

OUTLAWS The Bundy Ranch showdown turns Nevada into the Wild West

Why Russia needs its empire back

Blood moons: Do they fulfill Bible prophecy?

Is there life on Kepler 186-f?

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**LOST
IDENTITY**

How America's little-known past explains its turbulent present



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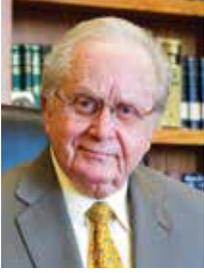
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Photo: Iranians supporting Ayatollah Khomeini overrun the United States Embassy in Tehran in November 1979 before holding 52 Americans hostage for almost 15 months.

Cover illustration: Gary Dorning/Trumpet





What Should a Nation Do When It Is Treated With Contempt?

A history lesson America's leaders desperately need **BY GERALD FLURRY**

FOR 444 DAYS IN 1979 TO 1981, IRAN HELD U.S. EMBASSY workers hostage. It was one of the most humiliating experiences in American history. Never was America more dishonored and disgraced before the entire world.

Yet, in the past three decades, we have done little to remove the lingering shame of that event.

Recently, Iran sent a new ambassador, Hamid Abutalebi, to the United Nations—a man who was personally involved in the hostage debacle. Why would Iran do such a thing? In essence, it is for the same reason the Iranians took the American hostages 35 years ago: Iran despises the United States, and will do all it can to humiliate America before the eyes of the world.

By appointing Abutalebi to the UN, Iran is sending a message—a message about how weak America is, and how strong Iran is.

The United States has moved to prevent issuing Abutalebi an entrance visa into America. But Iran is standing by its selection to the post, claiming America is breaking international law. This is yet another sign of Iran's disdain for American power.

This is just one example among countless demonstrations of how weak and powerless America has become in the world today. These kinds of provocations are routine. Most people today think that such matters aren't very important. They are grievously mistaken.

There was a teenager in the Bible who demonstrated exactly how to handle a situation like this with Iran. His example ought to resonate with us today because of the way America is conducting itself.

When King Saul ruled the nation of Israel, it suffered from a shameful lack of faith and courage. David, still a teenager, visited the army at the battlefield and saw Israel's soldiers—who should have been the picture of faith-filled valor—cowering in fear before a Philistine warrior.

“And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid” (1 Samuel 17:24). Saul offered a great reward to anyone who would stand up to Goliath. But no one would fight, even for riches. You see the same pathetic spirit of timidity and fear in the United States today.

Why were these men so shamefully fearful? It was primarily because of Saul's poor leadership. Young David had a totally

different spirit. “And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” (verse 26).

David saw these men, not as the armies of Israel, but the armies of the *living God!* *Who would dare defy the armies of the living God?* he asked. Not one person in that army looked at it that way, and David was just shocked at their shameful cowardice.

In times of crisis, real warriors come to the surface and demonstrate their leadership.

This was a real crisis of Israel's leadership! It is exactly the state to which America has descended. And young David is a picture of the kind of leadership necessary to empower the nation—even today.

In times of crisis, real warriors come to the surface and demonstrate their leadership.

David wanted to remove the “*reproach*” this situation was bringing on Israel. That word means *scorn, contempt, vile dishonor*. That is what the Philistines had brought on the nation! David took that as a personal insult!

Don't we see the exact same reproachful attitude today toward the United States by nations such as Iran, Russia and China? Nations all over this Earth routinely despise and taunt the United States, regardless of America's superior strength. There is no respect or fear of the United States.

Where is the David-like leader to stand up and defend the honor of the nation?

Who in America would stand up and fight for the honor of their nation—or even the honor of God? Even

See **LESSON** page 36 ►



RED ARMY

Russian troops patrol in Crimea near a Ukrainian outpost.

Why Russia Is Marching—and Eastern Europe Is Afraid

Want to understand events in Ukraine? You need to realize the sky-high stakes for those involved. **BY RICHARD PALMER**

FEW PEOPLE IN THE WORLD ARE more familiar with brutality than Eastern Europeans. Caught between the major powers of the West and the might of Russia, they have witnessed the worst of the worst conflicts in history. More men have died by the hand of their fellow man in this region than anywhere else in the world.

The World War II battles that the Western world is most familiar with, including D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge, took place on the Western front—where fewer than 4 million soldiers died. That hardly compares to the bloodshed on the Eastern front, where battles claimed roughly 17 million soldiers' lives. And that doesn't include the huge number of civilians who lost their lives in

the Battle of Stalingrad, the Siege of Leningrad and other horrific clashes. In fact, Western front losses don't even match those on the Eastern front in the *First* World War: An estimated 5 million soldiers became corpses there.

This history is critical to understand the crisis in Ukraine. That nation and several others in Eastern Europe are becoming a battleground in a turf war between Europe and Russia.

From the West's perspective, Russia's fear of European expansion into Ukraine seems like bizarre paranoia. But given

Russia's history—and how, time and again, Russians have suffered terribly under European aggressors—it is reasonable caution.

At the same time, Eastern Europeans have suffered terribly under the Russians, and not just during the Cold War. Given that history, *their* fear that Russia will strike beyond Crimea is also well justified.

Why Eastern Europe Is Shaken

The freedom Eastern Europe currently enjoys is actually a historical anomaly. For most of the 20th century, the whole region was ruled by Russia. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland spent only 30 of those 100 years self-governing and free.

Central and Eastern European nations can exist independently only when the surrounding powers are weak. The last time this was the case for an extended period was more than 500 years ago. In the 13th century, the Mongols conquered Russia from the east, keeping the country in their thrall for over 200 years. Meanwhile, Germany had not yet united and become mainland Europe's major power.

This vacuum allowed the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to thrive, officially forming in 1569. Sweden was also a major power in the area, while German knights ruled the region that is now Estonia and Latvia. With no threat coming from the East, Poland was able to hold its own.

In the south, the Ottoman Empire filled the vacuum. The Ottomans conquered Bulgaria at the end of the 14th century, then Moldavia (modern Moldova) and Romania during the 15th and 16th centuries.

When Russia became strong, all this changed. Poland tried to take advantage of Russia's weakness at the start of the 17th century, but soon its opportunity was gone. The Poles started losing control of Ukraine

territory to the Russians. The area that is now Estonia and Latvia fell to Russia at the start of the 18th century, and Poland became a vassal state, dominated by Russia. By the end of the 1700s, it disappeared entirely, divided between Prussia, Austria and Russia. The three conquerors even agreed to try to stamp out the very memory of an independent Polish nation.

6,000,000
Ukraine residents murdered by Russia in 1932-33

WORLD WAR II EUROPEAN THEATER SOLDIER DEATH TOLL



Russia continued to clash with Sweden in the north and with the Ottoman Empire in the south. But few of the countries in the middle had the power to hold out against the competing empires and preserve their own freedom.

For southeastern Europe it wasn't quite as bad. Bulgaria and Romania gained their independence from the Ottoman Empire with Russia's support in the late 19th century. The complex power balance between Russia, the Ottoman Empire and the powers of Western Europe meant that these countries were able to preserve their independence.

But the countries of northeastern Europe did not gain their freedom until after 1917, when the war-weary Russian Empire collapsed in the Bolshevik Revolution. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland won their independence from Russia. Several nations in the Caucasus also tried to break away, but failed. Ukraine was also unable to pull away, though Poland took some of its western territory.

This period of Russian weakness lasted only 20 years. During World War II, it took back all these nations. Poland was once again divided in 1939 before being conquered entirely by Russia. Abandoned by the West, it was forced to endure the next 40 years under Russian control.

The lesson for Eastern Europe is simple: *It can only be free when Russia is weak.* And now, the crisis in Ukraine shows that, once again, Russia is strong.

Soviet Domination

Eastern Europe suffered terribly under Communist dominion. The most famous atrocity is the Holodomor of 1932-33—the deliberate starvation of peasants in Ukraine. *The Black Book of Communism* estimates that over 6 million people were murdered. And *murder* is the right word here: Russian authorities deliberately withheld and even exported food while they knew the peasants were starving. They also forcibly prevented the peasants from leaving their lands to buy food elsewhere.

The rest of the region also suffered. From 1940 to 1953, Russian authorities deported 200,000 people from the Baltic states; they imprisoned 75,000 others in the gulags. Ten percent of the entire adult population of the Baltics was imprisoned or deported. The Russians deported 120,000 from Moldavia, 7 percent of the population.



They expelled 300,000 from Ukraine.

When Russia conquered eastern Poland at the start of World War II, it deported around 1 million Poles. One hundred thousand died in prison camps or on the way to their new destinations; 30,000 were shot.

Russia deported 600,000 people from Hungary and imprisoned around 750,000. The numbers are equally horrifying for the other countries dominated by the Soviet Union. *The Black Book of Communism* estimates 1 million people died due to Communist regimes in Eastern Europe during the 20th century.

These numbers are not mere statistics. Each number represents someone who, within living memory, was displaced, locked up or worse. Once-free countries saw huge portions of their populations extinguished, and those who remained were forced to live under an infamously repressive regime. The scars of Soviet domination still have not healed.

What Russia Fears

But Russians too have suffered horribly in recent memory. A lot of this has come from their own rulers: By 1953, under the

Soviet Union, 14 million were locked in gulags. But they have also suffered horribly because of Western European aggression. On the Eastern front in World War II, around 14 million *civilians* died, over 11 million of them Soviets (based on pre-war borders). When military deaths are included, around 15 percent of the Soviet Union's entire population died in the World War II conflict with Europe.

And this was not the first war in which Russia helped defeat a European tyrant at a monumental cost. In 1812, Napoleon launched his massive invasion into Russia. He lost half a million men in the disastrous campaign, but Russia also took a major hit: Three quarters of Moscow was destroyed; hundreds of thousands of soldiers were killed.

Russia has learned an important lesson from this region's history: European powers will periodically threaten to completely destroy Russia. The only way to defend against that is to keep these powers as far away from the heart of Russia as possible.

Napoleon began his invasion 550 miles from Moscow and 420 miles from St. Petersburg. Hitler

14,000,000
 Russians locked in gulags
 by the Soviet Union by 1953

began his invasion from a similar distance. Would Russia have survived if these invasions had been launched from Ukraine, which is less than 300 miles from Moscow, or Estonia, which is under 100 miles from St. Petersburg? There are no natural barriers in these regions that Russia could use to build a defensive line. Instead the Russians are forced to rely on sheer distance alone.

Hence Russia's current actions in Crimea and eastern Ukraine. President Putin is not panicking—he sees no European Napoleon capable of marching European armies to Moscow. But he knows the potential is there. You cannot defend a nation just by hoping the bleakest parts of your nation's history never happen again. So he is keeping Europe as far away from his borders as possible.

Which brings us to the current impasse. Eastern Europe has a long history of domination by Russia. Yet this domination saved Russia twice in the last two centuries. Russia's push westward meant that any invasion from the west had to cover so much territory that a European army would inevitably face a fearsome Russian winter. Russia's recent push was not a simple land grab—it was a matter of survival. It will take more than a few protesters in Kiev for Russia to give in.

So while Russia keeps pushing, Central and Eastern Europe—with their long history of suffering at Russia's hands—continue resisting. But they cannot make that stand alone. Without support of a strong foreign power, the independent states of Central and Eastern Europe will once again prove the point that they cannot endure while, next door, Russia remains intact and powerful.

In Search of Allies

These nations have two possible sources of help: the United States and the rest of Europe. In recent years, America has repeatedly shown itself unwilling to stand up for this region. However, with Russian gunmen standing on the roofs of eastern Ukrainian government buildings, these nations are once again trying to persuade the Americans to help them.

Closer to home, the European option has shown little promise. But Eastern Europe can influence the rest of the Continent much more

directly. In doing so, these nations' goal is to get closer to the heart of EU power and to forge that power into one that can stand up to Russia.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk recently called for Europe to form a united energy market to break Russia's "energy stranglehold" over the Continent. He has also said Poland should consider joining the euro. While Poland is wary of the economics of the euro, it is more worried about its own defense.

"From a strategic perspective, eurozone membership would be another anchor grounding Poland in the group of the most important Western countries and improving our security," Tusk said in an interview published in *Polityka* on April 9. "Sooner or later, we will have to return to this discussion."

In fact, this region's proximity to Russia is the biggest factor in euro membership. Estonia and Latvia, which border mainland Russia, have joined the euro. Lithuania, which doesn't, has not.

Timid Europe

To this point, however, the EU has responded to this pressure with little beyond talk. NATO has only deployed token forces into Eastern Europe. For nations like Germany, sending even a handful of planes into that region is a big step. But for nations in the east, it's a tiny one.

"There is a deep sense of betrayal in Central Europe," wrote U.S. intelligence company Stratfor. "The Polish government that asked for massive and permanent NATO protection received none. ... The countries from the Baltics south to Bulgaria feel that the European institutions they had counted on—and we can include NATO in this—have failed" (April 9).

Eastern Europe needs something far more drastic than what we have seen so far. For these nations, Russia's invasion of Crimea has thoroughly shattered the "end of history" illusion—that at the fall of the

Soviet Union we somehow entered a magical new epoch where war was a thing of the past. To be secure, Eastern Europe needs a military force stationed in its countries that is capable of preventing an invasion.

The NATO members of Eastern Europe are probably safe from Russia for now—though "probably safe" is less than reassuring when it's your national existence that is on the line. NATO has not stationed any meaningful military forces in Eastern Europe. The U.S. can retreat from the region with just a speech or piece of paper. Without a significant number of boots on the ground, guarantees can be withdrawn in an instant. NATO guarantees *probably* are good today. But what about in five years? Or five months?

America's word has never meant less. The U.S. failed to protect Georgia from Russia in 2008—this year it has done a similar disappearing act over Ukraine. Washington's red line on Syria went ignored. Its response to China's territorial claims has been so weak that Japan openly worries that it cannot rely on American promises of defense. When radical Islamists threatened America's long-term ally in Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, America leaned toward the Islamists. In recent years, just about every nation that looks to America for defense has been disappointed. No wonder Eastern Europe fears that America's

word will not protect it much longer.

So Eastern Europe wants more drastic action. It will continue its pleas to the superpower that has historically successfully opposed Russia, but at the same time, these countries will make a serious and sustained push for

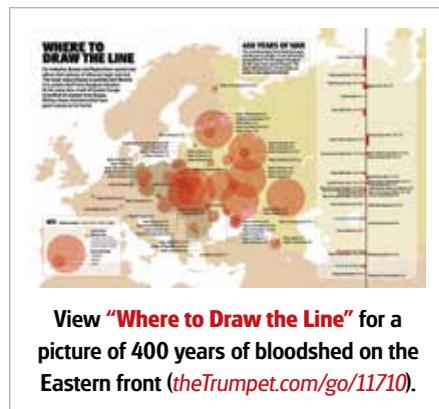
Europe to get its act together. To them, this means French, German and hopefully British troops stationed in their countries. It means some kind of European army.

'We Need to Be Brave'

Eastern Europe's history shows that the survival of these countries could be at stake, and they know it. On March 14,

See **RUSSIA** page 33 ➤

15
Percentage of Soviet population that died in World War II



View "Where to Draw the Line" for a picture of 400 years of bloodshed on the Eastern front (theTrumpet.com/go/11710).

Is There Life on Kepler-186f?

The answer eludes science—but it isn't beyond our reach.

BY RICHARD PALMER

SCIENTISTS AT NASA ANNOUNCED on April 17 the discovery of the first-ever Earth-size planet that seems capable of supporting human-like life outside of the solar system. Called Kepler-186f, the planet orbits its star in the “habitable zone”—which means its sun may keep it at the right temperature for liquid water to exist on its surface.

Until now, the only other planets that have been discovered in the “habitable zone” have been much larger than Earth, and therefore very different from our home planet. Many people are excited about Kepler-186f, as they believe it is more likely to have life on it than any other known planet beyond Earth.

“This is an historic discovery of the first truly Earth-size planet found in the habitable zone around its star,” University of California–Berkley’s Geoff Marcy told Space.com. “This is the best case for a habitable planet yet found. The results are absolutely rock solid. The planet itself may not be, but I’d bet my house on it. In any case, it’s a gem.”

Kepler-186f was discovered by the Kepler space telescope, its namesake. One way the Kepler telescope looks for planets is by searching for short dips in the brightness of stars. When a planet moves between

the Earth and the distant star the planet momentarily blocks part of its light.

Kepler uses these dips to find planets and then work out how big they are, how fast they’re orbiting their sun, and how close they are to their sun.

Kepler-186f’s sun, Kepler-186, is a red dwarf. This means it is much cooler than our sun—about half its size and 25 times fainter. 186f is much closer to its sun than we are to ours, yet it receives less energy from its sun than Mars does in our solar system.

Apart from this, we know just about nothing else about Kepler-186f. Current theories suggest it is made of rock, but they offer no direct evidence. As *Slate*’s Bad Astronomy blogger Phil Plait, who was part of the Hubble Space Telescope team with NASA, put it, “It could be a barren rock, or a fecund water world, or made entirely of Styrofoam peanuts, or some weird thing we haven’t even imagined yet.”

No one insists that Kepler-186f contains life. After all, Mars is also in the “habitable zone,” but it is a barren wasteland. There’s more to it than just size and proximity to a sun.

But if we’ve spotted one planet that matches these two requirements, could there be more out there? The answer is almost certainly yes. Data from Kepler and other projects indicate that *billions* of such planets exist *in our galaxy alone*.

Life on Other Planets? Yes!

The Bible reveals there is not currently life on other planets. In Romans 8, the Apostle Paul described God’s creation as enduring a state of waste and decay (e.g. verse 20). As

Herbert W. Armstrong wrote in his book *The Incredible Human Potential*, “This passage indicates precisely what all astronomers and scientific evidence indicates—the suns are as balls of fire, giving out light and heat; but the planets, except for this Earth, are in a state of death, decay and futility—but not forever . . .”

While that won’t stop NASA from looking for life elsewhere, it does raise another question for Bible-believing Christians: If the universe has a purpose and design, what’s the point of all these billions of planets that are just dead rocks, icy balls or dense, gassy clouds?

The Bible gives the answer, if we can expand our minds to accept it. Isaiah 45:18 says God created the heavens and the Earth “not in vain,” and that “he formed it to be inhabited.” That’s not just Earth—God created the universe and all its distant planets to be inhabited too. In Isaiah 51:16, God says that He will “plant the heavens.”

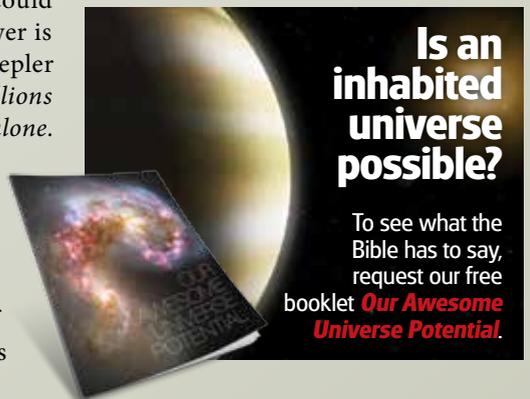
“Think about what that is saying,” *Trumpet* managing editor Joel Hilliker wrote in *Our Awesome Universe Potential*. “When you *plant* something, that means you are laying down seeds that you expect to grow into a crop. . . . Isaiah 51:16 tells us that God is going to *plant the heavens*—the ABODE OF THE STARS—THE UNIVERSE! He is going to *seed* it with life, expecting that it will grow into a greater, more impressive harvest in time!”

Those planets are empty for now. But there will come a time when Kepler-186f will be renewed, shifted to exactly the right orbit around its star, given the right atmosphere, and planted with *life*. And not just Kepler-186f. Other planets will be planted with life too.

When you realize that there are probably billions of planets in our galaxy alone, that makes for a dizzying and thrilling vision!

Is an inhabited universe possible?

To see what the Bible has to say, request our free booklet ***Our Awesome Universe Potential***.





OUT LAWS



Nevada is once again the Wild West. In a confrontation between federal authorities and America’s neo-revolutionaries, both sides are accusing the other of lawlessness. Here’s why it is truly dangerous. **BY ROBERT MORLEY**

CAN IMAGINE HOW ANGRY I WOULD be if the federal government forced me off land I felt belonged to me. All the more if it was land my father ranched, and his father before him; land I raised my children on; land containing generations of blood, sweat and tears my family had spent maintaining and improving.

I’d be angry to have that land taken away, particularly for the supposed purpose of protecting a tortoise that most city-dwellers will never see

or care about once the media cycle has turned—a tortoise that was endangered enough to confiscate my land, but not so endangered that the government approved construction of a solar power facility nearby; a tortoise for which there is no scientific proof that cattle ranching is incompatible.

Cliven Bundy doesn’t have to imagine all this; he’s living it. This situation made him angry enough to defy the government—SWAT team, helicopters, hired guns, snipers and all.

Who Owns the Land?

Bundy is the Nevada rancher battling the Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to keep his cattle on public land his family has grazed since 1877. His case has raised questions about government overreach and states’ rights—or lack thereof. *Is Nevada even really a state if the federal government “owns” 85 percent of the land within its borders?* Bundy asks.

Bundy poses an interesting question: Why should the people of Nevada have less right to their land than those in New York or Illinois? This isn’t about money, he says. It is about who the land belongs to, which in his mind is the state of Nevada, not the feds.

Bundy and his family ranched in Nevada’s Gold Butte for almost 70 years before the BLM even existed. The Bundys, like many other ranchers, were induced

LAWLESSNESS Protesters, some with weapons, made a stand for a man who is breaking federal law. But they say the feds are lawbreakers themselves.

to settle the area with the promise of free grazing land with no fees or limitations. It was part of the government's plan to develop the West—and the Bundys did their part. It was a win-win situation.

Then, according to the Bundys, the government changed the terms of the deal.

Bundy says there used to be 51 ranchers in Gold Butte; now he's the last one. Why? His answer: The feds regulated them out of business.

Yet there are two sides to every story.

The land the Bundys run their cattle on is federally owned. Bundy's emotional connection to it doesn't make it his. Two courts rejected Bundy's claims. The last judge found no merit to his argument: that the land in question should really belong to the state and therefore the BLM doesn't have jurisdiction. Bundy reportedly defended himself in court because no lawyer could make that case.

Bundy's problems started in 1993, after the desert tortoise was put on the endangered species list and the BLM ordered Bundy to remove most of his cattle. He refused. The BLM responded by levying fines. Bundy then decided to stop paying his grazing permit fees, saying something to the effect that it didn't make sense to pay management fees to an agency that was trying to manage him off his land. At that point he gave up his rights, say lawyers, and began stealing from the public.

But the problem festered. Twenty years of fines added up. The BLM says his tab comes to over \$1 million. Bundy hasn't paid a dime. Meanwhile, his cattle continue to forage on public land for free. Bundy's detractors say he is nothing but a "welfare king" stealing from the people. By the letter of the law, they might be right.

Eventually, environmental groups picked up the Bundy story and forced the BLM to take action. A judge ordered Bundy's cattle rounded up.

And a range war, unlike any other in U.S. history, erupted.

This is when this story changes from one about a stubborn rancher refusing to comply with a law he sees as unjust, to one about an increasingly militarized government,

and politicians that selectively enforce the law. It becomes a story about militias and people willing to travel across the country and put their lives on the line to defend a rancher they have never met—and a nation primed to erupt with racial violence.

Army vs. Cows

On March 27, about 200 BLM employees and contractors swooped into Clark County, Nevada—helicopters, off-road vehicles, fixed-wing aircraft and all. They closed down a whopping 322,000 acres of public land to track down 500 head of trespassing cattle. From then on, these federal bureaucrats were the law in town.

But not everyone agreed that the BLM army should be the law. People wondered: Why did the BLM send an army to confiscate some cows? Why did the rangers need attack dogs? More importantly, why do unelected, government-appointed bureaucrats have their own private militarized police force that supposedly supersedes the authority of local police? Why didn't the BLM solve this problem through regular law-enforcement channels?

Then the BLM began putting up fences delineating "protest zones" and "First Amendment areas" where protesting would be "allowed." According to the BLM, the rest of the 1,200 square miles of public land, including public highways, was now off limits to everyone. It even decreed a 30-day no-fly zone.

That didn't go over well either.

Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval said the corral-like protest zones were "offensive," and that they trampled upon "Nevadans' fundamental rights under the U.S. Constitution."

People ignored the First Amendment corrals anyway. Confrontations resulted. In the age of camera phones, it definitely didn't make the bureau look good. YouTube videos show BLM officers taser-ing, physically assaulting, pointing guns at and siccing an attack dog on protesters. One 50-year-old woman was football tackled from behind when she refused to move from in front of a truck. Some of the protesters didn't act so civilly either.

About that time, militia groups from around the country started arriving.

Brink of Another Revolutionary War

Militia members from the Oath Keepers (the organization made up of military and

law-enforcement members who pledge allegiance to the Constitution but not to the government), the III Percent Patriots (which gets its name from the claim that 3 percent of Americans fought in the American Revolution), the Arizona State Militia and several others were present.

Scott Shaw, co-founder of the Oklahoma Volunteer Militia, which boasts 50,000 members, said they were armed with AK-47s, AR-15s, sniper rifles and other military surplus hardware. He told Breitbart News they were prepared to use deadly force if necessary.

As if on cue, stories began popping up about how the BLM was also trying to seize 90,000 acres of private land along the Texas-Oklahoma border. And how the BLM had once before been found guilty of entering into "a conspiracy, a literal, intentional conspiracy, to deprive [another family] of not only their permit grazing rights ... but also to deprive them of their vested property rights," as recounted by Chief Judge Robert C. Jones of the Federal District Court of Nevada.

With war set to erupt, Reuters published pictures of protesters on a bridge overlooking one protest zone. One man in a military-style flak jacket was shown aiming his hunting rifle at what appeared to be BLM rangers. Another man was quoted as saying protest organizers were strategizing to put women and children in the front lines in case firing broke out. *Huffington Post* reported that there were 1,000 militia members on site.

As the number of protesters grew, tension escalated and BLM officers eventually threatened to open fire on the demonstrators, many of whom were armed and on horseback, six-shooters and all. It looked like something right out of the Wild West.

Thankfully, cooler heads prevailed and the federal agents backed down. Violence was averted and Bundy got some of his cattle back.

Bundy supporters called it a huge victory for freedom.

Not everyone saw it as a victory for America though. Nevada Sen. Harry Reid said, "Those people who hold themselves out to be patriots are not. They're nothing more than domestic terrorists. ... I repeat: What went on up there was domestic terrorism."

Reid's comments went viral.

It became a rallying cry for the right. Protesters mused: So we are domestic terrorists for *protesting* a heavy-handed government that is taking away constitutional freedoms—but when Maj. Nidal Hasan actually murdered 13 people at Fort Hood army base, that was just “workplace violence”? To many protesters, Reid’s comments seemed to confirm their worst suspicions.

Reid continued, “We can’t have an American people that violate the law and then just walk away from it.”

“It’s not over,” he said.

Lawlessness

Ironically, *lawlessness* is exactly what the Bundy supporters accuse the government of. As one commentator wrote: “Is he a union that can ask the Obama administration for a waiver for another year? Is he a low-income person who can ask that the mandate (to remove his cows) be delayed another year? Is he from another country and ask not to be deported based on his particular sad story?”

“Because this administration has made a mockery of the law through selective enforcement of it, it’s hard to see why

it’s necessary to remove some cows, and destroy this family’s livelihood, but it’s not necessary to do the rest of those things.

“We are in a dangerous place with this administration’s selective enforcement. It doesn’t take much for people to ask, ‘Why the law for me, but not for thee?’” (Powerline, April 14).

America is in a very dangerous and volatile place.

And most politicians, safe in their expensive city houses, haven’t a clue what is happening. They don’t see how their

See **OUTLAWS** page 11 ►

Throwing Gunpowder on the Fire

America labeled him a racist. CNN castigated him. ABC condemned him. Even Fox News’s Sean Hannity turned on him.

Following the Bureau of Land Management’s decision to release his cows, 67-year-old Cliven Bundy expounded on why he thinks big government welfare policies are destroying America. The *New York Times* reported Bundy’s comments: “I want to tell you one more thing I know about the Negro,” he said. Mr. Bundy recalled driving past a public-housing project in North Las Vegas, “and in front of that government house, the door was usually open and the older people and the kids—and there is always at least a half a dozen people sitting on the porch—they didn’t have nothing to do. They didn’t have nothing for their kids to do. They didn’t have nothing for their young girls to do” (April 23).

Bundy continued, “And because they were basically on government subsidy, so now what do they do? They abort their young children, they put their young men in jail, because they never learned how to pick cotton. And I’ve often wondered, are they better off as slaves, picking cotton and having a family life and doing things, or are they better off under government subsidy? They didn’t get no more freedom. They got less freedom.”

Asking whether or not black people would be better off under slavery is inflammatory and ridiculous. Furthermore, using terms like “Negro,” though common practice four decades ago, is considered insulting today. Making sweeping generalizations is also offensive.

But is Bundy really the evil, cold-hearted *racist* he is made out to be? Notice what Bundy also said *that was not reported by the Times*: “[A]nd so what I’ve testified to you—I was in the Watts riot, I seen the beginning fire and I seen that last fire. What I seen is civil disturbance. People are not happy, people are thinking they don’t have their freedoms, they didn’t have these things, and they didn’t have them.

“We’ve progressed quite a bit from that day until now, and we sure don’t want to go back. We sure don’t want the colored people to have to go back to that point. We sure don’t want these Mexican people to go back to that point. And we can make a difference right now by taking care of some of these bureaucracies, and do it in a peaceful way.”

Why didn’t the *Times* report this part? Saying he doesn’t want people to go back to those times doesn’t lend itself to the racist label—even if Bundy used politically incorrect words like “colored” that many people consider racist.

8

The *Times* also felt the following part of Bundy’s speech not worth quoting: “Now, let me talk about the Spanish people.



CLIVEN BUNDY

You know, I understand that they come over here against our Constitution and cross our borders. But they’re here and they’re people—and I’ve worked side-by-side a lot of them.

“Don’t tell me they don’t work, and don’t tell me they don’t pay taxes. And don’t tell me they don’t have better family structures than most of us white people. When you see those Mexican families, they’re together, they picnic together, they’re spending their time together, and I’ll tell you in my way of thinking they’re awful nice people. And we need to have those people join us and be with us, not not come to our party.”

If Bundy is a racist, he doesn’t seem to have a problem with people of Spanish descent.

Why didn’t the *New York Times*, CNN, ABC or MSNBC report even a portion of the rest of Bundy’s speech? The answer is because big media intentionally stir up controversy over race to score political points and attract ratings—even as it incites hatred and destroys the nation.

Did Bundy say some offensive things? No doubt. But is he a racist? *I don’t know*. I have never met the man. The *New York Times* writer vilifying him and misrepresenting his words doesn’t know either. Nor do all the media outlets and talk show hosts who jumped all over his comments. I do know that the full transcript of his speech doesn’t indicate what CNN indicates.

Adding a racial narrative to what happened at the Bundy Ranch added gunpowder to the fire. And when you play with fire, more than one person can get burned.

ROBERT MORLEY

Don't Become Fred AlphonzoMuhomaZipski

A cautionary tale of identity theft **BY ROBERT MORLEY**

WHAT IF ONE MORNING YOU woke up, looked in the mirror and discovered that you weren't you anymore! You were merged with some stranger. Your identity was combined with that of a bald, 6-foot-2, middle-aged man with a mustache and a penchant for flashy watches and expensive computers.

Suddenly, your real name no longer matters. You have become Fred AlphonzoMuhomaZipski.

At least, according to your bank, the big three credit rating agencies and the IRS, that's who you are.

What happened?

It began with an innocent mistake you made five years ago. You created a Facebook/Instagram/Twitter/online dating account. You typed in a bunch of information about yourself: age, hometown, photo. You made a few posts, then forgot about it.

A few months back you went to a baseball game. Someone there randomly snapped your picture with his smartphone. You never even saw a flash.

Bam! Within seconds, a complete stranger knew enough about you to steal your life.

By the time the Dodgers finished drubbing the Cubs, your bank accounts, credit cards, auto loans, utility bills and credit history were no longer yours alone. They were also Fred Alphonzo's, because he now had access to them all.

And Fred Alphonzo is an entrepreneur. When he is done using you, he will sell a share of you to someone else. After a few days, Fred Muhoma from Indonesia has merged himself into your profile, as has Fred Zipsky from Poland.

You become a hybrid Fred AlphonzoMuhomaZipski. These anonymous thieves can create fake birth certificates, licenses and Social Security cards using your information. They can apply for and receive government benefits in your name. They can

create fake identities and passports to sell to illegal aliens trying to cross the border and live in the United States. They can obtain jobs and abuse the healthcare services in your name. They can open bank accounts, credit cards and take out mortgages. They can file taxes and even claim your dependants on their returns. They can trash your credit rating.

Digitally, *they* become *you*.

How is this possible?

Recognize That Face?

NameTag is a new facial recognition smartphone app that lets users match a face to online and public records. It became available in January. The app whizzes through social media sites like Facebook and thousands of entries in the National Sex Offender Registry. It will soon be able to compare faces with photos from online dating profiles.

Google also recently purchased its own facial recognition technology, which it will eventually integrate into its products.

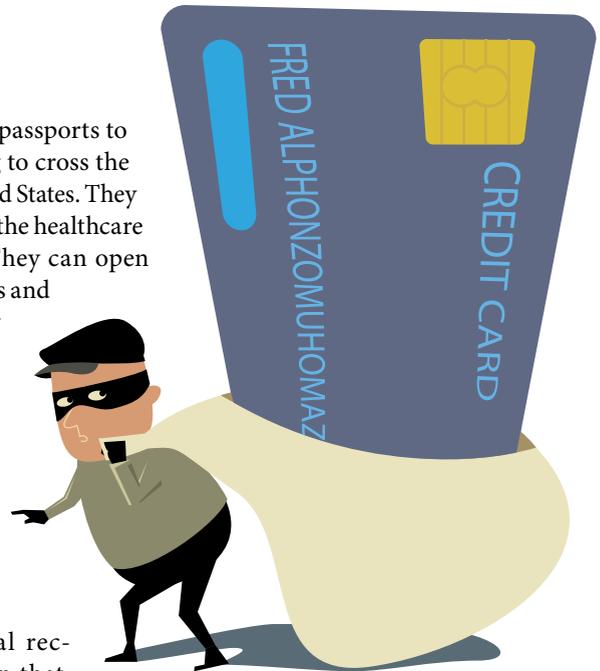
Facial recognition means no more anonymity. All it takes is a smartphone with a camera—or before long, Google glasses, which include a wearable camera activated by eye movement.

Seven seconds after he snapped your photo, the first Fred knew exactly who you were. And from your public Facebook page or other social media site, he found out your name, your age, where you were born, who your friends were, your parents' names, and the name of your miniature Doberman.

Although there are many ways to steal someone's identity, this is the new frontier of identity theft.

Easy Con, Easy Go

"If you tell me your date of birth and where you're born, I'm 98 percent to stealing your



identity," says con-man-turned-security-consultant Frank Abagnale. "Never state your date of birth and where you were born, otherwise you are saying 'come and steal my identity.'"

Abagnale should know. He was once considered the world's greatest con man and was the subject of a popular movie, *Catch Me If You Can*. After he was finally caught, the government offered a lenient sentence if he would help law enforcement bust fraudsters. Now he is trying to atone for his sins by helping people protect themselves from predators.

With the advancement of technology, identity theft is becoming cut-and-paste, says Abagnale.

"[I]t's about 4,000 times easier today to con people than when I did it," he told Wired. "To forge a check 50 years ago, you needed a Heidelberg printed press, you had to be a skilled printer, know how to do color separations, negatives, type-setting ... those presses were 90 feet long and 18 feet high Today, you open a laptop."

Each year, more than 11.5 million Americans have their identities stolen. By the time

Three steps to protect yourself

 **AVOID GIVING OUT PERSONAL INFO** Don't divulge personal information over the phone unless you initiated the call. If someone calls you, or even if you call them using a number they provided, you can't know whether the person you are talking to is not a thief. Information once given out, whether for a valid reason or not, may circulate for years and put you that much more at risk.

 **CHECK YOUR CREDIT REPORT** In the U.S., you are legally entitled to one free credit report from each of the three major credit rating agencies (TransUnion, Equifax and Experian) per year. Check your credit rating at least twice per year for any unauthorized changes or errors. Consider paying for a credit monitoring service, especially one that helps you clean up any mess if you become a victim.

 **CLEAN OUT YOUR WALLET** Never carry your Social Security card, birth certificate or passport with you in your wallet or purse. With this information, a thief could find out anything he or she could ever want to know about you. Protect these critical documents.

For more ways to help guard yourself from thieves, go online and read **"Nine Steps to Protect Against Identity Theft."** theTrumpet.com/go/11764

you finish reading this article, 150 of your friends, neighbors and fellow citizens will have had their personal information violated and abused for some sort of monetary gain—one identity stolen every two seconds.

By the Thousands, Millions and Billions

Imagine how many cars, phones, watches, wallets, computers and other valuable possessions are stolen in America every day. Now think about this: Identity theft now costs America \$24.7 billion per year—more than all other property crimes combined!

Some cases of identity theft simply involve someone stealing the credit card out of your wallet. Often, though, the theft is much more insidious—and far-reaching. In November and December last year, Target's credit card payment system was hacked, and 40 million card numbers and 70 million other pieces of customer data were stolen. Experts say it may be years before the thieves finish vending their treasure trove of personal information to other would-be thieves.

In February, the University of Maryland announced the records of more than 300,000 faculty members and students dating back to 1998 were compromised in a data breach. The stolen records included names, social

security numbers, dates of birth and the university ID numbers of staff members.

Once you give out information, anything can happen to it. In this case, information given out nearly 20 years ago may now be used to ruin people's lives. These people better start looking in the mirror, because they may soon become financially unrecognizable.

The possibilities for identity thieves are almost limitless, because once they have your information—they are you!

In one notorious case, a criminal spent over \$100,000 using someone else's credit cards. He also qualified for and received a federal loan, and purchased multiple motorcycles, handguns and even houses in his victim's name. Then he taunted his victim before filing for bankruptcy in the victim's name.

That's the power people can obtain over you if they get your information.

"What these criminals steal in a second also takes the victims years to recover," says U.S. Attorney David J. Hickton. He was speaking after an employee at a credit union accidentally discovered a "confederation of thieves" who were scamming the IRS by stealing people's identities and then their tax returns "on a scale that's unprecedented."

According to the IRS, tax-related identity theft investigations are up 66 percent

What to do if you're

 **ACT IMMEDIATELY** Time is crucial when you are trying to stop a thief before he does more damage.

 **TELL THE CREDIT AGENCIES** Contact the fraud department of one of the three main credit reporting agencies (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion). Confirm that the agency will notify the other two of abnormal activity on your account. Place a fraud alert and credit freeze on your credit report. Close any accounts that have been tampered with or that you did not open.

 **FILE A POLICE REPORT** The police will create an identity theft report. Get a copy of the police report, and hang on to

since 2012. The agency says it stopped \$50 billion worth of false returns since just 2012. Still, the Treasury's inspector general for tax administration estimates that the IRS missed over 1 million fraudulent returns worth \$3.6 billion in 2011.

But perhaps the most startling aspect of identity theft is this: In most cases, it isn't the Fred AlphonzoMuhomaZipskis of this world—it is friends and family.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, more than half of identity theft victims reported that the culprits were people they know: co-workers, friends, employees, neighbors and even parents and children.

How to Protect Yourself?

Our world is plagued by fraud, theft and deceit. And if you believe your Bible, you know it will get worse before it gets better. As the Apostle Paul warned, "But evil men and seducers shall wax *worse and worse*, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13). He prophesied exactly the sort of conditions that prevail in these "last days": "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent,

victimized

it forever. You will need this to refute future claims against you by creditors.

DO NOT PAY You are the victim here. You are not responsible for any fraudulent charges. If an institution was tricked into lending money to a thief, the fault lies with the thief and then with the institution, not with you. *Do not pay*, even if debt collectors are harassing you.

SEEK COUNSEL Visit reputable information sites like the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Education websites for more comprehensive guidelines on dealing with identity theft. These sites also provide good information on handling debt collectors, stopping businesses from selling the fraudulent debt, and cleaning up the mess.

fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” (verses 1-4).

In such a climate, you need protection. But as FBI assistant special agent Patrick Fallon Jr. says, “We’re kidding ourselves if we think there’s a foolproof method of protecting ourselves.”

Yet the Bible reveals a way to be protected. It is time you considered how to conquer these troubles—by letting God fight your battles for you!

God promises to bless and protect those who obey Him. You can come under that protection.

That does not mean you won’t experience any trials, or that you don’t need to take reasonable precautions to protect yourself. Neither does God promise us a problem-free life in this world. As Paul wrote to Timothy, “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (verse 12). But He does promise to fight our battles for us—to deliver us from every trouble and affliction. And as long as you continue to obey God, you will overcome those trials—and emerge stronger for them.

Will you let Him do it and learn how happy and free from worry YOUR LIFE may become? ■

► OUTLAWS from page 8

action, and the public’s perception of it, is leading people to selectively choose which laws they are going to obey too.

A Dangerous Cocktail

“I believe this is a sovereign state of Nevada,” Bundy said. “And I abide by all Nevada state laws. But I don’t recognize the United States government as even existing.”

Such sentiments are held by more than one militia group. Depending on your definition of militia, there are 270,000 to 680,000 people who belong to these groups. Probably millions more sympathize with them.

Never before in modern times have different militia groups banded together to offer armed resistance against the government like they did at the Bundy ranch, militia experts told Reuters. You have to go back to the Civil War.

Few things get people riled up more than property rights: land and who owns it. Throw in a government viewed as intrusive and unjust—one that only selectively enforces laws—and hundreds of people, militia and non-militia, were willing to travel across the country to defend a little-known rancher they had never met.

Toss in racial tension; armed militias, some with radical views; a distrusted, militarized government; plus a ratings-hungry media—and America faces a future of friction and flame.

For the past couple of years, the *Trumpet* has warned of the radical spirit of lawlessness in Washington and where it is leading. The administration has taken numerous steps to sidestep Congress to force through a partisan agenda. Congress has become confrontational, and the administration has responded with even more drastic measures. But there is a deeper dimension behind what is happening.

“Do you realize how deadly dangerous this trend of lawlessness is?” asks *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry. “Very few people do. But it gives profound insight into the real nature of the threat facing America today. ... This trend toward lawlessness is deadly! And I guarantee, based on biblical prophecy, that it is going to get far worse” (*America Under Attack*).

In the August 2013 edition of this magazine Mr. Flurry wrote, “Many people are trying to pretend like there is no real

problem, and that those who are concerned are overreacting. But this should deeply trouble every American! There is an unparalleled spirit of lawlessness behind all of these scandals! And it is leading to an outcome far worse than most people believe.”

One of the great lessons of history is that the law must be the same for everyone—and even the state must be subject to it. “If exceptions are made,” historian Paul Johnson wrote, “the rule of law begins to collapse”—and ultimately society cannot survive.

“We are in a dangerous place with this administration’s selective enforcement. It doesn’t take much for people to ask, ‘Why the law for me, but not for thee?’”

POWERLINE

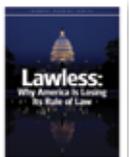
Anyone who doesn’t think this is a real problem need to reconsider. For over 200 years America has prospered unlike any other nation in history. Yet now social unrest is flaring and there is an air of tension blowing across the nation. What has changed?

Something dangerous has seized America—far deadlier than people want to believe. The Bible says there is a *spiritual dimension* to this trend, and you cannot understand these events unless you recognize it. Ultimately, this isn’t about any man or administration: It’s about an evil spirit working to destroy this nation, and why God is allowing it to happen. ■

LAWLESS

America is breaking down its own rule of law. What is causing this spirit of lawlessness? To find out, download our free e-book: **Lawless: Why America Is Losing Its Rule of Law.**

No cost. No obligation. No sign-up. Download instantly at theTrumpet.com/go/lawless



BLOOD MOONS

Do They Fulfill Bible Prophecy?

They have seized the public's attention. What does the Bible really say? The answer may surprise you. **BY DENNIS LEAP**

IN CASE YOU HAVE NOT YET HEARD ABOUT *blood moons*, here is what's going on.

This past April 15, the first of four unusual lunar eclipses began. They will occur at approximately six-month intervals—the next being October 8, then April 4 and September 28 of next year—and will be visible across North America. Astronomers call this a lunar eclipse *tetrad*. The last tetrad occurred over 2003 and 2004. Eight more such tetrads will occur before the year 2100.

Scientists at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) consider the most notable thing about the current tetrad is the fact that all four eclipses will be visible to most Americans, assuming the weather cooperates.

However, a large portion of the American public is keenly interested in the tetrad for more than the artistry created by night sky astral body dancing.

Two bestselling, prophecy-leaning authors believe the tetrad is directly related to a prophecy found in Joel 2:31: “The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the

Lord comes” (English Standard Version). These two men and their books—*Blood Moons* by Mark Biltz, and *Four Blood Moons* by John Hagee—have received widespread media attention because of the fervor and alarm they have created among religious-minded people.

Is it possible this astronomical event has something to do with dramatic end-time prophetic events? The answer may surprise you.

Why Blood Moons

Science-oriented Internet sites were inundated with questions about prophecy related to blood moons. “We’re not experts on prophecy of any kind,” wrote EarthSky in April. “But we’ll tell you what we know about the new definition for blood moon that has raised so many questions recently” (April 24). It explained that John Hagee and Mark Biltz apply the term *blood moons* to the 2014-2015 tetrad, and credited Hagee for popularizing the term in *Four Blood Moons*. “This book, published in 2013, is apparently what launched all the questions to our astronomy website about blood

moons,” EarthSky wrote. “We confess. We haven’t read it.”

Why do both men call such a lunar eclipse a “blood moon”? Astronomers don’t tend to use the term. Neither does it appear in the Bible.

Hagee and Biltz most likely use it because a total lunar eclipse makes the moon appear a shade of red, ranging from a dusty brown to an orange or coppery color.

The phenomenon is a natural occurrence caused when the sun, Earth and moon line up in space. Science explains why. “The reason stems from the air we breathe. During a total lunar eclipse, the Earth lies directly between the sun and the moon, causing the Earth to cast its shadow on the moon. If Earth didn’t have an atmosphere, then, when the moon was entirely within Earth’s shadow, the moon would appear black and invisible,” says EarthSky. “Thanks to Earth’s atmosphere, what actually happens is much more subtle and beautiful. ... As sunlight passes through our atmosphere, the green to violet portion of the light spectrum is, essentially, filtered out. ... Meanwhile, the reddish portion of the spectrum is least affected.

“What’s more, when this reddish light first entered the atmosphere, it was bent (refracted) toward the Earth’s surface. It’s bent again when it exits on the other side of Earth. This double bending sends the reddish light onto the moon during a total lunar eclipse.”

“On rare occasions, the light reaching the moon is exactly the color of blood, but there is no way of predicting this in advance,” Space.com adds. “So there are no grounds to call any particular lunar eclipse a blood moon until it actually shows its color.”

Solar and lunar eclipses, including the tetrad, are produced by the regular movements of the sun, Earth and moon and are completely predictable. Although a tetrad is rare, one happened just a decade ago, and another is expected in 18 years.

So can we consider this a sign that an earthshaking prophetic event is looming on the horizon? Biltz and Hagee seem to think so. Here is why.

Why All the Hubbub Over Moons

Mark Biltz is founder of El Shaddai Ministries located in Bonney Lake, Washington. John Hagee is founder of Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas. Both

organizations are non-denominational. The two men have met and agree that the tetrad is a warning from God. They see a prophetic correlation between the tetrad and two of God's festivals outlined in Leviticus 23—the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles.

In his book *Blood Moons*, Mark Biltz writes: “In March of [2008], I saw on the Internet an incredible total lunar eclipse over the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. I had read all the Bible verses in Isaiah, Joel, the Gospels and Revelation where the text talks about the moon turning to blood and the sun to sackcloth. I began to ponder the possibilities of tying the eclipses mentioned in the Bible to the possible coming of the Messiah.

“Because I love science and astronomy, I decided to look into the future occurrences of eclipses. ... I remembered that NASA has a list of eclipses that covers 5,000 years ... I noticed that there were four total lunar eclipses in a row for 2014 and 2015. ... One morning, as I was praying, a thought popped into my head: *Why don't I compare the dates of the eclipses on the NASA website to the dates on the biblical calendar?* When I did, I was shocked to find that all four eclipses—over both years—fell on the biblical holidays of Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles. I just about jumped out of my skin.” While researching the connection between tetrads and significant events in Jewish history, he discovered that there had been a tetrad right after Israel became a nation in 1948, and again when “Israel retook Jerusalem in 1967.”

“To me, all these signs, coming together at one time, are potentially the culminating signals that God is closing this chapter of human history,” Biltz writes in the concluding chapter of his book. “This could be the final curtain call before the Great Tribulation mentioned in the Bible.”

Similar Story—Different Book

Hagee's story is nearly a mirror image of Biltz's. “Though I had applied the study of the stars relative to the creation and the birth of Christ, I had yet to discover the connection that Pastor Mark had asked me to make: How were the sun, moon and stars linked to the study of prophecy?” Hagee writes in *Four Blood Moons*.

“I searched the Scriptures for a new revelation with that specific question in mind and came to two verses that shouted out to me!” Hagee continues. He then quotes Joel 2:31 and Acts 2:20 (which is the Apostle

Peter's quote of Joel 2:31). Explains Hagee, “The sun, moon and stars are unmistakably connected to Israel and biblical prophecy—and that connection inspired this book. God will use them to light up the heavens with an urgent, top-priority message for all mankind.”

“The history of the world is about to change forever,” John Hagee tells us with confidence, “and God is sending us messages on His high-definition billboard by speaking to us in the heavens—using the four blood moons; the question is ... are we listening?”

Although the two men leave themselves an out—using the words *could* and *possibly*—when reading their books and surfing their websites, it is clear that both are convinced they are on to something big prophetically.

While one might applaud their interest in Bible prophecy, can you *prove* the truth about what they are saying and publishing?

While one might applaud their interest in Bible prophecy, can you prove the truth about what they are saying and publishing? History is chock full of people's prognostications that proved to be profitless.

History is chock full of people's prognostications that proved to be profitless.

Is this tetrad the heavenly sign spoken of in Joel 2:31? You can know the correct answer. In fact, the great God that created the heavens, including the stars, sun, moon and Earth, wants you to know the truth about Joel 2:31 and all other earthshaking prophecies. However, to come to the correct answer, there are several things you must do.

Time Line of Prophecy

Prophecy is a significant part of the Bible. Did you realize that approximately ONE THIRD of the Bible is devoted to it? The Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 2:20 that the very CHURCH of Jesus Christ is *built* on the foundation of the PROPHETS and their prophetic writings!

The Bible's most important prophetic book is Revelation. This book actually unlocks large portions of the Bible's other prophecies, including the one used by Biltz

and Hagee regarding “blood moons.”

While the book of Revelation thoroughly stumps most Bible readers, you can understand this mysterious book. After all, God the Father and Jesus Christ revealed it to be understood by His servants (Revelation 1:1).

In 1972, in his booklet *The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last!* Herbert W. Armstrong wrote, “While the book of Revelation, itself, is a vital KEY to a large portion of the other prophecies, there are certain KEYS which open up this book to understanding. One important key is that in Revelation is a STORY-FLOW, relating one future event to another in time order—with occasional INSETS injected into the continuous story-thread.” This is a pivotal point to understanding Revelation. And this story-thread, or time line of end-time prophecy, reveals the *timing* of the heavenly signs discussed in Joel 2:31.

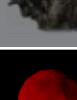
The book of Revelation reveals major prophetic events in time sequence using

SEVEN SEALS—discussed in Revelation 6, 8, 9 and 11. In Revelation 1:1, God the Father is revealed as the *originator* of the prophecies locked within the seven seals, and in Revelation 5, Jesus Christ is shown to be the only one who can unlock the meaning of the seals.

In chapter 6, Jesus Christ begins stripping off the seals—literally opening up to human understanding the sequence of world-shaking events for this end time. Yet the events are given to us in mysterious symbols. For example, the first seal shows a rider on a white horse with a bow and a crown (verse 2). What does this symbol mean?

Symbols are open to all sorts of interpretations—and for generations, people have forced their own human interpretations on them. That is the grave danger for all who desire to teach prophecy. The Bible *interprets its own symbols*—usually in a location different than the chapter you may be reading.

The Seven Seals of Revelation

1 ST SEAL	White Horse: False Prophets Revelation 6:1-2; Matthew 24:3-5	
2 ND SEAL	Red Horse: War Revelation 6:3-4; Matthew 24:6-7	
3 RD SEAL	Black Horse: Famine Revelation 6:5-6; Matthew 24:7	
4 TH SEAL	Pale Horse: Pestilence Revelation 6:7-8; Matthew 24:7-8	
5 TH SEAL	The Great Tribulation 2.5 YEARS Revelation 6:9-11; Matthew 24:9-10, 21	

6 TH SEAL	The Heavenly Signs Revelation 6:12-17; Matthew 24:29; Joel 2:30-31	
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7 TH SEAL	Hail, fire and blood; one third of trees, grass burned Revelation 8:6-7	
1 ST TRUMP	One third of sea becomes blood Revelation 8:8-9	
2 ND TRUMP	One third of fresh water made bitter Revelation 8:10-11	
3 RD TRUMP	One third of light darkened Revelation 8:12	
4 TH TRUMP	War inspired by Satan Revelation 9:1-12	
5 TH TRUMP	Army of 200 million; one third of mankind killed Revelation 9:13-21	
6 TH TRUMP	1ST WOE	
7 TH TRUMP	2ND WOES	

3 RD WOES	Terrible sores inflicted Revelation 16:2
1 ST VIAL	Sea turned to blood Revelation 16:3
2 ND VIAL	Fresh water turned to blood Revelation 16:4-7
3 RD VIAL	Scorching by the sun Revelation 16:8-9
4 TH VIAL	Darkness and pain Revelation 16:10-11
5 TH VIAL	Euphrates dried up Revelation 16:12-16
6 TH VIAL	Greatest earthquake ever; hail Revelation 16:17-21
7 TH VIAL	24 HOURS

RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

Revelation 11:15-19; 19:11-21; Matthew 24:30-31

You should read through chapters 6, 8, 9 and 11 at this point to familiarize yourself with these seals. They tell you what will happen on the Earth and *in the heavens* right up until the time of Jesus Christ's Second Coming. However, the symbols do not make the events plain! Don't give up and don't despair—there is another important key you must use.

A Symbol Is Like a Parable

Mr. Armstrong explained, "And now I want you to realize a most important fact, bearing on our problem, which most of you never realized before. Haven't you supposed, along with nearly everyone else, that Jesus spoke in PARABLES in order to make His meaning clearer—as a sort of illustration, so that people would better understand His meaning? Well, you have supposed WRONG! On the contrary, believe it or not, Jesus spoke in parables to cover up, to hide the true meaning from the crowds that constantly followed Him! This knowledge puts in our hands the KEY that will unlock these symbols of the book of Revelation" (ibid). Study Matthew 13:1-13 to prove what Mr. Armstrong teaches here. Pay particular attention to verse 11.

Did Christ reveal the literal meaning of these strange symbols from Revelation elsewhere in the New Testament? "He did!" Mr. Armstrong answered. "When His disciples came to Him on Mt. Olivet—when they to whom He revealed His parables—they to whom it *was* given to know these mysteries—came to Him *privately*, and asked Him: 'Tell us, when shall these things be and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world?' Jesus gave in plain language, a startling prophecy of these very world conditions of TODAY, and our immediate future!" (ibid).

In the astounding Olivet prophecy recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, Christ outlined in plain language the seven seals of the book of Revelation. See the accompanying chart for the seven seals and the story flow of the book of Revelation. The Olivet prophecy *highlights* a summary of world events from A.D. 31 until the return of Jesus Christ. You should read all of Matthew 24:1-31 before continuing this article.

The Great Tribulation Next

While you keep in mind what you just read in Matthew 24, there is another key you must understand to truly grasp what Jesus

Christ is telling us in these verses and in the book of Revelation.

"I want you to notice a consistent principle in the prophecy of Matthew 24 and of the sixth chapter of Revelation," Mr. Armstrong explained. "SEVEN successive things, or events, are to occur. As an example: The very *first* condition Jesus foretells is that of FALSE PREACHERS, misleading and deceiving, not the few, but the *many!*

"That condition set in almost immediately. The Apostle Paul wrote of it, and said this spirit of iniquity was *already working*, even as he wrote! And it has never relaxed or ceased, but rather has developed in intensity, until *the whole world*, as distinctly prophesied, *has become deceived and misled as to these Bible truths of God!*" (ibid). Mr. Armstrong was referring to the prophecy in Matthew 24:4-5 and Revelation 12:9. Christ's prophecy to His disciples is the *explanation* of the seven seals of Revelation! The first seal is this plague of *false teachers and prophets*.

The second event or condition to set in is *war* climaxing in intensity today in world war. We are now in the lull between World Wars II and III (Matthew 24:7). The third and fourth seals—famine and pestilence—are also included at the end of this verse.

"There is Christ's OWN EXPLANATION of the four horsemen! But this brings us to the fearful present," Mr. Armstrong wrote (ibid). What is the next major prophetic event that will rock this world to its foundations?

In verses 21-22, Jesus discussed the fifth seal, OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION.

Dozens of prophecies in both the Old and New Testaments describe this horrific event. To fully explain the Great Tribulation would take more than one article. However, you can know that religious teachers purporting to understand it are woefully ignorant about what this fifth seal truly means.

Here is a short description: The modern nations of Israel—primarily the United States, Britain and the tiny nation called Israel in the Middle East—along with the sinning saints of God, will suffer great evils during a horrifying 2½-year period—even being CONQUERED by foreign invasion and brought into CAPTIVITY (Revelation 6:9-11). You can read more about this in our article on page 22.

The Tribulation has *not yet occurred*. However, current world events show that it is at our doorstep!

Only *after* that modern holocaust occurs will we arrive at the *next* major prophetic event described in Revelation.

The Heavenly Signs

Jesus Christ discussed the sixth seal, or the heavenly signs, in Matthew 24:29. This is the same event the Prophet Joel spoke about in his prophecy (Joel 2:31).

For all those willing to listen, here is the Bible answer to the question: *Is this current tetrad the heavenly signs discussed in Joel 2:31?* Jesus Christ tells you, *No!*

Take the time to carefully study verse 29 with Revelation 6:12-17. The heavenly signs—where the sun grows dark and the moon becomes as blood—do not take place until *after* the Great Tribulation.

This event introduces the time period known as the Day of the Lord, which is the seventh seal. This is a *separate event* from the Great Tribulation. During this one-year period, God unleashes His wrath on a sinful world in the form of the seven trumpet plagues discussed in Revelation 8, 9 and 11. It is His way of showing all mankind left living that they need to repent of their wicked ways and turn to Him.

Understand that God has a great purpose behind the heavenly signs discussed in Joel 2:31, Matthew 24:29 and Revelation 6. Mr. Armstrong explained, “God has warned the world through all His prophets—through His Son Jesus Christ—He is warning the world right now through this very Work [conducted now through the Philadelphia Church of God]. But God is a God of mercy and compassion. He will yet warn this world once again—*by supernatural signs, IN THE SUN, THE MOON AND THE STARS. God will leave men no excuse*” (ibid).

Notice, the signs in the sun and the moon will be *supernatural signs*, meaning they will be *outside the natural order* of things. The current tetrad is a *natural event* occurring because of the natural, organized movement of the Earth, moon and sun.

Notice also: The tetrad will be seen mainly in the United States. Revelation 6 shows that ALL MEN ON EARTH will be able to see the dramatic heavenly signs that God will display (verses 15-17). So don't be buffaloed by all this talk about blood moons.

However, work hard to understand what the Bible truly says about prophetic events that will dramatically affect your life. You can put your full trust in what the

Let the Bible interpret itself—not some man

Misguided interpretations of biblical prophecy are common. Some basic keys prevent such errors. You can learn about them in our free e-book *You Can Understand Prophecy*. No cost. No sign-up. No follow-up. Visit theTrumpet.com/go/prophecy and download it instantly!

You Can Understand Prophecy



Bible records about the soon-coming climactic world events. “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts,” encourages the Apostle Peter (2 Peter 1:19). How wonderful that the Old Testament prophets and Christ's apostles recorded all we need to know about prophecy.

This world is growing darker each day. Evils are increasing at lightning speed. At

have a multitude of false prophets around.

The major sects of organized Christianity cannot help you understand prophecy. Most of today's so-called Christian leaders reject Bible history and prophecy as an exercise in futility. Few even believe in the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age. That is the main reason you will not hear sermons on prophecy in the great cathedrals and churches of the Western world.

Those scattered voices that *do* focus on prophecy do not agree on what specific

Those scattered voices that do focus on prophecy do not agree on what specific prophecies mean. And they rely on their own reasoning rather than on Jesus Christ and the Bible to interpret God's prophecies.

the same time, many are growing more confused by what is happening in our world, what it all means and where it is leading. Yet you don't have to be confused.

You can know what is happening—and *why*. Even more, you can know that a new and wonderful day is about to dawn for all mankind!

Yet, you must be extremely cautious of whom you listen to.

God Wants You to Understand Prophecy

It is a historical fact that God has always worked through a human being to tell people what He was going to do on Earth. God is faithful to reveal His secrets to those people truly serving Him (Amos 3:7). He then requires those people to share that message with anyone willing to listen (verse 8).

Judging by the Old and New Testaments, it would be strange if God *didn't* have someone delivering His prophetic message today (Acts 3:24). It would also be strange *not* to

prophecies mean. And as we can see, they rely on their own reasoning rather than on Jesus Christ and the Bible to interpret God's prophecies.

Yet, just as He always has, Christ *is* delivering God's prophetic message through His true Church today—the Church He founded and promised would never die (Matthew 16:18). He challenges you to find out whom He is using—who is interpreting the prophecies of the Bible *using the Bible*.

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation,” warned Peter (verse 20). Be careful what you read prophetically. Believe God and His Word, rather than giving heed to some man who thinks he knows. Then you will be able to follow Jesus Christ's admonition with absolute confidence, “And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH” (Luke 21:28). ■



America's Lost Identity

If you want to understand the dramatic and dangerous changes taking place in the United States today, you need some vital history. **BY DAVID VEJIL**

AMERICA IS DECLINING—CULTURALLY, economically and militarily. The world's only superpower is fading, qualitatively, quantifiably and undeniably. Now other powers are rising to take its place.

America has withdrawn from Iraq, drawn down in Afghanistan, backed away from Arabia, backtracked on Syria, detached from Eastern Europe, and given ground to Russia, China, Iran and the European Union.

A lot of people recognize this historic decline. But few can answer the most urgent question: *Why is this happening?*

To understand why America is declining, you have to understand *who America is*.

Only once you know the *historic identity* of the American people can you grasp the reality of America's current situation and where it's heading.

Yes, the Americans trace back to the British Empire. But their roots go much further than that.

The *Trumpet's* news analysis and forecasts revolve around this forgotten truth: The American people descended from Abraham and the ancient Israelites! That fact has tremendous bearing on current events—and you can *prove* it for yourself.

Extraordinary Promises

To start at the beginning, go to the Bible, a religious book that heavily impacted the founding and history of the United States.

The Bible's first book, Genesis, records the story of a man who believed and obeyed God:

16

Abraham. "Get thee out of your country, and from your kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee," God told him, "And I will make of thee *a great nation* ..." (Genesis 12:1-2).

Abraham obeyed God's command and believed His promise. God continued to work in Abraham's life and the lives of his sons and grandsons. The Bible records that God expanded His promise, saying that Abraham's descendants would become powerful and wealthy and would spread around the entire world. You can track more details of God's promises regarding Abraham's heirs throughout Genesis:

Genesis 17:1-6 | God promised that Abraham would be a father of many nations, not just one.

Genesis 22:16-18 | God promised that those nations descended from Abraham would possess the gates (access points vital for trade, commerce and military purposes) of their enemies.

Genesis 26:3-5 | God promised that the populations of those nations would multiply to become as numerous "as the stars of heaven."

Genesis 27:26-29 | God promised that those nations would become wealthy and would rule over other nations.

Genesis 28:13-14 | God promised that those nations would spread in all directions worldwide.

Genesis 35:10-11 | God promised specifically that these descendants would become "a nation and a company of nations."

Take an objective look at these promises in the Bible. If you believe that God exists, the Bible is His Word, and that He keeps His promises, you should look for Abraham's descendants to appear prominently in history. You should be able to see them take shape at some point as a single wealthy, powerful nation and as a group of nations—a *superpower* and a *commonwealth*, you might say.

Has there ever been a people that grew into a nation that developed an extremely wealthy economy, spread around the world, fielded a super-powerful military, exerted influence over its enemies and controlled the choke points of the world?

What nation fits all these descriptions *and at the same time* is related to a commonwealth or "company of nations"?

There is only one: the United States of America. America has been the world's greatest superpower, *and* it came directly from the world's greatest empire: Britain. Great Britain and then the United States projected their power all around the world, and controlled almost every last important sea gate in the world.

No other nation and empire fulfills those promises so specifically and so fully. This is *proof* that among the modern nations descended from Abraham, most prominent are America and Britain.

Modern Israel

Follow the biblical narrative, and Abraham's children flourished into the 10-tribed nation of Israel. Proof is abundant that America fulfills what God prophesied

Israel Is Israel—Right?

Who are the modern descendants of ancient Israel? The Jewish nation in the Middle East, right? Yes—and no.

The Jews, of course, descended from Abraham. Abraham's son was Isaac, and Isaac's son was Jacob, whose name God later changed to Israel. The Jews descended from this lineage. So Jews are Israelites. But *not all Israelites are Jews*.

Israel had 12 sons, one of whom was Judah. Judah grew into a great tribe, whose people came to be known as Jews. But there were 11 *other* tribes. And since God specially blessed the tribe of Joseph and Joseph's two sons, there were actually 12 tribes besides Judah.

Under King David and King Solomon, all the tribes of Israel were united in one kingdom. But then the kingdom split. Ten tribes rebelled and formed their own kingdom to the north in the land called Samaria. Judah, along with the tribes of Benjamin and Levi, stayed under the rule of David's descendants, who ruled from Jerusalem.

The history of those in the kingdom of Judah, known as the Jews, is well known. But what about the 10 tribes in the northern kingdom of Israel?

The Assyrian empire conquered these tribes. The Bible records what happened next.

"[T]here was none left but the tribe of Judah only," Scripture says, because "the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed *them* in the cities of Samaria *instead of the children of Israel*: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof" (2 Kings 17:18, 24). So Assyria imported non-Israelites into Samaria, and removed the Israelite captives. The Israelites and Assyrians migrated northwest. During this period, these tribes lost their identity.

But God had made a promise to Abraham—that his descendants would develop huge populations, would become wealthy, would project power over other nations, would spread worldwide, would control crucial sea gates, would become a nation and a company of nations. The Jews have never fulfilled these promises. In fact, they have often been dispersed throughout history with no nation of their own at all.

God actually specified that He would fulfill these promises of national greatness *not* through Judah and *not* through all 12 tribes in general, but through *Joseph* and his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. God recorded that Manasseh would become a great nation, and that his brother, Ephraim, would become "a multitude of nations."

When you look at history to see whether God kept His promises, look beyond the State of Israel. Look for those peoples with ancient connections to Judah that became a powerful nation and a powerful empire.

about the tribe of *Manasseh*, and Britain fulfills what God prophesied about the tribe descended from Manasseh's brother, *Ephraim*. In Genesis 48, Abraham's grandson Jacob—whom God had renamed *Israel*—specifically put the name *Israel* on those two (verse 16), one of whom would become a "great" people, and the other "a multitude of nations" (verse 19).

If America and the British peoples aren't the modern-day Israelites, no one else has fulfilled or is fulfilling those promises God made. And if those promises have failed, then the Bible cannot be trusted, and its hundreds of prophecies that revolve around modern Israel are pointless.

But if God's biblical promises are true, those hundreds of prophecies apply *right now*.

This still leaves a lot of questions: How did the Israelites migrate from the Middle East to the British Isles and North America? How did they lose their identity? Why did it take so long for God to fulfill those promises? Could those promises and prophecies about Israel still be for some time in the future? These are great questions, and they deserve great answers and further proof.

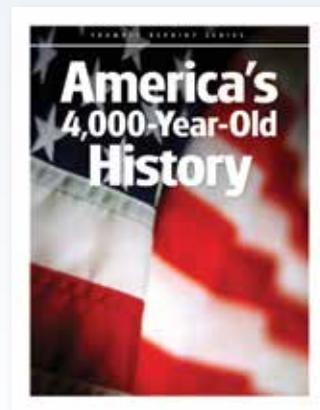
Whether you realize it or not, the answers to those questions link *directly* with the questions regarding America's present-day decline! Knowing America's biblical identity unlocks countless biblical passages that explain exactly why the nation is experiencing such a dramatic fall—and gives you the story of where you can expect this trend to lead in the years ahead.

DID YOU KNOW?

Calling the Jewish state in the Middle East "Israel" is actually a misnomer. In fact, as the state was forming in 1948, most of its citizens favored the name "Judea." Others favored "New Judea" or "Zion."

We can help you seek out these answers in your own Bible. You can start right now with our free e-book, ***America's 4,000-Year-Old History***. If there is a God, and if the Bible is His Word, then America must be modern-day Israel. It is the only nation that fits God's detailed prophecies. But you have to prove the truth for yourself. ■

See the back cover of this magazine to learn how to instantly download this free e-book, *America's 4,000-Year-Old History*.





Signs of Decline

President Obama and other observers maintain that the U.S. is not in decline. However, the facts show otherwise. In the fundamental building blocks of power, including military might, resource production and economic strength, the U.S. is falling—just as biblical prophecy said would happen at this time. The reasons for this dramatic reversal are worth studying into.

1750

1800

1850

DEBT "The borrower is servant to the lender," and the U.S. will be no different. Even by the more popular metric, the ratio of debt to a country's GDP, the U.S. is doing poorly, as this chart shows (red). Gross U.S. debt continues at unprecedented levels, and is projected to reach almost \$20 trillion by 2015 (black).



LABOR As more people accept government subsidy, the labor force has steadily declined from 67.2 percent of the population (16 and over) in 1998 to 62.8 percent in 2013.

TIME LINE

A survey of major milestones in U.S. history shows a nation that abruptly comes to power shortly after its founding, followed by a decline. The decline shows itself most poignantly in wars the U.S. has fought since World War II.

1803
The U.S. doubles in size again, gaining access to the world's largest continuous farmland and the world's largest navigable internal waterways.

1845
U.S. annexes Texas



1849
California gold rush begins

1851-1855
The U.S. produced 45 percent of the world's entire output of gold

1867
U.S. buys Alaska



1750

1800

1850

1733
Georgia, the last of the 13 original colonies, is founded

1783
Treaty of Paris ends Revolutionary War and doubles the size of the U.S.

1819
U.S. gains Florida

1846
U.S. gains the Oregon Territory, finally reaching the Pacific Ocean

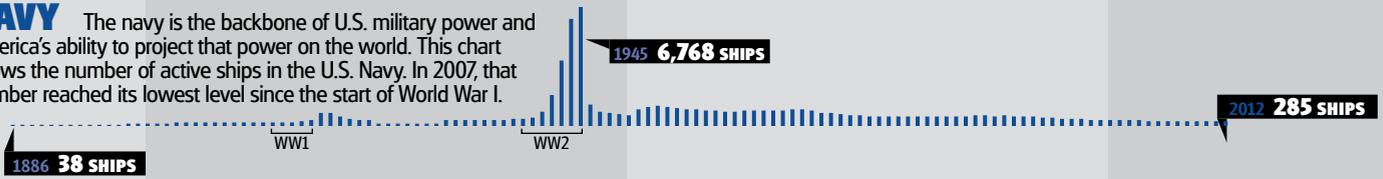
1848
Victory in the Mexican-American War gives the U.S. California and the rest of the Southwest

1859
Oil discovery at Oil Creek, Pennsylvania, begins U.S. dominance of oil industry

1869
U.S. completes the world's first transcontinental railway system, linking the U.S. by rail from coast to coast



NAVY The navy is the backbone of U.S. military power and America's ability to project that power on the world. This chart shows the number of active ships in the U.S. Navy. In 2007, that number reached its lowest level since the start of World War I.



STEEL
U.S. percentage of world production



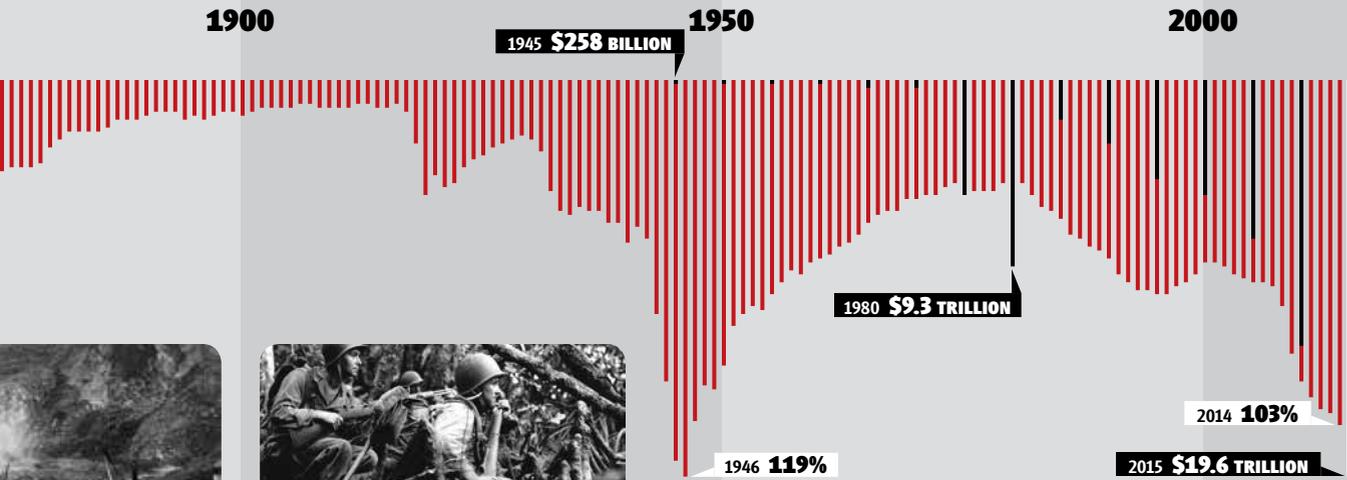
PIG IRON
U.S. percentage of world production



GOLD
U.S. percentage of world production



RESOURCES These charts show the decline of U.S. production compared to the world in major resources for industrial capacity and wealth.



1898 U.S. annexes Hawaii

1909 The Great White Fleet circumnavigates the globe, demonstrating the U.S. as a great naval power



1914 U.S. completes its greatest sea gate, the Panama Canal

1918 U.S. contribution to Allies brings a victorious end to World War I

1944 Supremacy of the dollar in world trade is solidified in Bretton Woods Conference

1953 Stalemate in Korean War after more than 35,000 Americans die fighting



1945 U.S. contributes to an Allied victory in World War II

1971 U.S. removes the dollar from the gold standard, ending Bretton Woods agreement

1968 U.S. announces its withdrawal from Vietnam after more than 58,000 American deaths

1979 52 American citizens are held hostage for 444 days by Iranian students

1991 Soviet Union is abolished, ending the Cold War

1999 Panama Canal taken over by Panama and China

2011 After eight years, the Iraq War is declared over, without a victory

2007 Number of active U.S. Navy ships, the backbone of U.S. military power, reaches lowest level since start of World War I

2014 After more than 12 years, war in Afghanistan continues with no victory achieved



What Are the Times of the Gentiles?

Once you know America and Britain's biblical identity, you can grasp the significance of one of Christ's major prophecies. **BY GERALD FLURRY**

JESUS CHRIST PROPHESIED OF A TIME that would take place shortly before His return to Earth—a time of the greatest suffering in human history. He called it “the times of the Gentiles.”

Do you believe these words of Jesus?

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. ... For these be the days of vengeance, that ALL THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN MAY BE FULFILLED” (Luke 21:20, 22). The Bible is *full* of prophecies of this horrific time, and Christ said *all of them* will be fulfilled within a short span of time. If you follow the signs He gave us, you know that time is about here.

“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES be fulfilled” (verse 24).

These “times of the Gentiles” are yet to be fully realized. However, we are in the outer edges of this catastrophic storm. Events taking place in Ukraine with Russia, along with those in the Middle East and Iran, have everything to do with this prophecy.

This is part of the core of biblical prophecy—right out of your Bible! Yet, we don't hear much about the times of the Gentiles today. Why not?

Who Are the Gentiles?

In this prophecy, Christ said Jerusalem will be surrounded by massive armies. These armies will be led by men who have wild and ferocious minds, like those of a beast.

This crisis is building around Jerusalem today. The Jews have many enemies—not only Iran, but many Gentile nations. Almost all

Gentile nations are very hostile and hateful toward the Jews. However, they are hostile to more than just the Jews.

Do you know who the Gentiles are? The only way you can understand the identity of the Gentiles is to know who biblical Israel is.

Israel is a lot more than the little nation in the Middle East. There are 12 nations of Israel on Earth. God is warning three in particular because they are the birth-right nations and the scepter nation. Read our article “America's Lost Identity” (page 16) for an introduction on proving this important truth.

Once you understand who Israel is, then you can understand how the Gentiles—the



non-Israelite peoples—have started to take charge of the world *right now*.

While there are many Gentile nations around today, when this prophecy is completely fulfilled there will be two *major* powers—one revolving around Russia and the other around Germany. Each will have *strong* allies, making the clash between these Gentiles the worst ever on Earth.

Some history will help you recognize how we are entering the times of the Gentiles today.

Successive Gentile Powers

Over 2,500 years ago, the powerful Babylonian Empire was ruled by King Nebuchadnezzar. This great Gentile king came into contact with the Prophet Daniel, who wrote the book of Daniel in the Bible.

Daniel gave Nebuchadnezzar a warning directly from God, but the king would

not submit. Therefore God dethroned Nebuchadnezzar and sent him out to the field, making him eat grass like an animal. Seven years passed before Nebuchadnezzar finally acknowledged that *God rules in the kingdom of men* (Daniel 5:21). This is a lesson *all mankind* will learn one day soon.

Daniel 2 records how God revealed a powerful dream to Nebuchadnezzar. The great image featured in the dream prophesied of successive world-ruling powers. They were the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and, lastly, the Romans, an empire prophesied elsewhere to be resurrected to separate times. This one image provides an incredible overview of world history under these Gentile powers.

Daniel 7 is a companion prophecy. It describes these same four kingdoms—but pictures them as “four great BEASTS” (verse 3). And in these prophecies, the *kingdom* and the *king* are used interchangeably.

There is a reason God uses this terminology: Every leader of these Gentile kingdoms was under the sway of an evil spiritual influence—and came to have the mind of a wild, fierce *beast!* When such men attain power, they become cunning, ferocious beasts. Throughout history they have routinely thought like wild animals, wanting to conquer, pillage, burn and destroy.

God calls these leaders *beasts* for a reason! Yet people don't believe God. Somehow, the leaders of Israel think our modern world has evolved to surpass that evil nature. In reality, we haven't even seen the worst of these beasts. The worst time of the Gentiles is yet ahead of us!

Think about Adolf Hitler, one of those beast-like leaders. Before World War II, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain tried to make peace with this man. His diplomacy almost caused Britain and Europe to lose World War II. **YOU CANNOT REASON WITH A WILD, FEROCIOUS BEAST!** We keep thinking diplomacy will solve all our problems. However, diplomacy solves nothing if it isn't backed up with real power.

CAN A GOOD DIPLOMAT WIN OVER THE MIND OF A VICIOUS, WILD BEAST?

America's Disappearing Will

The big reason these powers are rising today traces back to the POWER VACUUM created by America's weakness—and the *disappearance of America's will*.

Gentiles have utter contempt for the weak.

In recent years, America has demonstrated its lack of will to use its power in several international arenas. Most recently, it has done nothing to prevent Russia from taking over Ukraine.

Recognizing that weakness, China is asserting its power in the South China Sea by making territorial claims on Okinawa, which belongs to Japan, and also areas around the Philippines. AMERICA'S BROKEN WILL IS MOTIVATING THESE ACTIONS.

Throughout history, China has often taken on an expansionist policy to conquer, destroy, subdue and enslave people. That same policy is starting to materialize again, yet the United States acts like China has changed from its historical nature.

China also recently gave mobile missile launchers to North Korea, which will upgrade its ability to attack the United States with nuclear weapons. If China were Washington's friend and ally, would it do such things? Furthermore, if China still feared the United States, would it act so brazenly against American interests?

China's actions prove that Gentiles are rising to power before our eyes! And this is just one of *many* Gentile nations growing more aggressive on the world scene.

The U.S. is no longer asserting itself as it should, which is putting its allies on shaky ground. It is slashing defense spending and shrinking its nuclear arsenal—WHILE MANY OTHER NATIONS RACE TO BUILD NUCLEAR BOMBS! How will America protect itself?

While many will rejoice at the United States' demise, this trend is building to catastrophe like never before seen! As the U.S. falls in power, it will be replaced by leaders who act like wild, raging *beasts!*

'By His Servants'

Anciently, God sent Daniel to warn Nebuchadnezzar and his successors of what would befall their empires. God actually *spoke* through this man.

Notice this point from later in Daniel's book: "Neither have we [Israel] obeyed *the*

voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us *by his servants the prophets*" (Daniel 9:10). Daniel discusses the *voice of God*. However, God didn't speak in person; He worked *through Daniel*. Believe it or not, He works through one man today—a man who must follow Daniel's example.

Daniel also wrote that God set His voice before His people "by his servants the prophets." This shows there is to be a Daniel-type prophecy going out about the times of the Gentiles!

Who in this end time is telling us that we are facing the times of the Gentiles? That time is right before us!

"Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore *the curse* is poured upon us, and the oath that *is written in the law of Moses* the servant of God, because we have sinned against him" (verse 11). All the way back in the law of Moses—which is the first five books of the Bible—God prophesied what would happen to Israel in this end time. For example, in Leviticus 26:19, God said, *I'm going to break the pride of your power. You'll have lots of power but lack the courage to use it*. This has happened to Israel—specifically to America and Britain.

Daniel wrote about "*the curse*" upon Israel. When you break God's commands, He has no choice but to turn against you and punish you for your sins. That is *the curse!*

Daniel continued, "As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might TURN from our iniquities, and understand thy truth" (Daniel 9:13). Daniel is saying, *We need to pray to God and TURN from our evil ways. You must turn your life around if God is to help you*.

He is talking to *all Israel!* You *must* know who Israel is in order to understand this!

"Therefore hath THE LORD WATCHED UPON THE EVIL, AND BROUGHT IT UPON US: for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice" (verse 14). Do you believe in a God who brings destruction upon His own people because of their evil ways? That is what Scripture describes!

The Conclusion

God even brings destruction upon *His own Church* because of its sins! "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure

the temple of God, and the altar [a symbol of the ministry], and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for *it is given unto the Gentiles*: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (Revelation 11:1-2).

It is given to the Gentiles, God says—another reference to the *times of the Gentiles!* In this end time, 95 percent of *God's own people* will have to be plunged into the greatest suffering *ever*—in an effort to motivate them to repent!

This scripture also talks about the small portion of God's people in the *inner court* who are faithful in proclaiming the message for God. The majority are in the outer court, where God does not dwell. God promises to take His inner court people to a place of protection shortly before the Second Coming (e.g. Revelation 12:14). But those outside will have to experience the wrath of these Gentile leaders who have minds like ferocious, wild, ravaging *beasts!* How much mercy are those leaders going to show?

God's own people who have rebelled against Him will have to go through all this misery and suffering to save even half of them. The other half will lose their eternal lives! (e.g. Matthew 25:1-13; Jeremiah 24).

Look at history, and you see the savagery mankind is capable of. You also realize humanity is degenerating: *The last* empire described in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 is far more brutal, savage and uncivilized than the first. Man is not evolving and getting better and better—he is getting worse and worse. Look at the destruction mankind wreaked in World War II—then think of the horrific destruction prophesied to come in the near future. This is the complete opposite of getting better and better.

This is terrifying news. Luke's record of Christ's prophecy says it will be a time of "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Luke 21:26).

However, notice the very next verse! "And then shall they see THE SON OF MAN coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (verse 27). These times of the Gentiles lead directly to the return of Jesus Christ! He will finally put down the beast-like rulers so they are no longer able to tear apart mankind! Now *that* is GOOD NEWS!



1914 All Over Again

One hundred years after the outbreak of the First World War, history is repeating itself. **BY STEPHEN FLURRY**

THIS YEAR, A NUMBER OF COMMENTATORS have noted some sobering parallels between where we are today and where the world was 100 years ago—the year World War I started.

At that time, huge breakthroughs in technology—particularly in the fields of communication and travel—were blooming. Globalization was tying the nations of the world together more closely than ever before. The economies of nations were so integrated, many thought, that a large-scale war simply could never happen.

World war was unthinkable. The world was too sophisticated, too advanced, too civilized, to ever resort to full-scale war as a means of settling disputes.

The lead editorial in the 2013 year-end issue of the *Economist* spotlighted the lead-up to World War I, acknowledging Germany was the “driving force” behind the war, “looking for an excuse for a war that would allow it to dominate Europe.” It said, “Yet complacency was also to blame. Too many people, in London, Paris and elsewhere, believed that because Britain and Germany were each other’s biggest trading partners after America and there was therefore no economic logic behind the conflict, war would not happen.”

22 All it took was an emergent power—an instigator—coupled

with a complacent attitude from Britain, the rapidly declining former “policeman” of the world—to lead to the greatest war the world had even seen. Nine million people were slaughtered, and tens of millions more were killed in the various geopolitical tragedies left in the wake of the Great War.

The parallels with today are troubling.

Complacency, Then and Now

The *Economist* made these comparisons between 1914 and 2014: “The United States is Britain, the superpower on the wane, unable to guarantee global security. Its main trading partner, China, plays the part of Germany, a new economic power bristling with nationalist indignation and building up its armed forces rapidly.”

China, of course, *is* an emerging power on today’s world scene. But Germany is not about to sit on the sidelines for this final round. Germany—not China, as the *Economist* believes—is the nation that will settle into its familiar role as instigator.

How do we know? How can we say with such certainty that while the *Economist* article highlights a lot of good points, it misses the biggest and most troubling truth of all? We know that Germany will rise to dominate Europe once more because the Bible prophesies that it will.

“[U]nless America behaves as a leader

and the guarantor of the world order,” the *Economist* continued, “it will be inviting regional powers to test their strength by bullying neighboring countries.”

Now look at the past year: Russia, China and Iran have ALL tested America’s strength, sometimes with open defiance. In the absence of American influence over the world, these nations have become bolder and are now *bullying* their neighbors. Yet how many people are even aware of what is happening?

This complacency is the “most troubling similarity between 1914 and now,” the *Economist* writes. “Businesspeople today are like businesspeople then: too busy making money to notice the serpents flickering at the bottom of their trading screens.”

The Key Difference

Christ referred to this unconcerned attitude in Matthew 24. He describes the end time just before His return as being just like the days of Noah. How? “For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that [Noah] entered into the ark,” He said, “And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (verses 38-39). People didn’t even know utter destruction was coming! *They had no clue.*

Margaret MacMillan authored a Brookings Institution essay titled “The Rhyme of History: Lessons of the Great War” that also points to the recurring cycle of world war. She wrote, “We have entered a new and potentially perilous era. There are now nine countries with nuclear arsenals, including Pakistan, a fractious if not failing state, and North Korea, which has proved itself as reckless as it is repressive. Depending on whether Iran gets the bomb, numerous other states—including Japan perhaps—are likely to exercise their own nuclear options. That would make for a very dangerous world indeed, which could lead to a re-creation of the kind of tinderbox that exploded in the Balkans a hundred years ago—only this time with mushroom clouds” (Dec. 14, 2013).

These are not the panicked ravings of an ultra-conservative alarmist. This is a respected history professor who can see that dangerous powers are once again on the rise. And this time, with nuclear weapons on the table, the consequences of another world war portend a far greater destruction.

“The Second World War *ended* with the development and use of the nuclear bomb,” my father wrote in our February *Trumpet* issue. “A world war where many nations—some of which sponsor terrorism—*start out* with nuclear weapons is an unparalleled nightmare! We can’t even imagine how bad it will be!”

Can we begin to get a sense of what Christ was talking about in Matthew 24? Also speaking of the time just before His return, He says, “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (verse 21).

Yes, history and patterns of history are repeating themselves. We can already see that with history’s first two world wars. But the **MAGNITUDE** of destruction of this third round will be unlike anything ever seen, or that ever *will be* seen. So says your Bible.

What If Nobody Stopped It?

“And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened,” Christ continued (verse 22). Conditions will get **SO BAD** that if this prophesied **GREAT WAR** were to continue, mankind would **CEASE TO EXIST**. But God says He **WILL** cut the destruction short. Christ must return to Earth, as He has said He will, to

personally put a stop to it!

“These problems are almost too horrifying to even contemplate,” my father continued. “That is why most people *ignore* the potential for nuclear war. But we won’t be able to ignore it for much longer. Biblical prophecy makes that plain” (ibid). It’s right there in your Bible, straight from Jesus’s mouth. Mainstream media dismisses any mention of Bible prophecy, but why aren’t more *theologians* talking about these prophecies of Christ?

Jeremiah 30 also prophesies of this time period, a time of “trembling, of fear, and not of peace” (verse 5). “[W]herefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?” Jeremiah wrote. “Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of *Jacob’s trouble*; but he shall be saved out of it” (verses 6-7).

Jacob (Esau’s brother) had the name Jacob before he was converted and his name was changed to Israel. “Jacob’s trouble” refers to the trouble in the U.S. and British nations mainly. And notice: IT IS **THE WORST TROUBLE THEY HAVE EVER EXPERIENCED**. Worse than even World War II and the concentration camps. This coming nuclear holocaust is the culmination of a long history of mankind’s failed attempts to rule over man.

This time of trouble and world war climaxing in nuclear holocaust has not yet happened. It is a prophecy for the future, as verses 8-9 make undeniably clear.

Retreat, Then and Now

MacMillan wrote, “Britain, which once played an international leadership role during the 19th and the first part of the 20th centuries, in the end found the demands too great and the costs too high. After World War II the British people were no longer willing and the British economy no longer capable of sustaining such a role” (op. cit.). In 2014, Britain’s brother, the United States of America, finds itself in the exact same position.

“[T]he U.S., while still the strongest power in the world, is not as powerful as it once was,” MacMillan continued. “It has suffered military setbacks in Iraq and Afghanistan, and has had difficulty finding allies who will stand by it, as the current Syrian crisis demonstrates. Uncomfortably aware that they have few reliable

friends and many potential enemies, the Americans are now considering a return to a more isolationist policy. Is the U.S. now reaching the end of its tether, as Britain did before it? If it retreats even partially from its global role, which powers will dominate the international order, and what will that mean for the prospects of world peace?”

This scenario is exactly what the *Trumpet* (and Herbert W. Armstrong before that) has been prophesying for decades. In the 1950s, Mr. Armstrong was warning that the sun had already set on the British Empire—and that the United States was facing a similar stunning and rapid demise.

So what comes next? For MacMillan and others, the future is unsure, but they see a great coming conflict building.

We, however, can tell you *exactly* what will happen next on the world scene and *which* nations will play the key roles. Bible prophecy has laid it all out in vivid detail!

The Unthinkable

Daniel 11:40 details an initial clash “at the time of the end” between a “king of the north” (German-dominated united Europe) and a “king of the south” (Iranian-dominated radical Islam). Then the king of the north will attack America, Britain and the little nation of Judah, and the whole world will be swept up into the most destructive world war mankind has ever seen.

Just as it was with the first two world wars, an instigator will begin dominating Europe while an ignorant, complacent declining superpower will allow it to do so. But *unlike* with the previous two, neither Britain nor the United States will be strong enough this time around to rally the nations together and salvage peace. The existence of nuclear weapons will make this final *great war* culminate in such worldwide destruction that Christ Himself will return as the only one who can stop mankind from utterly destroying itself—as He Himself stated in His own words.

That is what’s coming! The unthinkable **WILL** happen. But thankfully, that **GREAT WAR** will lead us into another event that is just as unthinkable to most people: Jesus Christ returning to Earth to stop it. Then and only then will the cycle of world war finally be broken as He establishes world peace—and our planet will never again be marred by the destruction of worldwide war.



You Can Develop Emotional Maturity

The Philadelphia Trumpet, in conjunction with the Herbert W. Armstrong College Bible Correspondence Course, presents this brief excursion into the fascinating study of the Bible. Simply turn to and read in your Bible each verse given in answer to the questions. You will be amazed at the new understanding gained from this short study!

TO REALLY BE MATURE, YOU NEED MORE THAN an adult-size body.

How mature are you? That question applies in several different ways. *Physically*, maturing comes automatically as you get older. *Mentally*, you mature by developing and educating your mind through various classes and work. *Spiritually*, you mature by praying and studying the Bible each day and applying scriptural lessons to your daily life.

But if you are like many people—even full-grown adults into their old age—you might be in your “infancy” in *emotional* maturity! We *all* have a lot to learn about our emotions. But God gives us the tools to master these powerful, sometimes mysterious forces.

The Origin of Emotion

God created everything good in the universe (James 1:17). Did He create emotions?

1. Does God Himself experience emotions? Does God have *joy*? Psalm 16:11; Matthew 25:21; Luke 15:10. Does He get *angry*? Does He get *jealous*? Deuteronomy 4:24; 32:19-22; Psalm 7:11; Jeremiah 30:24; Nahum 1:2, 6.

2. Does God *love*? Romans 8:38-39; 1 John 3:1; 4:8-9, 16. Does He *hate*? Psalm 5:5-6; 11:5; 45:7.

3. Does God experience grief and sorrow? Genesis 6:6; Psalm 78:40; Isaiah 53:3; John 11:35; Hebrews 3:10. Does He feel *compassion*? Matthew 9:35-36.

The Bible shows that God experiences many profound states of mind that we associate with deep emotion—both positive and negative. Certain things delight Him, and others upset Him. God is composed of spirit (John 4:24), so He does not undergo the physiological changes that occur within your body when you get emotional (e.g. tears, stomach churning, face turning red). But He does think and feel deeply.

4. Did God create human beings to be like Himself? Genesis 1:26-27.

These verses show that God created humans in His image and likeness. We look like God, and we even possess mental capabilities to reason and to think creatively, as God does. God also gave us the power to FEEL. He gave us *emotions* so we can experience *joy* and *love*; we can have *deep relationships*; we can also experience *anger*, *jealousy*, *fear*—a *variety* of emotions.

If we channel our emotions to respond the way God does, we actually learn to THINK LIKE GOD! This is the essence of emotional maturity—to delight in the same things God delights in, and to get upset over the same things that upset Him. That is a lot more difficult than it sounds! Not only must we learn what

moves God, but we must then discipline our thoughts to match. Developing this emotional mastery, however, produces God-like ACTION and brings countless blessings, as we will see.

Where Negative Emotional Pressure Comes From

Emotion is a two-edged sword. When we wield it improperly, it can cause terrible injury in our lives.

1. The Bible reveals the existence of an evil being called Satan the devil. What is one of his names? Ephesians 2:2.

Herbert W. Armstrong explained what it means that Satan is the “prince of the power of the air”: “SATAN BROADCASTS! He broadcasts worldwide—as far as there is air. . . . He does not broadcast in words or pictures—neither audibly nor in video—but in ATTITUDES of self-centeredness, of vanity, lust and greed, of jealousy and envy, of competition, strife and violence, of hate, resentment, bitterness, of rebellion and resentment against authority” (*Good News*, August 1978). One of the main ways the devil tries to influence you is through your *emotions*!

Ephesians 2:2 shows that Satan’s evil spirit WORKS IN PEOPLE. SATAN causes our lack of emotional control! Let’s look at a scriptural example.

2. At the beginning of mankind, the devil (in the form of a serpent—see Revelation 12:9) tempted Eve. What techniques did he use? Genesis 3:1-5.

Satan lied and insinuated his way into Eve’s mind. How? By working on her emotions! He appealed to her vanity, her self-importance, her *desire* for independence, “rights” and “freedoms.”

3. Did Adam and Eve do what *felt* right? Verse 6.

This was an *emotional* decision, not a rational one. The fruit *looked* good to Eve—it *seemed* okay—she *desired* it, even though God had specifically told her to avoid it. Adam and Eve did not consider the pros and cons of this decision, based on God’s instruction, and then carry out the wisest choice—they acted upon their *emotional desires*.

Isn’t that what we do so much of the time? Like Adam and Eve, we FEEL, therefore we ACT.

WE MUST LEARN TO MASTER THOSE FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS. If we don’t, we are *enslaved* by them. To avoid this trap, we need to replace wrong thoughts and emotions with appropriate ones.

The Link to Law Keeping

How can you know whether a particular thought or emotion is “appropriate” or not? Is that open to each person’s

individual interpretation, or are there *absolutes*?

The entire universe is governed by LAW. Physical laws such as gravity and inertia govern physical matters. Likewise, relationships among people, and between God and people, are governed by SPIRITUAL LAW—which is summed up in the Ten Commandments. God is the Creator of both physical and spiritual law (James 4:12).

1. Some people say God's law is harmful or bad for us. What does the Bible say? Romans 7:12.

2. Does keeping God's law make you happy? Psalm 19:7-11; 119:14, 111; Proverbs 13:9; 29:6. If you *love* God's law, will you have peace in your life? Psalm 119:165.

This is a vital principle to remember in life. God gave His law to teach us how to become happy. God's law is absolute. Problems between people are a product of *broken spiritual law*, a result of wrong spiritual attitudes in one or both individuals. In other words, emotional problems are generally *spiritual* in nature! They are *caused* by sin and often result in *greater* sin.

Consider the example of Cain in Genesis 4.

3. Scripture indicates that Cain was nurturing wrong spiritual attitudes toward his brother. How did this impact his emotions? Genesis 4:5. What did Cain's poisonous spiritual attitude result in? Verse 8. But before that happened, what advice did God give him? Verse 7.

The end of verse 5 in the Moffatt translation reads, "Cain was furious and downcast"—he looked sad and depressed. Moffatt translates verse 7, "If your heart is honest, you would surely look bright? If you are sullen, sin is lying in wait for you, eager to be at you—yet you ought to master it." Cain's attitude, caused by lack of emotional control, was directly leading to sin. The more he dwelled on his negative thoughts, the more emotionally out of balance he became. If he had mastered his thoughts and emotions, he would have prevented the sin of murder.

Emotional control is tightly linked to law keeping. Mr. Armstrong defined emotional maturity as the "technical art of putting into practice the Ten Commandments. It is the real secret to human happiness." Another author defined it, "Development from the state of taking to the state of giving." It is living God's way of give.

God's law is a reflection of how He thinks. We can trust God implicitly: Breaking His law handicaps us emotionally; obeying the letter and spirit of His law gives us peace of mind, joy, satisfaction—positive, godly emotions.

Some Practical Advice

1. What does God say of the person who cannot control his anger? Ecclesiastes 7:9; Proverbs 14:17. What about the person who CAN control his anger? Proverbs 14:29; 15:18.

The phrase "hasty of spirit" in Proverbs 14:29 means *quick-tempered*.

2. If you know someone who gets angry easily, what advice does God give you? Proverbs 22:24-25.

3. What does God say to people who tend to blurt out their anger whenever they are upset with someone? James 1:19-20.

4. We saw earlier that God *gets angry*. But does He follow His own advice? Joel 2:13; Nahum 1:3. Does He hold on to His anger for long periods of time? Psalm 30:4-5.

5. We saw earlier that God *loves*. What is God's definition of love? Romans 13:10; 1 John 5:3. What are some specific ways God's love is exhibited? 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

These are wonderfully valuable passages of Scripture that can help you distinguish *true, abiding love* from the shallow, selfish type of love that many people are absorbed in. What many people think of as love is actually little more than sexual lust. These verses show that God's love is actually *not* an emotion—though it may be expressed with emotional content. God's love is reflected in *actions*, not in *feelings*. His love is entirely unselfish—it benefits the other person more than self. And it never runs contrary to His law. We must strive for a level of maturity where we never allow our emotions to drive us outside the bounds of God's law. Ideally, our emotions should impassion us to more perfectly *keep* God's law.

6. Does God want us to enjoy life? To have pleasures? Psalm 36:7-8. Does He want us to rejoice? 1 Thessalonians 5:16; 1 John 1:4.

As we said before, God gave His law to teach us how to be happy. He doesn't give commandments simply because He enjoys bossing people around. His commands are expressions of His *love*! If we live the lifestyle God commands, we will receive blessings, rewards and happiness!

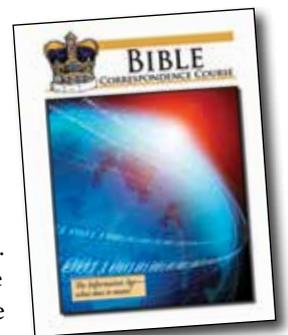
God wants us to have emotions. He wants us to cultivate godly emotion. He wants us to fear Him properly. He wants us to hate evil. He wants us to get angry at sin. He wants us to grieve at appropriate times. He wants us to have full joy! When we develop these emotions, we are learning to think like God.

Satan also wants us to have emotions. He wants us to let them go out of control. He wants us to fear *other people*. He wants us to hate *other people*. He wants us to get angry quickly and hang on to that anger for days or weeks. He wants us to grieve over *ourselves*. He wants us to rejoice over *other people's failures*.

This battle is going on in your mind!

Evaluate your own life. Learn, practice and grow in emotional maturity, and improve your life! ■

If we channel our emotions to respond the way God does, we actually learn to think like God!



This short study is a sample of the method employed in each lesson of the free **Herbert W. Armstrong College Bible Correspondence Course**. Over 100,000 people have enrolled in this exciting, dynamic course. Ordering information is on the back cover of this magazine.

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You can read previous articles in this series online at trmpt.co/bcc

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Palestinian Fatah delegation chief Azzam al-Ahmed (left) speaks to Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh in Gaza City on April 23.

They say 'peace,' but there's no peace

SINCE THE OSLO AGREEMENT in 1993, the Middle East peace process has chalked up a long history of wasted efforts and failed policies. The latest attempt, negotiations to establish a Palestinian state, followed the same negative narrative.

In negotiations, Israel said the Palestinians must not use the United Nations to establish statehood. The Palestinians said Israel has no right to construct more buildings in areas critical to negotiations and disagreed to a border Israel could legitimately defend. Israel has seen what happened in Gaza, and wants its future border with a Palestinian state to be defensible. The Palestinians wouldn't budge, despite Israel showing willingness to give up the entire West Bank and parts of Jerusalem itself.

On April 23, Israel's counterpart in negotiations, the Palestinian Authority, exposed its true disdain for Israel:

Mahmoud Abbas formed a unity government with Hamas. The move drew swift condemnation from Israel. Hamas is recognized by much of the world, including the U.S., as a terrorist organization. The Hamas charter itself is rife with anti-Israel hatred. For example, Hassan al Banna, a man respected by Hamas as a forefather, said, "Israel will rise and will remain erect until Islam eliminates it as it had eliminated its predecessors." Yet Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas assured the international community that the unity government with Hamas will

recognize Israel and renounce violence. Looking at Hamas's history, such a notion is ludicrous—and Abbas knows it. But he also knows that with the failure of the peace process, his political party has come dangerously close to losing funding from America and Europe. He needs to convince his financial backers that there is still hope of peace—even when there clearly isn't.

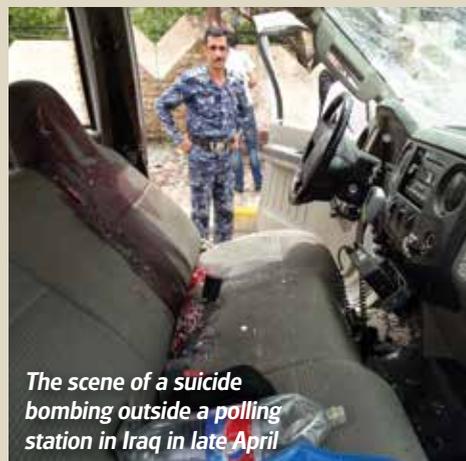
Much of the international community has sided with the Palestinians in blaming Israel for the latest breakdown in negotiations. But shouting loud over Abbas's promises of peace are the "death to Israel" chants that still emanate from the Hamas haven of the Gaza Strip. The simple facts of the negotiations—and that Abbas and the PLO allied with radical, bloodthirsty Hamas—suggests otherwise. The Palestinians want more than a state; they want to eradicate the Jewish nation. ■

Syria: The gas they didn't get

DESPITE THE REMOVAL OF some of Bashar Assad's chemical weapons from Syria, the rebel-held village of Kafr Zeita sustained a chemical weapons attack on April 11 that killed at least two people and injured dozens more. Ironically, the attack occurred just days before the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons announced that 86.5 percent of Assad's declared chemical weapons have been shipped to the Syrian port city of Latakia to be diluted. Even though the international community removed Assad's most heinous chemicals, it failed to prevent Assad from using the ample supply of chemicals he has left. In the April 11 attack, government forces used chlorine. Because of its heavy industrial usage, chlorine isn't considered a weapon of mass destruction the same way as sarin or mustard gas. As such, chlorine wasn't even placed on the list of chemicals that Assad was told to give up. ■

RISING TIDE: AL QAEDA TAKING CONTROL OF IRAQ

Iraq is experiencing the worst violence it has seen in six years. More than 1,400 people died in the first two months of 2014. Even when thousands of soldiers and security personnel were deployed in the lead-up to national elections on April 30, the violence didn't abate. The day before the elections, 15 people were murdered when two bombs exploded in a market in al Saadiyah. In the week leading up to the election, 160 people were killed by al Qaeda attacks across the nation. The terrorist group continues to prove itself capable of avoiding detection and carrying out assaults across the country. The violence is testimony to the inescapable fact that Iraq today is less safe than it was at the start of the U.S. intervention. Al Qaeda is taking control, and is making its presence felt.



The scene of a suicide bombing outside a polling station in Iraq in late April

The EU's military satellite program

THE EUROPEAN UNION launched its Sentinel-1A satellite from French Guiana on April 3, beginning the rollout of its advanced fleet of Earth-monitoring satellites. Once the Sentinel-1A's sister satellite, the 1B, launches, the pair will be providing radar images of any place on the Earth within three to six days. They are part of the Copernicus project, which aims to provide the EU an extensive view of the Earth's surface. "There is no Earth-observation project as big as this," said Prof. Anne Glover, the EU's chief scientific adviser.

Any system designed to study the Earth in detail for scientific reasons is also very useful militarily. The publicity for these launches focuses on

the environment, global warming and disaster response, but the EU admits, in the small print, that these satellites have "intelligence" and even "military" applications. "There's no doubt that Copernicus promises exciting new applications for land management and environmental science," said Ben Hayes of the civil liberties group Statewatch. "But it's already abundantly clear that the new system will also be used for military operations and surveillance purposes, some of which are highly controversial."

Copernicus was initially known as Global Monitoring



Sentinel-1A aboard a Soyuz rocket on April 3

for Environment and Security and was designed to support "environmental security." However, as a European Parliament document noted, this mission was adjusted ever so slightly: It now aims to support "the environment *and* security" (original emphasis). The system's declared military uses include "EU peacekeeping operations"—i.e., European military missions, as well as "border monitoring outside the EU" and resource monitoring. The latest Sentinel satellite will serve these purposes.

Copernicus is just one of many satellite projects underway within Europe. In assembling this man-made constellation, the EU and individual

European nations are extending their military power and diminishing their reliance on the United States for accurate satellite data.

EU leaders say that once the Copernicus and Galileo satellite systems are complete, they will be the most advanced systems in operation. Galileo is Europe's attempt to copy America's Global Positioning System so it can use satellite navigation without relying on America. Satellite navigation is essential for modern precision-guided weapons.

Sentinel 1A is not a particularly special intelligence-gathering satellite, but it marks an important first step. Space is an important theater for any aspiring military. Watch for the EU to continue to expand on this frontier.

For more details on Europe's space program, see "The Quiet Space Race" (theTrumpet.com/go/9050). ■

UKRAINE ON THE BRINK OF WAR

The crisis in Ukraine continues to dominate Europe's news, as Russia keeps the country perpetually on the brink of war. In eastern Ukraine, Russia appears to be in the early stages of repeating its takeover of Crimea. Masked gunmen have taken over government facilities in several cities. As in Crimea, some of these armed intruders may be current or former Russian special forces soldiers. In some areas where these gunmen have appeared, the Ukrainian government has completely lost control.

Meanwhile, unmasked Russian soldiers continue to mass along Ukraine's borders. They could invade at any moment, using the pretext of protecting eastern Ukrainian protesters from Ukrainian soldiers.

Few European leaders expect Russian President Vladimir Putin to invade and take over eastern Ukraine; however, few expected him to actually invade Crimea as he did, so they are extremely uneasy about what his next move will be.

Meanwhile, the European Union is a mess. Ukraine is proving that even when confronted by

the threat of a major war on its doorstep, Europe's government cannot act quickly. European nations near Russia, especially its former Soviet satellites, are demanding a firm response, but nations further west don't want to jeopardize their economic ties with Russia.

The deputy head of the EU's external action service, Maciej Popowski, said at a meeting of EU defense ministers in Luxembourg on April 15 that Europe was getting a "wake-up call," and added, "Now we need to get serious about defense." The EU's foreign minister, Catherine Ashton, asked the group, "If Ukraine is not a trigger to get serious about spending, about pooling and sharing, about smart defense, then what more do we need to get real?"

But so far, the EU is only talking about getting real. Eastern Europe and Scandinavia are taking some action. Finland is forming closer links with NATO, conservative Swedish politicians are pledging to boost annual defense spending by nearly \$1 billion if they are reelected, and Norway's defense

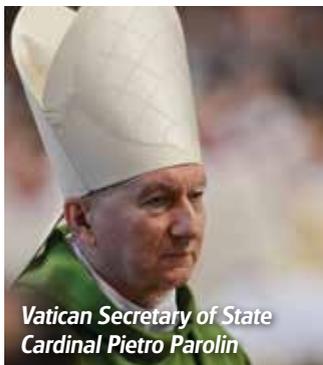


Ukrainian soldiers are held up by a pro-Russian separatist roadblock.

chief wants to expand its military personnel.

Eastern Europe has looked largely to NATO and the EU for help, and received nothing. Poland asked NATO to station 10,000 soldiers on Polish soil. It received a handful of fighter jets.

One of the biggest outcomes of the crisis in Ukraine will be a sustained push from Poland as well as other countries in Central and Eastern Europe to make the EU a meaningful military alliance that they can actually rely on. These crises have exposed the EU's weakness and given Eastern Europe a strong incentive to help fix that weakness. They know they could be next.



Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin

Vatican plays peacemaker in Venezuela

AFTER TWO MONTHS OF violent protests and 39 deaths, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro agreed on April 10 to meet with the opposition headed by Henrique Capriles. It was his first major effort at reconciliation since protests broke out in February. Whom did the government ask to mediate? The Vatican. In an April 9 letter, the government invited Pietro Parolin, the Vatican's secretary of state, to act in the talks. Parolin served as apostolic ambassador to Venezuela from 2009 to 2013, during which he experienced all the church-state tension that came with Hugo Chávez's 14-year socialist revolution. The Venezuelan government squabbled often with Parolin and the country's conservative Catholic hierarchy. Now, both the opposition and the current government are turning to the Vatican to help broker power. As this situation plays out, watch closely for the Vatican to play a bigger role in Venezuela's future, and for it to dominate the most Catholic region on Earth. To learn how the Bible foretold this trend, read "Is Venezuela on the Verge

of a Roman Catholic Spring?" (theTrumpet.com/go/10147).

Australia's auto industry rolling off the cliff

TOYOTA AUSTRALIA announced on February 10 that it will end vehicle manufacturing Down Under by the end of 2017. With this announcement, Toyota joined the mass exodus of foreign companies that have been Australia's sole carmakers. After Toyota leaves, every new car in Australia will be imported. That's dire news for this industrialized nation, which will become the only G-20 economy besides Saudi Arabia without a major auto industry.

The ripple effect goes much further than the 2,500 staff Toyota will lay off. Richard Reilly, chief executive of the Federation of Automotive Products Manufacturers, said, "[M]ultinationals are only here because of the car companies, so when they go, the multinationals will generally go as well." Thus, Australia's car-parts industry will probably lose at least 30,000 jobs. Trade



A Toyota dealership in Sydney

unions estimate that 50,000 jobs will disappear in the entire auto industry. Other experts believe that after all is said and done, as many as 200,000 jobs relying indirectly on the vehicle-manufacturing industry will be threatened—including the heavy mining equipment industries. Even what little is left of Australia's shipbuilding industry could be threatened. These losses are expected to slash roughly \$19 billion from the Aussie economy.

The danger to Australia also goes far beyond the initial

turmoil of lost jobs. From a national security perspective, there could hardly be a bigger blow against Australia's ability to defend itself. During World War II, Australia was able to convert its manufacturing base to produce war matériel. With the looming death of the automobile industry, that option will be off the table, and the nation will be much more vulnerable. Many nations throughout history have learned the hard way the dangers of being dependent on foreign materials and weapons for fighting wars.

TENSION RISING IN FALKLANDS

Military maneuvers by British forces in the Falkland Islands in April touched a raw nerve in Argentina, as the dispute over the coveted isles continues.

The drills, held April 14-27, were part of routine, biannual exercises Britain has conducted for years, according to the United Kingdom Foreign Office. This year, they proved particularly irksome to the Argentine government, which summoned the British ambassador to Argentina to protest Britain's "new show of military force." Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner accused the British of using the Falklands as a "NATO military nuclear base in the South Atlantic."

On April 2, Kirchner commemorated the 32nd anniversary of Argentina's invasion of the Falklands by unveiling a new 50-peso banknote. The bill displays a map of the Falklands on one side and on the other, Antonio Rivero, who led a rebellion against the British in 1833.

All but three of the islands' 2,563 residents who participated in a 2013 referendum voted to stay British,



but Argentina has kept the pressure on for a takeover. American support for Britain is waning. With the odds against them—including probable pressure from the Vatican and its Argentine pope—expect the British to finally lose the Falklands.

Bible history and prophecy show that the Falklands are actually part of the global empire God bestowed on Britain. The Bible also prophesied that God would remove those blessings from Britain to teach the importance of obedience.

Kim Jong-un 'reelected'

NORTH KOREA'S STATE-RUN news agency announced on April 9 that Kim Jong-un had been "reelected" by the nation's parliament to continue as the nation's supreme leader. The parliamentary session followed an election in March for which officials said 100 percent of North Koreans in Kim's district went to the polls, and not a single person declined to vote for Kim. That's because the voters' choice was only a "yes" or "no" for just one candidate. Casting a "no" vote in North Korea is asking for persecution that might include being thrown into a concentration camp with your family.



KIM JONG-UN

After the death of Kim Jong-il in 2011, Kim Jong-un took control of the country, and many analysts thought the country's government would become saner; after all, Kim Jong-un had received a Western education, and was an outspoken fan of James Bond films and Michael Jordan. It is now clear that, under Kim Jong-un's rule, nuclear-armed North Korea has never been less unpredictable or more oppressive to its people.

The world rolls its eyes when these reports emerge, but no power is willing to bring an end to the suffering the Kim dynasty inflicts on its people. The reason for this lies just west of North Korea and flies a red flag with yellow stars.

To better understand the significance of this situation, read "Why China Refuses to Deal With North Korea" (theTrumpet.com/go/7726).



A Russian S-400 battery near Moscow

Putin's milestone weapons sale to China

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin approved the sale of Russia's latest S-400 Triumf air defense guided missile system to China on April 30.

Beijing first tried to buy the advanced anti-aircraft weapon system back in 2011, but negotiations stalled; Russia wanted to ensure it could provide an ample supply of the high-tech systems to its own military before selling them to any other nation, and it was also concerned that China would copy the technology. But

now, in the aftermath of Moscow's occupation and annexation of the Crimean peninsula, Putin has new impetus to shore up Russo-Chinese ties, economically and militarily. This newfound impetus has reshuffled his priorities and trumped his other concerns.

Thus, China stands poised to buy enough of the systems to equip up to four battalions of the People's Liberation Army. Such a quantity, according to the military news website

Huanqiu.com, would give China a strategic advantage in both the Taiwan Strait and the airspace above the Diaoyutai/Senkaku islands, which lie at the center of an increasingly tense dispute between Beijing and Tokyo.

Alignment among the major Asian powers is accelerating. After Russia's recent annexation of Crimea, China and India made it clear that they supported Putin. Putin thanked Beijing and Delhi for their support and soon after took steps toward massive new energy deals with both of the Asian powerhouses. Besides fuel and weapons, Russia also possesses military know-how, which Putin appears increasingly willing to share with his Asian neighbors. This willingness was on full display at the end of May when Russia and China held joint naval drills in the East China Sea. Moscow's increasingly eastward gaze has sobering implications. To know what results to expect from it, read "Asia Stands With Putin" (theTrumpet.com/go/11533).

RUSSIA'S VERY SPECIAL DOLLAR-VALUE MENU

It's amazing how far a dollar goes when you are Vladimir Putin. Russia's state-owned energy giant Gazprom gave the government of Kyrgyzstan a one-dollar bill on April 10 in exchange for full ownership of the KyrgyzGaz energy corporation. The symbolic payment means Russia is also now responsible for repaying the \$40 million in debts the Kyrgyz energy company owes, but to Vladimir Putin, this is chump change.

Even if the debt had been uncomfortable for Putin to shoulder, he would still have taken it on, because the takeover of KyrgyzGaz represents a great step forward in his goal to transform Kyrgyzstan, a former republic of the Soviet Union, into something akin to a client state to Russia.

Last year, Russia promised to donate more than \$1 billion in weapons to the Kyrgyz Army, including tanks, helicopters, air defense systems and training programs. A few days later, Kyrgyzstan cleared the way to sell its massive, Soviet-legacy Dastan torpedo plant to Russia.

Also last year, after Russia had spent years pressuring Kyrgyzstan to kick America out of the Manas Air

Base, Putin finally got his wish. Now, he is moving Russians in to take over this strategic hub. Manas was America's last military base in Central Asia and the primary supply facility for U.S. operations in Afghanistan. For 12 years, it was the largest manifestation of American power in Central Asia. Now Putin is transforming it into an international logistics hub run by Russian state-owned oil company Rosneft.

With all the headlines going to Russia's belligerence in Crimea and now eastern Ukraine, few have noticed Putin's gradual takeover of Kyrgyzstan. That's because the Kremlin is conquering Kyrgyzstan not with soldiers, but with battalions of businessmen. From Ukraine to Kyrgyzstan, Putin is rebuilding Russian power in the former Soviet periphery. To understand how, why and what is ahead, read our new reprint article, "The Prophetic Significance of the Ukraine Crisis" (theTrumpet.com/go/RA1995).



PUTIN

Antibiotic resistance threatens global plague

DISEASES THAT WERE ONCE treatable are becoming killers again, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned on April 30. The organization said the over-prescription of antibiotics has enabled the rise of untreatable superbugs.

“For organism after organism, we’re seeing this steady increase in resistance rates,” Dr. Thomas Frieden, director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), told Reuters. “We don’t have new drugs about to come out of the pipeline. If and when we get new drugs, unless we do a better job of protecting them, we’ll lose those also” (Sept. 16, 2013).

In its most comprehensive report to date, the WHO said that several strains of infectious bacteria were able to resist even the strongest antibiotics. The world’s last line of defense against some bugs

again. Extremely resistant forms of the disease have been identified in Australia, the UK and several European countries. The CDC said in February that another tough strain of drug-resistant gonorrhea was on the rise, especially among homosexual men living in the western U.S.

Each year, more than 2 million Americans develop serious bacterial infections that show antibiotic resistance, the CDC reported in 2013, and at least 23,000 die from the infections—more than the number of AIDS deaths in the U.S. each year.

Startlingly, hospitals are a major source of these deadly



Staphylococcus bacteria

infections. The WHO noted an alarming rate of resistance to carbapenem antibiotics, which is the strongest weapon against life-threatening infections caused by *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (a major culprit of hospital-acquired infections like pneumonia and blood infections).

Additionally, the CDC

reported in the past that widespread use of antibiotics in food production to promote animal growth has also caused many resistant strains of bacteria.

The booklet *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* details what the Bible says about the future of global pandemics and why they will be virtually unavoidable. Request a free copy. ■

2,000,000
Americans who develop serious bacterial infections have shown antibiotic resistance

is failing. Even “last resort” drugs are losing their potency, the WHO reported.

“The world is headed for a post-antibiotic era, in which common infections and minor injuries which have been treatable for decades can once again kill,” said Keiji Fukuda, the WHO’s assistant director-general for health security.

Among the report’s key findings was the global spread of drug-resistant gonorrhea, which could soon become a killer

WEST AFRICA’S EBOLA PANDEMIC: UNCLEAN MEATS

On May 3, health authorities in Guinea reported that the country has seen 231 Ebola infections, including 155 fatalities, since February.

The highly contagious Ebola virus spreads through direct contact with infected people, infected blood and bodily fluids, and environments contaminated by such fluids. Ebola outbreaks have a case fatality rate of up to 90 percent, and recuperating patients may still spread the disease through bodily secretions up to seven weeks after recovery.

In its initial stages, Ebola shuts down the victim’s immune system and causes fever, headaches, muscle pain and weakness. In its advanced stages, it causes vomiting, diarrhea, organ failure and both internal and external bleeding. Since it was discovered in 1976, Ebola has killed more than 1,500 people. It has no known cure. The BBC reported that the United States government funds research for a cure mostly out of fear of bioterrorism.

The outbreak was denoted by West African foreign ministers as “a serious threat to regional security.” It spread from Guinea’s rural areas to the capital Conakry. It then leaped national borders to neighboring Sierra Leone and Liberia. All the victims had recently traveled to Guinea. Guinea’s northern neighbor, Senegal, closed its border with Guinea at the end of March in an effort to curb the spread of the disease.



A fruitbat: delicacy?

In its desperate measures to prevent further spread of this deadly disease, Guinea prohibited public funerals. But more significantly, it imposed a ban on the selling and consumption of a local delicacy that carries the virus: bats. Fruit bats are the natural hosts of the Ebola virus.

By banning the consumption of bats, Guinea essentially followed legislation given to the ancient nation of Israel found in Leviticus 11. Bats are specifically forbidden in verse 19. Could these health laws have been revealed for the purpose of preventing crises like the Ebola pandemic in West Africa?



Thou Shalt!

For every 'thou shalt not,' there is an implied positive command. **BY STEPHEN FLURRY**

MOST PEOPLE'S OPINION OF BIBLICAL LAW IS NEGATIVE. God's law is often seen as burdensome and outdated. And God—at least the God of the Old Testament—is perceived as a stern, wrathful God who angrily shouts, "Thou shalt not!" Many people view God's way of life as a religion of fear—of avoiding all the "thou shalt not's."

In reality, God's law is a wonderful blessing that can bring fruitful abundance and joy into the life of a true Christian. In Romans 7:12, Paul called the law holy, just and good. Why don't more people see God and His laws from that positive perspective?

Genesis 2:17 records the Bible's first "thou shalt not"—when God commanded Adam to stay away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But the reason God commanded the first man to avoid that tree—and the same reason He commands *us* to avoid certain behaviors—was only that He wants the very **BEST** for His people. "Thou shalt not's" are there to prevent mankind from harm. In this case, *disregarding* God's "thou shalt not" led to Adam's and Eve's deaths.

"Man is not to be punished for sin merely because a God gave an arbitrary command. But God gave the **COMMANDS** because these violations rob us of joys, and inflict automatic harm," Herbert W. Armstrong wrote. "God's laws were set in motion to **GIVE** us happiness, peace, security in plenty, and thrilling radiant **JOYS**. God's laws are the gift of His **LOVE** to us. God wants us to **ENJOY** the blessings they make possible" (*The Missing Dimension in Sex*).

Just before God forbade one tree, He gave Adam *this* instruction—this **COMMAND**: "And the Lord God *commanded* the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden *thou mayest freely eat*" (verse 16). People were to avoid one harmful tree—but God also provided an abundant variety of fruitful trees He *commanded* them to **ENJOY**. For every "thou shalt not," there is a flip side—a *positive* "thou **SHALT!**"

When God's law is understood, it's the most **POSITIVE** religion or philosophy there is! But you must see the perfect balance between the "thou shalt not" and the "thou shalt." As a true Christian, there must be certain things you *don't* do, but also certain things you *must* do.

God's First Commandment is actually stated in the positive form: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). We **SHALL** worship and obey the true God above all else. Then there is also the implied "thou shalt not" worship false gods to this command, followed by "thou shalt not" make images to aid in your worship of God (verses 4-5).

The Third Commandment says, "Thou shalt not take the name

of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (verse 7). Here is another "thou shalt not"—but the implied positive is that if you *do* use God's name as He intended, He *will* hold you guiltless!

The Sabbath command is also stated in the positive form: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work" (verses 8-9). We *shall* remember the Sabbath, and we *shall* work the other six days. To learn to work and be productive is a great blessing. And then we "shall not" work on the seventh day—another blessing: one day a week of *commanded* **REST!**

The Fifth Commandment: "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (verse 12). Nothing negative there! Love, honor and



When God's law is understood, it's the most positive religion or philosophy there is!

respect your parents—and you'll live long!

The last five commandments in verses 13-17 might sound like a string of negative "thou shalt not's." But do you grasp the implied positive, "thou shalt" side to the commands? Read those verses and think on it: You **SHALL** love and be patient toward your neighbor. **BE** faithful to your spouse. Be honest and trustworthy in your business dealings. Tell the truth. Respect your neighbor, his family and his property.

Imagine the world we would live in if every person on Earth abided by these positive commands. What a *blessing* God's law would be! What personality, what **CHARACTER** is possessed by the man who obeys these commands.

The Bible defines sin as the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4). This law both commands us to avoid wrong things and to **DO** right things. Christians should avoid what God forbids in order to protect themselves from the harm caused by sin. But it is not enough to only avoid the wrong. Beyond that, we should *do* what God admonishes us to do in order to experience the truly abundant life—the way that brings joy and happiness into our families and our communities.

God's laws are the gift of His love to us. **ENJOY** the blessings they make possible. When you read "thou shalt not," remember and follow the implied flip side to the command: *Thou SHALT.*



Europe to Unite

Thanks for this new revelation about the fact that the resurrected Roman Empire will likely be bi-polar with two power centers (“The Crimea Crisis Is Reshaping Europe!” May-June). This illuminates the picture greatly. And yes, Putin is a rare man, one of a kind. We cannot understand the danger that Europe faces as well as the people of Poland. I actually believe that, given their past experience, they are the best barometer to measure the new Russian threat. So as long as the current aggression from Putin continues, it may take few years for Europe to unite. It is real and present danger.

Bernard Muhwezi

FEEDBACK



Putin has not forgotten

You are absolutely right (“Putin Remembers Yugoslavia,” May-June). What Putin is doing is very serious, but what happened with the breakup of Yugoslavia was much more serious. The bloodshed was led by the United States in favor of the bloodiest nation in history, Germany.

Efren Pulido—COLOMBIA

What a jaw-dropping article. With civil war brewing, sentiment turning against Hezbollah and a sizable Christian population, Lebanon is the perfect place for the EU to put peacekeepers right next to Israel in the prelude to World War III. All of God’s prophecies are being fulfilled, which means Jesus Christ is soon to return.

Kofi Appiah—CALIFORNIA

The Iron Curtain has been lifted

Great article about the fall of the Iron Curtain and fall of the Soviet Empire (“The Curtain Raiser,” May-June). This supposed fall of the Iron Curtain was also a covert

way of spreading of the Communist ideology (socialist-leftist) throughout the world. Look at America today: Through Communist beliefs, the old Soviets have accomplished more to destroy America by stealth than by military might. It reminds me of Hitler’s methodology compared to the EU’s, of military might versus undemocratic stealth, to form the final revived Holy Roman Empire.

Norbet Ostarek—GERMANY

Thanks for the great article. It seems sometimes that the prophecies that we have been expecting to come to pass long ago are long overdue. It is comforting to be reminded that everything is shaping up just as God said it would, in His time line, not ours. I remember '79 very well, along with others my age, and thought that things would have surely been wrapped up by now. Keep up the great work!

Calvin Atkinson

What God is telling Vladimir Putin

What amazing understanding (“A Message to the Prince of Russia—From God,” May-June). I was locked on this article. I have been sharing many of the *Trumpet’s* articles in print and will share this one as well.

Jim Horton

The government is invading your privacy

What a revealing article (“Is the Government Reading Your E-mail?” May-June). Now that America has taken up the practice of executing its own citizens without due process of law, spying on everyone and taking away our freedoms, not to mention abandoning our allies, we have disgraced and degraded the words of our “Star Spangled Banner,” “land of the free and home of the brave.” Those words drew many people here, away from other lands where they

had no freedom of religion or any guarantee of personal privacy. Your comment that “if Congress cannot or will not rein in America’s spy agencies, there isn’t much protection left against a president becoming a tyrant” has far-reaching ramifications, not only for the average American, but for anyone who values freedom of religion. Thanks for another enlightening look at the new America.

Ross Freeman—ARIZONA

One of the most alarming and shameful points is that the majority of Americans are asleep and in some sort of trance. Nobody seems to care. Who is raising their voice in addition to the *Trumpet*? If this occurred 25 years ago, there would be a much different attitude of anger toward this lawless behavior. Most citizens in this country care more about who will make the next headlines in the entertainment world or not missing their next reality show.

Joe Hurtado—CALIFORNIA

What’s going on in Lebanon

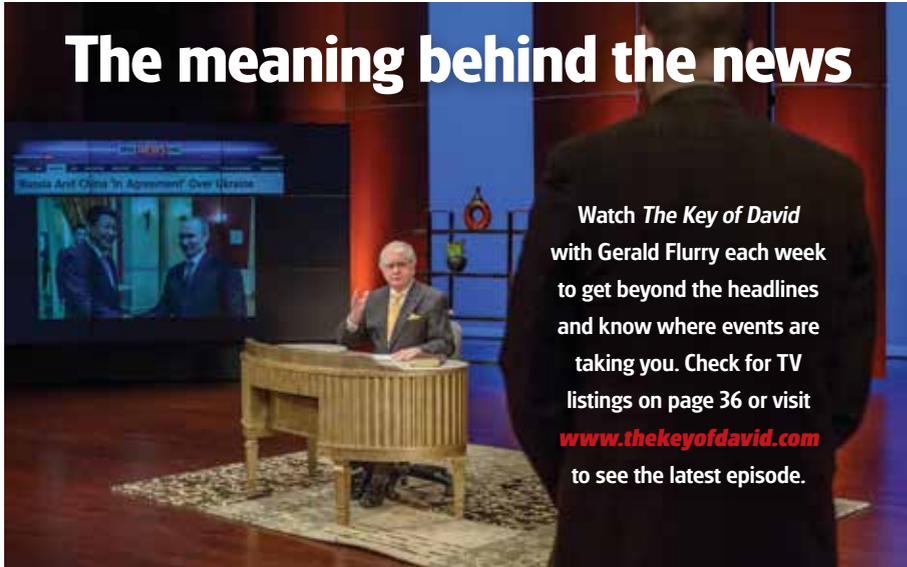
This article is so important one needs to read it another two times (“Why You Need to Watch Lebanon,” May-June). Last preparations must be taken seriously in every family if these things be true! Assad might think he is getting away with murder more than 150,000 times, but his sand glass is running out fast.

Francois

The occult revival’s reemergence

I used to love horror movies—watched them all the time (“It’s Baaack ... the Occult Revival,” May-June). Then came these witchcraft movies. I started watching them until they started bothering me. I would get the chills and just got so bothered by them I would not watch them

The meaning behind the news



Watch *The Key of David* with Gerald Flurry each week to get beyond the headlines and know where events are taking you. Check for TV listings on page 36 or visit www.thekeyofdavid.com to see the latest episode.

anymore. My younger brother told me he was out with his friends drinking one night and they went to one of his friend's house to play cards and drink. His friend said he had a ouija board, so they started to use it. They were sitting at the table having a good time, then started to clown around with the board and started mocking it. My brother told me the board flew up in the air and hit the wall. They were scared at what happened. I told him anything to do with witchcraft is dangerous. I told him to stay away from tarot cards and fortune-tellers who attract demons that can possess you. He does not play with ouija boards anymore. **Rich Nelson**

Just another sign of the end times we are living in. It also shows how teens, children and adults are woefully lacking in Bible education and how the vast majority of people are ignorant and blind of the truth. They will pay a dear price for it. **Elliot Nash—CALIFORNIA**

I like this article. Has anyone else noticed how far civilization has come? I was born into a Third World country that not so long ago practiced head hunting, cannibalism, paganism. Although Christian missionaries seemed to have done their part, there is still that mixture of pagan culture with their supposed Christian beliefs. I did, however, have an opportunity to do high school in a First World, Western country. After 17 years, I decided to come back to live in this Western, modern country and was mildly taken aback by how things have changed. I noticed there were people who have an inner ring which enlarges the ear lobes with a big hole that can fit a coin. This was unheard of before! I couldn't believe the first time I saw it. This was exactly the same

practice of my grandmother and their generations, who were from pagan culture. This is what they do to their ears! Have we come full circle or what? Tattoos are rampant. Vampires and monsters are the norm on TV. Boys and men dress in short shorts (like girly pants) and brightly colored garments (pink, fluorescent colors, etc.). Men are depicted on screen as clumsy, weak and with no backbone, while the women are the ones who are smart and brave. These are just a few observations to add to homosexual and feminist movements gripping our times. We all are in for a wild ride in these last days. **Mark C.**

ONLINE HIGHLIGHTS



The North Korean Threat Intensifies
theTrumpet.com/go/8490



Ukrainian Oligarch Offers 10K for Each Captured Russian Invader
theTrumpet.com/go/11614

► **RUSSIA** from page 4

the Associated Press surveyed the mood in these countries and summed it up: “Broken promises of help from the West. A tragic history of Russian invasion that goes back centuries. A painful awareness that conflicts in this volatile region are contagious. These are the factors that make nations across Eastern Europe watch events in Ukraine—and tremble.”

Lithuanian Ambassador to the United States Žygimantas Pavilionis expressed this same fear in an interview with the *Trumpet* in April. “Since things are becoming more like the 19th or 20th centuries now, we need to be brave,” the ambassador said. “We need more strategy.”

The EU moves slowly, but in the months ahead, Central and Eastern Europe will conduct a sustained push to unite Europe. Putin may escalate the Ukrainian crisis, or that issue could leave the headlines. But it will not leave the minds of those who live so close to Russia. The Crimean crisis sent a jolt through Europe, but we haven't even begun to see the lasting changes it will bring about.

These are changes that the *Trumpet* and its predecessor, the *Plain Truth*, have forecast for decades. Both magazines have long said that a united Europe will emerge, with an eastern and western leg.

Today, the eastern leg has a strong desire for this European superpower—a will to help create this power that has not been there before. These Eastern European countries know their own history; they know this is a matter of life and death.

This history means we can expect a determined Eastern European response—not something that will peter out after a few months. Some may try to form a deal with Russia, but those who suffered the most under Soviet rule will turn to Europe with renewed vigor.

With the centuries of eastern Europe's tumultuous history in mind, it's plain to see that the Crimean crisis truly is a global game changer. And the months ahead will reveal it to be a sharper change than most any analyst on the scene is anticipating.



Marriage is key, Cameron says—but what kind?

British PM: How to make society 'stronger'

BRITISH PRIME MINISTER David Cameron has an idea of what will strengthen a fragmenting British society. In his view, on March 29 the nation gained help in “growing stronger socially” by legalizing same-sex “marriage.”

“When people’s love is divided by law, it is the law that needs to change,” Mr. Cameron wrote in an article for homosexual news website Pink News. “Together we should be proud to live in a country judged to be the best place to live in Europe if you are lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans.”

Mr. Cameron previously said he wants Britain to “export” homosexual “marriage” and “take it around the world.”

British leaders across politics and society have been proud of the change in the law. The media were full of euphoric articles. The feeling among the general public was more one of indifference. There was little real opposition to the bill because no one really cared.

Among the British today, politicians stir up a lot of emotion when they fiddle with child care or education. But

fiddle with family? No one really minds.

Apathetic as the public may be about legalizing same-sex “marriage” though, Mr. Cameron is quite stirred up about it.

One theme has cropped up repeatedly in Cameron’s speeches, especially in his early speeches before he became prime minister: the power of marriage and family. He appears genuinely convinced that strong marriages make for a strong nation. In his view, marriage is about commitment and responsibility. And to him, the gender of those getting married makes no difference.

That thinking is not in line with the view of the one who created and designed marriage and family life: God.

British leaders are wrong to be enthusiastic about this change; the British public is wrong to be indifferent.

God created marriage between man and woman, and not only as a way to provide a stable relationship for bringing up children. Marriage is designed to help all mankind grasp profound spiritual truths. God says in His Word that He is a Father. The Bible

describes God’s Church as a mother. What some dismiss as outdated gender roles are in fact at the heart of the gospel.

Britain’s leaders are so proud of their own tolerance, their own views of virtue and morality, that they will not listen to any arguments or evidence that they may be wrong on this subject. For those willing to honestly examine what God says about this issue, the Bible warns clearly that same-sex “marriage” will not help society grow stronger—but will do the opposite.

As more and more religious leaders argue that the Bible contains no prohibition on homosexual “marriage,” it is becoming increasingly difficult for one honestly searching for the Bible’s perspective on homosexuality to find the truth. Even many church leaders who recognize that homosexuality is condemned in the Bible do not fully understand why.

We recently produced a booklet called *Redefining Family* that clearly explains why. It gives God’s full view on the subject. Like all of our literature, you can order a copy for free. ■



IN ONE IN FIVE FAMILIES, NO ONE WORKS

One fifth of U.S. families in 2013 did not have a single person working, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). That means over 16 million families in America did not include a single person with a job. According to the BLS, these people were either unemployed or not in the labor force. A person is considered “not in the labor force” if he or she does not have a job and is not actively seeking one. This number includes both discouraged workers and elderly people who are retired.

These shockingly high numbers jumped in 2009 during the economic crisis and reached a high of 20.2 percent in 2011. It leveled off at 20 percent

in 2012 and 2013.

Additionally, according to the BLS, the labor force participation rate plummeted to 62.8 percent in April—a 35-year low. The participation rate measures the percentage of all working-age people who have a job or are actively seeking one. An astounding 806,000 people left the workforce in that month alone.

That these numbers are so high five years after the economy imploded in 2008 shows how ethereal the “recovery” has been for many Americans. The Affordable Care Act and discussions about raising the minimum wage—two policies that make it more costly to hire workers—will work to entrench this disturbing trend.



Will Science Eliminate God?

Testing the limits of faith **BY ROBERT MORLEY**

SINCE THE TIME OF DARWIN, SCIENTISTS HAVE CHIPPED away at faith in a Creator. Even miracles, they say, can be explained not by the supernatural, but by laws of biology, chemistry, physics and astronomy. Now, a growing number of theoretical scientists say they will soon arrive at a complete understanding of the universe that leaves no room for God whatsoever.

Are scientists about to rule out the possibility of God?

“As we learn more about the universe, there’s less and less need to look outside it for help,” says Sean Carroll, a theoretical cosmologist at the California Institute of Technology who studies the origin of the universe. According to Carroll, as science has increased its understanding of the universe, the need for God to explain the existence of matter and life is approaching zero.

For example, the big-bang idea theorizes that all matter originated from one infinitely small, infinitely dense and hot singularity. Billions of years ago, it began expanding, astronomically. This is the most widely accepted scientific explanation of the universe’s origin. However, it doesn’t attempt to explain where the singularity came from in the first place, or what caused it to begin expanding. Many theologians point this out and credit the origin to God’s creation as described in the Bible.

But according to Carroll, scientists finally have an answer for that. Theoretical physicists can model what happened from now all the way back to 10^{-43} seconds after the big bang, he says, but even the tiny fraction of a second that remains unexplained may soon have an explanation. For example, many quantum gravity theories say the big bang wasn’t the starting point of time, but just “a transitional stage in an eternal universe.” This theory says that the universe acts like a pulsating balloon that inflates and deflates over and over again infinitely. There was no beginning and is no end—and thus, he says, no need for God.

Other cosmologists who disagree with this theory argue that the original big-bang theory is still correct, but that no God was required to jump-start it. Alex Filippenko, for example, an astrophysicist at the University of California–Berkeley, said at a 2012 conference that “the big bang could’ve occurred as a result of just the laws of physics being there. With the laws of physics, you can get universes.”

So instead of believing in a universe that began expanding out of an infinitely small, dense and hot singularity *all by itself*, Filippenko believes in the creation of a universe due to universal

laws of physics, chemistry and biology—which spontaneously appeared *all by themselves*.

But where did these laws come from? How did laws occur without a lawgiver?

To get around this criticism, scientists came up with the idea of the multiverse—an *infinite* number of *unobservable* parallel universes. Because there are infinite numbers of universes, there are infinite numbers of combinations of laws of physics and chemistry, and thus eventually one universe would by chance have the perfect conditions for life that we find in our universe, on our planet. *We just happen to live in the lucky universe!*

If a certain set of physical laws are true, “a multiverse happens, whether you like it or not,” notes Carroll. Then poof, there goes the need for God’s hand in starting the big bang.

Scientists ridicule belief in a God the Bible describes as having no end and no beginning, yet they say you should believe in a spontaneously generating, pulsating multiverse with no end and no beginning. Famous, highly educated university theorists laugh at people who believe that a God they cannot see or feel created the world around them—then propose the existence of infinite *unobservable* multi-

dimensional parallel universes. God skeptics criticize belief in God who existed eternally without a maker, but ask people to believe in brilliantly functioning laws of physics, chemistry and biology that existed eternally without a lawgiver.

The world’s educated and wise have become fools.

People who rely on arrogance and intellectual intimidation will never disprove

God’s existence by proposing alternate “scientific” creation theories—and not just because the theories are wrong. It is because these complex theories inevitably ask people to believe in something untestable and unmeasurable—the very two things scientists accuse God of being, and that supposedly separate science from the supernatural. If it is not testable and measurable, then by definition *it is not science*. It’s just another flawed faith.

God, on the other hand, *is* both testable and measurable in a very real sense. One basic biblical principle is cause and effect. Throughout the Bible, God challenges people to test Him and prove Him. God says if you obey Him, you will be happy, healthy, financially blessed, free from worry and possessing long life; conversely, if you disobey, you will come under curses. Billions of people have wittingly or unwittingly put God to the test—and lived the very real and *observable* results.

Have you put God to the test? Or do you simply believe what other people say? If you say you believe in science because it is testable and observable, then put *God* to the test today. God *wants* you to test Him. See if He won’t keep the promises He makes in the Bible. You can come to know God and experience the awesome way of life that leads to true happiness and purpose-filled joy. ■

Scientists ridicule belief in a God the Bible describes as having no end and no beginning, yet they say you should believe in a spontaneously generating, pulsating multiverse with no end and no beginning.



Request our free booklet **Does God Exist?**

► **LESSON** from page 1

America's valiant soldiers are restrained by disgraceful and incoherent policies from the top. No longer do the nations of Israel fight for their own honor.

The giant Goliath came out every day yelling taunts and belittling the army of Israel. Weeks went by and no one in Israel was willing to shut Goliath's mouth.

Hearing this, David was dumbfounded. He asked, *Isn't there a CAUSE to stand up for Israel and for God? Isn't this man's belittling speech which brings dishonor to our nation and God enough to go and make him shut his mouth?* (verse 29).

This bold teenager stepped right to the front of the army and volunteered to take on the giant himself. He said, "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine" (verse 37). Some will read that in their Bible and find it hard to believe. But is it really so impossible that the God who created man, his mind and the universe couldn't somehow empower a man to kill a lion, a bear and a giant?

When David confronted Goliath, he said, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I COME TO THEE IN THE NAME OF THE LORD OF HOSTS, THE GOD OF THE ARMIES OF ISRAEL, WHOM THOU HAST DEFIED. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (verses 45-46).

HERE WAS DAVID'S TRUE CAUSE: HE WANTED TO SHOW THE WHOLE WORLD THERE WAS A LIVING GOD IN ISRAEL!

In this, David set an earthshaking example for all of mankind!

David asked, *Who was this uncircumcised Philistine to dare mock God?* No one in Israel, apart from this young teenager, was willing to stand up and exercise some faith in the living God. The people's inaction sickened this young man! David's example showed all the Israelites how contemptible they were because they wouldn't fight for God's honor and their own honor.

DAVID CONTINUED TO DEVELOP THAT QUALITY OF FAITH HE EXHIBITED AS A YOUTH. WHEN HE BECAME KING, HE WENT ON TO BUILD ISRAEL INTO A SUPERPOWER! HE TAUGHT THIS SAME FAITH TO HIS FOLLOWERS—SO MUCH SO THAT THEY TOO BECAME GIANT SLAYERS! (2 Samuel 21:15-22). These were tough people when they learned how to fight in faith for God and for David.

David stood up himself and removed the dishonor from Israel, just as, on the human level, America ought to remove the dishonor created by Iran a long time ago, and by so many other nations today.

Weakness is revealed when a nation does not put down that dishonor. When enemies see that weakness, they become increasingly contemptuous, and grow bolder and more dangerous.

There is a gaping hole in our society today! Our leaders simply will not fight for the honor of God or our nation.

36 King David's example is there for all of us to learn from, especially our leaders! ■

THE KEY OF DAVID

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ION, Chan. 305, 6:00 ET, Fri
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WGN, Chan. 239, 8:00 ET, Sun

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WVUA 1:00 p.m., Sun

Dothan WTVY-DT 8:30, Sun

Montgomery WBMM/WBMM-DT 8:30, Sun

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Arizona, Phoenix KPXX 5:00, Fri; KAZT

8:00, Sun

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Arkansas, Fayetteville KWFT 8:30, Sun

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Tallahassee-Thomasville WTLF-DT/

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Hawaii, Hawaii Na Leo Chan. 54 6:30,

Sun; 8:30, Wed

Kauai Ho'ike Chan. 52 9:30, Tue

Maui/Lanai/Molokai/Niihau/Akaku

Chan. 52 6:30 pm, Sun; 3:30, Mon

Oahu Focus Chan. 49 7:00 am Sat (Olelo)

Chan. 27 5:00 am, Fri KPXO

Chan. 333 3:30 am, Sun The Discovery

Channel

Idaho, Idaho Falls KPFI/KBEO 10:30, Sun

Pocatello KPFB 10:30, Sun

Twin Falls KMVT-DT/KTWT-LP 10:30, Sun

Illinois, Bloomington WHOI-DT 8:30, Sun

Chicago WCUI 7:00, Mon-Fri; WCUI

9:30, Sun; WCPX 5:00, Fri

Peoria WHOI-DT 8:30, Sun

Rockford WREX-DT 8:30, Sun

Indiana, Fort Wayne WPTA-DT 12.2

9:30, Sun

Indianapolis WIPX 6:00, Fri

Terre Haute WBI 8:30, Sun

Iowa, Austin KTTC-DT 8:30, Sun

Cedar Rapids KPXR 5:00, Fri

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Keokuk WEWB 8:30, Sun

Kirksville KWOT 8:30, Sun

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Maine, Bangor WABI-DT 9:30, Sun

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Michigan, Alpena WBAE 9:30, Sun

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Detroit WPXD 6:00, Fri; WADL 10:00, Sun

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Traverse City-Cadillac WGTU-DT/

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Minnesota, Duluth-Superior WDLH

8:30, Sun

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Greenville WBWD 8:30, Sun

Greenwood WBWD 8:30, Sun

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Laurel WBH 8:30, Sun

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Syracuse WSPX 6:00, Fri
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Watertown WWTI-DT 9:30, Sun
North Carolina, Durham WRPX 6:00, Fri; 9:00 am, Sun
Fayetteville WFPX 6:00, Fri
Greensboro WGPX 6:00, Fri
Greenville WEPX 6:00, Fri; WNCT-DT 9:30, Sun
Lumber Bridge WFPX 6:00, Fri
New Bern WNCT-DT 9:30, Sun
Raleigh WRPX 6:00, Fri; 9:00 am, Sun
Washington WNCT-DT 9:30, Sun
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Fargo WDAY-DT 8:30, Sun
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Oregon, Bend KTVZ-DT 9:30, Sun
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Pennsylvania, Erie WBEP 9:30, Sun
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South Carolina, Charleston WCBF-DT 9:30, Sun
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South Dakota, Mitchell KWSB 8:30, Sun
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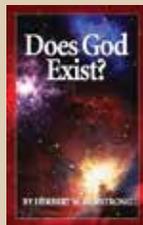
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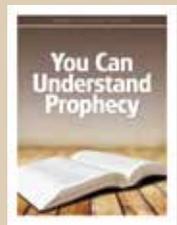
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