITY. Taken together, Catholic, Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant denominations have about 2 billion adherents worldwide, compared with 1.3 billion Muslims.



That's not to say that Catholics and Protestants will be completely unified before this prophesied religious clash with Islam. What we can expect, though, is a *partial* unity prior to the Daniel 11 prophecy being fulfilled. Indeed, in many ways, this has *already* happened.

Total unity between the Roman church and its protesting daughters won't actually occur until immediately after the clash between the kings of the north and south—the event that triggers the beginning of the Great Tribulation. At that point, the mother church will abandon her efforts to woo her daughters back by flatteries and instead revert to the age-old method of preserving "Christian" unity by exerting physical force—Inquisition-style. And the Bible clearly indicates that most daughters

will fall in line with mother's misrule rather than be killed.

Thus, the stage will be set for another great clash—the titanic battle of the ages! Look into your Bible and see what it says about the prophesied return of Jesus Christ to this Earth! Let's return to the account in Revelation 17, about the scarlet-clad whore riding the seven-headed beast. Verse 15 says, "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." And what does the Bible say about this globe-girdling, religiously guided beast power? Look at verse 13: "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." What unity! What oneness of mind—all of them giving their power and strength to this religiously dominated beast! *And for what reason?*

Verse 14: "These shall MAKE WAR with the Lamb" This is where the ecumenical movement is ultimately leading—INTO A HEAD-ON COLLISION WITH JESUS CHRIST! This is the real motive behind "church unity" in the Christian world, as far as the devil is concerned. This is why he's working overtime, EVEN NOW—*behind the scenes*—to UNITE all the world's religious denominations and sects: It's so they might then JOINTLY OPPOSE and FIGHT AGAINST the coming rule of Jesus Christ on this Earth!

Satan is the author of confusion. He loves division—even within his own deceived Christian community. BUT SATAN HATES JESUS CHRIST MORE! So he's gathering all of his forces of evil to make one last UNIFIED stand—against Christ!

And Then, Unity Under Christ!

Efforts at Unity

Under the leadership of John Paul, the Catholic Church made unprecedented efforts to unify Christianity under the "mother" church.

■ In 1979, on a visit to the United States, the pope introduced a theme that would outlive him: "We ... are asking all Christians—Catholic, Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox—to transcend our present and past differences on this occasion, and to mark the papal visit as a sign and stimulus for reconciliation ... and to pray for the unity we seek."

■ In 1982, John Paul became the first bishop of Rome to set foot in England, giving a sermon at Canterbury Cathedral, headquarters of the Church of England.

■ In 1999, Catholics and Anglicans jointly published a document called "The Gift of Authority" that asked Christians from both churches to recognize the authority of the pope. The same year, the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification was signed by the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation, ending one of the major disagreements that had split the Christian world since the Protestant Reformation.

■ In May 2000, a global summit of Roman Catholic and Anglican regional leaders, as well as Vatican clergy, was held in Toronto, where they examined how Anglican-Catholic relations could be improved. The talks were the first of their kind.

■ In 2001, "a historical convergence of Europe's main Christian leaders" signed an ecumenical charter "intended to promote greater interchurch cooperation" (*U.S. Catholic*, July 1, 2001). The main signatories were the president of the Conference of European Churches—which represents the Orthodox, Anglican, Old Catholic and Protestant churches of Europe—and the president of the Catholic Council of European Bishops' Conferences. The charter outlined guidelines in the areas of Christian unity, interchurch dialogue and service to European unity. "There is no alternative to reconciliation and ecumenism," the document stated.

■ In 2002, for the first time the Vatican hosted an exhibition on Anglicanism. The "Anglican Church has been welcomed back to the bosom of the Vatican—at least in spirit," is how the *Houston Chronicle* interpreted the move (June 29, 2002). German Cardinal Walter Kasper said, "This exhibition is symbolic of the partial communion which we already share" (*Washington Post*, June 8, 2002).



FALLING INTO LINE

Murphy-O'Connor and Rowan Williams attend mass in Rome prior to Pope John Paul II's funeral.

When Jesus Christ returns to this Earth to restore God's perfect government, HE WILL NOT BE WELCOMED. Every denomination and sect, EVERY RELIGION on Earth, will oppose His loving rule, except for a "little flock" of followers that will be supernaturally protected by God during the Great Tribulation. But thank God for the fact that Satan's Babylonian system will NOT prevail!

"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" (verse 14).

Isaiah 47 also speaks of the stunning demise of this powerful mother church, once she gains back the daughter churches she believes are rightfully hers and wreaks the destruction that is prophesied to occur in the coming Great Tribulation.

But the *real* news is this: The disastrous results of church unity Vatican-style will herald the arrival on the world scene of *true* Christian unity—under the Christ-led government of the Kingdom of God.

God speed the day.

With reporting by **DONNA GRIEVES**

John Paul II made a habit of being “the first pope ever” to visit certain areas, and his reasons were no secret. He wanted to heal the breach in Europe between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches—a split rooted in a dispute over the infallibility of the pope that goes all the way back to the ninth century. Mr. Armstrong made reference to this dispute: “The Catholic Church is divided between the Roman Catholic Church in the west and the Greek Orthodox Church in the east. The latter has strenuously objected to supremacy of the pope and to

return as one of “we which are alive” (1 Thessalonians 4:15). When the Apostle John said, “It is the last time [hour],” he truly believed that Jesus Christ was returning shortly. These men, obviously faithful servants of God, were off in their timing by almost 2,000 years.

When the Great Tribulation comes before the return of Jesus Christ, no one will think about the timing of Mr. Armstrong’s comments. They will remember that everything he said came to pass EXACTLY AS HE SAID IT WOULD IN 1934, as well as the words the apostles Paul and John penned so long ago.

How far away does a European superpower seem now? With a Europe-focused conservative new pope, a phenomenon the *Trumpet* has continually warned we should expect

at this time, how probable does it seem that the European superpower will take its final form speedily?

This is NOT the time to say, as Christ warned against in Matthew 24:48, “My Lord delayeth His coming!”

Far from being wrong in his prophetic statements, Mr. Armstrong has been proven RIGHT again and again. He saw the formation of the European superpower on the horizon before anyone else did. He pointed out, decades in advance, that John Paul could be the pope to initiate the reunion of east and west in Europe. In the midst of the Cold War, the headline “Why Russia Will NOT Attack America!” only ran in one magazine: the *Plain Truth*. His analysis of world events was consistently decades ahead of those around him. For far more proof of this, please request a copy of our sample *Trumpet* edition titled “He Was Right,” which illustrates this fact in detail.

Before Jesus Christ came to Earth the first time, John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way. Now, a man in this modern age has prepared the way for Jesus Christ’s Second Coming, which will have a far more dramatic outcome for everyone alive—in fact, for everyone who has ever lived. The announcement given during Christ’s first coming of the good news of His coming Kingdom is about to be realized! And, just as prophesied in Malachi 4:5, the world has been prepared before the coming of that “great and dreadful day of the Lord.” ■

past several years is that he would be a man intent on shaping the future of Europe—and injecting traditional Roman Christianity back into it.

The Vatican has complained of a “militant secularism” that is “driving the church out of public life in Europe” (BBC News, February 11). Benedict XVI is at the forefront of this concern. Just the week prior to his election as pope, he released a book, *Values in Times of Upheaval*, arguing that Europe must reclaim its Christian heritage. Last December, he said, “We are in a very grave moment; radical secularism may destroy humanism” (Zenit.org, Dec. 2, 2004). He seems to have just the remedy. As one Vatican insider told *Time*, “The Ratzinger solution is definitely on” (op. cit.).

If his papal name is any indication, the new pope will certainly work to apply his “solution.” In his first weekly papal audience, on April 27, Ratzinger used the occasion “to express what may become a central theme of his papacy: the Christian roots of Europe” (*International Herald Tribune*, April 28). In this message, the pope explained why he had chosen the name Benedict, one reason being “the role that St. Benedict of Norcia, the 5th-century founder of the Benedictine order of monks, had on spreading Christianity in Europe” (ibid.). Pope Benedict stated: “He represents a fundamental point of reference for the unity of Europe and a strong reminder of the unrenounceable Christian roots of its culture and civilization.”

We can be certain that the “spread of Christianity on the Continent” will indeed be a priority for Benedict XVI. Seven resurrections of the warmongering Holy Roman Empire are prophesied in chapters 13 and 17 of Revelation—six of which have already occurred (as our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire* explains). Historically, this empire typically revolved around Germany and the Vatican, along with Italy. The reason this pope is of vital interest is that he will most likely be one of the two most powerful leaders of the seventh resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire—an empire that will thrust the world into a prophesied World War III! The seventh resurrection—now in the making—will once again revolve around Germany and the Vatican. Now that the first German pope in 10 centuries rules in the Vatican, every indication is that these prophecies will speed to fruition! After all, Benedict XVI is the perfect man for the job. ■

When the tribulation comes before Christ’s return, people will remember that everything he said came to pass just as he said.

the doctrine of papal infallibility. But on this trip we learned in Athens that the Eastern Orthodox church at last is willing to give in on papal leadership, though not yet in agreement on infallibility. I feel sure some compromise or agreement will be reached very soon” (ibid.).

John Paul II spent the rest of his life trying to bring the daughter churches back into the fold. In a May 25, 1995, address, “That They May Be One,” he stated, “How can unity be restored after almost a thousand years? This is the great task which the Catholic Church must accomplish, a task equally incumbent on the Orthodox Church.” But while his life was spent working toward the unity of the Catholic Church, his *death* was the single greatest catalyst toward achieving that goal. Look at how John Paul’s funeral, the greatest media event in history, brought the world together. Mr. Armstrong’s statements on Catholic unity are right on the verge of coming to pass (see “Returning to the Fold” on page 18). Any actions Pope Benedict XVI will take toward further reconciliation with Protestant and Orthodox religions were made possible by John Paul II.

He Was Right

And yet, on occasion, someone will point out that Mr. Armstrong was not always correct in stating how *quickly* prophecy might unfold. Remember though, the Apostle Paul believed he would be caught up in the air at Christ’s

TERRORISM

The Nuclear Dangers of Illegal Immigrants

A TERRORIST SLIPPING through America's borders is bad enough; what about a terrorist employed in a nuclear power plant?

On April 13, Associated Press issued a report stating that 57 illegal immigrants were arrested in March who worked at "airports and other risk-sensitive facilities." One man worked as an airplane mechanic in Greensboro, N.C. Another worked in a Florida nuclear power plant.

The danger this situation poses is obvious. Although none of those arrested appear to have ties to terrorism, the idea that employee background checks in key areas are this lax points toward a danger that the *Trumpet* has warned about many times.

We already know that the borders of the U.S. are not even close to secure, with tons of illicit drugs and a million illegal immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border every year. A terrorist could easily enter the U.S. with whatever destructive capabilities he brought along. But imagine how much damage someone with a fake ID and access to a nuclear facility could cause!

We live in a country that faces a horrifying prophecy, found in Ezekiel 5:12: "A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee" In his book *Ezekiel: The End-Time Prophet*, editor in chief Gerald Flurry explained, "The word *pestilence* just means destruction or death (see the *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*). One definition of the root word is 'to

lay snares, to plot against, to destroy.' So this pestilence could be a plague of violence or burning—not necessarily a physical disease at all! It can be defined as a plague of violence or rioting—such as the Los Angeles riots in 1992 or the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks!"

The threat of terrorism in the United States is very real. Sadly, despite post-9/11 efforts, inadequate security in many areas is one ele-



TARGET Nuclear plants like this Florida one are alarmingly vulnerable to terror strikes.

ment that will lead to the fulfillment of Ezekiel 5—if we don't wake up.

Al Qaeda Has Crude Nuke?

"RECURRENT INTEL-
ligence reports say al Qaeda terrorist Abu Musab Zarqawi has obtained a nuclear device or is preparing a radiological explosive—or dirty bomb—for an attack, according to U.S. officials, who also say analysts are unable to gauge the reliability of the information's sources. ... CIA Director Porter J. Goss said such a terrorist strike 'may be only a matter of time'" (*Washington Times*, April 20).

Terrorists and Technology

WHAT MANY ISRAELIS THOUGHT WAS a noisy UFO was actually a new technology owned by one of the Middle East's most successful terrorist groups.

On April 11, Hezbollah flew an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) over settlements in northern Israel in violation of Israeli airspace. This was the second successful mission of its type in recent months. Last November, Hezbollah flew a UAV from Lebanon into Israeli air space and over the northern Israeli town of Nahariya. After flying undetected for about 30 minutes, the flight ended safely when the UAV landed close to the shore on the Lebanese side of the Mediterranean Sea. In an even greater display of defiance against Israel, in its most recent UAV flight, Hezbollah successfully flew a Mirsad-1 spy plane over Israeli territory for three hours (Stratfor, April 12).

On Nov. 8, 2004, the day after the first launch, Hezbollah was quick to trumpet its achievement and released a 20-minute video containing footage taken from the UAV's flight. It also claimed that the aircraft could penetrate silently and "deeply" into Israel's borders.

The *Atlantic Monthly* highlighted further details of Hezbollah's UAVs: "[T]he aircraft can carry a payload of up to 88 pounds, making it an 'attractive option' for launching a covert attack with chemical or biological weapons" (March 2005). 9/11 and this example clearly prove that many terrorist groups have a variety of options besides strapping

explosives to the sweaty chest of a suicide bomber in order to attack their targets.

Today's well-financed terrorist groups are gaining access to some of the most advanced technology around. It is believed that Hezbollah has eight of these UAVs. Not surprisingly, Israeli intelligence believes that the UAVs were graciously donated to Hezbollah by none other than Iran—the head of the terrorist snake.

The fact that Hezbollah has a number of unmanned aircraft vehicles that could potentially drop chemical, biological or nuclear weapons is frightening—particularly if you live in Israel. More than that, Hezbollah's UAVs disprove the notion that terrorist organizations are mostly backwoods groups that tramp around the desert, moving from cave to cave, fighting battles with broken bottles and primitive explosives.

The military arsenal at the disposal of many terrorist organizations clearly goes much deeper than this. Thanks to nations like Iran, many terrorists have access to some of the most advanced and *dangerous* technology available. Reports indicate that al Qaeda might already possess a nuclear weapon.

How frightening that these dangerous technologies are making it into the hands of some of the world's most dangerous and volatile men. Many commentators and government officials say it is only a matter of time before Israel and the United States are attacked by terrorists using these technologies.

Iran Found Interfering

IN APRIL, THE AUSTRALIAN reported that for the first time “concrete evidence” has been found of Iran’s interference in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process (April 4). This comes as no surprise to the *Trumpet*, which has reported extensively on Iran’s infiltration of Palestinian terrorist organizations. The newest information comes from a number of the Palestinian terrorists themselves, who told the *Sunday Times* that the Iranian-backed Hezbollah terrorist organization has paid for attacks against

Israelis for the past four years. In order to stymie the peace process, Hezbollah has encouraged violence against Israel by making payments of up to US\$9,000 for each attack. The militants reported that Hezbollah is currently on the hunt for Palestinians willing to carry out terrorist attacks that would ruin the existing “truce.”

In March, U.S. President George W. Bush said that he would accept Hezbollah as a legitimate political party in the region if it renounced terrorism. Hezbollah’s

leader boldly responded, “We are ready to remain until the end of time a terrorist organization in Bush’s view” (*Guardian*, March 16). Shortly thereafter, Hezbollah and Hamas reportedly signed a cooperation accord declaring their war against Israel as legitimate.

With Iran’s lackey Hezbollah deeply ensconced within Palestinian Islamic groups, things do not look bright for Israel. The *Trumpet* has long maintained that Iran’s ideological, logistical and monetary support of Palestinian terrorists has as its goal not only the destruction of the peace process, but the conquest of Jerusalem.

U.S.-Israeli Relations at Low

IS THE UNITED STATES GETTING weary of its alliance with the most hated country in the world?

The U.S.-Israel relationship practically seems preordained and eternal. Certainly Israel has heavily depended on America for support against the almost numberless enemies that surround it—both within the almost entirely Muslim Middle East and, if its poor treatment within the United Nations is any indication, worldwide.

If this pillar crumbles, it would shake the Jewish state to its foundation.

Nevertheless, the *Trumpet* has tracked several stories over the past year pointing to this development.

It had been quite some time since U.S. President George W. Bush had met with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon before they assembled at the president’s Texas ranch in April. Some officials and congressional sources say Bush has actually been avoiding Sharon. Many are characterizing the rela-

tionship between the two leaders as strained.

Middle East Newline said this: “U.S. officials said relations between Jerusalem and Washington have been strained at both the defense and political levels. They said the Bush administration has been increasingly estranged from the Israeli government amid repeated misunderstandings between leaders, rising U.S. skepticism over Israel’s ability to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and northern West Bank and”—note this—“the growing perception that Israel has hampered U.S. policy goals in the Middle East” (April 12; emphasis ours).

That report quoted one U.S. official as saying, “The administration wants to focus its Middle East policy on a military exit from a democratic Iraq. This goal requires significant international cooperation, and that’s where Israeli policy has been seen as a hindrance.”

As the *Trumpet* said in



DEFUNCT DUO? Sharon, in Texas, holds a press conference with Bush.

the March-April 2004 issue, “For many Arabs, the number-one reason to hate America is its support for Israel. As the U.S. war against terrorism continues to yield high bills, a steady body count and a booming crop of anti-Americanism worldwide, is it possible that Americans will begin to think, *Why are we making ourselves such a target over that little country?*”

Zechariah 11:14 contains a prophecy that God would “break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.” This may well refer to a future rift between America (biblical Israel) and the Jewish state (Judah). The *Trumpet* is watching for it.

Algeria Ties



WELCOME GUARD Iran’s Khatami (L) and his Algerian counterpart have agreed to boost military cooperation.

IN ITS GOAL OF REGIONAL hegemony, Iran is boosting ties with Algeria with an agreement to begin military cooperation (*Guardian*, April 5). In April, Iran’s defense minister visited Algiers for talks with the Algerian president and top defense officials—the first such visit since the Iranian Islamic Revolution in 1979. This could be a sign of what’s to come in the two countries’ relationship, which has improved “significantly” over the past year.

Should its Islamic-leaning populace bring to power an Islamic government, Algeria would come further into Iran’s sphere of influence. Our editor in chief has written of this likelihood in his booklet *The King of the South*: “The radical Islamic movement, led by Iran, is very strong in ... Algeria. This religion will probably take control ... very soon.”

So, as Tehran keeps the U.S. at bay and the Europeans talking, it continues in its efforts to expand its influence in the Middle East. As the Bible prophesies, that agenda will sometime soon lead Iran, as head of an Islamic power bloc, into confrontation with the same European power that is now kowtowing to it (Daniel 11:40).

CHINA

Securing a Vital Sea Port

THE CHINESE NAVY IS once again traversing the high seas, particularly the west Pacific and north Indian oceans. Driving Beijing's sea travel is its reliance on Middle Eastern oil and the need to secure the safe transport of this nation-building commodity.

In April, Chinese officials signed an agreement for the deepening of the port of Gwadar, "whose Chinese-built facilities symbolize China's return to an area that was, briefly, a playground for its navy" (*International Herald Tribune*, April 12). The article went on to explain that China's rapidly growing influence over this strategic port is sending "ripples of anxiety" through America, Japan and even India.

The *Trumpet* first acknowledged the economic, strategic and even military significance of Chinese interest in the port of Gwadar in August 2001.

China's rapidly expanding, technologically advanced navy is impressive (see our March-April 2005 article "China's Military Muscle"). Isn't it logical that, concurrent with its naval expansion, Beijing would seek to establish a number of seaports in which it can dock this naval hardware? Even the best navy in the world, if it were reliant on the port facilities of other nations to refuel and service its ships, would lie at the mercy of those nations.

By solidifying control over Gwadar, not only is Beijing establishing a base from which its navy can guarantee the security of its oil as it comes through the Strait of Hormuz, but it is in-



AMIR QUESHI/PHOTODISC

CHINA'S BABY Construction on the Gwadar port will upgrade the sea gate's significance.

creasing its navy's sphere of influence. Gwadar will serve as a base from which China

can patrol the high seas—specifically the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. The Chinese Navy is now on the doorstep of the Middle East!

China has taken control of some of the most critical seaports around the globe. Chinese government or private companies

own or partially own ports in Britain, Europe, Asia, Central and South America, the Caribbean and even Africa. Gaining control of strategic ports and waterways is clearly part of Beijing's strategic plan. *Gwadar is an apt example.*

It's a different story for America, however. Patrolling the Asian waterways and the Indian Ocean, since the post-world War II withdrawal of the British Navy, has chiefly been America's

China Courts Africa

AS AN ASPIRING SUPERPOWER, CHINA has needs: money, raw material resources and the political support of other nations, among other things.

Beijing has a specific strategy to solve these issues: the African solution. More than any other superpower, the Chinese government is building economic and political influence in economically poor but resource-rich African nations.

Take Zimbabwe as an example. China sent crates of T-shirts to help support the ruling party in parliamentary elections. Despite the West's arms embargo on Zimbabwe, China has begun to deliver 12 fighter jets and 100 trucks to Zimbabwe's army. The Chinese donated cobalt-blue tile for the roof of President Mugabe's \$9 million mansion—also designed by a Chinese business. A Chinese business reportedly "provided a radio-jamming device for a military base outside the capital, preventing independent stations from balancing state-controlled media during the election campaign" (*Christian Science Monitor*, March 30).

President Mugabe himself refers to the Chinese as "our good friends"—for good reason. It is difficult for a ruler whose agricultural program has crippled his country and who has a known record for human rights violations to find support from any nation, much less one as influential as China.

Why would the Chinese support a despot like Mugabe? Two reasons: 1) He provides them with money. To take one example, between 2003 and 2004, China National Aero-Technology Import and Export Corp. signed a series of contracts worth \$300 million to rebuild Zimbabwe's electricity grid.

2) Beijing wants as much political support, as it opposes the U.S., as it can get. The *Wall Street Journal* put it: "China is courting other countries to support its plan to reassert political authority over Taiwan and seeking a counterweight against U.S. power in global bodies such as the United Nations" (March 29).

Zimbabwe is one country in an African region now filled with Chinese activity, apparently free of the ethical limitations that lock U.S. businesses out of similar opportunities. When Ethiopia went to war with Eritrea in the late 1990s, the U.S. greatly reduced its presence and China moved in. Now "Chinese companies have become a dominant force,

building highways and bridges, power stations, mobile-phone networks, schools and pharmaceutical plants. More recently, they have begun exploring for oil and building at least one Ethiopian military installation" (*ibid.*). In 1997, the U.S. government barred Sudanese oil investment by U.S. companies because the Sudanese government sponsored terrorism and committed human rights violations; since that time, China has invested \$2 billion in the Sudanese oil industry. Last year, China deflated U.S. efforts to levy sanctions on Sudan by threatening to use its veto within the Security Council, protecting its oil investment despite genocide in the region.

These activities are only a small sampling of China's dealings in Africa, which span the continent. They do illustrate, however, the ethical boundaries Beijing is willing to cross to oppose the U.S., to bring African resources to China, and to establish itself as a bona fide superpower.



ALP/INFORMER

POWER PLAY China's Wen Jiabao (R) with Mugabe.

responsibility. While the job might be expensive at times, Washington's presence has ensured relative stability in the region and guaranteed the safe flow of oil to the United States. However, China's naval presence is growing and has become a serious concern for America. Unless America gets off its back foot and takes some strong action, this predicament cannot end well for America, or, indeed, the rest of the world.

ASIA

All for One?

THREE INFLUENTIAL BLOCs of nations currently exist on the world scene. A fourth is coalescing.

Added to the English-speaking countries, the European Union, and the Islamic Crescent, many analysts expect a unified *Asian* bloc in the near future.

Speaking at the Asian Cooperation Dialogue conference in April, Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz “underlined the need for collective efforts by the Asian countries to achieve the goals of progress and prosperity in the continent ...” (*Pakistan Newswire*, April 6). Aziz declared Asia the “continent of opportunities,” petitioning Asian nations to join hands in prosperity and peace in order to harness the power of the region.

“Asian growth,” according to the prime minister, “is the engine for the revival of the



TAKING A STAND Demonstrators in Kyrgyzstan hold a sign reading “People are for Justice” in March.

CENTRAL ASIA

Revolutions to Russia's Chagrin

IN MARCH, THE PEOPLE OF LAND-LOCKED Kyrgyzstan revolted and overthrew their corrupt government. Labeled the “Tulip Revolution,” the Kyrgyzstan revolt, if successful, could prove to be the first of a number of democratic revolutions in Central Asia.

While America and the European Union may be smiling, Russia is approaching the matter more pessimistically.

With the election of pro-European governments in both Ukraine and Georgia, Russia has seen the EU's sphere of influence expand to within a few hundred miles of its capital, Moscow. Both EU and American influence has increased in this area. U.S. military bases have been established throughout

by and casually observe the establishment of any nearby pro-Western democracy. Watch for Moscow's diplomatic rhetoric with these nations to intensify in the coming months.

Russia is under intense pressure. The treaties and economic ties Moscow currently has with the EU are nothing more than short-term agreements of convenience. Remember, despite treaties signed to guard against it, Russia has been involved in two world wars against a German-led axis.

You can be sure that Russia is concerned about the establishment of pro-Western democracies in Central Asia. Unless any new governments serve his agenda, Putin will do his best to thwart these attempts.

If further democratic revolutions occur in Central Asia and pro-Western governments are established, Moscow will seek alternate alliances and strengthen present ones (e.g. with China and the rest of Asia). This trend is already occurring, but *it will grow stronger*.

global economy.” An April 7 *Asia Times* article purported that an Asian union of nations will be the world's most powerful bloc by 2020—even ahead of the EU, which is presently the world's largest trading bloc. *Asia Times* is right, except for its time frame. An Asian power bloc will form long before the year 2020!

The unification of Asia is a geopolitical event of mammoth proportions. “The biggest asset of Asia is *human capital*,” declared Prime Minister Aziz (*Pakistan Observer*, April 7). *He is right!* The combined populations of China and India, just two of the Asian nations that are coalescing, exceed

2 billion! Add the populations of Japan and the Southeast Asian countries to this number and you have roughly 2.5 billion people. By contrast, united Europe is comprised of roughly 450 million people; the U.S. population, only about 300 million.

What's more, *Russia*, despite its strengthening ties with Germany, is steadily building an alliance with Asia—China in particular. Russia is surrounded by traditional enemies. Unless it firms up an alliance with its southeastern neighbors, it faces being hemmed in.

Asia will soon form a giant coalition of nations. News events pointing to this growing alliance are plentiful. As an increasingly unified Asia steadily combines with oil-

rich, nuclear Russia, it will become the most massive power bloc in human history.

The Bible prophesies of a coming 200-million-man army (Revelation 9:15-16). This is virtually unfathomable unless one considers the likelihood of a giant Asian alliance, with its biggest asset being human capital.

Watch for the continued unification of Asian nations and their strengthening alliance with Russia. And watch for a violent clash of interests to occur between the four major power blocs! There is only so much room on Earth, and this coalescing of globe-girdling powers will create conditions ripe for World War III—described in detail in our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy*.



GET TOGETHER Aziz speaks at the ACD April 6, calling for Asian unification.

Answering Bible Critics

Just what is Bible criticism? How does it affect you? BY DENNIS LEAP

THE BIBLE—MORE THAN ANY other religious writings of similar age—has drawn intense examination. What is the common conclusion? Bible critics *write off* the Bible as the *not-divinely-inspired* writings of an unlearned people. Many claim the Bible is full of contradiction and historical inaccuracies. Some go so far as to say that the Bible is a carefully contrived sham to keep tight-fisted control over mindless people. Others say the Bible is a work of fiction. What is truly appalling is that many *theologians* agree. Understand that there is nothing new here. The Bible has been under violent attack for centuries—by scholars, philosophers, cynics and *the religious*.

Why this book and not others? Many theologians hold great reverence for the writings of men like Buddha and Confucius. Many Protestant ministers even call the writings of these men *sacred*. But are they? According to the *Encarta Dictionary*, the first definition of the word *sacred* is, “dedicated to a deity or religious purpose.” If you know the beliefs of Buddha, he would never have considered his own writings sacred, because he did not believe in a deity. Confucius was an atheist. Although today many see him *godlike*, he would have claimed his own writings to be merely practical or ethical.

Think on this too. No one questions that the writings of Buddha are Buddha’s or that the writings of Confucius are Confucius’s. Yet, Bible critics say—without a doubt—Moses did not write the books attributed to his name. Critics have determined five men other than Isaiah wrote Isaiah. Critics claim that a fake Ezekiel wrote Ezekiel. Critics maintain—without question—an imposter wrote Daniel centuries after his death. Is there an *answer* for the critics?

The Unique Book

You must recognize this fact. The Bible is radically different than all other *so-called* sacred literature. This *book of books* asserts that it is the divinely inspired writings of a *supreme Deity*. No

other sacred literature makes such a claim. The Bible is a book full of personal quotes from a very active, living God. Here is an example: “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure” (Isaiah 46:9-10). The God of the Bible declares the supremacy of His own power. There is none like Him. He is capable of initiating and carrying out a purpose on Earth. A real understanding of God’s purpose shows that there are stupendous and wonderful things ahead for *all* mankind.

The Bible asserts that it alone contains the *divine revelation* of that plan—that the Almighty God directed all the writing. Here are some examples: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words



The Bible asserts that it alone contains the divine revelation of God’s plan—that God directed all the writing.

I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel” (Exodus 34:27). God told Isaiah, “Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever” (Isaiah 30:8). The expression “time to come for ever and ever” is best translated *latter days*—or our time right now! Isaiah is not an outdated book. It bears a vital message for us today. In fact, the entire Bible carries essential knowledge that only God can make known to mankind. It is one of His many remarkable gifts to all men. This *sole* piece of sacred literature contains the historical record and *prophecies* about how God is working out His plans. This makes the Bible a great treasure. Yet, few value the Bible.

Defining Bible Criticism

So, why is there so much hostility toward the Bible? There is a *cause*. It be-

gins with modern Bible criticism. What is Bible criticism? Most of the people involved in such effort like to refer to their activities as *biblical scholarship*. This sounds harmless enough. It makes their occupation appear more acceptable. What could be wrong with these types of biblical studies? When we understand the *effect*—everything!

Let’s look at some excerpts from a current article on biblical scholarship to show you what we mean. The *Encarta Encyclopedia* states: “Biblical scholarship ... attempts a critical assessment of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures in the light of all contemporary resources of knowledge.” Sound good? It is not. Essentially, Bible scholars want to take the Bible and measure it using all the up-to-date knowledge society has accumulated. But let’s not forget that *contemporary* knowledge has been strained through the filter of evolution, which is an *atheistic* theory—the explanation of a creation without a creator! Ask yourself, how can scholars educated with an anti-God bias objectively study the Bible? It is impossible.

Continuing its defense of Bible scholarship, *Encarta* casually states: “Unlike the literature of various other religions, the Bible has always been subject to some measure of scholarly criticism and correction.” Simply making that statement doesn’t make it true. Logic tells us we should seriously think about a statement with the word *always* in it. Has the Bible *always* been subject to scholarly criticism and correction? Think about it. Did Christ criticize the Bible? What about Peter—the chief apostle? Did the other original apostles? What about Paul—did he employ the tools of scholarly criticism and correction when writing his letters to the Church? The answer is a resounding *no*. A statement we could agree with is that the Bible has *always* been *under attack*.

Also, note in the above quote that *Encarta* admits that the literature of other religions is not subject to scholarly scrutiny. Now why would that be? The answer is simple. The Bible claims

to be the express Word of God. Remember, no other religions make such a claim for their literature. The Bible speaks out with God's *authority*. If one could prove that it is not the Word of God, then there would be no need to read or follow it. This is the real reason Bible scholars have worked so hard at examining the Bible. Uncovering any flaw would be proof that it is not the literal *Word* of God. Critics may deny this fact, but it is the truth.

Justifying the work of critics, *Encarta* continues: "This criticism undoubtedly developed because Jews and Christians conceive of religion as historical, as the product of definite historical events. Even though the great majority of the Old and New Testament writings are, in fact, anonymous, they have always been ascribed to particular human authors. It has therefore been considered legitimate for other human beings to evaluate them. They have never been regarded simply as literature transmitted directly from heaven or as so remote from the contemporary human condition as to render them immune to critical study." This sweeping statement is incredible. It is a cleverly planned concealment of true motive. Here's our understanding of what *Encarta's* writers are actually saying. *The Bible's religion is a human invention—the result of historical events, or legend. God is not in it. The Bible was not written by men like Moses, Joshua, Samuel and Isaiah; we don't know who wrote it. Since the book never came directly from God and is from the distant past, we have the right to dissect, ridicule and reject it.* Are we just a little too hard on Bible scholars? If they are hard on the Bible, can't we be a little hard on them?

The point is, *true* Bible scholars understand that comprehending that the Bible is the literal Word of God is an *eternal-life-or-death matter* for all human beings. Someone must stand up and defend the Bible.

Short History of Criticism

Knowing the historical roots of modern Bible criticism greatly helps us understand why this field of study can never produce any good results. Let's briefly discuss several key points of history.

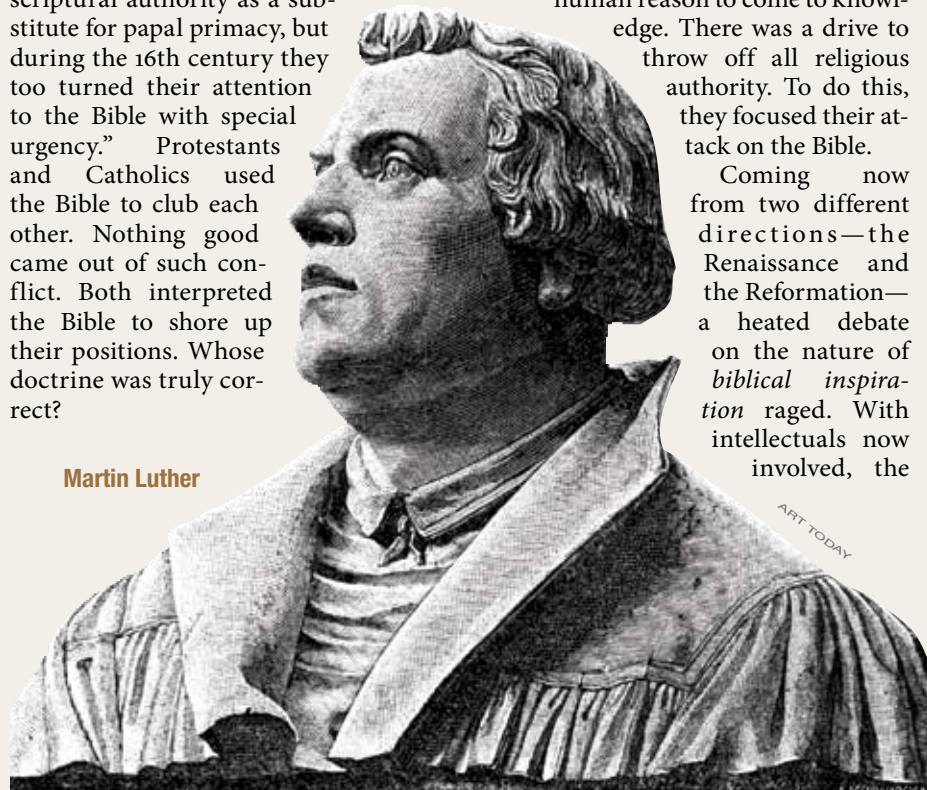
Although historians consider the writings of the Hellenistic Jewish philosopher Philo Judaeus as the beginning of the history of Bible criticism, modern criticism

as we know it was born at the time of the Reformation. The *Oxford Companion to the Bible* states, "The religious conflicts that most stimulated the rise of biblical criticism were, however, the Catholic-Protestant conflict within Christianity and, later, the disputes among the many different directions within Protestantism, for these particularly emphasized the unique role of Scripture and the implications of reading it for and from itself." In essence, the Bible became the battleground in the war between Catholics and Protestants—then, again, among disagreeing Protestant groups.

"Rebels against the authority of the Roman Catholic Church ... had traditionally appealed to Scripture in justifying their defiance of the pope and the institutional church" (*ibid.*). Reacting to the domination and religious hypocrisy of the papacy, reformers explained and published views on the Scriptures as a means to weaken the abusive power that the Roman Church wielded over the spiritual lives of men and women.

The Catholic Church did not take such attacks lying down. Besides the bloodshed of the infamous Inquisition, Catholic theologians responded with their own commentaries related to the Bible. The war was on. The *Oxford Companion* continues, "Roman Catholic theologians, of course, did not view scriptural authority as a substitute for papal primacy, but during the 16th century they too turned their attention to the Bible with special urgency." Protestants and Catholics used the Bible to club each other. Nothing good came out of such conflict. Both interpreted the Bible to shore up their positions. Whose doctrine was truly correct?

Martin Luther



Martin Luther carried great scorn for James's epistle; he referred to it as a "right strawy epistle." Luther resented James's teaching about *faith and works*—which was radically different than Luther's. During this time, Catholic authorities continually asserted their exclusive right to control and interpret the Scriptures—a right never given to them by God. Considering the Roman Catholic Church's view of the Bible as being secondary to papal authority, could we expect from that church a solid defense in favor of the Bible?

The Renaissance

Consider also the Renaissance's effect on Bible criticism. This movement was the spark for the Reformation and, like its subsequent sister movement, above all else was a reaction to the subjugation of the Roman church. Freed from religious oppression, intellectually minded people pursued vigorous investigation into the fields of science, classical Greek literature, philosophy and art. Our modern knowledge explosion began at that time. With new discoveries in science and astronomy, questioning minds uncovered serious error in Roman Catholic teaching about scientific matters concerning Earth and the universe. Betrayed by religion, men began to rely on self-expression, experimentation, observation and human reason to come to know-

ledge. There was a drive to throw off all religious authority. To do this, they focused their attack on the Bible.

Coming now from two different directions—the Renaissance and the Reformation—a heated debate on the nature of *biblical inspiration* raged. With intellectuals now involved, the

war of the religious denominations became simply a war against the Bible. Theologians, philosophers and scientists attempted to answer the question, *how did God inspire men to write the Bible?* It was essentially a debate of human reason. The answer depended upon a person's religious or educational persuasion. Scientists at the time rejected the Bible because of the Roman church's false teachings. Yet, the church of Rome has survived well during all the attacks. What ultimately suffered the most damage was people's confidence in the veracity of the Bible.

As men increased their scientific knowledge of the world around them, significantly less importance was attached to the Bible as a guide and authority in human affairs. Science became the new guide—even for the so-called religious. By the time of the Enlightenment, “theologians ... focused on issues of biblical authority; for example, whether the Bible, the product of ancient cultures, has any claim on modern humanity. Supernatural revelation was often denied in whole or in part, with such views gaining



A dedicated, faith-filled study of the Bible will yield true understanding of its contents.

further support from the rise of modern biblical criticism in the 19th century” (ibid.). Historians of Bible criticism want all of us to think well of the so-called developments in biblical studies. Reality tells us there is no advancement at all, but rather a process of continual degeneration. As Bible criticism developed, humans strayed further from God.

German Rationalism

Most scholars uphold and praise the development of Bible criticism in the 19th century—the so-called *higher* criticism. Some think of it as the *golden age* of Bible criticism. In reality, it has done the most damage to people's faith in the Bible. Higher criticism has been heavily influenced by German rationalism, which is the philosophy that regards human reason as the chief source and test of knowledge—even spiritual knowledge. German rationalism denies the need for *divine* revelation. Higher criticism has reduced the Bible to a merely *human* book.

German Bible critics such as Julius Wellhausen focused their attention on Moses's authorship of the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Bible. To a German rationalist, there can be no such thing as divine revelation. Since the first five books of the Bible make the claim that God directed Moses to write them down, there had to be an alternative, rational explanation. What Wellhausen and others supposedly uncovered was a Jewish sham. Their attack states that *anonymous* individuals *later* than Moses wrote the books. Why? They say that a man who lived that long ago would not have had the education to draft such writings. The “documentary hypothesis” was formulated, which assigns capital letters such as J, E, P and D to sections of the books supposedly written by the anonymous authors.

The *Encarta Encyclopedia* admits, “By the end of the 19th century higher criticism had aroused tremendous opposition from those who considered it an attack on the reliability of Scripture. To some degree this opposition has not yet been overcome, although the great majority of biblical scholars regard higher criticism as an indispensable tool of biblical interpretation.” A few recognize what higher criticism is all about and are opposed to it, but the majority of Bible scholars have been swept right along with it. Recent archaeological discoveries have placed major cracks in the documentary theory, but scholars refuse to depart from it. Read any article about the Old Testament in current literature and you will see continual references to the anonymous authors of the ancient Scriptures. Don't be deceived. The documentary hypothesis is a theory and a sham just as evolution is a theory and a sham. Unfortunately, Bible scholars cannot come around to admitting that fact.

If you desire to know more details about the history of Bible criticism, your public library should be able to provide you with reference books for further study.

Battlegrounds of Bible Criticism

The fruits of Bible criticism have been devastating for many. Yet it does not have to be that way for you. A dedicated, faith-filled study of the Bible will yield true understanding of its contents. Are you willing to take the plunge?

The five books of Moses and the book of Daniel are the two most attacked sections of the Bible. This makes sense if one intends to attack the reliability of the Bible.

The Pentateuch lays the necessary foundation to understanding God's purpose for all mankind. Moses's books contain essential history now lost to mankind, as well as God's revealed civil and spiritual laws and prophecies about our time. A right understanding of these books is a faith-builder. These books motivate us to earnestly seek God. Ignorance of these books leads to spiritual error.

Why Daniel's book? Daniel's book contains a series of vivid and historically accurate visions that provide a key to understanding the book of Revelation. This final book of the Bible, recorded by the aging Apostle John, coordinates the right timing and sequence of all prophecy—the final working out of God's plan for man. If Daniel is unreliable, then Revelation would remain a mystery.

Doesn't all of this show that there has been an invisible spirit behind the Bible criticism movement? Since the creation of Adam and Eve, God has been sending a message to mankind. A powerful, evil being has been working diligently to discredit that message. Genesis chapter 3 reveals Satan's work. The Apostle Paul warned, “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom *the god of this world* [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). Remember that the word *gospel* simply means good news, or good message. Satan's goal is to blind all men to God's incredible truth. He has been doing an effective job. Yet, you do not have to be one of his victims.

Christ's View of Moses's Books

Robert Ingersoll, a famous 19th-century atheist and Bible critic, wrote this about the history of Moses and the Israelites in the Pentateuch: “Everything that happened was attributed to the interference of this God. Moses declared that he met this God face to face; that on Sinai's top from the hands of this God he had received the tables of stone on which, by the finger of this God, the Ten Commandments had been written, and that, in addition to this, Jehovah had made

known the sacrifices and ceremonies that were pleasing to him and the laws by which the people should be governed.

“In this way the Jewish religion and the Mosaic Code were established.

“It is now claimed that this religion and these laws were and are revealed and established for all mankind.

“At that time, these wanderers had no commerce with other nations, they had no written language, they could neither read nor write. They had no means by which they could make this revelation known to other nations, and so it remained buried in the jargon of a few ignorant, impoverished and unknown tribes for more than 2,000 years.

“Many centuries after Moses ... many centuries after all of his followers had passed away—the Pentateuch was written, the work of many writers, and to give it force and authority it was claimed that Moses was the author.

“We now know that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses” (“About the Holy Bible,” 1894).

What about those statements? Do they rock your faith—or compel you to study “to give an answer”? (1 Peter 3:15). How would you answer Mr. Ingersoll?

The easy way to answer any Bible critic is to let Jesus Christ do it. John calls Jesus Christ *the Word* in his Gospel (John 1:1). This means that Christ is the Scriptures *personified*. Jesus Christ is the ultimate authority on all Bible

questions. He knows, without question, that the Bible is the holy, inspired unbreakable Word of God. He told the Jews of His day, “the scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35).



John calls Jesus Christ the Word in his Gospel. This means that Christ is the Scriptures personified.

Did Moses meet with God? Jesus Christ says, *Yes!* The Sadducees came to Christ to trap Him with questions. Study His answer carefully, “And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?” (Mark 12:26). Jesus Christ stated emphatically that God spoke directly to Moses through the burning bush, even verifying the author of Genesis.

Did Moses receive the Ten Commandments from God? There was the time when the Pharisees came to Christ and complained that His disciples did not keep the traditions of the elders—meaning the ceremonial washing of hands, pots and cups. Christ answered sternly, “Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said,

Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say ...” (Mark 7:6, 9-11). The Pharisees were deeply into their ritualistic religion. But they overlooked the more important aspects of the law contained within the Ten Commandments. Notice that Christ quotes Moses as saying, “Honour thy father and thy mother.” This is a direct quote from Exodus

20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16—the Fifth Commandment. The other statement, “Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death,” is a judgment of the civil law based on the Fifth Commandment. Any child guilty of serious parental disrespect was worthy of execution. This statement is a direct quote from Exodus 21:17. Jesus Christ said the Pharisees were rejecting the commandment of God (Mark 7:9). Moses gave the people God’s commandments.

Did Jesus Christ support the religious laws handed down by Moses? Yes, He did. After healing a leper, Jesus Christ instructed him, “See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them” (Matthew 8:4).

We’ll continue next time with the answers to several technical questions on the Pentateuch. We will also answer the critics concerning Daniel. ■

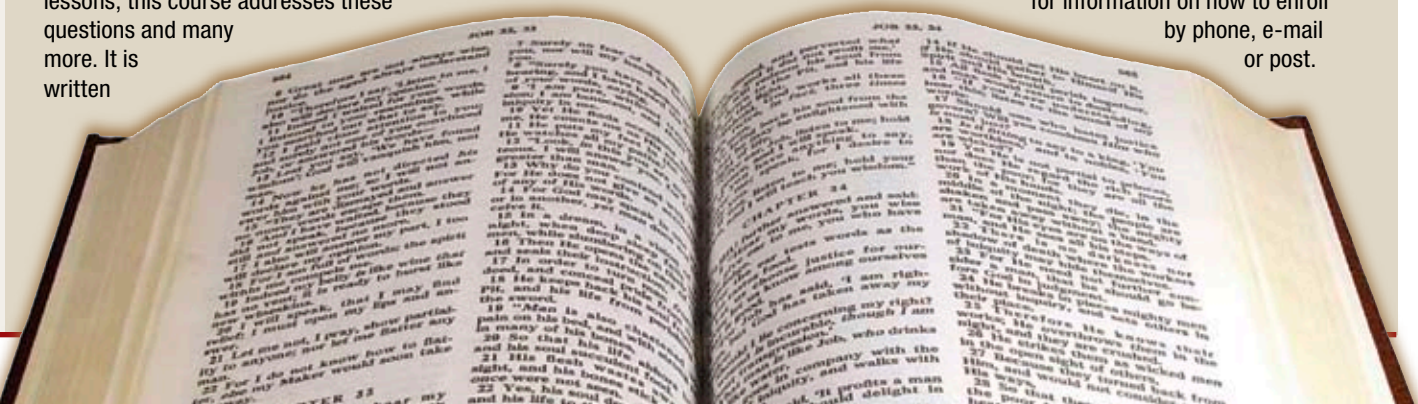
The Answers!

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IF YOU BELIEVE BIBLICAL REFERENCES to “Israel” refer to the Jewish people only, you are no different from most everyone else. But does that make it right?

A *USA Today* survey discovered that 91 percent of all U.S. households own at least one Bible. Of those surveyed, 80 percent consider the Bible the most influential book in human history; 58 percent say the Bible is **TOTALLY ACCURATE** in all it teaches. If those statistics are true, that means there is a large segment of the population that will honestly consider what the Bible says and believe it! Let us briefly consider the misunderstood biblical history of Israel.

Most are familiar with the term “twelve tribes of Israel”; those who descended from the 12 sons of Jacob (whose name God changed to Israel):

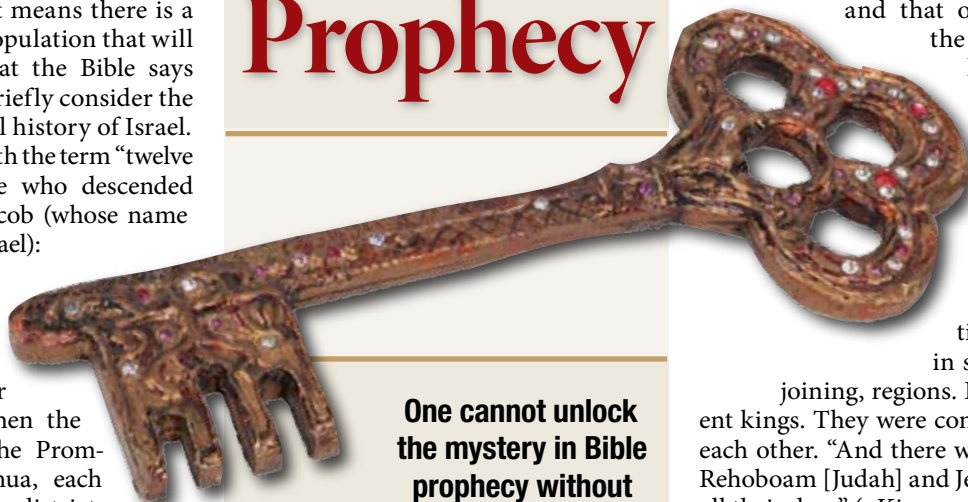
Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher (Genesis 35:22-26). When the Israelites arrived in the Promised Land under Joshua, each tribe was given its own district, except for the priestly tribe of Levi, which mingled among all the tribes. Also, Joseph had separated into two tribes by this time—Ephraim and Manasseh. Both were assigned their own district. So, technically, there were 13 tribes, but 12 districts. Except for Levi, the tribes mostly kept to themselves. Yet they were united as one nation, the nation of Israel, much like the 50 states in America.

Israel reached its height as an empire during the reigns of King David and his son Solomon. God had made an unbreakable covenant with David that his kingly dynasty would continue right up to the return of Christ. God said in Jeremiah 33:17 that David’s royal line would never end.

But because of Solomon’s sexual perversion and idol worship, God said, “I will surely rend the kingdom from thee” (1 Kings 11:11). God, however, promised to preserve one tribe for David’s sake (verse 13).

Solomon died in 926 B.C. The people begged his son Rehoboam to relieve them of the unbearable taxes his father had instituted (1 Kings 12:4). Rehoboam disdainfully replied, “My father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions” (verse 11). Ten Isra-

Why Most Do Not Understand Prophecy



One cannot unlock the mystery in Bible prophecy without this indispensable key.

BY STEPHEN FLURRY

elite tribes rebelled against Rehoboam and seceded from the kingdom. They chose Jeroboam as their ruler. “There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only” (1 Kings 12:20). God’s prophecy was fulfilled. Israel separated into two kingdoms.

Rehoboam tried to subdue the rebels and preserve unity in Israel. He succeeded in retaining the tribe of Benjamin (verse 21). Most of the tribe of Levi also joined Rehoboam’s forces. But God finally told him to stop fighting with Israel,

Before Israel separated into two nations, all Jews were considered Israelites. After the division, Jews were no longer called Israelites. The Bible calls them Judah.

“for this thing is from me” (verse 24).

When the dust settled, the 10 seceding tribes moved their capital north to Samaria and chose Jeroboam as king. It is they who retained the name “Israel,” not Rehoboam’s kingdom. The smaller southern kingdom retained Jerusalem as its capital, but became known as Judah. God’s prophecy came true. He did rend the kingdom of Israel from Solomon’s descendants. He left only a small “part” for Rehoboam, and that only because of the covenant He had made with David!

From this point forward, the Bible deals with Israel and Judah as two separate nations. They dwelt in separate, yet ad-

joining, regions. Each had different kings. They were constantly fighting each other. “And there was war between Rehoboam [Judah] and Jeroboam [Israel] all their days” (1 Kings 14:30).

As soon as Jeroboam gained control of the northern kingdom, he rejected God’s holy days and introduced idol-worship into the nation. This continued over many generations. God constantly pleaded with Israel through His prophets, warning them to return to their former ways. Israel refused. So God promised to “root up Israel out of this good land” to be scattered abroad over the face of the earth (1 Kings 14:30).

God used the Assyrians to root them up. “And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land” (2 Kings 15:19). Assyriologists attribute the name “Pul” to Tiglath-Pileser III, who ruled from 745-727 B.C. Menahem, king of Israel, quickly submitted to Assyrian aggression and paid tribute to Pul with much silver and gold (verse 20). He appeased Pul, but infuriated his own people who despised the burdensome taxes.

Angered by Menahem’s compromise, an Israeli army officer named Pekah killed Menahem’s son and ascended to the throne. Pekah entered into a military alliance with Rezin, king of Damascus, in hopes of thwarting Assyrian advances. Other Phoenician and Arabian states joined the alliance. But King Ahaz of Judah, the southern kingdom,

obstinately rejected. 2 Kings 16:5 says that Rezin and Pekah descended upon Jerusalem to force Ahaz into the defensive league. Judah resisted. The league, however, did succeed in driving the Jews out of Elath (verse 6).

Most people read over this seemingly unimportant skirmish in 2 Kings 16 without realizing the true significance. It's the first time the word "Jews" is mentioned in the Bible and we find that Jews are fighting ISRAELITES! Tell this to the average churchgoer today and they will think you are crazy. That's impossible, they might say. How can Jews fight Israelites? They're both the same people.

True, before Israel separated into two nations, all Jews were considered Israelites. But after the division, Jews were no longer called Israelites. The Bible calls them Judah!

When Shalmaneser v succeeded Tiglath-Pileser III on the Assyrian throne, Hoshea, Israel's new king, refused to continue paying tribute. He solicited Egypt's help to resist Shalmaneser. It was to no avail. 2 Kings 17 records Israel's last stand and subsequent uprooting at the hands of Assyria. "Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and REMOVED them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only" (verse 18). Shalmaneser and his successor Sargon II removed tens of thousands of Israelites from Samaria and placed Assyrians in their homes (verses 22-24), just as God prophesied during Jeroboam's reign.

If you continue reading 2 Kings in sequence, following Israel's captivity, you will see that the history of the Jewish nation continued on, though not much longer. They too rebelled against God and His laws. In 2 Kings 23:27, God warned, "I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen."

By this time, the Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar was the world's most dominant power. The Babylonians ransacked Jerusalem over the course of 19 years (604-585 B.C.). In the end, God removed the Jews from Palestine, just as He did the Israelites 130 years earlier.

Though Judah and Israel were different nations, God delivered the same punishment for rebellion. Israel was amalgamated into Assyria; Judah into Babylon. Israel never returned to the land of Palestine; Judah did. Read it for

yourself in Ezra 1:5 and 2:1. God allowed the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi to return to Palestine 70 years after their captivity to rebuild the temple. In other words, He allowed people from the kingdom of Judah to return to Jerusalem.

Here is where scholars, theologians and historians fail to understand. They know from Bible history and abundant

Over centuries, names change, people migrate, but whole races do not just disappear. Hitler was one of history's most noted genocidal maniacs, yet even he didn't come close to exterminating the entire Jewish race!

archaeological evidence that Israel split into two nations after Solomon's reign, but after that, their understanding is hazy at best. Those who returned to Palestine to rebuild the temple in the fifth century B.C. were Jews. The descendants of these Jews were in Palestine during the days of Christ 500 years later. Indeed, those who reside in Palestine today are mostly from the tribe of Judah. They have been mistakenly labeled "Israel."

The actual descendants of the northern kingdom of Israel never returned to Palestine. When they were removed from their land in 721-718 B.C., they lost their identity. But they did not disappear, as most scholars carelessly assume. Werner Keller gives an excellent account of Israel's separation into two kingdoms in his outstanding book, *The Bible as History*. Yet he makes the same mistake so many others do. He said, "The people of the northern kingdom and their kings with them disappeared, were absorbed into the population of these foreign lands, and never emerged again in history. All investigation into what became of the 10 tribes who had their home there has so far come to nothing."

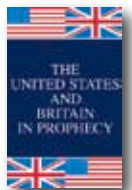
It is amazing how quick scholars are to cast aside whole races of people as "disappeared." Over centuries, names can change, people will migrate, but whole races do not just disappear. Hitler

was one of history's most noted genocidal maniacs, yet even he didn't come close to exterminating the entire Jewish race! The 10 northern tribes biblically known as Israel after the reign of Solomon might have lost their identity, but they most assuredly DID NOT DISAPPEAR!

In Matthew 10, Jesus commissioned His disciples, those who became apostles in the New Testament Church, to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God. They were not to deliver the gospel to Gentiles or Samaritans (verse 5). Christ told them to go "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (verse 6). Understand the critical history that is packed into this short verse. It was written nearly 800 years after Israel went into captivity, and here Christ tells the disciples to go to "lost" Israel. Yes, they had lost their identity, but they did not disappear! Christ couldn't have been referring to the Jews residing in Palestine. They weren't lost. Christ wanted His disciples to take the gospel to the Israelites who were removed from Samaria and absorbed into the Assyrian Empire hundreds of years before; those who never returned to the Promised Land.

Considering Christ's commission in Matthew 10, it should not seem strange that after Acts 15, you do not read much in the New Testament about the original apostles. Paul is the most prominent individual in the New Testament; and he was commissioned to go to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). There were numerous Gentile nations in and around the region of the Middle East. Most of the New Testament revolves around Paul's travels to Gentile nations nearby and the letters he wrote to churches in those regions. The original apostles, however, left the land of Palestine to preach to the lost sheep of Israel.

The question is, Where did those disciples go? Where had the Israelites migrated to? Why had they lost their identity? These questions, and many more, are answered in our fascinating free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*. Write for your free copy and find out why more than 5 million people have requested it over the past 60 years. If 58 percent of you reading this magazine believe the Bible is totally accurate in all it teaches, then *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* will open your eyes like no other publication ever written on prophecy. ■





DREAMSTIME (2)

ABORTION

Kill the “Defective” Ones

WHAT COMES TO MIND when you think about humans being murdered because of genetic defects or disabilities? Is it Nazi Germany with its “mercy killings” and its goal of racial purity?

How about considering the abortion laws in America, Britain, and across the rest of the developed world? These laws are allowing hundreds of unborn babies to be aborted under the legal medical practice known as eugenic abortion.

In Britain it is legal to abort a fetus if “there is a substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped” (Abortion Act). It is common practice for expectant mothers to abort babies with genetic defects discovered during prenatal testing. In Britain, over half of unborn babies with Down syndrome are aborted. In America, which has even more liberal abortion laws, fully 80 percent of these babies are aborted (*Washington Post*, April 14).

Often, if a pregnant mother is hesitant to undergo

the operation, medical professionals urge and pressure her to dispose of the fetus. One mother who participated in a study of parents of Down syndrome children reported in 1999 that when she was told her baby had Down syndrome, a geneticist showed her “a really piti-

ful video first of people with Down syndrome who were very low tone and lethargic-looking and then proceeded to tell us that our child would never be able to read, write or count change” (ibid.). These professionals paint the bleakest of pictures for mothers whose expected babies may have Down syndrome, spina bifida or other conditions. They neglect to relate any positives (such as the fact that there is a waiting list of people wanting to adopt Down syndrome babies) and fail to cite examples of people who lead comparatively successful lives despite their condition. Mothers are made to feel guilty if they decide to proceed with the birth.

In 1999, an unborn 28-week-old child was aborted when it was found the child would have a cleft lip and palate—a treatable condition. Under the British law this was legal as there is no precise definition for “seriously handicapped.”

Other reasons for abortion under British law are legal only up until the 24th week of pregnancy. But lawmakers have deemed eugenic abortions legal *up until the point of birth*.

Our February 2005 article “Is Abortion Really Murder” explains why any kind of abortion is wrong and how God feels about the subject. Eugenic abortion not only puts in man’s hands God’s prerogative of life and death, but the decision of what kind of baby will be born.

In a world perfectly submitted to the laws—*physical* as well as *spiritual*—of the Creator God, such defects would not occur. But because they do, we are forced to make the best of a less-than-ideal situation rather than destroying the fetus on the pretext of doing the future child and society a favor—an act that demonstrates a lack of “natural affection” (2 Timothy 3:3) and a callousness toward the preciousness of life.

ECONOMY

Where America’s Tax Dollars Go

CURIOUS TO KNOW HOW THE U.S. government spends hard-earned tax dollars? According to the Heritage Foundation, the government collects an average of \$18,248 per household—but it spends an average of \$22,039 per household (the difference gets tagged onto the government debt). So where does the money go?

The largest chunk of American taxes goes to Social Security and Medicare. These two major entitlement programs soak up \$7,245 per household. This, however, will not be enough to sustain the programs much longer. The Baby Boomer generation is expected to retire in the next few years, adding great strain to the funds.

The second-largest amount of tax dollars, \$4,451, goes to defense spending, which has increased dramatically since the 9/11 attacks. This money goes to military salaries and operation, military research, and development of new technology.

The third-largest piece of the pie goes to low-income programs. About \$3,559 per household is spent on health services, food stamps and other government subsidies. Medicaid, whose costs are rising 9 percent every year, also falls under this umbrella.

About \$1,582 is spent on debt payments. The rest of the tax dollars are divvied up between other federal programs and benefits such as transportation, international affairs, education and veterans’ benefits. The costs of many of these programs steadily grow, adding further burden on the taxpayer.

For more analysis on the U.S. economy, see our May 2005 article “Speeding to Economic Armageddon” on www.theTrumpet.com.



READING

Signs of the Times

THE NUMBER OF SUBSCRIBERS to American newspapers has steadily declined over the past 20 years. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, newspaper readership among adults dwindled from 81 percent in 1964 to 52 percent today (April 25). It's especially bad among younger adults. Last year, just 39 percent of 18-to-34-year-olds even read a newspaper.

Obviously, a lot of this has to do with the Internet, which allows news consumers to locate stories of interest with the click of a button as opposed to leafing through a print edition. But another factor to circulation declines is this: *People just aren't reading much.*

If you aren't reading regularly—following world events, studying history, proving God's Word true by dili-



DREAMSTIME (2)

gent and consistent Bible study—now, *more than ever*, is the time to start. Let this issue of the *Trumpet* be your wake-up call. We are most certainly living in the

final days of man's civilization, just before Jesus Christ returns to this Earth! These are fascinating and terrifying times. Reading, in large part, is how we discern the signs of the times. As a young man, Abraham Lincoln walked for miles just to obtain a good book. He pored over biblical passages and Shakespeare's plays. As an American, he felt it essential to study the life of George Washington. He studied law and eventually became a lawyer. Yet Lincoln never received a formal education. He never finished high school.

John Adams is believed to have come from an illiterate home. Here is how he broke free from the family trend: "I discovered books," he said, "and read forever."

If you tend to make excuses not to read, stop. Stop waiting for perfect understanding, or fast reading skills, or for things to finally settle down. Stop waiting for the ideal circumstances.

Start reading.

Of course, be selective. As Solomon wrote, "[O]f making many books there is no end" (Ecclesiastes 12:12). You can't possibly read everything. That's why you have to be choosy. Life is too short. The times are too urgent. Concentrate on the best.

Then, while reading, stop when something moves you. Highlight. Pencil thoughts in the margin. Chew over it. Consider the *Trumpet*, for example. Are the articles in this issue *true*? Can you *prove* them true? If so, what does it mean for you *personally*? How will it alter your behavior?

Someone once said the object of reading is not to just get through material, it's to let the material *get through you*. That's the kind of *circulation* we here at the *Trumpet* are most concerned about.

HEALTH

Smell the Roses

NEED TO RELIEVE STRESS and boost self-esteem? Recent studies show that drawing closer to nature can make a huge difference.

Jules Pretty, director of the Center for Environment and Society at the University of Essex, UK, reports that in 9 out of 10 case studies, people who participated in activities involving the great outdoors had a significant improvement in their self-esteem (*Daily Telegraph*, London, March 21). Depression and anxiety levels were also noted to drop considerably. "Green" activities, such as walking or biking, are a great way to improve physical health and mental wellbeing.

Another dis-

study: Merely gazing at pictures of nature is beneficial to one's health. Pretty states, "in reality, it must be better for you to smell and touch the real thing, but a good approximation is still helpful" (ibid.). Hospitals are using studies like these to improve waiting rooms. One study from John Hopkins University found that patients awaiting operations were better able to cope with the pain when they were shown pictures of landscapes and listened to bird sounds and running water.

Going outside and getting fresh air is a known key to radiant health. Relaxing

outside, playing outdoor sports or exercising in the open air are all great ways to get closer to nature. Take full advantage of this all-natural stress reliever and antidepressant.



PHOTOSPIN

Food Pyramid

THE USDA JUST RELEASED its new food pyramid, MyPyramid, designed to better help Americans lead a healthy lifestyle. The old pyramid, last updated in 1992, was criticized for being unclear, especially on what a "serving" really is. The original pyramid has done nothing to curb the ever growing obesity problem in America.

Faced with these issues, the U.S. Department of Agriculture spent four years and \$2.4 million revising the old pyramid. The new personalized version is based on the latest *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, released in January of this year.

MyPyramid gives personal suggestions based on the individual's age, sex, and the amount of daily exercise undertaken. It gives the same emphasis on eating a wide variety of food in moderation, but with a new emphasis on exercising regularly.

The USDA is counting on this sleek, new and improved pyramid to help battle the American obesity problem, a tough task considering that 30 percent of adults are obese and over half are overweight. But at least the USDA is making an admirable attempt at giving Americans the solution to obesity, one that *Trumpet* readers are well familiar with—eat a balanced diet and get plenty of exercise.



DREAMSTIME

SOCIETYWATCH is compiled and edited by Stephen Flurry, with assistance from the *Trumpet's* editorial team. If you run across items that could be used here, send them to us at **SOCIETYWATCH, P.O. Box 1099, Edmond, OK 73083**, or e-mail societywatch@theTrumpet.com. If you e-mail a story from a website, be sure to include the URL address.



New Pope

I WAS FLABBERGASTED by the accuracy of your prediction that Joseph Ratzinger was going to be the next pope (“Coming German Pope?” May 2005). I want to know, what is going to happen next? Are we nearing the Second Coming of Christ? I am so excited.
Raul Trovela—CHICAGO, ILL.

THE TRUMPET STAFF WAS RIGHT ON target in predicting the next pope. The election of Pope Benedict XVI is an ominous sign that Christians should recognize and beware of. The imposition of church doctrine, or fighting heresy, in some kind of new revived Inquisition is something to watch for. ...
E-mail response

I AM WRITING TO ADDRESS YOUR FEARFUL, yet unjustified, comments about the next pope and the Catholic Church. The church has made several reformations over the years since the church was founded. ... Your prediction of a more conservative pope may be true or it could be false. ... Catholics can and do read, they can make decisions, and all good Catholics will know when something is wrong. ... Good Catholics will not simply be led like lambs to the slaughter. ... There is plenty of fear and suspicion already in the world and I can see no reason to add to it any further since none of us knows except those with divine inspiration. ...
John Moskal

Military Superiority

YOUR ARTICLE ON THE EU MILITARY was an eye-opener (“Steps to Military Superiority,” May 2005). Being in the British military, it isn’t hard to see that the EU is slowly starting to tighten its grip within Europe. A strong economy leads to a superior military, and it is plain to see that the European Union has already started its influence globally.
N. Robinson—ENGLAND

AS HAD BEEN THE CASE WITH MR. Armstrong, you are truly carrying on the work of being one of the few lucidly

informative and well-focused teachers of Bible prophecy today. However, I believe your emphasis upon America’s lack of will to use its military might is wrong; not only in the sense that military might would fail to be any kind of answer (rather than the exact opposite), but also in the sense that America’s downfall is going to be brought about precisely as a result of the kind of arrogantly, unscrupulously imperialistic megalomania you insist America lacks. ...
Richard O’Donnell—LAKEWOOD, CALIF.

Already Bankrupt

YOUR MAY 2005 ARTICLE (“SPEEDING to Economic Armageddon”) was the best analysis of the U.S. debt problem that I have read in quite some time. As a practical matter, I believe the U.S. is already bankrupt; it’s just a matter of time until the collapse. I would also add to your piece the damage that inflation is doing. Even an “acceptable” rate of 3 or 4 percent annually robs people of their purchasing power and destroys their savings. ... I look forward to reading more articles dealing with the economy.
Bennett J. Weldon

theTrumpet.com

WELL DONE ON UPDATING THE TRUMPET website to include weekly articles. As much as the Internet is touted as evil, it has enormous benefits as a communication aid. In this “wonderful” rainbow nation of South Africa ... where the postal system delivers the *Trumpet* 6-8 weeks late—it is refreshing to have access to *The Key of David* and the *Trumpet* via the Internet.
Lionel Naude

Motherhood

I READ “MOM MADNESS” (MARCH-April 2005) while I was waiting in my pediatrician’s office, and as an unstressed working mom of a young child, I felt compelled to comment. It seems to me that both Ms. Warner and your writer express incomplete views on motherhood and work. Some women, it seems, were born and raised to be wives and mothers. That’s not to say that we can’t be professionally viable, either by choice or necessity, but we know where the priorities are and make professional decisions based on how

they will affect our family life (cutting hours, working from home, choosing a home-based business). Some women weren’t taught that people are more important than money—or what they consider “self-deprivation”—and they either need to realize this personality trait before marrying and having children, or they need to seriously reeducate themselves and organize their priorities. Your writer was absolutely correct in that an involved father makes a huge difference in the job satisfaction of most mothers—but no one, man or woman, can make any job—including being a full-time mom—universally pleasant. It’s through prayer and reflection that we are shown the Master’s plan for our growth through “discomfort”—so that we can better teach our children.

E-mail response

The Book

THE ARTICLE “THE BOOK ONLY A FEW Know” (March-April 2005) is without question the best article I have ever read on the subject. I have passed it on to some of my friends. If we know truth, it will expose deception, and Jesus said He was truth. It is no wonder that this world is in its present state. Please keep on with the work of the Philadelphia Church of God. In my lifetime, I have seen God rejected and replaced by sin, and the worst is yet to come.
Jack Bell—YUBA CITY, CALIF.

I RECENTLY HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO browse through one of your magazines, and I was amazed at the depth of your explanation of current world trends and the implications they have for the future. I realize that you are continuing the work that Mr. Armstrong was used by God to do. I’ve always wanted to read the various books that God used him to write, especially *Mystery of the Ages*. I understand you are still publishing his work. ... I am impressed and happy that the foundation God laid through Mr. Armstrong is still going strong. ...
Michael Smith—JAMAICA

Comments?

letters@theTrumpet.com
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A Headache for Benedict

One unresolved issue Pope John Paul II left for his successor is no small job. BY JOEL HILLIKER

ROMAN CATHOLICISM IS MASSIVE, WITH OVER A BILLION believers. Islam has about 1.3 billion. The collision of these two faiths will be the world's next Big Story.

Pope John Paul II, conservative and convicted, saw the rise in Islam as an issue, and not a small one. A man who viewed every Muslim as a soul eternally lost—a mind that daily pondered questions of doctrine and dogma, faith and salvation—could not have looked at Islam in the world today—fiery, fierce, explosive and spreading—and not seen a problem.

That pope's weapon of choice against that adversary was *dialogue*. He didn't lash out against Muslims; he engaged them. He visited mosques and talked about a need for Christian-Muslim brotherhood and friendship.

A number of cardinals have followed John Paul II's lead. In their view, the church has no choice but to be a good neighbor with the swelling numbers of Muslims. To this end, one Italian cardinal even launched a magazine devoted to advancing Christian-Muslim relations.

Don't expect Pope Benedict XVI to take that gentle, conciliatory approach. He believes that dialogue unacceptably puts Christianity and Islam on equal footing—and that such efforts have enfeebled European Catholicism, which is now enslaved by “the dictatorship of relativism.” In a climate of religious pluralism and relativism, the new pope is unafraid to take an unpopular stand.

Consider his views as stated in “Dominus Iesus.” In this paper, Ratzinger said that all religions that fail to accept the doctrine of apostolic succession (the uninterrupted transfer of papal authority through the generations from the Apostle Peter to, now, himself) are “not churches in the proper sense,” and that, as far as salvation for their followers is concerned, “objectively speaking they are in a *gravely deficient situation*” in comparison to those in the Catholic Church.

Consider his statement last August that Turkey, which seeks membership in the European Union, should look for allies elsewhere. Why? Because its Muslim faith is “in permanent contrast” with European Christianity. “Europe was founded not on a geography, but on a common faith,” he said.

Consider his publicly expressed concern over the rise of Islam. As the *New York Times* put it, Ratzinger “represents a skeptical faction” among Roman Catholics, “one that sees the relationship between Christianity and Islam more as a *competition*” (April 13, emphasis mine).

Christians and Muslims are at each other's throats around the globe, including in the Caucasus, the Balkans, the Mediter-

ranean, the Middle East, several African countries (Sudan, Nigeria, Chad, Kenya, Tanzania), Indonesia and the Philippines.

But for Benedict XVI, the first battleground is *Europe*, where Catholicism seems to be shrinking just as Islam waxes strong. The Bavarian pontiff is sure to make correcting this problem a priority. He is not one to turn the other cheek to the Islamic assault on the bastion of his beloved religion.

The new pope's counterattack will start at home. His election signals a strong desire by the church to revitalize the religious roots of the Continent. As Joseph Fessio, a friend and former doctoral student of Cardinal Ratzinger, told the *Washington Post*, in electing this man the cardinals chose to make one more attempt to hold on to the Christian identity of Europe.

Benedict will capitalize on the unprecedented flood of popular goodwill his church is enjoying. He will seek ways to increase the Vatican's profile in European politics and to consolidate its power base. He will bridle the liberalism that leeches the church's strength.

In fact, the new pope will be able to use the rise in Islam as one of the *biggest catalysts* for European Christians to abandon secularism in droves and to rally around the banner of Roman Catholicism.

Even today, in the face of runaway immigration of Muslims to Europe and Islamic terrorist cells being uncovered on the Continent, we see the Christian European public's antipathy toward Islam rising—boiling over in places.

This hatred plays perfectly into the hands of the Vatican.

Once the pope has shored up the support he needs, he will turn his full attention to facing his most zealous enemy. Pushed into a corner, the Roman Catholic Church will lash out.

As Monsignor Cesare Mazzolari said of John Paul II last October, “The church has defeated communism, but is just starting to understand its next challenge—Islamism, which is much worse. The holy father has not been able to take up this challenge due to his old age. But the next pope will find himself having to face it.”

Benedict XVI will not be the first pope to brace himself for this challenge. He will take his place beside Gregory VII, Urban II and the other bishops of Rome who have battled the Muslim faith. This age-old *clash of civilizations* is almost here once again.

You need to understand the prophetic significance of this war of religions. Read the cover story from December 2004 by *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry, “The Coming War Between Catholicism and Islam.” And brace yourself. ■



ADVERSARY Pakistani Shiite Muslims shout anti-West slogans during a religious procession in Karachi, March 31.

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