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PALACE FOUND?**
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The SIEGE of JERUSALEM

Will the
Palestinians
take the
holy city?



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FROM THE EDITOR

Gerald Flurry

The Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem, Israel.

Jerusalem Is About to Be CUT IN HALF

YOU NEED TO WATCH JERUSALEM AS NEVER BEFORE. We are going to see half of that city fall very soon. IT COULD HAPPEN THIS YEAR—2006! Zechariah 14 contains an end-time prophecy about half of Jerusalem falling to the enemy. When half of Jerusalem falls, it starts a chain reaction of events—an avalanche of crises—that leads directly to Jesus Christ's Second Coming!

If we don't have our focus on that Second Coming, we will be shaken by the many severe catastrophes. That means we will become victims—not protected by God. However, God promises to protect those who remain faithful and are found doing His work. Shortly after that, these loyal servants will be made rulers over the universe (Matthew 24:44-47). That is more than just a fringe benefit!

Did you know that much of the world is even now discussing how the Jews must give up East Jerusalem to the Palestinians? The United Nations, America, Europe, the Palestinians and even the Middle East Jews themselves are discussing how they must surrender East Jerusalem!

What does that mean? It means that THE PROPHECY IN ZECHARIAH IS NOW IN THE EARLY STAGES OF BEING FULFILLED, even though the world doesn't know it!

And Zechariah 14 is only the first stage of Jerusalem's total destruction.

As Jerusalem falls, America and Britain will collapse at the same time (Hosea 5:5)—unless they repent. (This is thoroughly explained in our free booklet on Hosea.) In these modern times, the Jews are called Israel. But they are only one of 13 biblical nations of Israel today. Three of them will fall together in the Great Tribulation: America, Britain and the Middle East Jews (biblical Judah—*Jew* is a just a shortened version of Judah). Jerusalem was the ancient capital of all Israel. So much of the time when Jerusalem is mentioned in prophecy it represents the three nations just discussed. This city is a *type* of the nations of Israel today—but primarily those three powerful nations in this end time.

Jerusalem is like the *thermometer* in those three nations today. God will punish these nations in the Great Tribulation. Then comes the Day of the Lord and Christ's Second Coming. Events are now unfolding in Jerusalem that lead step by step to the return of Christ.

So watch Jerusalem!

What electrifying and exciting times we live in!

The Zechariah 14 Prophecy

“For I [Jesus Christ] will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC/GETTY IMAGES

from the city” (Zechariah 14:2). Note the big *overview* Zechariah gives us. There are three phases to this crisis. Zechariah starts at the Second Coming of Christ, the third phase, and works his way backward chronologically.

The verse starts with Christ conquering the European and Asian powers who are gathered together for battle. Then there is a *semicolon*, which means all these events in verse 2 are *linked and closely associated*.

The first semicolon introduces the second phase of this violent time. The city shall be taken, houses rifled and women ravished. This is when the king of the north (Europe) conquers the whole city of Jerusalem (also America and Britain), shortly *after* he conquers the king of the south (Daniel 11:40-41).

Then there is another semicolon. This is the first phase, when half of Jerusalem goes *into captivity*—suggesting some violence in the process. (This sequence of events is explained in our booklet *History and Prophecy of the Middle East*.) THIS FIRST PHASE COULD HAPPEN AT ANY TIME. The Palestinians, backed by Iran, will almost certainly do this violent deed.

So why are these three events *so closely linked*? I believe there is only one logical answer: The fall of half of Jerusalem triggers a violent and massive chain reaction that leads to Christ’s Second Coming.

The Palestinians will take half of Jerusalem. They say even now that a Palestinian state must include East Jerusalem, which already is comprised mostly of Palestinians, *and the Temple Mount*. They want Jerusalem, with the Temple Mount, as their capital. If they take the Temple Mount, you could see that act quickly provoking more war. The Temple Mount is holy to three great religions: Judaism, Islam and Christianity. It is the Jews’ holiest site. The Arabs consider it their second- or third-holiest site. Christians, especially Roman Catholics, put more emphasis on the whole city. (Remember the Crusades?)

The Palestinians could—and, I believe, will—conquer the Temple Mount and refuse access to anybody else. This would certainly unite Europe and the Middle East Jews against the Palestinians. This would also intensify the “push” by the king of the south against Europe (Daniel 11:40). Such a provocative act could in itself stir Europe to attack and conquer radical Islam. Europe would then control much of the Jerusalem area. Once it establishes that foothold, it will quickly double cross and conquer the Middle East Jews, America and Britain at the same time.

This sequence of events will alarm the Asian powers, causing them to think they will be Europe’s next victim. So the Russians and Chinese will unite and plan an attack against Europe (Daniel 11:44-45). At that point, the armies of both these powers will gather in Megiddo (Armageddon) and head down to Jerusalem, where Christ will conquer them and set up the Kingdom of God.

So you can see how all of this is *linked*. The *trigger* to all of it is the fall of half of Jerusalem. Then begins a step-by-step series of crises that leads to Christ’s electrifying return to this Earth.

You urgently need to see where these events are headed.

The Rise of Hamas

In 2005, the terrorist group Hamas entered politics and immediately showed itself very popular among Palestinian voters. When this group announced it would run in the January 2006

Palestinian parliamentary elections, many analysts expected it to do well and secure a prominent position in Palestinian politics.

BUT THE ELECTION RESULTS STUNNED THE WORLD! Hamas didn’t just win parliamentary seats—it *took over the government!* This terrorist group won a decisive 74 out of the 132 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council, which gives it the right to form the Palestinian government.



REUTERS

The Palestinians could—and, I believe, will—CONQUER THE TEMPLE MOUNT and REFUSE ACCESS to anybody else.

In the final days of 2005, I wrote a letter to Philadelphia Church of God members and co-workers that is essentially the same as the article you are now reading. I also recorded a *Key of David* television episode on the same subject, which aired on Jan. 6, 2006. Here is what I said in that program: “Now it appears that the Hamas terrorists—who are really supported by Iran—are about to get control of the Palestinians.” I was referring to Zechariah’s prophecy, not to the Palestinian elections. But within just a few weeks, Hamas had done just that!

In that program, I spoke of how much pressure is being applied to Israel to give up half of Jerusalem. I said, “[Hamas leaders] know what the Israelis are saying, and what the Europeans are saying, and what the United Nations is saying, and they’re going to come in, in a very short while, and take it by force. Of course, they’ll be supported by Iran. But it’s going to be taken by force, and you need to realize that.”

Then I stated the possibility, based on the conflict Zechariah describes between the Palestinians and the Israeli government, that Benjamin Netanyahu’s conservative Likud party could bounce back and win the Israeli elections scheduled for March 28. Again, I recorded that program at the end of December last year.

In the weeks since then, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who was enormously popular with the Israelis and who was preparing to make more unilateral concessions to the Arabs, has been removed from the scene by a massive stroke. And now, terrorism is the official platform in Palestinian politics!

READ THE HAMAS CHARTER DOCUMENT. THAT GROUP EXISTS FOR ONLY ONE PURPOSE: TO DESTROY ISRAEL!

These two events will make the conservative position look more attractive for Israelis. Whether or not they elect Netanyahu, it is almost certain the new government will act with more caution toward the Hamas-dominated Palestinian government. That is going to bring the crisis to a head much more quickly.

I based my statements on Zechariah's prophecy. God's prophecies are sure!

Recently I received a letter that criticized us for reminding our readers of prophetic statements we have made that are now coming to pass, calling it "bragging."

That reader is missing the beautiful point. We do not remind people of those statements to puff ourselves up—but to exalt God! We are showing, as the Prophet Daniel did, that "there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known ... what shall be in the latter days" (Daniel 2:28). When God reveals a prophecy and then it happens, that should strengthen our faith!

As Christ Himself said, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe."

Besieged by Iran

No nation was more excited about the Hamas election victory than Iran. Tehran has sponsored and financed Middle Eastern terrorist groups for decades, and Hamas is near the top of the list. The election of Hamas was a great victory for Iran.

Through Hamas, Iran—the world's number-one terrorist-sponsoring nation and one of the world's most anti-Semitic nations—now has a much firmer foothold in Israel.

After the Hamas victory, Mr. Netanyahu stated, "THE STATE OF HAMASTAN HAS BEEN CREATED IN FRONT OF OUR VERY EYES, A SATELLITE OF IRAN, in the image of the Taliban" (Inter Press Service News Agency, January 26).

THAT STATEMENT IS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT!

Netanyahu put a lot of the blame on Israel's "policy of unreciprocated withdrawals"—like the retreat from the Gaza Strip. He called it "a reward to Hamas terror" (ibid.). That is certainly how the Arabs see it! Israel's political weakness helped bring the Iran-backed terrorist group Hamas to power.

January 22, Israel's Arutz Sheva reported a meeting that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad held in Syria with representatives of Hezbollah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Israeli Defense Minister Sha'ul Mofaz labeled it a "summit of terror." He said Ahmadinejad called the meeting "to be sure that the terrorism against Israel would not slow down for a moment, and would even increase." This is what Hamas leaders were doing just days before their electoral victory!

But Tehran does more than just cheer these groups on. There is abundant proof that Iran provides weapons to Hezbollah and supports it with financial aid to the tune of about \$100 million per year. Iran gave about \$10 million to the PA-based Islamic Jihad in 2005—about twice as much as it did in 2004. Iran's support of Palestinian terrorist groups is growing.

Over the years, Tehran has worked hard to position its henchmen in and around Israel. Its efforts are paying off. Hamas now controls the strategic Gaza Strip and major parts of the West Bank—and dominates Palestinian politics! Hezbollah has grown into a highly-organized, well-armed, well-financed organization in neighboring Lebanon. To the south, in Egypt, the Iran-friendly Muslim Brotherhood is growing increasingly popular.

IRAN HAS A PASSION TO SEIZE CONTROL OF JERUSALEM—AND NOW IT HAS ISRAEL SURROUNDED!

The Jewish nation is being "besieged" (Deuteronomy 28:52).

Iran has surrounded and infiltrated Israel. Now the city of Jerusalem is on the VERGE OF DESTRUCTION!

These events only give more urgency to Zechariah's proph-

ecy! I said in December that half of Jerusalem could fall this year. These events make that catastrophe even more likely!

Jews' Possession of Jerusalem Prophesied

Most of the world was sympathetic to the Jews after the Holocaust in World War II, when Hitler murdered 6 million Jews in Europe. His goal was to exterminate all European Jews. Many world leaders believed the Jews needed their own homeland and helped them to settle in the Middle East, where they are today.

ISRAEL WAS ESTABLISHED AS A NATION IN 1948. THIS WAS A POWERFUL FULFILLMENT OF BIBLE PROPHECY. THE JEWS ARE PROPHESIED TO LOSE JERUSALEM AND THE REST OF THEIR LAND IN THE LATTER DAYS. How could this happen if they weren't first given that land from the great God? Any Bible scholar should be able to see that.

At that time, the Jews only controlled half of Jerusalem. But in 1967, war broke out between the Arabs and the Jews. The Jews were victorious and gained control of all Jerusalem.

BIBLE PROPHECY SHOWS US THAT THE JEWS HAD TO CONQUER EAST JERUSALEM SO THEY COULD THEN LOSE IT AS PROPHESIED IN ZECHARIAH 14! EVEN THE JEWS' CONQUERING OF EAST JERUSALEM WAS AN ASTOUNDING FULFILLMENT OF BIBLE PROPHECY! The Zechariah 14:2 prophecy clearly shows that the Jews had to get control of all Jerusalem between 1948 and Christ's Second Coming! That happened in 1967.

If the Jews would submit to the omnipotent, prophecy-fulfilling God, they would *not* lose their land. They know about these prophecies but refuse to heed God's warning.

God gave all Jerusalem to the Jews, and because of their sins He is going to give their country over to the enemy. How many fulfilled prophecies and miracles do they have to see before they turn to God?

The Jews are looking to men—not God—to bring them peace. That reality is vividly explained in our free booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy*.

Can you and I believe God and all of these spectacular prophecies? CHRIST GAVE ALL JERUSALEM TO THE JEWS SO PROPHECY COULD BE FULFILLED. SO JUST A LITTLE FAITH TELLS US THAT THE PROPHECY ABOUT THE JEWS LOSING HALF OF JERUSALEM WILL ALSO BE FULFILLED, PERHAPS EVEN THIS YEAR.

God's prophetic Word is 100 percent reliable. His reputation is on the line. His Word never fails.

East Jerusalem to Be Lost

The Palestinians are recklessly intent on regaining East Jerusalem. They are growing stronger as the Jews—along with Britain and America (which usually, and inexplicably, pressure the Jews to give in to the Palestinians)—get weaker.

Just how weak are the Jews becoming? A poll published by Yedioth Ahronoth on Dec. 16, 2005, showed that 49 percent—*nearly half*—of Israelis would support giving up parts of Arab East Jerusalem—the largely Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem—in a peace deal with the Palestinians.

The Jews are going to lose more than just "parts" of East Jerusalem. They want to make a peace deal even though *not one* of their previous peace deals has been honored by the Palestinians!

Now—that was their thinking *before* the Hamas election. Perhaps it is changing now.

A Dec. 13, 2005, Jerusalem Newswire article by Ryan Jones said this: "... Finance Minister Ehud Olmert, the prime minister's top deputy [and current acting prime minister] and a man known for releasing 'trial balloons' regarding future policy,

has on more than one occasion stated *Israel would eventually have to relinquish the dream of an eternally united Jerusalem under Jewish sovereignty.*” At a conference January 24—after the Hamas victory—this man said his country needs to reform its borders “to ensure a Jewish majority,” which shows that he still favors pulling out of areas populated mostly by Palestinians. So he is a leader who might be pushed into handing over Arab East Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem Newswire article went on to describe how the Palestinian Authority prime minister (who has since resigned) told Jewish leaders that there would be no peace deal if Israel didn’t make “serious concessions” on Jerusalem. “There can be no ‘Palestinian’ statehood and therefore no Middle East peace unless the eastern half of Jerusalem, *including the Temple Mount*, comes under Arab rule, [he] told a gathering of European representatives.

“The European Union recently clarified its position on Jerusalem in a still-unpublished report slamming Israeli activity

and the imposition of Israeli law in the eastern half of the city, where several hundred thousand Jews live in the neighborhoods of Gilo, French Hill, Ramat Eshkol and others. ...

“Many in Israel fear that as the ‘peace’ process progresses, a combination of ‘Palestinian’ intransigence, Western disregard for Israel’s ancient rights, and a headlong rush by leftist leaders such as Peretz and Sharon to conclude a final peace deal at almost any cost MEANS THE DIVISION OF JERUSALEM MAY NOT BE FAR OFF” (emphasis mine throughout).

These Jewish fears are well-grounded. But will the Jews *willingly give up the Temple Mount, their holiest site?* I don’t think so—especially now with Hamas in control!

It seems the Palestinians could get East Jerusalem, minus the Temple Mount, without a fight. Zechariah’s prophecy implies that there will be an impasse over the Temple Mount—which the Palestinians “resolve” by taking East Jerusalem by force. That is why I believe the conservatives could regain control in Israel. They have a stronger will to fight for the land they believe belongs to the Jews.

However it happens, half of Jerusalem is going to be lost! I believe that will include the Temple Mount.

You can see why that crisis would bring at least three powers into war, which includes millions of people around the world. It would involve many nations. **THAT IS WHY THIS EVENT WILL BE SUCH A STRONG, EXPLOSIVE LINK LEADING ALL THE WAY TO CHRIST’S SECOND COMING!**

Do you realize how close we are to this emotional and violent explosion in Jerusalem? We are about to see the worst suffering this world has ever experienced.

It is shockingly near.

Thankfully, the best news that men have ever heard lies at the end of this tumultuous chain (Zechariah 14:3-4).

Times of the Gentiles

For over 200 years, we have been living in *the times of Israel*. Now we are rapidly moving into the *times of the Gentiles*.

“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” (Luke 21:24). “*Jerusalem shall be trodden down*” also

includes America and Britain. God is now cursing the nations of biblical Israel, and they are about to go into captivity.

The same is true for most of God’s own Church. “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, 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). This is a prophecy of what has recently happened within God’s Church. In fact, it too will be taken captive with the nations of Israel.

God gets very specific here, powerfully warning His people that most of them are about to experience the Great Tribulation—the times of the Gentiles. He wants them to know their fate!

You are now seeing spectacular prophecies being fulfilled.

The good times for Israel are fading fast, just as God prophesied. America, Britain and Judah are going down like a sinking ship. At the same time, Gentile

Ahmadinejad’s VIOLENT WORDS are a part of this PUSH from the king of the south against the king of the north.

powers are rising like a rocket.

We are entering extremely dangerous times.

Iran is the most powerful Muslim nation in the Middle East. This leader of radical Islam is the number-one terrorist-sponsoring nation in the Middle East. Iran is also about to get the nuclear bomb. It can do all this because it is swimming in oil profits.

In December, Mohamed El Baradei, the chairman of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said that if Iran resumed its uranium enrichment, it would take only “*a few months to produce a nuclear bomb.*”

Tony Blankley wrote, “Keep in mind, Mr. El Baradei is not some wild bomb-thrower (so to speak). He is the same diplomat who the Bush administration recently, and unsuccessfully, tried to block from being reappointed chairman of the IAEA because he was insufficiently assertive and too inclined to understate the danger of nuclear development in Muslim countries” (*Washington Times*, Dec. 12-18, 2005).

The Iranian leaders are looking for a war, and they are going to get one—but not the way the world expects.

Charles Krauthammer wrote this in the *Washington Post*: “To be sure, Holocaust denial and calls for Israel’s destruction are commonplace in the Middle East. They can be seen every day on Hezbollah TV, in Syrian media, in Egyptian editorials appearing in semiofficial newspapers. But none of these aspiring mass murderers are on the verge of acquiring nuclear weapons that could do in one afternoon what it took Hitler six years to do: destroy an entire Jewish civilization and extinguish 6 million souls.

“Everyone knows where Iran’s nuclear weapons will be aimed. Everyone knows they will be put on Shahab rockets, which have been modified so that they can reach Israel. And everyone knows that if the button is ever pushed, it will be the end of Israel.

“But it gets worse. The president of a country about to go nuclear is a confirmed believer in the coming apocalypse. Like Judaism and Christianity, Shiite Islam has its own version of the messianic return—the reappearance of the 12th imam. The more devout believers in Iran pray at the Jamkaran Mosque, which houses a well from which, some believe, he will emerge.

“When Ahmadinejad unexpectedly won the presidential elections, he immediately gave \$17 million of government funds to the shrine. Last month AHMADINEJAD SAID PUBLICLY

THAT THE MAIN MISSION OF THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION IS TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THE REAPPEARANCE OF THE 12TH IMAM.

“And as in some versions of fundamentalist Christianity, the second coming will be accompanied by the usual trials and tribulations, death and destruction. Iranian journalist Hossein Bastani reported Ahmadinejad saying in official meetings that the hidden imam will reappear in two years.

“SO A HOLOCAUST-DENYING, VIRULENTLY ANTI-SEMITIC, ASPIRING GENOCIDIST, ON THE VERGE OF ACQUIRING WEAPONS OF THE APOCALYPSE, BELIEVES THAT THE END IS NOT ONLY NEAR BUT NEARER THAN THE NEXT AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION” (Dec. 16, 2005).

This staggering news ought to galvanize the world into understanding that the evil powers in this world are out of control! They are led by the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4)—not the true God. That means trouble in this world beyond what men can even imagine!

As the Dec. 18, 2005, *Sunday Times* reported, the nuclear clock is at “three minutes to midnight.”

Given the seriousness of these events, people ought to get serious about studying God’s inspired Bible.

Mr. Krauthammer sees a lot, but he doesn’t understand the Bible. He uses a biblical word that he and most of the world don’t understand: *apocalypse*. This comes from a Greek word meaning *revelation, to enlighten or to give light*. And this world has never been more desperate to comprehend that light! All people need to understand the most important prophetic book in the Bible: Revelation. (Request our free booklets *Unveiled at Last: The Royal Book of Revelation* and *Daniel Unlocks Revelation*.)

God has given this world light, but people keep rejecting it. God continually rains down *revelation* upon His faithful Church. The rest of the world is in a condition of spiritual drought. With a little effort, you can prove this for yourself.

Satan has been cast down to Earth and is full of wrath as never before (Revelation 12:9, 12). Why? Because he knows his time is short. Demons by the millions are full of their worst wrath and are stirring people into hatred, violence and war! Quite soon, Christ is going to cast those demons into outer darkness. Knowing how short his time is motivates the devil, and it should motivate us. This world is very close to its death!

Just reading Ahmadinejad’s remarks ought to make us see that this man is motivated by EXTREMELY DANGEROUS IDEAS that are about to rock this world. He will act on his hate-filled ideas, just as Adolf Hitler did.

Do you think we will have peace in the Middle East? We can be absolutely certain there will be no peace until Christ returns. Before the Second Coming, nuclear warfare is going to consume this world! So says your Bible, which is the Word of God.

Lead-up to Last Crusade

One nation that is taking the Iranian president seriously is Germany. The German media and government are furious about Ahmadinejad’s inflammatory statements. Stratfor reported last December: “The German government has called in Iran’s top diplomat in Berlin to express Germany’s disapproval of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s statements against Israel Ahmadinejad has said in recent weeks that ISRAEL SHOULD BE WIPED OFF THE MAP ... and that THE HOLOCAUST WAS A MYTH” (Dec. 14, 2005).

What really stung the German government, however, was just how specific Ahmadinejad was in offering a future location for the Jewish state, “suggesting that if the Europeans really felt that bad for the Jews, that Israel should be picked up and moved to Europe—specifically to Germany and Austria” (ibid., Dec. 13, 2005).

It was a deliberate “push,” to use Bible language.

If these statements were intended to provoke a reaction from Germany, Tehran did not have to wait long. Vice Chancellor Müntefering’s response was to declare “that Germany is pulling out the stops in seeking ‘political consequences’ for Iran in the European Union and at the United Nations” (ibid.).

Ahadinejad’s remarks certainly got Germany’s attention. IRAN’S PRESIDENT KNOWS THAT GERMANY IS THE LEADING POWER IN EUROPE. HE ALSO KNOWS THAT THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH STRONGLY WANTS CONTROL IN JERUSALEM. After all, prophecy shows that the pope will move his headquarters there after the king of the north, or the Holy Roman Empire, conquers the king of the south!

This religious zealot, Ahmadinejad, knows about the Crusades of the Catholic Church. He also knows that the Holy Roman Empire has usually been comprised of Germany and the Vatican.

So he is also telling Germany and the Vatican to stay out of the Middle East. This is his hidden message and threat. He believes this area belongs to Islam and nobody else. He is not only threatening to wipe the Jews off the map, but also anybody else who thinks they have some claim on Jerusalem!

I HAVE WRITTEN SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE HOW I BELIEVE THE MAJOR CAUSE OF THESE TWO POWERS CLASHING IS GOING TO BE JERUSALEM! AND I BELIEVE THAT IS WHAT AHMADINEJAD’S EMOTIONAL OUTBURST IS ALL ABOUT. This is really quite simple: It is all leading to the last crusade.

Remember, these two powers have a long history of religious clashes. They are just “doing what comes naturally.”

On Dec. 15, 2005, Deutsche Welle quoted the Berlin paper *Taz* encouraging Germans to take Ahmadinejad seriously for this reason: “[H]IS WORDS ARE FALLING ON FERTILE GROUND IN THE ISLAMIC COUNTRIES AND ADDING FUEL TO THE HATRED OF THE WEST AND ISRAEL.” Then it quoted the Munich daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung* as saying that Ahmadinejad’s “CONTINUED PROVOCATIONS SCREAM FOR A RESPONSE.” That paper urged EUROPEAN LEADERS TO PREPARE FOR CONFRONTATION, and to “make it clear to Ahmadinejad that there are consequences to his populist campaign.”

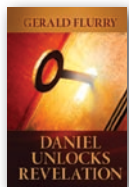
Already, newspapers are saying Ahmadinejad’s “continued provocations scream for a response.” They are alarmed that this fiery leader is lighting a match to the Middle East powder keg!

That is precisely what is happening. It is all leading to a confrontation prophesied over 2,500 years ago!

There surely are many Germans who don’t want their nation to start another world war—but that is exactly what Germany will do. Many Germans don’t want to return to the hate-filled days of Adolf Hitler—but a deceitful and deadly leader is going to hijack the world’s next superpower, the European Union (Daniel 8:23-25). Now Iran is *pushing* Germany toward the point where this leader with a “fierce countenance” will hijack the EU. Iran’s pushing could be the very catalyst to propel this man into office. (Write for our booklet *Daniel Unsealed at Last!* if you need more information.)

Ahadinejad’s violent words are a part of this “push” from the king of the south against the king of the north. And

See **JERUSALEM** page 23 ▶



FREE UPON REQUEST

STOKING THE ENGINES OF EMPIRES

IN THE MODERN WORLD, BEING A FIRST-RATE global power is expensive. It takes a lot of fuel to keep the engine firing.

Modern luxuries such as jetliners and SUVs, electronics and computer technology, spacious air-conditioned homes and offices require an unprecedented supply of resources to operate—resources like oil, natural gas and coal, not to mention human laborers. The more elaborate our civilization becomes, the more resource-dependent it becomes—developing from a patchwork of self-sufficient communities using only local resources into a dizzyingly complex, economically interdependent matrix of pipelines, shipping lanes and trade routes that transmit resources to the folks who hunger for them.

The United States is the most voracious devourer of natural resources ever. Its 296 million citizens spend over half a trillion dollars each year on energy. Over 40 percent of that energy comes from oil, of which the U.S. guzzles 20 million barrels, and growing, *daily*. Since the U.S. produces only about a third of that itself, it must import well over 4 trillion barrels of oil annually (a quarter of that from our “friends” in Saudi Arabia and Venezuela). That is what it takes to enable 4.6 percent of the world’s population (Americans) to consume 25 percent of the world’s oil production. The Institute Français de Pétrole warns that if all countries consumed oil on a per-person basis equal to that of the U.S., the world’s known oil resources would be gone in eight years.

America’s unmatched prosperity and record-breaking use of resources has erected a new standard not only in materialism and convenience, but also power projection. And it is a standard to which other nations in a competitive world are aggressively trying to catch up. Consider the U.S. military: To possess the most impressive armed forces in the world, the United States has paid close to a billion dollars a day, every day, for over 60 years. Nations that aim to compete on that level are shelling out money and manpower on a massive scale, forming alliances and pooling their assets—and all the while increasing *their* thirst for greater and greater quantities of natural resources.

This is not an insignificant development. The world is already straining just to fuel one superpower. But other empires-to-be are now coming of age. China, the most dramatic example, is

growing twice as fast economically as the U.S. and has settled into its new role as the world’s home base for manufacturing.


As countries like China industrialize and urbanize, their oil consumption inevitably expands. Whereas a man living in a developing country uses two barrels of oil per year (that is the average per-capita usage of 5 billion of the planet’s 6.4 billion people), his brother in the developed world uses *18 barrels*. The gap between these two figures is shrinking—and not because the developed world is cutting back in its oil usage.

Unfortunately, though demand is ballooning, supplies aren’t: In fact, global oil production appears to be approaching its peak.

Existing oil fields are already working at or close to full capacity—and, in many cases, have already started to decline in output—and new discoveries aren’t expected to make up the difference. According to former Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, “The underlying problem is that for more than three decades, [world] production has outrun new discoveries. Most of our giant fields were found 40 years ago and more. Even today, the bulk of our production comes from these old—and aging—giant fields” that are past peak production (www.senate.gov, Nov. 16, 2005).

The U.S. Department of Energy’s statistical agency, the Energy Information Administration, insists that the world will “require new [oil] production equivalent to three Saudi Arabias by 2025” to meet projected growing global oil needs. In other words, *three “Saudi Arabias” must be discovered, permitted, drilled and put*

The world is exiting the age of America and entering the age of multiple superpowers. The crunch on resources needed to stoke the engines of emerging global powers is destined to spark a violent revolution. BY JOEL HILLIKER

A large, dark silhouette of an oil pumpjack dominates the left and center of the page. The background is a warm, orange-hued sunset sky. The pumpjack's structure is complex, with a long, angled arm extending upwards and to the right, and a large, circular counterweight at the bottom. The overall mood is somber and industrial.

into production over the next two decades just to meet demand (*Petroleum Intelligence Weekly*, Sept. 5, 2005). Furthermore, all infrastructure—including pipelines, tankers, storage facilities and refineries—would also need to be constructed before the oil could reach the market.

Clearly, this is not going to happen. What *will* happen is that competition for what oil *does* exist will get vicious.

While the scope of resource extraction, distribution and consumption in today's world is unparalleled in human history, *competing for resources* is as old as the hills. A shortage or perceived shortage of required resources, or an increased appetite for resources, has time and again brought families, clans, tribes, states and nations into conflict with one another in tragic cycles of violence, conquest, enslavement and revolution. To take nothing away from the friction between contrasting ideas (particularly religious ideas), nor from the competitive and hostile tendencies within human nature to simply want to dominate other people, throughout history *physical resources*—including land, water, livestock, material supplies, treasure, armaments and even slave labor—have been among the principal pursuits of those nations that have engaged other nations in war. The two world wars of the past century, for example, were ignited largely by resource grabs by Germany within Europe and Northern Africa, and by Japan in Southeast Asia.

So it will be in our day. Only now, in the age of WMD, *the stakes are much, much higher.*

Precursor to War

The classic sign of oil demand exceeding supply is already in evidence today—and that is price hikes. Over the past decade, crude oil prices have tripled.

Such rate escalation especially wallops the countries that import oil the most. Certainly the U.S. is hurting: In 2004 it imported 58 percent of its oil.

The world's most populous nations, China and India—which import 44 and 70 percent of their oil respectively—also feel the crunch, though they are, as yet, generally less dependent on it. But this is a real crisis for the

European Union, which ships in over 80 percent of its oil

(last year, that figure in Germany, France,

Italy and Spain exceeded

90 percent)—and the island nation of Japan, which imports 98 percent. Mounting costs for those oil imports can ravage a nation's economy, simultaneously stunting economic growth and driving up inflation.

It is easy to see how quickly the tension will escalate between those nations that have the resources and those that need them—and among those who are competing for them—as they become more scarce. The incalculably high stakes of this game are producing some serious side effects. First, the nations that export those resources, especially oil and natural gas, are coming to enjoy a disproportionate amount of clout (witness Iran, which the world appears completely unable to prevent from gaining nuclear weaponry simply for fear of jeopardizing the 4.2 million barrels of oil it puts on the market each day). Second, while demand for resources skyrockets, *production* increases have not kept pace. As a result, the competition to lock down sources is already starting to become more fierce—and it is about to get ugly.

From Washington to Brussels, Caracas to Moscow and Beijing, national leaders and international corporations are stepping up their efforts to gain control over major sources of energy and commodities. With oil especially, never has the competitive pursuit of resources been so sharp, and, in the words of Michael T. Klare, director of the Five College Program in Peace and World Security Studies, “Never has so much money as well as diplomatic and military muscle been deployed” to gain control over major stockpiles (*TomDispatch.com*, May 9, 2005).

Economic analyst James Puplava succinctly sums up the global situation we face: “At a time of tremendous population growth and escalating demand for commodities of all types, resource scarcity will become a harbinger of war. The wars of the 21st century will arise over the scarcity of resources like water, oil and food as much as they will religion and economics. National security will become aligned and directed towards the securing and protection of global resource flows” (*Financial Sense Online*, Feb. 22, 2002).

The facts we are about to examine are compelling, even alarming. But it is only when we compare those facts with the Holy Bible's prophetic descriptions of the interplay among nations during the final days of our present civilization that the utter *ferocity* of the rivalry over resources we are about to witness truly leaps into focus—and the extent to which today's great powers will claw their way into becoming tomorrow's superpowers by *raping* weaker nations, while enriching an elite collection of international corporatists.

As the following pages show, two of the major players in this drama, the United States and Iran, are about to be eliminated in a shocking manner. The world is about to witness a titanic struggle for dominance—already appearing in its embryonic stages—between, principally, *Germany* and *China*. In large part, it will be competition over resources that ignites it.

Realizing their resource dependency and the potential for a coming supply crunch, nations, especially China and EU nations, have *already begun scrambling to secure sources*. In fact, we are actually witnessing *the reemergence of colonial-type relationships*, in which greater powers offer their manufactured goods in exchange for raw materials from their weaker partners.

But considering there is more than one empire in the game—and that they are all pursuing the same select group of “colonies”—*this development is a clear precursor of resource war*. ■

THE PLAYERS

The embryonic stages of a violent scramble for resources are already under way. Here is a list of the cast of characters in this unfolding drama:



THE UNITED STATES Presently the world's biggest consumer of resources, its debt-bloated economy is operating at unsustainable levels. Its global role has reached its zenith, and it is about to recede dramatically both in terms of power projection and commodity consumption.

PAGE 9



IRAN OPEC's second-largest oil producer is its most ambitious member. Its energy assets give it inordinate clout in global politics—but even with nuclear weapons and a short-term, brilliant flash of regional supremacy, it will be overtaken by greater powers intent on eliminating its threat while securing its resources.

PAGE 10



LATIN AMERICA Though this region is near the U.S. and historically friendly, it has been courted over a period of decades by Europe, which seeks to undermine that relationship and secure its riches for its own use. A recent scramble by China to preempt the Continent in this respect promises to spark contention.

PAGE 14



AFRICA Since shaking off its history of colonialism, this continent has been plagued by corruption and instability. Great powers are eyeing its untapped riches hungrily and moving in to stake their claim in what looks suspiciously like the emergence of a new colonial era.

PAGE 16



GERMANY Like much of Europe, it is almost wholly dependent upon outside sources of energy, but is positioning itself as the gatekeeper through which the rest of the Continent must receive its energy. As Germany wakes up to the dangers in its overdependence on Russian resources, watch for it to move decisively to lock down alternative supplies.

PAGE 14



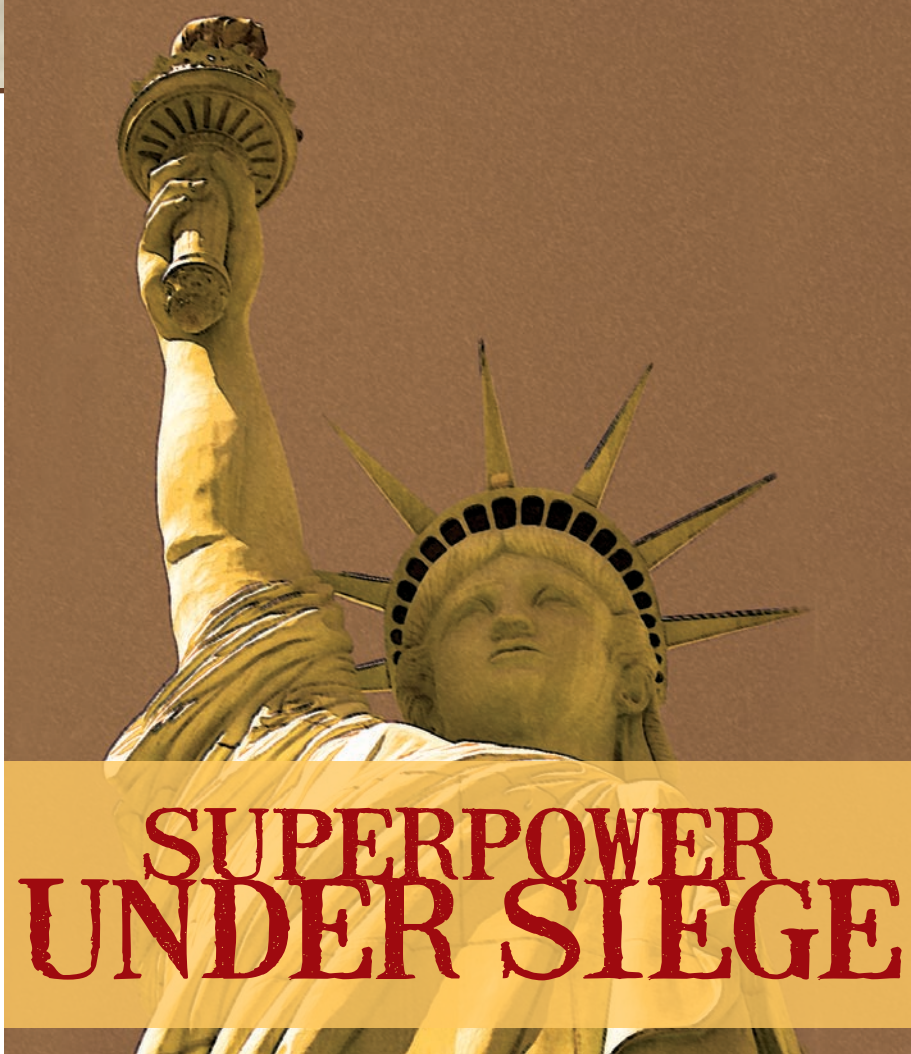
CHINA The world's most populous nation is industrializing at a lightning pace. To fuel this advancement, it is undertaking a massive global resources grab that is unsettling other nations and intensifying the competition for assets worldwide.

PAGE 15



RUSSIA This once and future empire sits on a wealth of commodities that guarantees it won't remain a second-rate power much longer. Its current top customer is Europe—but in the impending conflict, as this relationship reverts to historical form and turns ugly, Russia will cement ties with a powerful new ally.

PAGE 20



SUPERPOWER UNDER SIEGE

BY JOEL HILLIKER

IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE THE United States becoming a second- or third-rate power. Of course, the same was true of the formerly great Britain just a century ago.

From a resources standpoint, the British Empire was enormously wealthy. With far-flung colonies encircling the globe, and possessing the mightiest navy in history, it controlled the world's most strategic sea gates, thereby securing the world's trade. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Hawaii, the Falkland Islands, many Caribbean islands and much of Africa—including South Africa, Rhodesia, Kenya, Egypt and Sudan—all hoisted the Union Jack. Under the colonial relationship, the British colonies (later to be known as the British Commonwealth) had a guaranteed market for selling their raw resources: Mother Britain. Conversely, British manufacturing was guaranteed an exclusive market for its goods: all of the British colonies. On the back of this system, Britain and its colonies became among the richest nations on Earth.

The picture dramatically changed

with World Wars I and II, which bled Britain of its finest men and the lion's share of its treasure. Though resources flowing from the colonies helped sustain Britain through both wars, by the end of World War II Britain was bankrupt. It could no longer sustain the operating costs associated with empire, particularly that of maintaining a military capable of protecting resource-supplying countries.

The resource demand void left by Britain was soon filled by the rising industrial power of the United States (and the developing markets of East Asia). The U.S. dominated the Western Hemisphere for the latter half of the 20th century, and when the Cold War ended, it became the world's lone superpower. Its economy and military might stood unrivaled.

But superpower status is incredibly expensive. And just as the costly tragedies of world war hobbled the British Empire's ship of state, so are the rising costs of sitting atop this dangerous and catastrophe-prone world taking their toll on America.

Troubling Trends

The American economy is now unsustainably bloated with debt. Where the

U.S. once outproduced all other nations with its resource-fueled, self-sufficient economy, it is now the world's largest debtor nation by far—a net importer of goods from food to consumables, even the high-tech goods whose production it pioneered. Saddled on one side with wartime expenses from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and on the other by pricey natural disasters and a jittery job market at home, America couldn't be facing a supply crunch and price hike on vital resources at a worse time.

Thus far, the U.S. has gotten away with carrying such a large deficit, partly because it owns the world's reserve currency and nations have been eager to hold dollars in their vaults. But this privileged position is slipping away as confidence in the dollar falls and its status as a reserve currency is challenged by a younger, and increasingly attractive, rival—the euro. Over the last several years, central banks around the world have let go their dollar reserves while increasing their euro holdings.

We are witnessing the beginning of a devastating trend: foreign capital flight.

As the dollar's status as the world's reserve currency shifts, so too will strategic power in global markets. The U.S. will simply no longer enjoy the many advantages of owning the world's reserve currency. It happened to Great Britain after World War II. It will happen to the U.S.

But the forces eroding American dominance are more malevolent than just the capricious winds of currency valuation. From South America to Europe to Asia, many nations are calculating how best to cripple the world's largest consumer of resources and to assume control over its suppliers. The U.S.'s shaky economic position and absorbing commitment to the war on terror is providing these nations a unique opportunity.

For example, China saw Washington's post-9/11 disengagement from Latin America and the Caribbean, and the ensuing explosion in anti-Americanism in those regions, as an opportunity to pounce. It has moved in on America's oil supply in Venezuela and taken control of vital sea gates through which resources must travel into the U.S.—the Panama Canal and Freeport, Bahamas. The greatest concentration of U.S. oil refineries, terminals and storage facilities, including the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve, is in the Gulf of Mexico region, which means that much of the oil must pass through the Caribbean—a

route now significantly controlled by China. In addition, China is establishing a huge deep-water port in Gwadar, Pakistan, at the entrance to the Persian Gulf.

These troubling moves must be viewed in combination with those of two other powers that pose an increasing danger to U.S. trade traffic: the Islamic powers and the European Union. Islamic governments presently control access to Persian Gulf oil resources through the gulfs of Oman and Aden and the Suez Canal, with China operating many of their major port facilities. Turkey, another Islamic state, stands at the crossroads of the Dardanelles, pathway of oil from Eurasia. The southern gateways of Jakarta and the Straits of Malacca, through which shipments from Pacific and Asian oil fields must be transported, are bordered by Islamic nations. The European Union controls the crucial northern gates of the Mediterranean and the North Sea, through which oil from Russia, the Caucasus and Eurasia passes.

Lack of control over these strategic gateways puts the U.S. in a very vulnerable position—one that is sure to be exploited in the coming resource war!

Can we recognize the possibility of foreign powers, when the moment is right, simply blockading these supply lines—shutting the gate on trade with the “mighty” U.S.? That is exactly what your Bible prophesies will happen to America, unless it repents of its ungodliness.

Read it for yourself: “They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the Lord your God has given you” (Deuteronomy 28:52; New King James Version). Believe it or not, that prophecy relates directly to the Anglo-American peoples.

Trends show that America’s days as the world’s singular superpower are numbered. Bible prophecy describes for us how it will occur.

As the United States is declining—like Britain in the 20th century—other powers are rising quickly, and their thirst for resources, primarily energy, is also growing rapidly. This need puts these countries in direct competition with the U.S.—and with each other. ■

With reporting by **ROBERT MORLEY**

WHY IRAN CAN AFFORD TO BE INSANE

Is the Iranian president crazy, or canny? Before you answer, consider the ace up his sleeve.

LOOSE CANNON

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is alarming and offending many nations with provocative statements and decisions.

BY BRAD MACDONALD

IRAN HAS GUTS, THERE’S NO DOUBT about it—what with its pressing forward with nuclear development while threatening to wipe Israel off the map. But these moves aren’t as careless as some people assume, considering the ace Tehran has up its sleeve.

Oil, that is.

The equation is simple. The advanced economies of America and Europe rely heavily on a stable supply of oil, much of it from OPEC member nations. Iran is the second-largest OPEC producer and a major contributor to the global oil supply.

In the same manner that nutrient-rich sap is the lifeblood of a tree, furnishing the energy needed to grow, oil provides energy (in many cases, literally) to the largest and most affluent economies on the globe. Oil is absolutely central to our modern lifestyles.

Although Iran can’t stop the flow of oil, it can reduce the volume of oil flowing onto the global market if it chooses. And any such restriction in oil flow would yield dire results for the economies of America, Europe and Asia—directly affecting transportation, manu-

facturing, industry, agriculture and the military, with indirect ramifications for every other economic sector. Even a couple of million fewer barrels of oil per day on the market would likely create economic chaos, which would precipitate political crisis.

But here is where the analogy breaks down. While a tree wouldn’t respond to a mere *threat* to reduce its sap flow, with oil it is different. Even the *threat* of there not being enough oil to meet global demands has an impact.

We experienced this phenomenon in late January. As Europe and America scrambled to drum up support for UN sanctions against Tehran for resuming its nuclear activities, the Iranian oil minister warned that one of the consequences of sanctions will be “the unleashing of a crisis in the oil sector and particularly a price hike” (Agence France Presse, January 19). The news of a *potential* disruption in the flow of oil from Iran caused oil prices to jump to near four-month highs.

This is quite startling. Iran didn’t actually reduce the amount of oil it contributes to global supply, it just *threatened* to reduce it—and look what happened.



AP/WIDEWORLD



But is he crazy, or canny?

It is hard to deny the truth in a threat Ahmadinejad made this past January 14. The *Guardian* in Britain reported his statement: “Iran had a ‘cheap means’ of achieving its nuclear ‘rights,’ Mr. Ahmadinejad said, adding: ‘You [the West] need us more than we need you. All of you today need the Iranian nation’” (January 16; emphasis mine).

Iranian oil fuels and energizes some of the world’s leading nations. Fully aware of the resultant massive influence it wields on the world scene, Iran believes it can run the risk of pushing around global giants.

Iran is playing for the highest stakes in the global energy game, given that, based on latest figures, *that country contains some of the largest proven reserves of hydrocarbons in the world.*

That explains the West’s embarrassing timidity in invoking any real penalties on Iran for flouting conventions in its pursuit of nuclear capability. With Iran, regardless of the stridency of the rhetoric from the rest of the world, appeasement is the foreign policy of the day. The major energy-consuming nations dare not risk any move by Iran to further disrupt an already high-priced energy market.

The most ironic aspect of the situation is this: These nations’ response to Tehran’s prestige has gone well beyond mere *inattention*. In the scramble for energy resources, Germany, having the leading industrial economy in Europe, realized early that the nuclear option would be a prime negotiating tool in gaining favorable access to Iranian energy resources. Even 30 years ago, it ensured an early place in the development of Iran’s nuclear technology by signing its first contract to assist in this project. Since then, it has been joined by Russia and China in aiding and abetting Iran’s development of nuclear power, using various tricks of delay in contractual fulfillment as diplomatic carrots or sticks, depending on the mood reflected by their major Islamic client.

But there is now a stark new threat. The ayatollahs may have been extreme, but Ahmadinejad is truly a volatile, unpredictable customer whose violent vocalizing against Israel, the U.S. and EU members is forcing these nations to reassess their foreign policies toward this rising king of the south. Now Ahmadinejad has ripped the UN seals off Iran’s stalled nuclear program and declared his intention to proceed full-

steam ahead with the development of a nuclear capability, despite any global opinion to the contrary.

Sure, UN sanctions would hurt the Iranian economy, and its national income would decrease substantially if it chose to withhold oil from the market. But Tehran knows such measures would hurt America and Europe even more. It could potentially *devastate* their economies! These facts infuse Iran’s leaders with tremendous confidence.

The Danger of Overconfidence

The Iranians are failing to consider all the ramifications of their flippant behavior, however. They are blinded by arrogance and overconfidence. They operate under the assumption that they can push Europe and America around without serious implications. Time will prove them wrong.

Europe is heavily dependent on outside sources for its energy. The lives and well-being of most Europeans depend heavily on Russian natural gas and OPEC oil. Threatening Europe’s supply of energy is the same as threatening the lives of Europeans! President Ahmadinejad is foolish for thinking Europe will roll over and acquiesce to Tehran’s wishes. To push at Europe by threatening its energy supply is naive and highly dangerous.

Facing Russian instability to the east and Iranian arrogance to the south, Europe has to secure the flow of oil and natural gas into its borders. And this will not be good news for Iran.

For more than a decade, our editor in chief has foretold of bullying tactics by Iran that would “push” Europe over the edge—inviting a blitzkrieg attack from the Europeans. This is based on a prophecy in Daniel 11 that shows Europe, a resurrection of the old Roman Empire—an outgrowth of Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon—marching into the Middle East, partially to secure its energy supplies.

Europe’s energy issues will play a significant part in bringing this biblical prophecy to pass. Continuing resistance by Ahmadinejad to German-led EU initiatives on the nuclear front, stymieing EU efforts to tap further into Iran’s massive oil and gas reserves, will ultimately awaken the beast in the German breast. With the engines of this formidable global power needing fuel, and present sources proving so unpredictable, we can expect that, quite soon, Europe will rise up and impose its will on this energy-rich nation by force. ■

The amount of influence Iran wields in this scenario is ridiculous. The Iranian oil minister makes a statement to the Middle Eastern press, and *you* have to pay more at the gas pump. This man is taking more money from your wallet, and there is little you can do to stop him.

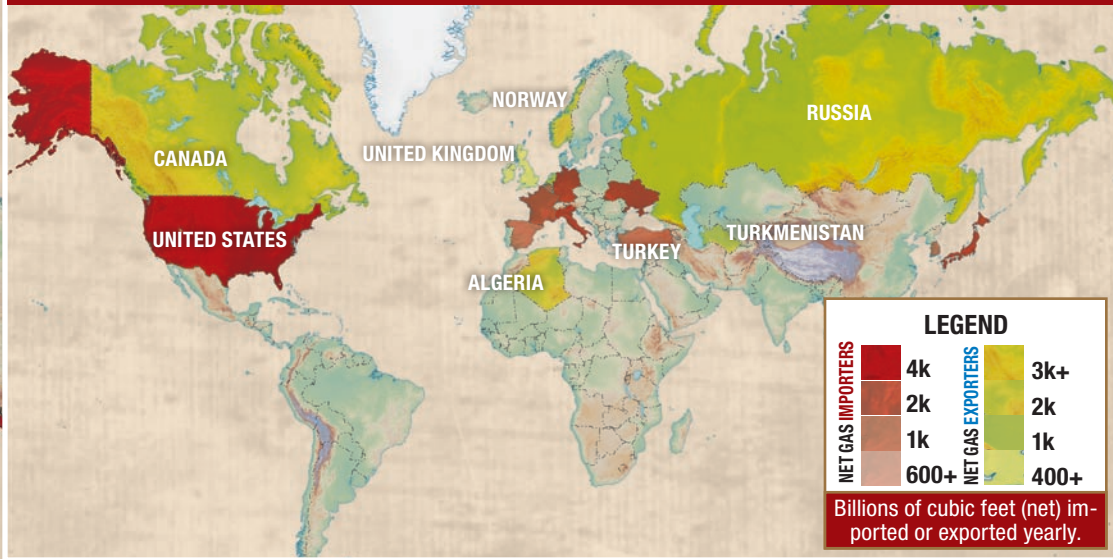
Why? Because America, as well as Europe and Asia, absolutely *must have* a stable flow of oil. Oil has become the Achilles heel of the world’s greatest, most advanced nations. Even though the United States doesn’t receive oil directly from Iran, in the event of Tehran squeezing supply, those nations that do import Iranian oil would have to hunt elsewhere for it. In the end, it affects everyone.

Few Alternatives

As Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad swaggers, endorsing dangerous ideologies, flippantly throwing around offensive remarks that he remains arrogantly unapologetic for, many wonder if this politician isn’t slightly loco—if there aren’t some screws loose in his mind. What else would give him the gall to push around some of the most powerful nations and groups of nations in the world?

NATURAL GAS PRODUCTION

Leading net importers and exporters by region



Making moves

The European Union relies on foreign sources for **80 PERCENT** of its oil. Between 1990 and 2004, European trade with Latin America more than **DOUBLED**; Europe is now also the continent's largest foreign investor.

CANADA

Oil Reserves 16.8 billion barrels
 If Canada's oil sands are included reserves are 178.8 billion barrels.

Demanding

Americans spend **HALF A TRILLION** dollars on energy each year.

The U.S. accounts for **4.6 PERCENT** of the Earth's population—and **25 PERCENT** of its oil consumption.

UNITED STATES

UNITED STATES

Population 295,734,134
Imported Oil 58% of consumption
Where It Comes From:
 Canada, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Nigeria

GERMANY

Population 82,431,390
Imported Oil 92% of consumption
Where It Comes From
 Russia, Norway, United Kingdom

MEXICO

Oil Reserves 14.8 billion barrels

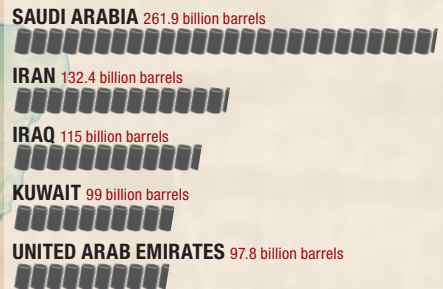
LATIN AMERICA

Oil Reserves 17.3 billion barrels

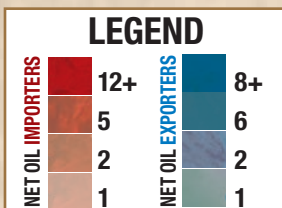
Unfaithful

Venezuela has abruptly **TURNED AWAY** the U.S. as an energy trading partner and welcomed China as its new oil lover.

MIDDLE EAST OIL RESERVES



WORLD OIL PRODUCTION



Millions of barrels imported or exported per day. Map includes all nations that (net) import or export at least one million barrels of oil per day.

Open season

Africa holds an estimated **30 PERCENT** of the world's mineral resources. The conflict-ridden continent contains **60+** metals and minerals, including gold, diamonds and uranium. Africa's confirmed **90 BILLION** barrels of oil reserves account for 9.1 percent of the world's total.



Empire-in-waiting

With higher global energy demands and the accompanying rising prices, **RUSSIA** is **LESS DEPENDENT** on the West.

If it ever decided to, Moscow could flip the switch on a full **THIRD** of Germany's oil and gas supplies, which are currently imported from Russia.

RUSSIA

Population 143,420,309

Oil Reserves 72 billion barrels

JAPAN

Population 127,417,244

Imported Oil 98% of consumption

CHINA

Population 1,306,313,812

Imported Oil 44% of consumption

AFRICA

Oil Reserves 90 billion barrels

Growing

INDIA has over 1 billion citizens, increasing modernization, and exploding energy demands.

THE BATTLEGROUND

How the competition over resources will play out among the world's great powers **BY JOEL HILLIKER AND ROBERT MORLEY**

WHERE DO OIL AND NATURAL GAS COME FROM? LOOK AT A WORLD MAP IN TERMS OF have and have-not nations—those with surpluses versus those with scarcity.

A simple reality quickly leaps out. The entities with the greatest advantage are Russia and a collection of Middle Eastern nations. The entities with the greatest need are the United States, the European Union, and Asia, especially China. Latin America and Africa present themselves as

two regions possessing ample resources—much of which remain untapped—but little muscle.

These facts are worth contemplating. They strongly suggest the manner in which geopolitical events will play out—and how cutthroat they will get—in the time just ahead.

Largely because of its oil, the Middle East has become the pivot point of world events. The flood of cash it provides empowers the spread of Islam and funds the scourge of terrorism—two realities, undeniably linked, destined to *force* greater powers to deal with them decisively. Russia is on the road to a different destination (see page 19).

The main battle over resources is primed to occur among three giants: the U.S., the EU and China. However, as the article on page 9 shows, the U.S. won't stay in the fight much longer. Already we see the EU and China undermining the U.S.—even positioning themselves to be able to choke off supplies when the opportunity is right—and working to redirect those commodities to fuel their own needs. The ensuing battle to be fought between these two—Europe and China—is visible today in its early stages.

As nice as it may be today to possess assets that the world's great powers crave, in the ruthless era of resource war into which we are now entering, it will prove to be a fatal disadvantage. Holding valuables without having the brawn to protect them only invites stronger powers to conquer, pillage and occupy. Even judging by

how these regions are being treated today, it is evident that this is the dreadful future awaiting Latin America and Africa.

Following is a closer examination of the trajectory of today's trends, with a focus on projecting where they are heading.

Land of Opportunity

Rich in resources, Latin America is a sumptuous smorgasbord for resource-hungry outsiders. Oil from Venezuela; silver from Mexico and Peru; tin from Bolivia; iron ore from Brazil; and on and on—Latin America can provide raw materials in abundance.

Germany, since the closing days of its defeat in the Second World War, has viewed Latin America as a land of opportunity. The strongest tie between these two entities lies in religion: Though Roman Catholicism is headquartered in Rome and remains the predominant faith of Europe, over half of the world's Roman Catholics live in Latin America. This friendship served Germany well even during World War II, when Argentina sheltered Nazi officers and provided safe haven for Nazi ships and submarines. At war's end, many Nazis found safety in South America. By the late 1940s, Ger-

man influence in Latin America was unmistakable, with its military camped out in Argentina, its industrial strength flourishing in Brazil, and Nazi leaders enjoying respected status within Chile, Venezuela, Paraguay and Ecuador.

Since then, German businesses, with Vatican support, have opened the door for Europe to penetrate key industrial, agricultural and corporate industries in Latin America. German corporate giants such as Krupp, Siemens, Bayer, Volkswagen, I.G. Farben and Deutsche Bank have become household names throughout the region. Slowly, stealthily, skillfully, German corporatists have secured the supplies of resources needed to stoke the engines of a truly world-class European superpower.

But while the foundation for this relationship was carefully laid over a period of decades, its structure has been built with much greater urgency in the 15 years since Germany's reunification. This German penetration of Latin America has been operating under an EU cloak. Between 1990 and 2004, EU trade with Latin America more than doubled, vaulting the EU into position as the leading foreign investor in the region.

THE GERMAN CRUNCH POINT

BY RON FRASER

DURING JANUARY, IN THE DEAD OF WINTER, GERMANS watched as their gas supplies fell markedly. When they suddenly realized that Russia had screwed down the tap, they stood wide-eyed at the sudden realization that Germany may have placed too many eggs in the Russian energy basket.

What happened is that, using a spat with the Ukraine over gas prices as the excuse, Russia deliberately cut gas supplies to Ukraine, knowing full-well that by so doing the pressure would drop all the way across the chilled landscape of Central Europe to its main customer: Germany. It is through Ukraine that much of Germany's gas flows from its source in Russia.

The fact is that Germany presently relies on Russia to supply a whole *third* of its oil and gas supplies. Such a level of dependence provides a nice bargaining tool for Russia—but it poses a significant geopolitical conundrum for Germany.

Pipeline Politics

During Gerhard Schröder's chancellorship, Germany enjoyed warm and close relations with Russia's President Vladimir Putin. It was a convenient politico-economic relationship. Russia got German investment to kick-start its ailing economy, and in return Germany got preferred access to Russia's massive energy resources.

This relationship culminated in the Germans negotiating a clever strategic energy deal with Russia intended to meet

the German and Western European demand for energy. This agreement, once carried to completion, will link Russia to Germany by routing a pipeline directly from the Russian distribution point in the town of Babayev, 800 kilometers east of St. Petersburg, to the coast at Vyborg, thence undersea to the town of Greifswald in northeastern Germany.

Bypassing the overland pipeline routes through Central and Eastern Europe, this northern pipeline will also avoid a more direct land route via the Baltic states by routing around them, under the Baltic Sea. Although this adds considerably to costs, in terms of German strategic interests this is a classy move. Not so for the rest of the European Union. This undersea pipeline will give Germany *direct control over the distribution of gas flowing from Russia to the principal EU nations*. In this plan, Germany becomes the gateway between Russia and other EU nations.

Not only will this pipeline bypass the Baltic and Central European member nations of the EU, it deliberately avoids the aspiring EU member nation of Ukraine. Thus, regardless of the winter shenanigans involving Russia's demonstrated power to turn off the gas to Ukraine and break the will of its government, Russia will no longer need Ukraine's cooperation in distributing gas unhindered to the EU, by far its largest customer. By 2010, when this undersea link between Russia and Germany is due for completion, Russia will be able to hold Ukraine to ransom by turning off the gas tap with no effect on the rest of Europe, which, it is planned, will

Latin America's growing friendship with the EU has, over time, undercut its historically robust trade relationships with the United States. Of late, with anti-Americanism quickly spreading among their peoples, Latin American nations have grown even more receptive to other foreign trade proposals.

Surely, Europe must have felt for some time that it had Latin America all but sewn up for itself. But something very interesting has happened: Recently, and quite suddenly, a new entity has been aggressively moving in on this emerging opportunity: *China*.

Enter the Competitor

China's newfound role as the world's factory of manufacturing has created a rapacious craving for raw resources: A mere decade ago, China was a net exporter of oil; but it has since become the world's

second-largest oil importer (behind the U.S.)—accounting for fully 40 percent of global growth in oil demand over the four years between 2001 and 2004 and with its demand expected to double again over the next 8 to 10 years. The world's most populous country has made similar leaps in its need for other resources: For example, where it used to be a major coal exporter, it now consumes almost everything it produces, amounting to 30 percent of global coal production.

The far-sighted Chinese haven't taken up such habits heedlessly; they are keenly aware of the need to secure reliable sources of supply and ensure regular delivery of those supplies. The volatile nature of Middle Eastern oil has stirred China to invest aggressively in alternative sources. One of those is the Caribbean and Latin America.

It began seemingly out of the blue in

1999, with the procurement by a Chinese front company of control over the entry and exit points of the Panama Canal, when America gifted ownership of its sovereign territory of the Canal Zone to Panama.

That marked the beginning of a swift and effective campaign by China to effectively storm the whole of Latin America.

Over the last two years alone, China has negotiated major trade deals and energy-related investment deals with oil producers Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, and even Mexico. In January, Bolivian President Evo Morales invited China to help develop his country's vast natural gas reserves. Though Venezuela is currently the U.S.'s fourth-largest supplier of crude oil, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez granted Chinese firms the right to operate 15 mature oil fields in Venezuela. China is also looking at building a pipeline from Venezuela through Colombia to a Pacific port.

In return for resource access in many of these nations, China is developing the infrastructure necessary to transport the resources home. It is building and improving roads and railways and upgrading port facilities in Brazil; in Venezuela and Argentina, it is investing billions in railways and telecommunications, among other things. Most significantly, it is working overtime locking down deals on military technology and equipment with various countries in this region. Why? The president of the Washington-based Asia-America Initiative, Al Santoli, explains, "China's growing military ties in



receive gas routed through Germany instead.

But, as Hamlet said, there's the rub.

As long as Berlin and Moscow remain friends, Germany will have the power to control the gas flow from Russia to EU nations, which draw a quarter of their energy needs from Russian sources.

So this is a powerful strategic tool for Germany to use in bargaining with other EU nations if they do not follow Germany's will on the future direction of Europe. Just as the Germans have ensured that they control the gates on the much-used canal and river routes from East to West Europe, they will hold the whip hand when it comes to controlling much of the supply of gas to the EU as well.

If this project proceeds, Ukraine will be left out in the cold by both Germany and Russia, for Ukraine is the bargaining chip within the whole scenario.

The deal is this. Behind the scenes, *Germany has quietly*

agreed to trade off Ukraine's efforts to join the EU for access to Russian energy. In exchange for Germany's energy deals, Russia gets its massive breadbasket of the great Ukraine plain returned to its orbit, and a buffer zone to boot between an eastward-spreading EU and a historically unpredictable ally, Germany. The EU, on the other hand, courtesy of Germany acting as the gateway to Western Europe, gets access to Russian gas.

By the year 2010, when the Baltic Sea pipeline is completed under the guiding hand of chairman Schröder (who, after leaving the German chancellorship, accepted a controversial job offer by Putin to oversee the project), Germany will strategically control the flow of gas to the principal EU powers. As Russia demonstrated in January, that leverage can make or break a government's will, or bend it to the power of the controller.

The problem is, as Berlin discovered this winter, this still leaves Germany vulnerable to the whims of its major energy supplier, Russia. It is obvious that the German-dominated EU, not least Germany itself, urgently needs an alternative source of energy in order to minimize the risks imposed by dependency on a single major supplier, Russia.

This situation has only served to underline that Germany, and, by definition, the EU, can ill afford any prospect of failure in its energy diplomacy. This is why Germany has sought a leading role in the Middle East peace process. After January's wake-up call, watch as its efforts to secure sources in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East intensify. ■



BRIDGING AN OCEAN

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez (left) has become fast friends with China, represented in this 1999 photo by President Jiang Zemin.

Indications are that China's moves are provoking Europe to intensify its work in Latin America.

Latin America have a *direct link to their international quest for energy and other vital natural resources ... as well as their efforts to reinforce the growing reach of Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez to create a counterweight to U.S. influence in the region*" (*Washington Times*, Nov. 20, 2005; emphasis ours throughout).

During 2004, Chinese military officials made at least 20 visits to Latin America, and nine Latin American defense ministers visited Beijing. U.S. Gen. Bantz Craddock says Beijing's most recent military strategy outline "departs from

the past and promotes a power-projection military, capable of securing strategic shipping lanes and protecting its growing economic interests abroad" (ibid.).

What must Europe think of all this? You can be certain it won't stand aside and allow its decades-long efforts to be undone.

Indications are that, in fact, *China's moves are provoking Europe to intensify its work in Latin America*. In the end, it could even prove to be one catalyst among many driving European nations to unify—and then to lash out as a sin-

gle, powerful entity.

Watch this region! At present, it is perhaps the most vivid example of the escalating competition among the U.S., the EU and China—with the U.S. being pushed aside and the other two powers lumbering toward inevitable head-to-head confrontation.

An Alternative Source

Africa is another continent that has moved to center stage as the resource struggle intensifies. Glutted with relatively untapped mineral and energy resources, it has become a focus of resource exploitation by the U.S., Europe and China despite the inherent difficulties of operating within a continent plagued by instability.

Africa holds an estimated 30 percent of the world's mineral reserves. It produces over 60 metal and mineral products and is a major producer of a number of the world's most precious metals, including gold, diamonds, uranium, manganese, chromium, nickel, bauxite, cobalt and platinum group metals. But the most vital of Africa's strategic resources, which is being discovered in increasing abundance, is crude oil.

The Corporate Council on Africa reports that Africa contains over 90 billion barrels of proven oil reserves, representing 9.1 percent of the world's total reserves. A 2002 Cambridge Energy Research Associates study revealed that West Africa's growth potential in terms of oil production is greater than that of Russia, the Caspian or South America. In total, sub-Saharan Africa is expected to boost oil production from 3.8 million barrels per day in 2003 to 6.8 million by 2008.

With Iraq languishing in crisis, Iran a heartbeat away from becoming a nuclear power and militant Islam continuing to rise, it is not hard to see the attraction in African resources, despite the continuing tribal conflicts that plague that continent.

China Sees an Opening

Largely due to its historic colonial relationships with Africa, Europe has been a major influence on the continent. Besides Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands all had colonies within the continent in the past. However, as more and more colonies gained their independence, corruption, civil war and instability seeped across the African landscape, making many Western companies hesitant to invest there. Following

the decolonization of Africa, European influence on the continent, though it did not disappear, measurably shrank.

China is only too happy to take full advantage of this situation, demonstrating few of Europe's qualms about African insecurity. In recent years, the Chinese government—more than any other power—has been building economic and political influence in economically poor but resource-rich African nations.

A January 24 article in the *Providence Journal* described the situation well: “When it comes to China’s extraordinary grab for the natural wealth of Africa, the Chinese keep their eyes on the prize. No hand is too bloody to shake. No genocidal lunatic too awful for an embrace. And nobody will be turned down in ordering, with special credit facilities, weapons for oppressing civilian populations.

“China is securing the wealth of Africa for itself from Sudan to Zimbabwe, with tentacles reaching into South Africa. A plethora of heads of failed states could not be happier.

“Never has one country set out to secure the treasure and allegiance of a whole continent the way China is now doing in Africa. You would have to look back to the British takeover of the Indian subcontinent for such blatant commercial imperialism.”

Though mineral exploitation is a priority for Beijing (it has been mopping up copper from Zambia, coal and gold from South Africa, platinum from Zimbabwe, manganese from Gabon, and so on), the most geopolitically significant of China’s moves is its exploitation of African *oil and natural gas*. About 28 percent of China’s oil imports currently come from Africa, and China’s three biggest energy firms are engaged in exploration deals with 17 African states. Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing spent a week in January visiting Senegal, Cape Verde, Liberia, Mali and Nigeria promoting energy deals. On January 9, the Chinese state-owned oil company CNOOC (one of the big three) announced a \$2.3 billion deal for Nigeria’s Akpo oil and gas field.

China has deeply infiltrated Sudan. In 1997, the U.S. government barred Sudanese oil investment by U.S. companies because the Sudanese government sponsored terrorism and committed human rights violations. In 2004, China squashed U.S. efforts to levy sanctions on Sudan by threatening to use its veto within the UN Security Council, protecting its oil investment despite the

genocide taking place in that region. Beijing has invested \$14 billion in Sudanese oil through its largest energy firm, the China National Petroleum Corp., alone; a full 5 percent of its oil imports come from Sudan. China’s staunch support for the regime in Sudan has gone as far as *supplying arms* to the government the U.S. labels as genocidal!

But it is little wonder that China supports Sudan: *Sudan ships over half its oil to China*—and as new fields come on line, the amount is expected to jump dramatically.

In Zimbabwe, China, in its thirst for resources and power, is actively supporting the dictatorial rule of President Robert Mugabe despite his government’s rampant corruption and abuse of power. In Zimbabwe’s blatantly fraudulent parliamentary elections last year, China boosted the ruling party in a variety of ways: In one instance, a Chinese company “provided a radio-jamming device for a military base outside the capital, preventing independent stations from balancing state-controlled media during the election campaign” (*Christian Science Monitor*, March 30, 2005). And, despite the West’s arms embargo on Zimbabwe, China is supplying Zimbabwe’s army with fighter jets and other armaments.

Again, there is no guessing why: In return, China has gained access to Zimbabwe’s platinum, gold and other precious resources. The two nations are cooperating in mining and mineral processing, transport and communications.

China apparently operates free of the ethical limitations that lock U.S. businesses out of such opportunities. For instance,

As reticent as Europe has been to invest in unstable Africa, the thirst for resources is starting to override the fear.

when Ethiopia went to war with Eritrea in the late 1990s, the U.S. greatly reduced its presence in that country—and *China moved in*. Now “Chinese companies have become a dominant force, building highways and bridges, power stations, mobile-phone networks, schools and pharmaceutical plants. More recently, they have begun exploring for oil and building at least one Ethiopian military installation” (*Wall Street Journal*, March 29, 2005).

These activities are only a small sampling of a continent swarming with Chinese activity. They do illustrate, however,

the ethical boundaries Beijing is willing to cross to oppose the U.S., to bring African resources to China, and to establish itself as a bona fide superpower.

It is true that America currently has a foothold in parts of Africa, but it won’t be a player forever. China’s efforts to thwart the U.S. are showing success and, as our article on page 9 explains, a confluence of factors will ensure the Chinese will not have to compete with America for much longer.

But that doesn’t mean China will be the only show in town. Just as China’s inroads in Latin America appear to be provoking Europe to intensify its efforts in the region, so it is in Africa.

Europe Goes on the Offensive

An awakening Europe is on the hunt for the same bounty of resources that China is laying claim to. As reticent as Europe has been to invest in unstable Africa, the thirst for resources is starting to override the fear.

In an October 2005 news release, the European Commission outlined its “Strategy of the EU for Africa.” According to the Panafrican News Agency, the strategy defines a framework for “a strategic partnership for security and development between the European Union and Africa in the next decade” (Oct. 14, 2005). The “strategy” implies that the EU is willing to spend the money and build the infrastructure needed to gain access to Africa’s resources.

Of course, terrorism, rife within many failed African states, jeopardizes the flow of oil and other raw materials to Europe. Thus, EU politicians intend to foster ro-

bust European security involvement in Africa. They have already undertaken a wave of military missions in Africa in recent months, including one in Sudan’s war-torn but oil-rich Darfur region and another in mineral-laden Congo.

How much were China’s African incursions a factor in rousing Europe to begin establishing a military footprint on that continent? At this point, only the individuals making the decisions behind closed doors in European capitals know. But in view of the crucial nature of the resources at stake, and how swiftly and

aggressively China is pushing, the fact that troops are beginning to be deployed is not a trivial development.

Jockeying for Military Control

China definitely sees signs of the coming struggle and intends to come out on top.

Jan. 18, 2005, the *Washington Times* reported that U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had received an internal report, prepared by defense contrac-

The competition for those commodities most sought after by the globe's brawniest nations is making clear the critical need for the Continent to rise up as a singular political, economic and military force.

tor Booz Allen Hamilton, titled "Energy Futures in Asia," which concludes that China fears the U.S. is too easily able to disrupt energy supplies in case of a conflict. The report claims China is concerned that the Strait of Malacca, through which 80 percent of China's oil currently passes, is "controlled by the U.S. Navy."

But the report also outlines the giant steps China is making to limit and reduce its exposure to oil and ocean trade disruptions by foreign powers. China has adopted a "string of pearls" strategy for greater influence and power projection overseas to control the flow of trade—one that involves shoring up military forces, building strategic relationships, developing diplomatic ties and setting up bases along sea lanes from the "Middle East to the South China Sea in ways that suggest defensive and offensive positioning to protect China's energy interests" (ibid.).

China also claims the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, which for 50 years have been hotly contested. Why? Half the world's merchant traffic by tonnage passes close to the Spratlys, two thirds of it crude oil. Whoever controls sea passage through the South China Sea has power over some of the largest and fastest-growing economies in the world. China is not about to give up control of this region.

Evidently, Beijing is pulling out all stops in its efforts to lock down its supply routes for oil, particularly along the volatile path from the Middle East. No doubt it is not just the U.S. that is taking note. Europe, too, is watching closely—and diligently moving itself to secure its own supplies.

Some analysts view Europe today as a spent force, its plans for unification and superpower status as absurd. In point of fact, its leaders have already done much to create the infrastructure of an empire. The bulk of the work Continental heads have undertaken to this end has been through the expansion of the European Union. One by one, Europe is drawing key localities into its sphere of influence.

First came the Balkans—the strategic crossroads of Europe. One of the paramount goals of the German-Vatican destabilization of the Balkan region was the dismantling of Russian influence and herding of the embattled peninsula into the waiting arms of the EU. This strategy was designed to give the Union control over the land, air, river and pipeline routes for the movement of goods, services and oil, and to open up warm-water access to the Mediterranean via the Adriatic. The plan succeeded: The EU now has huge influence in Tirana, a deep-water port on the coast of Albania in the warm Adriatic Sea.

In 2004, the gateway island of Malta, one of the most militarily strategic islands in the Mediterranean because of its geographic position (directly in the middle of the Mediterranean ocean trade routes), became a member of the EU.

More recently, the island of Cyprus was incorporated into the EU fold. In the very least, this island supplies the EU with a base of operations close to the Middle East and the Suez Canal, through which much of Middle Eastern oil flows. However, the implications of EU-Cyprus partnership go far beyond that. Cyprus has been used as a staging ground for military campaigns in the Middle East dating at least as far back as the Crusades. Through the centuries, many empires, including the Roman, British and Ottoman, have controlled it. It is no coincidence that the EU, so dependent on imported oil, is expanding ever closer to the Middle East, the repository of the world's greatest supply of oil.

Europe is aware of its vulnerabilities and moving strongly to seal them off. The intensification of the competitive atmosphere for those commodities most sought after by the globe's brawniest nations is making abundantly clear the critical, life-and-death need for the Continent to VIGOROUSLY RISE UP AS A SINGULAR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY FORCE. That is exactly what the most forward-thinking, ambitious leaders in Europe are planning and pushing for, and fully intend to carry out.

Military Conquests

All the events you have read about in the preceding pages of this magazine—America's besiegement at the hands of hostile enemies; its unsustainable economy taking a fall; its resource suppliers being snatched up by other rising empires; Iran using its oil leverage to strengthen its power regionally and push its agenda globally; growing giants in Europe and Asia bunkering down economically and militarily in competi-



tion over resources—these are dramatic, even in their early stages as we see today, and are destined to become more so.

But all of these developments are pointing toward an even *more dramatic event*—spoken of throughout biblical prophecy as being the single most earthshaking episode in human affairs: the appearance of a fearsome *European superpower, led by Germany*.

This European kingdom's soft invasion, visible today, of Latin America and Africa will do much to enrich this entity and facilitate its path to power.

Latin America's the European Roman Catholic heritage that hails back to the region's Spanish colonial roots is far stronger than the recent economic inroads made by China within this region. It is religion that will bind this great imperial power, the soon-to-be-resurrected "Holy" Roman Empire, to its ancient colonies in Latin America.

History suggests, and Bible prophecy confirms, that the great trading association envisaged by leaders in Europe and

Latin America, cementing the EU and the South American trade bloc Mercosur into one giant market of 680 million people, will soon become reality. This entity will overwhelm China's efforts to sew up trade in this region. And it will richly supply Europe the raw materials it needs to stoke the engines of empire.

Expect Africa, too, to fall sway to this emerging titan of trade. Read for yourself this prophecy of Europe's exploitation of African resources: "The men of Rhodes [*Dedan* in the margin] traded with you [king of Tyrus—the revived Roman Empire]; many coastlands were your own special markets, they brought you in payment ivory tusks and ebony [merchandise peculiar to Africa]. ... The traders of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; they exchanged for your wares the best of all kinds of spices, and all precious stones, and gold" (Ezekiel 27:15, 22, Revised Standard Version). (Dedan and Sheba were sons of Raamah, the great-grandson of Ham, from whom all black Africans descended.) As Britain and America

fade out of Africa and into the sunset of superpowers past, Europe positions itself to march in. Germany in particular will corporately "reinvade" its old African colonial possessions, pillaging resources to feed the furnaces and drive the machinery that will turn out tools of war for a remilitarizing imperialist power.

At what precise point in this process European leaders will consider themselves sufficiently equipped to undertake the next phase in their plan, we cannot be sure. But when that time arrives, it will come in shockingly explosive fashion. The Prophet Daniel describes it in a prophecy of this empire's response to the provocations of the Iran-led Islamist power.

This prophecy (in conjunction with others, explained in our booklet *The King of the South*) convincingly suggests the kind of alliances Iran will manage to cement in the short term—including a likely *takeover* of neighboring Iraq. We are likely to see a continuation of the Islamic Republic gaining control of the region and the lion's share of Middle Eastern oil, bloating its bank accounts and enabling it to push its violent program ever more assertively. Its final arrogant move may well involve a *cutting off of oil supplies to the Continent*—which Europe, "the king of the north," will use to justify suddenly unleashing the full force of its military might" (Daniel 11:40-42).

This European king, drunk on his impressive victory and the spoils of his conquest, "shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt ..." (verse 43). Middle East resources will be Europe's for the taking. Clearly, no single military campaign would do more to guarantee the security of the *oil* needed to fuel the expansion of this geopolitical colossus.

This king of the north, after conquering and securing the resources of the king of the south, is prophesied to then turn its attention to the biblical nations of Israel—specifically the United States and Britain, in addition to the Jewish state located within its newly acquired Middle Eastern territory—and to swiftly demolish them! It will strip these subjugated nations of their wealth. This is thoroughly explained in our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.

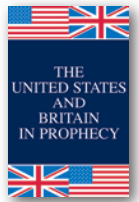
This truly will be the most fearsome and ruthless empire ever seen. The stronger it becomes, the more power and influence



INDEX OPEN

THE MERCHANTS

Even as resource war breaks out to the point that peoples are conquered and nations subjugated, some few will reap unimaginable profit.



FREE UPON REQUEST

it will wield over its colonies and protectorates in the Middle East, Africa, South and Central America, and yes, North America. Its economic tentacles will trail into all parts of the Earth. It will glut itself on luxury as it leeches wealth from whole foreign populations. The economic and trade dominance it enjoys, and resultant mammoth prosperity, will provide the fuel needed to feed the fires of its tyranny.

The Merchants

The great God of prophecy tells us in advance that this empire, which He labels “Babylon the great,” after reigning for a violent period of only a few years, will

The world will face the atrocity of forced slave labor on a massive scale once again—as humanity endures another world war.

be smashed. But His vivid prophetic description of its ruin tells us much about the nature of its reign—which, again, this world is about to witness: “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen,” He says, “For *all the nations* have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, *the kings of the earth* have committed fornication with her, and *the merchants of the earth* have become *rich* through the **ABUNDANCE OF HER LUXURY**” (Revelation 18:2-3, New King James Version).

Please read those verses again. Let your imagination linger on them.

What sort of superpower is it that intoxicates all nations with its power? How shrewd, how insidious an empire would seduce and entrap into sin-soaked affairs the kings of the Earth? And how sumptuous, how opulent, how unsurpassably wealthy must this kingdom be, to be so intimate with the merchants of the Earth, enriching them with such overflowing luxury?

In this age of globalization, we have seen the emergence of these “merchants.” These are not the local town, city, province or nationally confined businessmen. These are true “merchants of the earth”—globalist corporate moguls who operate huge commercial conglomerates and who view the whole Earth as their marketplace. Driven by greed, employing every conceivable stunt to avoid taxation as they erect their corporate empires, these businessmen seek personal gain above all else, even at the expense of peoples and governments.

Consider what kind of perverse minds would relish *profiting* from the appalling destruction to come! Unbelievable as that may sound, such is the state of the black human heart when pushed to its limit. These despicable activities, on a smaller scale, are documented to have routinely taken place in the midst of the Holocaust and genocide of World War II.

This mighty kingdom of the north will become infamous for its voracious appetite for resources, including “merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious

wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and *slaves, and souls of men*” (verses 12-13).

Yes—this empire will operate a slave market of unprecedented proportions. According to Bible prophecy, the world will face the atrocity of forced slave labor on a massive scale once again—as humanity endures another world war!

Kings of the East

In those dark times, this empire will reign supreme and all nations will bow before it! But some of those nations will also be plotting a revolution.

China, having been locked out of Latin America, locked out of Africa, locked out of the Middle East, forced to watch as the indomitable European king swallows continents, will have searched elsewhere for the resources it needs to keep growing. Look again at the world map: There, to its north, lie the limitless Russian plains, dense with oil and natural gas—bristling with nuclear power. With one nation’s unmatched resources combined with the other’s unmatched manpower, this pair will form the core of a superpower—to be joined by Japan, India, South Korea, North Korea, and other Asian nations seeking protection in numbers—that is singularly intent on waging war with the European power.

The prophecy in Daniel picks up on this future moment, when the king of

the north, though glutted with power and wealth, becomes concerned and obsessed with reports of these activities emerging from Russia and Asia. “But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him,” the prophet records. And what will Europe do—this mighty empire that essentially recolonized the whole of Latin America and Africa, that consumed the Middle East in a whirlwind, that smashed the nations of Israel in a stroke? “[T]herefore *he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many*” (Daniel 11:44).

The biblical narrative is explicit in describing the grisly outcome of this conflict. We urge you to request a free copy of our book *Russia and China in Prophecy* to aid you in your study of these prophecies.

At the height of the warfare, Jesus Christ will return in power and glory, bringing to an abrupt end the madness of these kings of the north and east. Your Bible then declares that the kings and merchants, these global corporate strategists, will weep, because the luxury they enjoyed on the broken back of Israel will be gone! They will wail and mourn at the *destruction* of the chief commercial, industrial, political and religious city of their global corporate empire (Revelation 18:9-11, 15-19).

The kings of the east will be likewise destroyed by the returning Jesus Christ (Revelation 19:11-21) as the righteous, incorruptible Kingdom of God is set up on Earth. This King of kings will establish a perfect reign that will produce never-ending peace and prosperity.

Some may dismiss this view of what is about to occur because of its foundation in biblical prophecy. *But the intensifying competition over resources in the world today is already pointing to this reality.* The pieces are in place. The stakes are enormous. The powers at play are starting to move. The makings of a global conflict of unprecedented proportions are becoming increasingly obvious—and the factors required to prevent it, increasingly overwhelming.

Resource war is upon us.

As we witness events moving toward the fulfillment of these prophecies, we should recognize the fingerprints of the God who issued these prophecies for our benefit. As Jesus Christ said, “I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.” ■



FREE UPON REQUEST

What Is Guiding This Man?

Iran now holds a central position in global affairs. If we consider what motivates the Iranian president, this should frighten us all.

INSPIRATION

The Iranian president prays at the grave of the founder of the Iranian Revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini, in January.

BY BRAD MACDONALD

IF YOU WERE TO WRITE OUT A LIST of the hottest, most explosive news headlines on the world scene today, nearly every one of them would include Iran. Global terrorism, Iraq, Afghanistan, nuclear weapons, Israel, anti-Americanism, oil—Iran is intimately involved in every one of these front-page issues.

What is disturbing about Tehran's new prominence on the world scene is that this nation embraces and promotes some of the most dangerous ideologies in the world.

Although he's only been president for a few months, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has already thrown down the gauntlet before some of the world's most powerful nations and governing bodies, including America, Europe, Israel and the United Nations. It seems this man is doing everything he can to stir up as much controversy as possible.

What motivates President Ahmadinejad? The question has been widely discussed lately. In recent months, it has become clear that he believes a very real,

spiritual power is inspiring him. Recent reports reveal that men within Ahmadinejad's own government believe there is an unseen "force" behind this man. In fact, the Iranian president himself has acknowledged the presence of a hidden hand motivating and governing his actions.

Whether one believes there is a "spirit" guiding President Ahmadinejad or not, it is hard not to see that religious beliefs are directly influencing his actions.

The Twelfth Imam

Consider Ahmadinejad's commitment to the *mahdaviat*. The belief of a returning *Mahdi*, or 12th imam, is a central doctrine among the most populous group of Shiites (known as Ithna Ashari, or "Twelvers"), to which President Ahmadinejad belongs. The president is a staunch believer in the *mahdaviat*, which is "belief in and efforts to prepare for the Mahdi." Put simply, he believes the *Mahdi* will return within two years and that it is his job to prepare the way for his return. Columnist Charles Krauthammer likened Ahmadinejad's belief in the return of the *Mahdi*, or 12th

imam, to the belief within Judaism and Christianity of the messianic return.

In an article for the *Christian Science Monitor*, Scott Peterson showed just how much this religious belief is motivating the Iranian president. Ahmadinejad is so fervently convinced that he is the one sent to prepare the way for the *Mahdi* that, even months in advance, when polls showed he had only 1 percent support, he declared with "no doubt" that he would win the Iranian election.

Later in the article, Peterson wrote, "From redressing the gulf between rich and poor in Iran, to challenging the United States and Israel and enhancing Iran's power with nuclear programs, every issue is designed to lay the foundation for the *Mahdi's* return. ... [T]his presidential obsession with the *mahdaviat* yields a certitude that leaves little room for compromise" (emphasis ours throughout).

"Little room for compromise"—what better way to critique the present state of Iranian foreign policy? President Ahmadinejad does not base his decisions on standard international political procedure or what is best for his nation po-

litically—he decides based on religion. And these radical beliefs tell him that he must challenge America and the West and strengthen Islamic power on the world scene—no matter what the rest of the world does.

Amir Mohebian, political editor of the Islamic *Resalat* newspaper, discussed the influence of Ahmadinejad's religion on his leadership. "This kind of mentality makes you very strong. ... If you think these are the last days of the world, and Jesus will come [again], this idea will change all your relations." Putting himself in Ahmadinejad's shoes, he stated, "If

[T]hey were rapt. It seemed as if a hand was holding them there and had opened their eyes to receive the message from the Islamic Republic."

Even the president himself has no qualms in telling people that he feels an unseen force influencing his mind. Such a scenario doesn't bode well for America or the West. Inspired by die-hard religious beliefs and his perception of an unseen force that works with his mind, the Iranian leader believes it is his duty to rid the world of American influence, destroy the nation of Israel and prepare the way for the return of the 12th imam.

The Iranian leader believes it is his duty to rid the world of American influence, destroy Israel and prepare the way for the return of the 12th imam.

I think the *Mahdi* will come in two, three or four years, why should I be soft? Now is the time to stand strong, to be hard." This is a truly remarkable fact: Today, Iranian foreign policy is dictated by the Shiite belief in the return of the *Mahdi*.

There is no doubt that President Ahmadinejad's religious beliefs are also influencing his internal leadership of Iran. In 2004, for example, when he was mayor of Tehran, Mr. Ahmadinejad instructed the city council to build a "grand avenue to prepare for the *Mahdi*" (*New York Sun*, January 10). Once he became president, he allocated \$17 million for a blue-tiled mosque in Jamkaran (south of the capital) that is closely associated with *mahdaviat*.

Ahadinejad also isn't afraid to discuss his belief in the return of the *Mahdi* among non-Muslims. When he addressed the UN in New York last September, he concluded his address to world leaders with a prayer for the *Mahdi's* appearance: "O mighty Lord, I pray to you hasten the emergence of your last repository, the promised one, that perfect and pure human being, the one that will fill this world with justice and peace."

Who can deny that religious fervor isn't guiding the Iranian president? But what about this notion of a "mystical" power directly influencing his mind?

Spirit Influence

Notice the president's own feelings about his address to the UN. "One of our group told me that when I started to say 'In the name of God the almighty and merciful,' he saw a light around me, and I was placed inside this aura. *I felt it myself. I felt the atmosphere suddenly change, and for those 27 or 28 minutes, the leaders of the world did not blink. ...*

Krauthammer summed up Iranian politics under President Ahmadinejad particularly well: "So a Holocaust-denying, virulently anti-Semitic, aspiring genocidist, on the verge of acquiring nuclear weapons of the apocalypse, believes that the end is not only near but nearer than the next American presidential election. ... This kind of man would have, to put it gently, less inhibition about starting Armageddon than a normal person" (*Washington Post*, Dec. 16, 2005).

In the end, it doesn't matter whether or not *you* believe the mind of the Iranian president is being influenced by a sinister spiritual force. What matters is that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the president of Iran believes it and is aggressively operating under that belief.

Few things are more mysterious than the concept of an unseen spirit world. One of the hardest things for humans to do is believe in something they can't see, feel or touch. President Ahmadinejad believes he is being guided by an unseen spirit power. While he would argue that it is an angelic being, perhaps Allah himself, others would argue that a demon, or even Satan himself, is inspiring this man.

A Real Spirit World

The Bible does reveal the existence of a spirit world. It clearly proves the existence of evil spirit beings—demons—and even the existence of an over-arching leader of these beings: Satan the devil. Although Satan has been foisted off as a silly myth, little more than a red, horned cartoon character, the Bible and the world around us is filled with evidence that firmly proves his active existence.

Ephesians 6 states that mankind's contentions and strivings are, in fact, ultimately not with other humans, but

against "principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [evil spirits] in high places" (verse 12).

The Apostle Paul identifies that there is a sinister "god of this world" that has direct influence over the minds of men (2 Corinthians 4:4). In Ephesians 2:2, he discusses a being he calls the "prince of the power of the air," an unseen being that broadcasts directly into the minds of men. In Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14, God reveals other very specific details about Satan the devil.

If you're surprised by this information, you are not alone. While many millions of people would stake their lives on the fact that there is a God, and believe that this is God's world, most of the same people have great difficulty believing that there is a real, living devil and that he is influencing the minds of mankind.

In the November 1960 *Plain Truth*, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote, "Most churchmen today, viewing everything from the perspective of this world today, blindly assume this is God's world. They see certain forces of evil in it, and these they feel they must oppose. They see the Christian duty to be that of working to make this a better world.

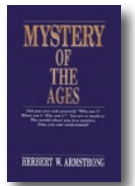
"That concept is a wrong viewpoint altogether.

"This is not a world of God's making. This is Satan's world! Satan is the invisible god of this world. He is the author of its organization, its basic philosophies, its systems of government, business, society—yes, and religions!"

The Iranian president and many of the men who surround him believe that a mystical force is influencing the mind of the hottest firebrand in world politics today. Truth be told, these observations are not far-fetched—a spirit being does indeed have influence over Mr. Ahmadinejad's mind.

Most people would be shocked to learn just how much Satan and his cohorts influence the minds of all men—not just the Iranian president.

To gain a thorough understanding of the spirit world and the very real impact that it has on mankind, please read our book *Mystery of the Ages*, particularly the second chapter, "The Mystery of Angels and Evil Spirits." This enlightening volume thoroughly explains precisely what the Bible says about the spirit world. It is free upon request.



already some leading Germans think they must respond to this outrage—this “push.”

Armageddon

“And at the time of the end shall the king of the south *push* at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over” (Daniel 11:40). Here is the clash between the king of the north (or Europe, explained in our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*) and the king of the south (radical Islam led by Iran, explained in our *King of the South* booklet). Iran’s *pushing* is going to lead to its own defeat.

“He [the king of the north] shall enter also into the glorious land, and *many countries* shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon” (verse 41). Why does the king of the north enter into “the glorious land,” or Jerusalem? Because he plans to conquer Jerusalem—a *type* of America, Britain and the land of the Jews in the Middle East. The Holy Roman Empire will conquer *many* countries, some of them outside the Middle East, in one all-out attack—shortly *after* it conquers radical Islam.

This empire’s ambition is far greater than just to conquer the Middle East. Germany will once again launch this planet into another full-scale world war!

Naturally, the Asiatic powers—Russia, China and probably Japan—know that they are apt to be next on the hit list. So they will begin to prepare their armies for war. Even today, we can see these nations coming together in a dramatic way and forming the foundation of another mighty superpower.

“But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many” (verse 44). Europe will attack them first, and then they will respond with an overwhelming counterattack. During this war, both sides will move gigantic armies to Megiddo to fight.

“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” (Revelation 16:16). Here is famous Armageddon in prophecy. To many people, the name conjures up pictures of the worst war ever. But there is not even one battle there in this prophecy!

Armageddon just means *armed Megiddo*. So what and where is Megiddo? It is a huge plain in the Jewish nation, about 55 miles north of Jerusalem, ideal for amassing armies. And these armies from Europe and Asia will, in fact, gather there to fight. But then they will receive the shock of their lives! **THEY WILL SEE SOMETHING THAT CHANGES THEIR ENTIRE GOAL IN THIS WAR: JESUS CHRIST RETURNING TO JERUSALEM.** Then these two massive armies, which are about to fight each other, actually join forces and go to Jerusalem to fight Christ!

“For, behold, in those days, and in that time ... I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem” (Joel 3:1). By this point, the Jews in the Middle East will have been conquered.

Why does the Prophet Joel discuss “Judah and Jerusalem”? *Judah* is only one tribe of Israel. Joel was also referring primarily to two other nations of Israel. That is why he included Jerusalem—a *type* of the powerful nations of Israel in this end time.

Only two world powers remain in this period of prophecy—Europe and Asia.

“I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scat-

tered among the nations, and parted my land” (verse 2). These Gentiles must be punished for the cruelty they will have inflicted upon the nations of Israel.

Notice, first, God says “I will also gather” those Asian and European powers to Megiddo. Second, God brings them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, which runs into Jerusalem.

How does God lead them to Jerusalem from Megiddo? **THEY SEE CHRIST RETURNING TO JERUSALEM.** Then these two powers decide to unite and fight Christ, instead of each other.

Jehoshaphat means *judgment of the Eternal*. This world is about to be *judged* by Christ for its rebellion.

Today, Christ *pleads* with words. Soon He will plead with His mighty power. That will lead to the most bloody violence ever on this Earth.

The whole world could be saved from the worst suffering ever if it would heed Christ’s *words* today!

“And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs” (Revelation 14:19-20). The Valley of Jehoshaphat is also called Kidron Valley today. It is about 200 miles long. *Blood will flow up to the horses’ bridles in that long valley! It will be the worst war ever.*

Does that sound outrageous? The Asian army alone will be comprised of 200 million soldiers (Revelation 9:16). Much of their blood will flow in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

This is how God *pleads* with them. This is what it takes to reach this rebellious world!

If you and I don’t hear His words today, we have a bloody future also. But God promises to protect us if we back and support His work.

Men work to have peace and always get war. Only God knows the way of peace. You can always trust Him. That is the lesson all this bloody violence is going to teach mankind!

Armies have fought to gain control of Jerusalem for thousands of years. But they never rule that city for long. God has chosen Jerusalem (1 Kings 11:13). He did *not* choose London, New York City, Paris or Moscow. He chose Jerusalem.

That is the city from which Christ will soon rule the Earth. **AND THAT IS THE CITY FROM WHICH THE FATHER WILL RULE THE UNIVERSE WITH HIS FAMILY. JERUSALEM IS GOING TO BECOME THE CAPITAL OF THE UNIVERSE.** No city in the universe will ever be close to it in beauty and importance!

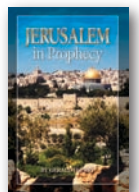
Satan knows the future of Jerusalem. That is why he has made it the bloodiest city on Earth. He hates to even think about the fabulous future of Jerusalem. Why? Because he has no part in it!

It is time that mankind learns about Jerusalem, the majestic city God has chosen.

We have a tremendous job to do, getting God’s warning message to this world. As Daniel prophesied, “they that *turn many* to righteousness” are going to shine “as the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:3). *Only* God’s message will *turn many* to God. *Only* this work is delivering that message.

We obviously have only a tiny span of time to finish the job. **THIS WORLD NEEDS GOD’S MESSAGE MORE DESPERATELY NOW THAN AT ANY TIME IN MAN’S HISTORY.** ■

More information on Zechariah’s prophecy can be found in our free booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy*.





REUTERS

DIMMING PRESENCE U.S. and Iraqi soldiers on patrol.

UNITED STATES

Scaling Back in Middle East?

THE THEME FOR U.S. military action abroad for 2006 seems firmly established: troop reduction.

Washington plans to hand control of southern Afghanistan over to an international force led by NATO. The United States will withdraw 2,500 troops from the volatile southern region even though it is “not clear how aggressively NATO troops will pursue insurgents, who have shown no sign of relenting” (*Washington Post*, January 3).

Funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development, which has helped rebuild Afghanistan over the last four years, will also be reduced from its more than \$1 billion level in 2005 to just over \$600 million for 2006 unless Congress appropriates more funds.

Washington claims these reductions will parallel Afghanistan’s development as a self-sustaining democracy. However, as U.S. officials give them space to make their own decisions, Afghans are apprehensive about the lack of U.S. support, fearing a repeat of the 1990s withdrawal, after which Afghanistan erupted in a civil war that

opened the door for the Taliban to take power.

Similarly, Washington does not plan to seek new funds for Iraq’s reconstruction. Of the \$18.4 billion allocated to the reconstruction effort, less than 20 percent remains. Billions of dollars’ worth of work still need to be done to restore reliable electricity and water, along with other fundamental services, to Iraq. When U.S. funds run out, it appears Washington is hoping someone else will pick up the tab.

2006 will also bring military reductions in Iraq. Exact numbers are not yet known, but the Pentagon says about 7,000 troops will leave.

Clearly Washington is beginning to shift its priorities, apparently in response to a basketful of increasing domestic pressures: costly disaster relief, political scandals, an unsteady job market.

What’s more, as the military has been occupying two foreign countries, its recruitment numbers continue to drop. In order to sustain operations, troops have been held beyond their contracted terms, testing their dedication and that of their families back home. Despite the

fortitude American troops continue to display, it is likely that further drawdowns will be decided upon for reasons beyond their purely strategic value.

Bible prophecy tells us that the U.S. will have the pride of its power broken (Leviticus 26:19) and will spend its strength in vain (verse 20). Any military success the U.S. will experience will be limited to minor skirmishes or perhaps some major battles. But Washington hasn’t won a war—carried through to absolute *victory*—since World War II; and victory in war will continue to elude the U.S. because America—not just the president, or the policy-makers or the Pentagon brass, but America as a nation and as a people—has abandoned its history with God.

It is true that reconstructing Iraq is a monumental job, made all the more daunting by a grisly insurgency. But the inevitable result of a U.S. pullout—as was clear even before the day Saddam Hussein’s fa-

mous statue fell in downtown Baghdad—is that a far more dangerous enemy of America will enjoy an enormous expansion of influence in the Middle East.

In removing Hussein, the U.S. removed the only leader that Iran truly feared. Now, with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad replacing Hussein as chief Middle East madman, the U.S. is in no position to confront him no matter how extreme his threats. The stage has been set for an Islamic group of nations, led by Iran, to coalesce.

To study this biblical prophecy in detail, read in its entirety Mr. Flurry’s article from the June 2003 *Trumpet*, “Is Iraq About to Fall to Iran?”

As we hear news of America beginning to turn over its responsibilities in the Middle East, we must ask *why—and to whom?* The answers reveal much about the condition of America today—and the state of the Middle East tomorrow.

UNITED NATIONS

Scandal Watch: Tsunami Funds

WHEN THE UNITED Nations took control of the relief funds for the Asian tsunami crisis, its under secretary general for humanitarian affairs assured the world that “only the UN has the universal legitimacy, capacity and credibility to lead in a truly global humanitarian emergency” (*Financial Times*, March 30, 2005).

That statement might have been more convincing five years ago. In the last year alone, the reputation of the UN has been shredded by allegations of kickbacks, billions of dollars in graft in the oil-for-food

scandal, the rape of minors in the Congo, and a procurement scandal. Should we really be surprised now to learn that the tsunami fund has been mishandled?

A two-month inquiry by the *Financial Times* shows that an exorbitant amount of money is going toward administrative costs, and that it is difficult to track how the money is being spent in many cases despite UN promises of transparency (Dec. 23, 2005).

Out of \$49 million spent by the World Health Organization, 32 percent went toward “personnel costs, administrative over-

A Cursed Year

REUTERS



CURSE UPON CURSE Wildfires burns near a New Orleans highway, an area still recovering from Hurricane Katrina.

SEIZING GLOBAL ATTENTION, 2005 featured record weather catastrophes: 26 tropical storms bested 1933's mark of 21. Fourteen of those were hurricanes, two more than 1969's record. Dry conditions also prevailed worldwide, leading to wildfires that burned a record 8.5 million acres in the United States alone.

Too little rain in one state meant too much in another, as dry states like California and Nevada dealt with unusually wet weather, causing costly flash floods. Authorities declared a state of emergency for several western Nevada counties as damages surpassed \$10 million by early January.

Other English-speaking nations are suffering similar curses. In Australia, wildfires are racing along as the dry land suffers from blowtorch-like conditions. Fires have been raging out of control in New South Wales, Victoria and the capital,

Canberra. In Victoria alone, firefighters struggled with a 19-mile front that consumed more than 22,000 acres.

In Canada, 2005 was soggy, wet and erratic. Heavy rain from coast to coast flooded one out of every 10 homes in Calgary, Alb., and forced a state of emergency further east in Manitoba. The weather in British Columbia, Ontario, and Atlantic Canada was also bizarre. B.C. saw little to no snow for its tourist-heavy winter. The weather played tricks in Ontario: On Nov. 9, 2005, Ottawa was smacked with freezing rain, while Windsor experienced a balmy 68 degrees, Barry saw snow, and

Hamilton experienced a rare 10-minute tornado.

In Britain, significant water deficits in southern England resulted in the worst drought in 85 years. "The drought has gone on so long that the country needs weeks of steady rain to restock reservoirs" (*Express*, January 4). The Met Office predicts that the exceptionally dry conditions of 2005 will persist into the spring and summer of 2006. At the same time, Britain has had a spate of cold snaps, with one county recording its coldest day in 19 years over the holiday period.

All this weather irregularity, especially drought, has a significant impact on business. It also increases the risk of fire damage and crop failures.

Among the most sensitive industries to this volatile weather, and dead center in its rampaging path, is agriculture. The U.S.'s agriculture-related businesses—which account for about 12 percent of America's gross domestic product and about 17 percent of American jobs—are shriveling, literally from the ground up.

Why would a loving God allow all this? Mainstream Christians are split over the question—especially since the Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina snuffed out more than 280,000 lives. Regarding Hurricane Katrina, some said it was

God's punishment on a sinning mankind. Others called it foolhardy to interpret natural disasters as judgment from God or that the end may be near.

But what is God's position? Can we know?

His word states: "And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered" (Amos 4:7).

The God of the Bible proclaims to control the weather. In other scriptures He says He dries up rivers, controls the seas and works in the whirlwinds. He also says that He will curse a nation that refuses to obey His laws by turning the heaven into iron and the earth into brass. Men will spend their strength in vain trying to gain an increase. See Leviticus 26 and Isaiah 29:6.

America, Britain, Australia and Canada are experiencing these curses because God wants them to repent of their disobedience. Salubrious weather is a natural blessing that comes with obedience to God's laws. As long as His laws are trampled upon, God will continue to correct us so we will change our evil ways.

We are under a curse.

But the curses are a form of mercy. God wants to bless America and Britain. And He will continue to intensify the correction, using His creation, to bring people to obedience and blessings (Revelation 6:12-17; Ezekiel 33:11). After all, God is a LOVING FATHER.

For more, request our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* and free booklet *Repentance Toward God*.



is primarily blamed on dueling UN bureaucracies and accounting methods plus what in many cases appears to be institutional paranoia [about disclosure]."

After this latest embarrassment, perhaps Secretary General Kofi Annan will want to "reform" the UN again; everyone else does.

For more information, read the article "The Corruption of the United Nations" in our December 2005 issue. This story remains, as always, to be continued.

NEED A tsunami survivor begs.

heads, or associated 'miscellaneous' costs" (*ibid.*). Many of the UN's other agencies simply declined to provide information at all.

The *Times* concluded: "A year after the tsunami, pledges of transparency and accountability for the UN's appeal appear a long way from being realized. This

Bavaria Cracks Down on Muslims

AT THE END OF DECEMBER 2005, amid finger pointing, investigations and umbrage taken over the U.S.'s covert domestic spying program as part of the war on terror, authorities in Germany began taking a more aggressive approach against militant Islam.

While Americans debated the constitutionality of the Patriot Act and rights to privacy, authorities in Germany's most Catholic and conservative state, Bavaria, shut down an Islamic center in Munich.

Bavarian authorities banned a Bavarian-based Islamic group, the Multi-Kultur-Haus, on Dec. 28, 2005, "after seizing material allegedly inciting Muslims to kill Jews and Christians and carry out suicide attacks in Iraq" (Deutsche Welle, Dec. 29, 2005).

Günther Beckstein, the state's interior minister, said Bavaria was "making the limits clear to supporters of foreign extremist organizations. ... Organizations that aggressively try to oppose our constitutional order and openly call for violence will not be tolerated" (ibid.).

Strong words accompanying strong action.

Elsewhere in Germany, the interior minister of Lower Saxony, Uwe Schünemann, told German newspaper *Die Welt* that Berlin should consider electronic ankle bracelets "to monitor 3,000 potentially dangerous Islamists, hate preachers and people who had been trained in foreign terrorist camps" (ibid.). He said this move could easily be made law, denying that such action would be unconstitutional.

Imagine such a suggestion coming from a promi-

nent U.S. cabinet member. Germany is taking far more extreme measures to thwart terrorists within its borders than the United States is willing to take.

And though the ankle-bracelet suggestion is only coming from a state official, that type of thinking is not new to Germany, which, at one time, started "monitoring" Jews through a simple piece of cloth worn on the sleeve. Of course, we know where that cultural labeling took the country and what it

meant for the Jews in particular.

Also interesting is the fact that the latest crackdown happened in Germany's most Catholic and most economically prosperous state. Bavaria is not only home to the current pope, it bred the country's staunchest conservatives and cultural purists like Adolf Hitler and Richard Wagner. Its current premier, Edmund Stoiber, has held his state up as an example for the rest



CLOSED Bavarian officials shut down the Multicultural House in Ulm after uncovering its connection with extremism.

of Germany in how to deal with its economic troubles. He, and the pope, for that matter, may one day call on Germany and the rest of Europe to use how Bavaria deals with militant Islam as another shining example of progress.

The Bible does, in fact, prophesy of such a cultural clash. Germany, leading a united Europe, is destined to collide with an Islamic power. We are witnessing the beginnings of such a clash in Germany today.

VATICAN

Pope Absolves Himself



BENEDICT XVI

IN 2002, SCANDAL ERUPTED SURROUNDING Catholic priests' sexual assaults on children—or, as Pope John Paul II put it, the way church leaders "are perceived to have acted." The victims, and the world in general, demanded answers, wondering how a religious organization could allow such a problem to become so widespread.

The Vatican's response was dismissive at best—notably, that of then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.

With 2005 drawing to a close, Pope Benedict XVI found himself the target of a civil lawsuit. He was personally accused of conspiring with the archdiocese of Galveston-Houston in Texas to cover up the abuse of three boys in the mid-1990s. His legal defense? Diplomatic immunity.

Opposing lawyers argued that a May 18, 2001, letter from Cardinal Ratzinger written as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith was evidence that he was involved in a conspiracy: The letter stated that "grave" crimes like sexual abuse of minors would be handled by his congregation and that such proceedings would be subject to "pontifical secret" (Fox News, Dec. 23, 2005).

Ultimately, though, diplomatic immunity won out, with the judge dismissing Benedict from the lawsuit. No other religious leader on Earth could have used this particular defense. Commenting on the ruling, papal lawyer Jeffrey Lena stated that the pope "is entitled to immunity like any foreign sovereign without any special limitations imposed upon his immunity just because he is a religious leader" (ibid.).

This falls in line with the Vatican's original responses to the sex scandal. For more information, see our June 2002 article "How Deep A Wound?" on theTrumpet.com.

European "Justice"

WHEN MICROSOFT'S conflict with the European Union began, the *Trumpet* warned that Microsoft would lose. Why? EU courts operate on the old Roman premise that the accused is guilty until proven innocent. Under that system, EU victory was assured from the outset.

In March 2004, the European Commission (EC) found Microsoft guilty of abusing its market position in violation of EU competition law. Since that time, the EC has ordered Microsoft to pay a gargantuan fine (\$613 million), to provide documentation for

China, India Improve Relations

CHINA AND INDIA HAVE Cset aside a long-standing rivalry to forge an energy alliance. In January, India's petroleum minister at the time, Mani Shankar Aiyar, attended three days of talks with Chinese officials in Beijing to create energy agreements. On January 12, Aiyar and China's economic planning chief Ma Kai inked a deal to "develop a joint strategy to secure global energy assets" (Stratfor, January 12).



AIYAR

Both China and India are highly reliant on imported oil: India imports 70 percent of its oil; China ships in almost half its supply. Demand for petroleum

in both areas—the two most populous countries on Earth—is increasing rapidly. Aiyar believes India's need for imported oil will have risen to 85 percent of consumption within 15 years.

These talks come at an especially volatile time on the world energy scene. Many countries fear that Iran's oil supply—given the unpredictability of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad—will soon become unreliable. Thus, one result of his nuclear standoff with the Western world is a tidal wave of new energy agreements. Russia also alarmed many nations when it temporarily stopped gas shipments through the Ukraine. Setting up stable energy supplies is a primary focus for many countries—especially those like China and India.

India's reasons for wanting to do business with the Chinese are obvious. China recently outmaneuvered India's attempts to acquire oil fields in Angola, Nigeria,

Kazakhstan and Ecuador. As analysts at Stratfor said, with Chinese companies consistently outbidding their Indian counterparts, India approaches these negotiations "with the desperation of a player that knows it has no options" (ibid.).

Beijing's motivation to do business with India is less clear. In recent months, Chinese officials have had similar negotiations with Vietnam, Iran and Turkmenistan—even rogue state North Korea—which have gained China access to oil and gas reserves. Stratfor points out, though, that China's dealings with India will produce far less money than its other ventures.

Thus China's main reasons for engaging in these talks must not be economic, nor simply a grab for resources. Rather, China wants to build for itself a friendly and strategically beneficial political standing in the region.

While these deals will gain it political points with New Delhi, China will also "bolster its regional image as a cooperative and caring neighbor" (ibid.). Rather

than appearing as an economic juggernaut that could crush Indian competition, China is now casting itself as a friend—not only to India, but to the entire region.

Beijing is actively working to lead the Asian economic community and to create a free-trade zone through ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

As a first step, India's Oil and Natural Gas Corp. and state-owned China National Petroleum Corp. have jointly purchased a Syrian oil field. India's Aiyar pointed to this deal as a model for future cooperation between the two governments.

The *Trumpet* has long forecast that relations between China and its neighbors will improve. Bible prophecy tells us that Asia will align both politically and militarily; in fact, Bible prophecy shows that this region will form the most powerful army in history—200 million soldiers! (Revelation 9:16).

To learn about this scriptural forecast and to study where Asia is headed, please request our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy*.

for Microsoft

its competitors to achieve interoperability with its products, and to provide a version of Windows without a media player included.

In December 2005, the EC kicked it up another notch: Microsoft was given until January 25 this year to comply to the ruling or else be fined \$2.37 million dollars a day until it does, retroactive to December 15 last year. (The day before the deadline, the EC pushed it back by three weeks.)

Microsoft legal chief Brad Smith was nonplussed, responding, "We've shipped a new version of Windows, we've paid a historic fine,



The EUROPEAN COMMISSION building in Brussels

and we've provided unprecedented access to Microsoft technology to promote interoperability with other industry players. In total, we have now responded to more than 100 requests from the

Commission" (BBC News, Dec. 22, 2005).

Not enough, apparently. Additionally, on January 25, Mr. Smith announced that Microsoft would license the source code for its Windows operating system

to its competitors—a serious step, but one that still might not prevent millions of dollars in fines.

Microsoft has already lost the battle. The question now is, how much worse can it

get? How much more money will the EU take before it either accepts Microsoft's efforts or kicks the giant American software company out of Europe altogether?

The EC wields tremendous power, even in the U.S. This is the same body that blocked a \$42 billion acquisition of Honeywell International by General Electric in 2001, stopping dead a Washington-approved merger.

If Microsoft wanted justice, this particular institution of unelected officials was an unfortunate venue in which to try to find it dispensed.



THE SHALEM CENTER

THE DIG

A photo from the Shalem Center depicts ruins of the “large stone structure”—a public building that might well have been King David’s palace.

King David’s Palace Found?

Does an amazing new discovery show that the Bible is supported by science?

BY ROBERT MORLEY

MANY ARCHEOLOGISTS ARE calling the latest Israeli archeological discovery “the find of the century” (*Canadian Jewish News*, Oct. 20, 2005). Israeli archeologist Eilat Mazar claims to have unearthed the palace of biblical King David.

King David was the 10th-century B.C. poet-warrior and slayer of Goliath whom the Bible says consolidated and expanded the ancient Israelite kingdom into a regional power. In approximately 1000 B.C., King David conquered Jerusalem from the Jebusites and subsequently made it his capital (2 Samuel 5:6-7). According to the Bible, King David’s palace was partially built by workers sent to him by the Phoenician king of Tyre as a gesture of friendship (verse 11).

Mazar relates that, although the location of King David’s palace was very

elusive, the Bible itself played a significant part in her being able to locate it. Ms. Mazar speculated that a previously uncovered and famous stepped-stone structure located below her proposed excavation site was actually part of the Jebusite fortress that King David conquered. Also in the same area and slightly lower than her proposed dig site, Phoenician capitals (the tops of Phoenician-made columns) had been previously unearthed. This too suggested that a monumental building may have stood further up the hill.

Combining these two known archeological finds with the Bible’s description, she then theorized where David’s palace would have been built. The Bible indicates in 2 Samuel 5 that when the Philistines came to fight, King David “went

down to the hold,” or fortress, to meet them. Ms. Mazar said that, after reading this, she wondered, “down from where? Presumably from where he lived, his palace” (*New York Times*, Aug. 5, 2005).



THE SHALEM CENTER

EILAT MAZAR

According to Ms. Mazar, the area above the fortress ruins and Phoenician capitals was a logical location for King David’s palace because it would have placed it outside the original walls of the cramped city of Jerusalem and on the road to Solomon’s Temple on the Mount.

Within weeks of beginning the dig, Ms. Mazar’s team was uncovering the remains of many rooms. At first, most were more recent Roman structures, like baths and pools, but then, within the boundaries of the limited excavation area, she found the remains of “mas-

sive older walls underneath the Roman structure, running toward the rim of the Kidron Valley” (*Washington Post*, Dec. 2, 2005). The walls, constructed with boulders, are on average 2 yards thick and extend at least 30 yards. Their size gives credence to the importance and grandeur of the structure.

Below the walls, Mazar first found 11th-century B.C. pottery. Then, inside a room above the 11th-century B.C. fill, 10th-century B.C. pottery, dating to the time of King David and free from material from any other period, was found. According to a relative of Ms. Mazar who is also an archeologist, “The sample was among the finest from that time found in Jerusalem” (*ibid.*).

To this point, only a small fraction—approximately 10 percent of the structure—has been exposed, but the finds have been remarkable. Ms. Mazar described her discovery, which was potentially David’s home, as “not just a house, but a fantastic house” (*ibid.*). In another uncovered room, dating to the 6th century B.C., a bulla, or seal, was found inscribed with the ancient Hebrew name of Jehucal, son of Shelemiah, son of Shevi (*Canadian Jewish News*, op. cit.). Jehucal was a Judean prince mentioned in Jeremiah 37:3. This fact suggests that the site was an important seat of Judean royalty for four centuries after King David. It also matches the biblical account of the palace being in continuous use from its construction until the conquest of Judea and Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 604-585 B.C. Several years ago, another royal seal was found in the general region. It showed the name of Gemaryahu, son of Shaphan, who is also mentioned in the book of Jeremiah (*New York Sun*, Aug. 1, 2005).

Also lending support to the conclusion that this was David’s palace is that up to this point there have been no finds of idolatrous statuettes or ritual crematoria which are found in contemporary Phoenician and Philistine settlements. “Furthermore, the building appears in a time period where such massive constructions were extremely rare and represented the greatest sort of public works” (*Canadian Jewish News*, op. cit.).

Why is King David’s palace important?

Skeptical of the Bible’s account, archeologists have long debated “to what extent Jerusalem was an important city or even a city in the time of David and Samuel” (*Times*, op. cit.). Some scholars suggest that King David and Solomon were

nothing more than petty tribal chieftains who ruled over an area comprising little more than a few scattered rural clans. One renowned archeologist has even hypothesized that Jerusalem during David’s time was nothing more than a “typical hill country village” (*International Herald Tribune*, Aug. 5, 2005). Some scholars go even further, suggesting that the biblical account of King David is nothing more than a myth.

If the massive structure found by Ms. Mazar does prove to be 10th century, Seymour Gitin, director of the Jerusalem-based Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, says it will “demolish the view of the minimalists” who dismiss the biblical accounts of history and religion (*ibid.*).

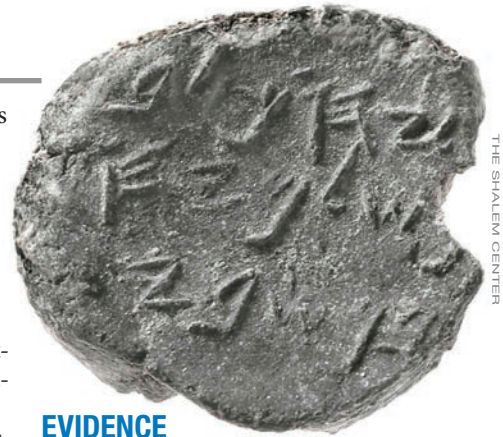
It would also discredit the claims of many Arabs, including the late Yasser Arafat, who have denied any Israelite links to Jerusalem. Digs in the city, especially in areas around the Temple Mount, have been politically sensitive in the past.

Even if this structure does not turn out to be the palace, it could still be a revolutionary archeological find. It is certainly a major construction from the early Israelite period in Jerusalem, which negates the views of critics who claim there is no evidence of a major Israelite presence during this time. The Bible’s description of a great, unified and influential monarchy of David and Solomon is also reinforced.

Other Finds

Lately, other archeological discoveries within Israel have also supported the Bible’s validity.

Last July, in what archeologist Michael Homan calls an “Indiana Jones moment,” the sun’s rays illuminated an inscription of the Hebrew alphabet on a 40-pound stone found at the Tel Zayit excavation site in southwest Israel. After analysis of the stone, the two lines of incised letters were reportedly determined to be the earliest known specimens of the Hebrew alphabet and an important benchmark in the history of writing. Lawrence Stager, a Harvard archeologist working on other excavations in Israel, said that what makes this find exceedingly rare is that it was found with pottery that “fit perfectly with the 10th century” (*New York Times*, Nov. 9, 2005). Dr. Ron Tappy, the lead archeologist for the dig, stated that actually, “All successive alphabets in the ancient world, including the Greek one, derive



THE SHALEW CENTER

EVIDENCE

A bulla (seal) inscribed with, “Jehucal, son of Shelemiah, son of Shevi.” Jehucal is mentioned in Jeremiah 37:3 and 38:1.

from this ancestor ...” (*ibid.*).

Tel Zayit is thought to be an ancient Israelite border town 18 miles inland from the ancient Philistine port of Ashkelon established by an expanding Israelite kingdom based in Jerusalem. Dr. Tappy said that such a well-developed border town suggested a “centralized bureaucracy, political leadership and literacy levels that seemed to support the biblical image of the unified kingdom of David and Solomon in the 10th century B.C.” (*ibid.*).

Another interesting find of late was that of a tiny ceramic shard that was unearthed at the biblical city of “Gath of the Philistines.” According to the *Jerusalem Post*, this shard contains the earliest Philistine inscription ever discovered. Fascinatingly, the inscription mentions two names that are surprisingly similar to the name *Goliath*. What makes this story even more exceptional is that the Bible identifies the city of Gath as Goliath’s hometown (1 Samuel 17:4). Although Goliath was supposedly a popular name during the time of King David, this find still enhances the Bible’s validity.

As more and more evidence of the Bible’s accuracy is unearthed, scholars are forced to reconsider the veracity of the Bible as a historical document and its use as a reliable map for archaeological discovery.

For many people, this brings up some unsettling questions. After all, if the Bible is proven to be archeologically and historically accurate, what about the rest of the written Word? Is it possible that what the entire Bible says is true? Should we also consider it as a reliable map for instructions on human living?

In light of these and the many other recent archeological finds, it is important to reevaluate just what modern education and society say about the Bible. It is time to question Bible critics, and to prove the veracity of the Bible for yourself. ■

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

Many people exclaim, “Read the Bible? Study the Bible? Believe the Bible? You’ve got to be kidding!”

Here is why you must get into your Bible. BY DENNIS LEAP

IF WE THINK SOMETHING TO BE true, does that make it the *truth*? This is not an easy question for human beings to answer. Man’s history abounds with examples of people believing error even when the facts prove otherwise. For example, for centuries, people believed the Earth was flat. The Earth has always been a sphere of course, yet those who knew and proclaimed that truth were ostracized, persecuted, imprisoned and even executed. Today, to believe the Earth is flat would seem ridiculous.

Beliefs about heaven are another example. Recently, ABC News featured a two-hour Barbara Walters special titled *Heaven—Where Is It? How Do We Get There?* Advertisements for the special said it was *the* hot topic in America. A recent ABC News poll showed that 9 out of 10 Americans believe in heaven. For two hours, people from different religious, social and cultural backgrounds gave their views of *heaven*. Walters even questioned the Dalai Lama about the Buddhist perspective. It was crystal clear that not everyone agreed on what heaven is or how to get there. Yet, each individual questioned believed his or her view was the truth!

An atheist claiming heaven is a myth stated: “Heaven doesn’t exist, hell doesn’t exist.” A Muslim said, “We are told we will be in comfortable homes, reclining on silk couches ... so we’re given the delights of sex, the delights of wine, the delights of food with all their positive things without their negative aspects.” An actor claiming to be Buddhist said, “I don’t think necessarily heaven and hell happen in some other life. I think it’s right now.” A well-known “Christian” minister, claiming to speak from the Bible, described heaven as “a place where you can eat all that you want and not get

fat.” The program showed how confused most humans—including Bible-believing Christians—are about the afterlife.

Think on this. Not every person interviewed could be right! Who had the truth? When disagreements arise, on whatever topic, how do we determine who is right and who is wrong?

Cause of Spiritual Error

Why are human beings confused about the most serious spiritual questions? Jesus Christ stated clearly that the cause of spiritual misunderstanding is the lack of scriptural knowledge and belief in an all-powerful God.

In Christ’s day, the Sadducees taught there is no resurrection. Christ disagreed. When questioned on the subject, He taught them, “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God” (Matthew 22:29). Our time is no different. Most don’t know the Scriptures or God. Be honest. How many people actually read the Bible? Who thoroughly studies the Bible? Who actually believes what they read and study? These are fair questions. Realize, the Sadducees were sincere *religious* people who did not believe what they read. They did not know God or His purpose for man.

The Bible is the *only* source of spiritual truth for all mankind. Although most people will not accept that statement—it is *the* truth! The Bible gives easy-to-understand answers to life’s most important questions. In fact, the Bible gives the real answer about heaven. Surprisingly, the answer is not what most people—even professing Christian ministers—think. Even though humans want to go to heaven, the Bible shows that God wants to move to this Earth (Revelation 21:1-3). The majority of biblical doctrines are quite different from what people actually believe and

do. This is the very reason most people reject the Bible. For example, the Bible does not sanction observing Sunday, Christmas and Easter. The word *trinity* does not appear in the Bible.

The problem with humanity is we want to believe what *we* think—to create our own truth. The Bible challenges our thinking and quashes our cherished beliefs.

When praying the night before His execution, Jesus Christ said, “Thy word is truth” (John 17:17). Only God’s Word is the truth. Jesus Christ allowed for no other. We are not saying that the Bible contains all truth. It provides the primary foundation for the production of all knowledge. When we want truthful answers to vital spiritual questions—like, *What is God? What is man? Why is man? Where is man going? Why is there evil? Why is there human suffering?*—we must turn to the Bible, not to what men think.

Herbert Armstrong’s Challenge

Most people want some man to interpret the Bible for them. In fact, the largest Christian church believes that only a priest *can* interpret the Bible. Why do so many accept such teaching? It is the *easy* way to approach spiritual matters. It is in our nature to want to follow a man rather than God. Many today choose spiritual leaders based on outward appearance or emotion. If what a man teaches makes people feel good, they stick with that man. The danger here lies in the fact that we can become comfortable with a man who has a false message.

Think about it. How are you being taught doctrine and other spiritual instruction? A common practice of major Christian denominations is to hire only those ministers who are willing to preach what the denomination approves—regardless of whether it agrees with the Bi-

ble. Is this a good practice? Where is the value in it? Shouldn't we want our spiritual leaders to be unshackled from the restraints of narrow bias?

God warns us through Jeremiah, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord" (Jeremiah 17:5). Truly spiritual people know that the man is not important. It is the man's *message* that must be all-important. Of course, it must be *God's message*—truth based on God's Word.

Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul and all the original apostles worked very hard to get the attention off themselves and onto their message. Most of them were killed for what they taught. Theirs was not a popular message. But isn't that the way it generally is with the truth? Few want to hear the truth. So it is also important to consider that a large group gathering around a popular message doesn't make the message true. Remember: Though Christ had taught thousands, only 120 people followed Him at the time of His crucifixion (Acts 1:15).



The problem with humanity is we want to believe what we think—create our own truth.

When we consider the life-threatening seriousness of world conditions, it is worth examining these things. Speaking about our times now, Paul said, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Herbert W. Armstrong challenged readers of the *Plain Truth* and listeners of the *World Tomorrow* broadcast to "Blow the dust off your Bible. Read it. Find out what it really says. You'll be shocked at the truth of your Bible." His statements were based on 1 Thessalonians 5:2: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Gerald Flurry lays down that same challenge to *Trumpet* readers and *Key of David* listeners. Have you accepted the challenge? Take the time and prove out your spiritual teachers. If you don't, you could be headed for spiritual disaster.

Mr. Armstrong also said repeatedly, "Don't believe me, believe your Bible." He was confident that he was teaching directly from the Bible. So are we. Yet it

is your personal responsibility to know your Bible. You should not rely on someone else to know it for you. In Paul's day, the Bereans were considered very noble people because they listened attentively to Paul and then proved what he said from the Scriptures (Acts 17:11). Someone proving the preaching or teachings will not offend a true minister. God will back you up personally for doing it. The Prophet Isaiah warns, "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). If you don't know the Bible, you can't truly know whether your leadership is bringing you light or darkness. The Bible belongs to every man, woman and child—not just ministers.

Bible Design

Get to know your Bible. It is a well-designed book. Some give up reading or studying the Bible because they don't know its design. There has been a conspiracy for centuries to destroy the Bible. The war is still on. Today, instead of burning the book, scholars discredit it.

The progenitors of higher Bible criticism teach that the Bible is the written record of wandering desert dwellers struggling to come up with a concept of God. Just the opposite is true.

Mr. Armstrong wrote: "The Holy Bible covers three main categories: history, prophecy and instruction from God.

"Through history and prophecy, the Bible covers all God intended to cover of Earth and world events from the creation, on into the future and the eternity beyond. But, in a sense, this Book of God—His revealed knowledge for His people—leaves a most conspicuous GAP in the progress of world events.

"WHY?" (*Good News*, December 1980).

The Bible is a sweeping—highly successful—project of God. It has preserved key ancient historical records that would have been lost to mankind. For example, Genesis 10 is an ancient genealogical record preserving for us the roots of modern nations. David Noss, co-author of the book *A History of the World's Religions*, states: "[T]he Hebrews were historical-minded, and not in any casual or intermittent way, but steadily."

In its prophecies, the Bible shows us clearly that an all-powerful God is directly carrying out a plan on Earth. That plan reveals the awesome future of

man. It is an afterlife far exceeding any expectation of a *heaven*. And the Bible contains the deep spiritual wisdom and instruction that produces the wonderful happiness that all men want.

Understand the uniqueness of the Bible. For example, its history is not like any other. As Mr. Armstrong taught, there are gaps in the history. Not understanding why, scholars criticize the book. Remember, the Bible is sacred history—God's intervention in human affairs. Discussing the gap in Bible history, Mr. Armstrong explained: "For example, in its history, the Bible gives no history of anything concerning such populous nations as China, India and Japan. None regarding Russia except in yet future prophecy. History is concerned to the one nation Israel, and the few other nations only as they were involved in contact with Israel.

"WHY?" (*ibid.*). Realize that just because major nations are not mentioned in the Bible does not mean those nations are not important to God. The Bible is clear on this matter. God loves the whole world (John 3:16). In terms of history, the Bible focuses on Israel only because God's history with that nation is an example of what God plans to do with all nations—within His time frame.

The Bible's New Testament Church history is also scanty. Mr. Armstrong continued, "Now consider the CHURCH. There are four whole books, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, devoted to the biographical sketch of the human life of Jesus, and a history of the first early years of the Church. That's all—except the symbolic prophecy of Jesus in Revelation 2 and 3 of the seven eras of the Church. But even here, many shout and scream that these two chapters are NOT a history of successive eras of the Church, but an account of the seven phases of the Church AS A WHOLE, without regard to the time sequence of periods or eras. Actually, these two chapters are depicting BOTH. . . . But otherwise, there is nothing in the Bible revealing conditions in the Church from the first century to now.

"WHY?" (*ibid.*). Even though Church history may not be what we would like it to be, God has provided what we need. Instead of whining about the supposed lack of history, we should work to fully understand what God has provided. Concerning Bible history, Mr. Armstrong concluded, "One simply cannot understand this—nor the Bible

message—unless one knows the great PURPOSE of God and His MASTER PLAN for its accomplishment” (ibid.). Every human must come to accept how miraculous and wonderful the Bible truly is. God purposely designed it according to His wishes. Mr. Armstrong often described the Bible as a coded book. God wants to decode it for every man, woman and child. That process can only take place for those people willing to look into the Bible with an open, unprejudiced mind.

True Spiritual Education

Most people fail to recognize that God is the great Educator. The Bible is His instruction book given to all mankind. It contains all necessary spiritual education. Paul wrote Timothy: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Bible and those books based on the Bible are

the only ones of real spiritual value. The Bible provides so much. It outlines doctrine. The Bible provides reproof and correction for us while we walk on the path of this human life. Of all things, it gives us instruction in righteousness, or how to live, think and act like God (Matthew 5:48). If we don't love and study the Bible, we are doomed to spiritual failure.

Paul also taught Timothy, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of

How to Study the Bible—and Understand It

1 Set aside a regular time for study

Schedule study time in advance, or other things will interfere. Bible study should be something you look forward to every day.

2 Pray for understanding

Study the Bible in a prayerful attitude, asking God to lead you by His Spirit and to reveal *His will* to you. True understanding comes from the Eternal. You cannot reason it out for yourself. (Psalms 119:33-40; Proverbs 3:5-8; 1 Corinthians 1:25-29; Jeremiah 9:23-24)

3 Seek correction and instruction

The Word of God cuts deep, like a two-edged sword. It judges our innermost thoughts and reveals every flaw in our character. We must approach the study of God's Word with a humble, teachable attitude. (Jeremiah 10:23-24; Isaiah 66:1-2, 5; Romans 8:6-9; Matthew 5:48; 2 Timothy 3:16; Proverbs 6:23)

4 Realize the Bible is inspired

The entire Bible—both Old and New Testaments—is the inspired Word of God. When studying the Bible, bear in mind it is God speaking to you. Reverence His Word, and let it inspire and motivate you to grow in His likeness. (2 Peter 1:21; Philippians 2:5; John 6:63)

5 Let the Bible interpret the Bible

Keep in mind, although some passages may seem confusing, there are no contradictions in the Bible. Examine the context and gather all scriptures on a given subject or doctrine. The clear passages will clarify and shed light on those that are difficult to understand. (2 Peter 1:20; Isaiah 28:9-10; John 10:35; 17:17)

6 Keep an open mind

Because there is so much religious confusion in the world, it is necessary to prove the truth and distinguish it from error. In doing so, it is important to maintain a positive attitude and keep an open mind. Be thankful and appreciative as new knowledge is revealed. Be willing to change even if it means you must unlearn wrong ideas and teachings.

7 Prove God's way is right

Prove the Bible by putting it to the test. Begin to practice the things you learn and notice how much more you get out of Bible study. Notice the changes taking place and acknowledge the blessings that come as a result. (1 John 3:22; Malachi 3:10; John 8:31-32; 10:10)

8 Study by subject

Concentrate at times on one book, doctrine or subject, and go into it thoroughly. This systematic approach will help you grow in depth of understanding.

9 Mark key verses and passages

A marking system will save time in locating scriptures and provide a quick recall of subject matter. Develop a system that works best for you. For example: Use one color or symbol for doctrine, another for personal correction and another for story flow.

10 Meditate and review

Stop and think about what you are learning. Ask yourself, “What is the real meaning of this scripture to me?” Then reflect on the different ways it can be applied in your daily life. (Psalms 1:1-3; 119:97-99; 139:17-18)

11 Read the Bible through

Read the Bible from cover to cover as a separate project, in addition to other study. This will ensure that no sections are missed, and it will broaden your perspective as to story flow.

12 Be familiar with study aids

Study aids are useful for providing historical background and time setting on the books of the Bible. A good *Bible handbook* will provide helpful background information. A *concordance* will locate all passages on a given subject. *Bible maps* provide topographical, geographical and historical information. *Commentaries* can be helpful, but exercise care. They contain a great deal of uninspired opinion.

Source: Good News

truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). Unfortunately, what was actually revealed by the ABC News program mentioned earlier was the depth of spiritual shame in this world. Even those men who appeared to be speaking from the Bible were not. Had that program been founded on and taught the truth of the Bible, it could have made a major impact on this religiously dark and confused world.

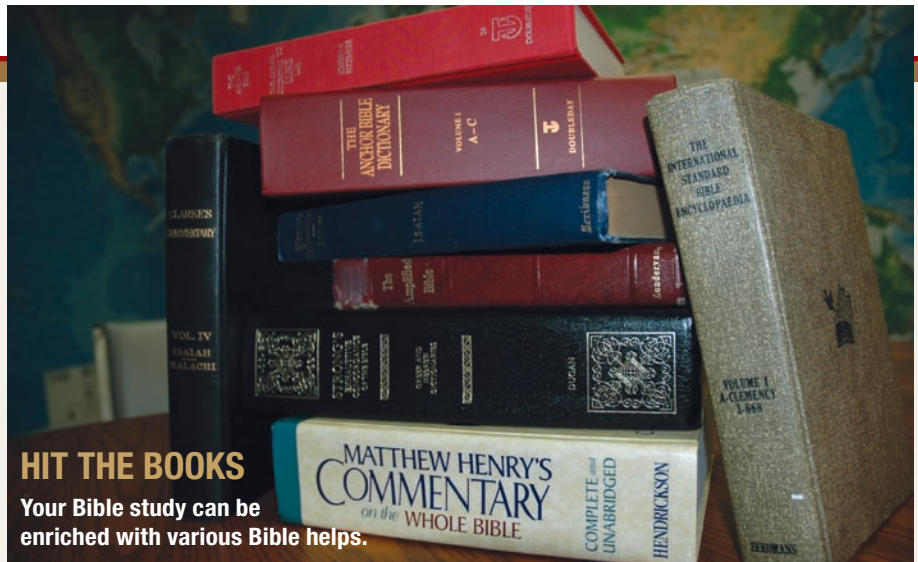
You do not have to be ashamed. Take up Paul’s admonition to *rightly divide* the Bible. The Bible is highly organized in seven divisions—it is a complete package. These divisions are the Law, the Prophets, the Writings, the Gospels, Acts, the Epistles and Revelation. For the list of books in each division, see the September/October 2005 issue of the *Trumpet*.

It is vitally important to know these divisions. Why? When people become interested in the Bible, they generally want to begin reading with Genesis through to Revelation. Although reading the Bible straight through is a good idea, without understanding its divisions this can introduce frustration. The Bible is not like a story book. It is a collection of books, like an encyclopedia.

The Bible is best studied by subject. Here is why. As Mr. Armstrong stated, God coded the book so He could reveal it only to those minds willing to be corrected by and obedient to it. God purposely designed the Bible to be like a jigsaw puzzle. All the pieces of the puzzle must be put together correctly for us to come to a right understanding of any one subject. Isaiah confirms this fact: “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; *here a little, and there a little*” (Isaiah 28:9-10). Be assured that God wants to teach you spiritual knowledge. He does not want to hide anything from us. Yet you will have to show yourself mature enough to see and believe what God shows you. Rightly divide the Word of truth, and it will change your life.

Study Aids Important

To successfully study doctrines and other subjects in the Bible, you will find some study aids very useful. First in importance is a concordance. A concordance is a book that lists most of the words in the Bible and tells which



HIT THE BOOKS

Your Bible study can be enriched with various Bible helps.

verses contain which words. Using a concordance is like using a dictionary, except that, after each word, instead of a definition, there is a list of Scripture verses. For example, if you looked up the word *prayer*, a concordance would list every verse with that word. You can then look up every verse. You may be thoroughly surprised to read what the Bible says about prayer. To get a full understanding of the subject, you will more than likely have to look up associated words like *pray* and *praying*.

An Example from Strong's Concordance

BLESSING	
and thou shalt be a b.....	Gen 12:2
That in b I will bless thee, and.....	Gen 22:17
bring a curse upon me, and not a b.....	Gen 27:12
Isaac had made an end of b Jacob.....	Gen 27:30
and hath taken away thy b.....	Gen 27:35
now he hath taken away my b.....	Gen 27:36
Hast thou not reserved a b for me.....	Gen 27:36
his father, Hast thou but one b.....	Gen 27:38
b wherewith his father blessed.....	Gen 27:41
And give thee the b of Abraham.....	Gen 28:4
and that is brought to thee.....	Gen 33:11

A second useful study aid is a Bible dictionary. In such a reference book, you will find short explanations of historical events and background information on personalities of the Bible. For example, you may want to look up Jezebel, the infamous wife of King Ahab of Israel. In a Bible dictionary, you will find a brief sketch of her life. She is an important person to know because God uses her wretched spiritual life as a symbol of the great false church of our time.

Some people wonder if they need to know Hebrew and Greek to really understand the Bible. The answer is no. The Bible is translated into more than 1,400 modern languages. And even though the translations are not perfect, God has ensured that His Word has been preserved. Some translations are better for Bible study (see the January 2006 *Trumpet*). However, many Bible students have learned to use Hebrew

and Greek lexicons. A lexicon is also like a dictionary; when you look up a word from the Bible, it gives the corresponding Hebrew or Greek word and a definition from those languages.

If you desire to research into the Bible in depth, there are many Bible encyclopedias and commentaries. Use extreme caution with Bible commentaries—they contain a lot of men’s opinions and human reason. Generally, the oldest commentaries are the best.

All of these aids are sold in bookstores or available to look at in public libraries. You can find many wonderful buys in used bookstores. If your budget allows, there are excellent computer software programs that incorporate all of the study aids mentioned here and more. A few good online programs are free.

There is nothing more rewarding than reading and studying the Bible. To help you do an effective job, see our inset across the page.

In your Bible study, we can guarantee that you’ll find adventure. The intrigue of history will amaze you. You’ll receive truly satisfying instruction on how to live your daily life. You’ll find real excitement when you see Bible prophecy come alive in your daily newspaper or on your nightly news. If you get in a tight spot, write us. We’ll be more than happy to answer your questions—even the tough ones.

Once you begin to read, study and understand your Bible, you will not be able to put it down. The Bible is truly better than any fiction thriller. ■

To aid you in your study of the Bible, we offer the Herbert W. Armstrong College Bible Correspondence Course absolutely free. Its monthly lessons will bring your Bible to life. We invite you to enroll today!

ECONOMY

Post-Christmas Credit Blues

CONSUMER SPENDING is the backbone of the American economy. And more and more, society is geared to encourage us to spend.

The commercialization of Christmas is particularly demonstrative of the importance of consumer spending to the economy. Months prior to Christmas—even before Thanksgiving—advertisements blanket the airwaves. “Buy now—pay later” and “no payments to 2007” have become synonymous with our guilt-free view of living for the present moment.

As many of those commercials demonstrate, debt has fueled much of the recent consumer spending. But few consider that debt is a form of enslavement. Few seem to remember the biblical proverb, “The borrower is servant to the lender.”

America’s consumption-based economy is at the tipping point, and increasing debt payments might be the bump to push it over the edge. As Martin Cantor, director of economic development with Sustainable Long Island, an advocacy group, says, “No matter how bad the economy has gotten, everybody pointed to increasing consumer activity to sustain it ... If that goes, there’s nothing left” (*Newsday*, Dec. 11, 2005).

How long can we keep spending money we don’t have?

Since the end of the last recession in November 2001, the average worker’s wage has not increased. In fact, inflation-adjusted average wages are still below what they were when economic recovery began more than four years ago (*Wall Street Journal*, January 4).

Instead of cutting back on spending when faced with a dip in real wages, consumers decided to maintain or improve their standard of living—even if that meant spending their savings and taking on more debt.

Consequently, the personal savings rate plummeted from 10.4 percent in the early 1980s to 1.8 percent in 2004. In 2005, for the first time since the Great Depression, the annual personal savings rate was *negative*.

Among the many record-breaking occurrences over the past year, the negative savings rate may be the most underrated and underreported sign of sickness in the U.S. economy yet—because a



DREAMSTIME

negative savings rate means that the consumer might finally be getting spent out.

In view of the fact that consumer spending now

accounts for over two thirds of U.S. economic activity, if spending falters, so does the economy.

One of the means by which consumers have been able to continue to spend more than they earn is through easy debt provided by credit cards. But for many Americans, the cost of easy credit has just gone up. This past December, new legislation requiring credit card companies to increase minimum payments went into effect.

Approximately 40 percent of Americans carry a monthly balance on their credit cards. Of that number, 7 percent pay only the monthly

EDUCATION

College Students Lack Key Literacy Skills

WITH COLLEGE TUITION RATES AT higher-than-ever levels, we can expect only the best results from students graduating from these institutions of higher learning, right?

Maybe not. According to a literacy study funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, more than half of students at four-year colleges and at least 75 percent at two-year colleges lack the literacy to handle complex tasks (Associated Press Online, January 20).

These “complex” tasks include analyzing newspaper editorials and using math skills needed for checkbooks and restaurants. The study showed these skills were lacking in students no matter what their field of study.

But some good news gleaned from the literacy study was that most students at community and four-year schools possess *intermediate* skills, meaning they

can handle moderately challenging tasks, such as “identifying a location on a map” (*ibid.*). Phew!

What this study really shows is how inadequate our modern education system is in producing balanced and well-educated graduates who can handle the real world. Education does not come all wrapped up and ready to be handed over when paying the tuition bill, but, as educator Herbert W. Armstrong wrote in his *Autobiography*, “Education comes from study—from books—from lectures—from contacts—from travel—from thinking about what you see and hear and read—and from experience.”



PHOTODISC

minimum (Financial Times Information, January 3). That equates to more than 8.2 million Americans who will be forced to shell out higher monthly minimum payments.

In a decade, average credit card debt per household grew from \$4,640 to \$7,300 by 2004 (*Newsday*, op. cit.). Last year, the trend continued. Credit card company Visa recently announced that holiday shoppers charged 18 percent more money on its credit cards during the three months leading up to Christmas than they did the previous year.

As these consumers pay more to service their credit cards and pay off their bills, they will be forced to cut spending elsewhere.

For an economy so reliant on high consumer demand, this is not good news.

But American consumers are not the only ones who have been feeling the pinch of too much credit card debt. According to accountancy firm Grant Thornton, a record number of personal insolvencies are predicted for first quarter 2006 in England and Wales. Approximately a third of those will occur because of “excessive Christmas spending” (*Independent*, January 3).

Amazingly, *two thirds of total EU credit card debt is British*. It is no wonder that more personal bankruptcies are expected to occur in Britain during 2006 than in any other year since records on personal debt began to be kept 45 years ago, and that bankruptcies are surging at an annualized rate of more than 30 percent (*ibid.*).

The American and British economies are more precarious than most people think. The mountains of debt that now face American and UK consumers are about to come

back to haunt us—even enslave us! Most people do not want to accept reality, but it is time for people to wake up and get their financial house in order.

The *Trumpet* can state with certainty that the

American and British economies will collapse—bringing on a global crisis of unrivaled proportions!

If you want to know why this economic collapse is coming and where it is leading, request our free

book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*. It will prove to you where the U.S. and British economies are headed and how that will subsequently affect the world economy. Are you willing to face reality?



CAUGHT Lobbyist Jack Abramoff

LOBBYING

Cycle of Greed

IN 1913, WOODROW WILSON SAID YOU couldn't throw a brick in Washington, D.C., without hitting a lobbyist. Ninety years or so later, little has changed: An overwhelming number of cash-laden lobbyists still seek to influence politicians who need funds. Glorified access-peddling has grown into a \$4 billion industry.

The job description is relatively straightforward: A lobbyist is paid by a corporation or any other donor to act as an intermediary between the corporation and the politicians who write the legislation under which that corporation must operate. The more friends a lobbyist has on Capitol Hill, the more effective and in demand he or she will be.

Doing the job in a legal and ethical manner is quite difficult. Just ask high-flying Washington lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

The now-infamous lobbyist at the center of a widely publicized scandal pleaded guilty in early January to fraud, tax evasion and conspiracy to bribe public officials. On top of it all, Abramoff agreed to a plea deal in which he promised to provide evidence about the actions (many likely to be illegal) of numerous members of Congress, as well as other prominent politicians.

As details of this story emerged, politicians and reporters were quick to highlight the potential ramifications of the case. The *Washington Post* stated, “The plea deal could have enormous legal and political consequences for the lawmakers on whom Abramoff lavished luxury trips, skybox fundraisers, campaign contributions, jobs for their spouses, and meals at Signatures, the lobbyist’s upscale restaurant” (January 4).

If the reaction of many politicians to Abramoff’s plea deal is anything to go by, the chance of further criminal implications is high. As news of the plea bargain filtered through America’s political elite, politicians rushed to publicly sever their ties with the once-popular Abramoff. News of various politicians digging out their checkbooks and giving to charity any money they had received from Abramoff was everywhere.

A lot has yet to be revealed about the Abramoff case and the true extent of how many politicians are actually involved in this scandal. But one thing we can already learn: The days when national law was shaped by biblical laws, morals and ethics and a spirit of fairness and well-being for American citizens are gone. That basis for law is being replaced with a foundation of greed and lust for wealth and power. Money has become the driving factor in American politics.

The pressure on politicians to raise enough money to be noticed leaves many of them exposed to the smooth tongues of cash-rich lobbyists who are prepared to give massive donations in return for legislative favors and other concessions.

This cycle of greed has permeated American politics and aided a severe crisis in leadership. To learn more, read our September -October 2002 *Trumpet* article “Why This World Lacks Leadership.”

MULTIPLYING LOBBYISTS

34,750 registered lobbyists work in Washington D.C. This number has more than doubled since 2000, when there were 16,342 in the nation’s capital.

The True Church

I AM A MEMBER OF THE UNITED CHURCH of God. My parents were baptized in the WCG around 1978 when I was about 5 years old. I grew up in the WCG and I do remember the YES and YOU programs. I attended services off and on from age 16 until age 27, so I was “out of the loop” of what was going on inside the Church. I was baptized in the UCG at 27. Around that time, my dad gave me his copy of *Malachi’s Message* because I had a lot of questions about things. I have always been one to question, read, research and study, even when I wasn’t attending services regularly. It’s like I have the truth ingrained in me so deeply, I could not imagine giving it up! When I see old friends of mine keeping traditions that we never kept growing up, I’m shocked! I have been reading your literature for several months now. I just don’t understand why United didn’t break off sooner and why they did not see the warning signs early on after Mr. Armstrong died like you did. My dad told me that locally they broke away after the WCG stopped keeping the Sabbath day. I had started reading the “minor prophets” early last year and started sharing with my dad what I had learned. I understood that a lot of it is talking about now and what will happen in the future. I don’t know why I never read them in the past! Then, in the past several months I came to notice something about your literature. I noticed that you have a tremendous amount of new revelation about these minor prophets I was reading about, among other very important booklets. I ordered *Daniel Unsealed at Last*, which I am very thankful for. Then I read that God’s revelation is a key to knowing where Christ is working and leading. I have also ordered many other booklets and have read them. *God’s Family Government* is the truth. I believe the PCG is a continuation of the work restored through Mr. Armstrong and I would like to be a part of that work.

Subscriber—UNITED STATES

You recently sent a copy of *Malachi’s Message* and filled in a 10-year gap of Church history for me. I left the WCG quietly around 1995. I was saddened and hurt over all of the fighting and backbiting. It was a long and confusing 10 years; then at work, I saw the *Philadel-*

phia Trumpet on our magazine stand. Thank you for reaching out to us. God’s love is truly longsuffering.

David Calvin—TYLER, TEX.

IN THE EDITORIAL BY MR. FLURRY IN the February 2006 issue, you give a long list of things that supposedly “prove” that the Philadelphia Church of God is the only true Church of God, including form of church government, number of television viewers, quantity of literature printed, an impressive church building, religious college, etc., etc. By this definition you have just declared that the Roman Catholic Church is the true Church of God! They have you beat in all these areas. Nowhere in your editorial do you give a *scriptural* definition of the true Church, which is a spiritual body made up of those to whom God has given His Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). Only God knows to whom He has given His Spirit. He says He places His children in His body as He chooses (1 Corinthians 12:18). Only God knows who His children are, and where He has placed them (1 Kings 19:18). It is not biblical to say that there is only [one] physical organization to which all true Christians must belong.

Arlene Schroeder—YORKTOWN, TEX.

The *fruits* of the Church of God under Herbert W. Armstrong and the continuation of those fruits in God’s Church today were certainly discussed in detail in this article. However, Gerald Flurry pointed to the *doctrinal understanding* of the Church as being the *most important* indication of where God is working, stating, “God flooded Mr. Armstrong with biblical understanding, restoring *all foundational true doctrine* to His Church through that man.” The PCG’s beliefs, which identify it as the true Church of God, can be found in Herbert Armstrong’s book *Mystery of the Ages*, available free upon request.

In proving where God is working today, Mr. Flurry pointed out that not only would God’s Church hold on to the doctrinal understanding revealed by God to Mr. Armstrong, but that it would receive *new revelation*, or “present truth” (2 Peter 1:12). Referring to the “new biblical understanding” contained in the PCG’s books and booklets, Mr. Flurry stated: “That is the single greatest proof that the God who inspired Mr. Armstrong is behind our work.”

Though, as you say, the Church is a spiritual organism made up of those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, the idea that there is no single organization that constitutes the true

Church of God is unbiblical. 1 Corinthians 10 states that the true Church is *not divided*: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all *speak the same thing*, and that there be *no divisions among you*; but that ye be *perfectly joined together* in the same mind and in the same judgment” (verse 10; see also Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 12:20; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:3-5; Colossians 3:15).

Immigration

I’D LIKE TO THANK THE ENTIRE STAFF at the *Philadelphia Trumpet* for its superb December 2005 issue, largely due to the cogent articles on the hot-button issue of immigration. In this perilous time of political correctness, multiculturalism, tolerance, sensitivity training, etc., it was a relief and an inspiration to read such well-researched and well-written articles on an issue that seems to intimidate “respectable” mainstream Christian leaders. It’s undeniable that high levels of multicultural/multireligious immigration into the U.S. and other Western nations is causing great social unrest and strife, and our leaders seem oblivious to it. Those immigration articles, just by noting the hard-core facts contained therein, answer Gerald Flurry’s question on page 1, “Is God Cursing Us?,” with a resounding “Yes!”

Kenneth Reynolds—BRONX, N.Y.

United Nations

YOUR ARTICLE “THE CORRUPTION OF the United Nations” (December 2005) was understandable and a true disclosure. That organization was started in 1945, in San Francisco, by the delegates from several friendly nations, and the formation of the charter was promising. The shock came when our delegate, Alger Hiss, got up and proposed that the name of God be dropped from the charter because that name was offensive to certain nations. The proposal was voted upon and passed. To many of us, this meant that the workings of the UN could be without morality and/or justice.

Leo Kimmitt—CANON CITY, COLO.

Comments?

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Heil History

Britain softens history to appease Germany. BY TIMOTHY OOSTENDARP

LAST DECEMBER, BRITISH EDUCATORS PUBLISHED A NEW history syllabus in response to German criticism. History taught to secondary school students will now focus on the Cold War instead of the Second World War.

Criticism of Britain's history curriculum reached a peak last May, when, according to the *Daily Mail*, Germany's outgoing ambassador to London, Thomas Matussek, said that English schools are "whipping up xenophobia by concentrating too narrowly on the 12 years of Nazi dictatorship" (Dec. 27, 2005).

Matussek's concern was that more than 80 percent of English students choose to study Nazi Germany in their final years of secondary school. He said that the English need to know that Germany is aware of its past and is applying lessons drawn from its Nazi history. "German democracy is a success story which could also be taught," he said (*Deutsche Welle*, Dec. 27, 2005). Germany routinely points to its 60 years of bloodless history following the Second World War as proof of its reformed ways and has on more than one occasion chastised the British for holding on to the past.

So under the new syllabus designed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) for 11-to-14-year-olds, World War II history will be sidelined in favor of Germany's sanitary post-war history during the Cold War.

It is only fair to ask the cost at which these changes are being made.

This revisionist education springs from a dangerous disregard of British history as it relates to Europe. As Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. wrote, "[H]istory is to the nation ... as memory is to the individual. As an individual deprived of memory becomes disoriented and lost, not knowing where he has been and where he is going, so a nation denied a conception of its past will be disabled in dealing with its present and its future" (*The Disuniting of America*).

It follows, then, that one price the British will pay for changing their secondary school curriculum to make it pro-German is a loss of heritage, creating a generation that is measurably more European and less British—meaning it will have a Euro-federalist viewpoint.

The Eurofederalist goal, promoted especially by Germany, is to forge independent European states into a political combine to rival the United States in power and prestige. For Britain to remain within the Union, its independent national

identity, laws and way of life must give way to all things European. That is why its educational system, which once focused on national heritage, is being gutted—a trend that has been getting progressively worse for some years.

Even a decade ago, Dr. Nick Tate, then chief executive of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority in Britain (which later merged with another committee to form QCA, the same organization that designed the recent change in the syllabus), warned that factual knowledge in British history classes was being sidelined, that heroes and heroism were being debunked, and nationalism was being regarded with distaste (*Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 19, 1995). Of great concern to Dr. Tate was that Britain's sense of national identity was being undermined, even betrayed.

The rewriting of national history is coming at the cost of British *will* for Britain's independent sovereignty. The nation's young are being systematically trained to look upon Britain's past with embarrassment—as a compendium of oppression rather than an example of democracy, freedom and civilization.

Indeed, it could be said that, thanks in large part to its educators, a generation in Britain is being *lost to Europe* by the willful destruction of national history.

What is truly ironic is the fact that *Europe's* history really is filled with the kinds of atrocities the British

are expected to believe about their own—but, as these latest curriculum changes illustrate, these are scooted under the rug.

Since the end of the First World War, Britain has devolved from a globe-encircling empire into a second-rate power. And educators have had their part to play, hollowing out Britain's past and replacing it with revisionist history for an uninitiated general public. The result is that many British have come to be ashamed of a past empire they ought to be proud of.

Yet, ultimately, Europe forcing its identity down the throats of the British will reach a stopping point. The Bible indicates that the UK will not remain a part of the Catholic-dominated, German-led EU. At some point, probably over some crisis, Britain will either leave the Union or be kicked out.

If you want to learn more, you are welcome to request a free copy of *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*. ■



SOON FORGOTTEN
Adolf Hitler receives a standing ovation at the Reichstag in 1938.



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