

THE PHILADELPHIA Trumpet

**America's greatest
defeat—Iran's victory**

Solving 'toxic masculinity'

**The patriarch Abraham:
astronomer, mathematician**

Unmasking Antifa

The top lesson of family



SPECIAL REPORT

KING MIE

The rise of strongmen heralds a dangerous new era



VICTORY AGAINST TERRORISM? Iranian-supported Popular Mobilization Unit fighters hold an Islamic State flag upside-down in the reconquered Iraqi city of Tal Afar. (AHMAD AL-RUBAYE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES)

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America's Greatest Defeat—Iran's Victory

America is celebrating the fall of the Islamic State. But the reality is that it has just suffered its greatest defeat ever in the Middle East—and helped to crown Iran the victor and king!

AMERICA IS CELEBRATING AFTER HELPING TO DRIVE THE Islamic State out of Iraq and Syria. But it should not be celebrating. The reality of the situation is being dismissed: The United States has just suffered its greatest defeat EVER in the Middle East!

As shocking as that statement may sound, I can prove it to you. America may have helped drive the Islamic State out of Iraq

and Syria—but now AMERICA *is about to be driven out of Iraq and Syria* BY IRAN! We are about to see a vicious turnaround. In many ways, it has already started.



GERALD FLURRY

We must look at what is happening here in the context of the prophecies of the Bible. That shows where events are leading and why. Those prophecies describe a lot of *good news* for America's future. But that good news is preceded

by very alarming news—*terrible punishment* coming on the U.S.

America's problems in the Middle East are actually part of that punishment, and they are going to get worse. God provides those prophecies as a warning, and He has been sending that warning for decades. The nation simply will not receive the blessings God would like to provide until it heeds what God tells us to do, even in our foreign policy.

Look at the Middle East right now, and you get a clear picture of the danger in ignoring this truth.

The Real Danger

The shocking barbarity of the Islamic State consumed a lot of the world's attention the past few years. In one sense that was understandable. But if people had viewed those events in the context of Bible prophecy, they could have seen that there was an even *bigger danger* that was being overlooked.

I talked about this on my *Key of David* television program on Oct. 1, 2014: "We see the [Islamic State] terrorists doing ALL these violent acts and all of the bloodshed, cutting off people's heads, and it really has attracted the attention of this world. But in many ways it is a DISTRACTION from the REAL danger in the Middle East and in the world." That REAL DANGER is Iran!

Then in February 2015, I said: "[T]here is a U.S. general who said that the face of radical Islam is now [the Islamic State], but I disagree with that strongly. The face of radical Islam is STILL Iran, many times over, and the Bible tells you that because Iran is the KING." That was a reference to the prophecy in Daniel 11:40 of an end-time "king of the south."

For more than two decades, the *Trumpet* has been stating our conviction that this role in end-time events would be fulfilled by *Iran*, leading the forces of radical Islam. You can read about this in my free booklet *The King of the South*. If God labels Iran "KING of the south," that means it RULES the Middle East! Most people haven't recognized that—especially in earlier years, although more people see it now. Nevertheless, this is what *God* says! To consider *the Islamic State* to be the "face of radical Islam" overlooked this basic reality—you don't need biblical prophecy to recognize Iran as the bigger threat.

In that program, I continued, "But if you look at [the Islamic State], well, they don't even have an air force, and they in many ways are a distraction. Now, they are dangerous—no question about that—but in many ways they are a distraction of what is happening in the Middle East through Iran. ... [I]f you look at ISIS today, THEY'RE LIKE A MOUSE COMPARED TO THE IRANIAN TIGER. There is no comparison."

That was absolutely true. If it wasn't clear then, it certainly is now, judging by how rapidly the Islamic State was defeated in Iraq and Syria.

And while the threat from the Islamic State has been mostly neutralized, the Iranian tiger has grown even stronger and more dangerous!

In fact, BY DIRECTING ITS FIREPOWER AGAINST THE ISLAMIC STATE, THE U.S. VASTLY EXPANDED THE POWER OF IRAN!

Iranian Expansion

This is how the *Washington Post* expressed it: "The U.S. Is on a Collision Course With Iran in the Middle East." "President Trump's assertive new strategy toward Iran is already colliding with THE REALITY OF TEHRAN'S VASTLY EXPANDED INFLUENCE

IN THE MIDDLE EAST, as a result of the Islamic State war" (Oct. 26, 2017; emphasis mine throughout). Extraordinary: America's efforts to eliminate this radical terrorist threat are proving to have made the problem worse! How do you explain that?

Now that this reality is emerging, President Donald Trump is trying to adjust America's policy. The *Post* continued: "The launch of the strategy signaled an important shift in the U.S.-Middle East policy AWAY from an almost exclusive focus on fighting the Islamic State to an effort that also pushes back against YEARS OF IRANIAN EXPANSION IN THE REGION.

"But the strategy offers no specifics on how to confront Iran's pervasive presence on the ground in Iraq, Syria and beyond, raising questions about how easy it will be to push back against Iranian influence without triggering new conflicts."

The key to understanding the Bible's prophecies is knowing America's historical and biblical identity. To learn this, request our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.

Truly, Iran's influence has been expanding for YEARS. This radical nation has proved over the years how *dedicated to the death* it is to its cause. How CAN America or any other power effectively push back? It will take some determined *violence* on the ground. And America is proving unwilling to make such a commitment.

Iran is backing more than 100,000 troops in Iraq in what are known as Popular Mobilization Units—an assortment of about 40 paramilitary militias comprised primarily of Shiite Iraqis. Many of them have officially integrated into the Iraqi military. Some of these troops include soldiers from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Iran has tens of thousands of troops in Iraq and Syria, and its presence is growing. The U.S. has about 5,000 troops, and there is great pressure within America to reduce even that. "Iranian-backed Shiite militias have fanned out into the Sunni and Christian areas of northern and western Iraq that were freed from Islamic State control—often with the help of U.S. air strikes," the *Post* continued. Iran has SIMPLY TAKEN OVER IRAQ. It has even helped subdue America's strong allies in the Middle East, the Kurds—taking over Kirkuk, which has tremendous oil wealth.

The situation is no better in Syria: "Alongside [Syrian President Bashar] Assad's army, they [the Iranians] are now in a race with the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces to capture the last stretch of Islamic State territory in eastern Syria. There they hope to link up with their Iraqi allies to secure a land bridge between Tehran and their Lebanese ally Hezbollah in Beirut, securing AN ARC OF CONTINUOUS IRANIAN INFLUENCE THAT STRETCHES TO THE MEDITERRANEAN" (ibid). THAT IS A BOLD MOVE BY THE KING OF THE SOUTH!

What a clear confirmation of Daniel's prophecy! The KING is not Turkey or Saudi Arabia or Iraq or Syria. THE KING IS IRAN—just as we have been proclaiming for over 20 years.

Legitimizing Iran

When you see what Iran is doing, it is dumbfounding that the U.S. has followed an anti-terrorism strategy that involves FIGHTING ALONGSIDE IRAN, the number one state sponsor of terrorism! For America to be fighting *alongside Iran*, something is TERRIBLY WRONG! We have fallen into a deadly trap!

Turning Iran into an "ally" in our battle against the Islamic State has not only eliminated this organization that has been competing against Iran among the radicals, it has also legitimized Iran in the eyes of the rest of the world. The Iranian mullahs have deployed their forces into Iraq and Syria, in effect conquering these areas and building that bridge to the Mediterranean—yet shamefully, they are being *acclaimed* for doing so, since it drove out the hated Islamic State!

America is not actually fighting alongside Iran—WE ARE EMPOWERING IT! Iran now looks like an *effective and useful partner* in the war against terrorism. AMERICA HAS HELPED TO MAKE IRAN APPEAR TO BE THE SAVIOR IN IRAQ AND SYRIA!

What a FARCE!

THIS RADICAL POWER IS FAR MORE VICIOUS THAN THE ISLAMIC STATE EVER WAS! But the world turns a blind eye.

And in spite of its belligerent foreign policy, Iran has continued to develop its nuclear weapons program.

Surrounded

Unbelievably, the great American superpower now finds itself SURROUNDED by Iran! The *Washington Post* article quoted Beirut-based political analyst Mohammed Obeid as saying that any effort to challenge Iran in Iraq and Syria "will have a very negative effect on the existence of American forces in the region. THEY ARE SURROUNDED BY IRANIANS. This is a big question the Americans are going to have to face."

Can you recognize this reality as clearly as this analyst does?

On October 22, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said, "Certainly, Iranian militias that are in Iraq, now that the fight against [the Islamic State] is coming to a close, those militias need to go home. Any foreign fighters in Iraq need to go home."

Do you honestly think Iran will go home?

If you don't believe what I am saying about this situation, think about how Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi responded to Secretary Tillerson. He *strongly rebuked him*—in a way that *humiliated* America! He said that these Iranian militias are an *Iraqi institution*. "Popular Mobilization fighters should be encouraged because THEY WILL BE THE HOPE OF THE COUNTRY AND THE REGION," Abadi said.

Another statement from Abadi's office referred to Popular Mobilization fighters as patriots and stated, "No party has the right to interfere in Iraqi matters." Think of all the blood and treasure America has poured into this country over the past decade and a half—supposedly to try to free it from tyranny and terrorism and to help it to stand on its own. But now it is led by a stooge of Iran who thumbs his nose at America!

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammed Javad Zarif also ridiculed Tillerson's comments. He said that these Iranian-supported militias couldn't go home because "they *are* at home."

A high-ranking Iranian militia group leader tweeted, "To the U.S. Secretary of State: your armed forces have to prepare from this point immediately and without any delay to leave our homeland Iraq after the end of the ISIS presence excuse." Apparently, America's presence in Iraq to fight off a radical terrorist group was just an EXCUSE! There is no gratitude for the resources we put in to liberating that nation. WE HELPED DRIVE OUT THE ISLAMIC STATE, BUT NOW IRAN IS DRIVING US OUT!

How truly did the great God prophesy of America, "[Y]OUR STRENGTH SHALL BE SPENT IN VAIN" (Leviticus 26:20).

Nicholas Heras of the Center for a New American Security said, "No amount of strategizing and boots on the ground short of an invasion is going to push back against Iran's ability to shape events in Baghdad and all of Iraq. And short of the U.S. Army marching on Damascus, IRAN WILL NOT BE RIPPED FROM SYRIA OR LEBANON" (*Washington Post*, op cit).

With Iran backing tens of thousands of militia fighters in these regions, only a *vast military confrontation* could push them out. But the United States LACKS THE WILL to do that. Iran knows this—America knows it—and the whole world knows it!

WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE? How could such a disaster possibly occur, and where is it leading? These are questions with deadly implications that we MUST seriously consider. Do our U.S. officials realize what kind of force they are up against? Iran is not a normal power. No other nation matches its fanatical thinking and extreme religious beliefs. Iran believes the more violently it fights, THE SOONER ITS MESSIAH WILL RETURN!

AMERICA HAS BEEN DEFEATED IN THE MIDDLE EAST!
This is a grave reality you cannot afford to ignore!

Broken Pride

This incredible nightmare is unfolding just as we prophesied it would, based on the outline provided in Bible prophecy.

In a *Key of David* program I taped in August 2011, I said, “[W]hat most people *still* do not understand is that Iran **RULES** the Middle East, and they are going to drag nations into war. ... We don’t realize and this world doesn’t realize how much Iran is ruling the Middle East and taking it over and giving it over to the most vile kind of terrorism and war.”

“Iran, the number one state sponsor of terrorism by far, had bludgeoned its way into controlling Lebanon and Gaza, and has become the backbone of Syrian terrorism,” I continued. “Iran also has bombed and butchered its way into the dominant role in Iraq and Afghanistan and is empowering the Muslim Brotherhood terrorism to get control of Egypt. Now America and the West have paved the way for another Iranian victory in Libya.” You can add Iraq to the list of Iranian victories that America has paved the way for.

Here is more of that prophecy in Leviticus 26: God says, “And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. And I WILL BREAK THE PRIDE OF YOUR POWER ...” (verses 18-19). God warns that, because of our sins, our pride will be broken. That is why America is experiencing these disgraceful defeats.

In 2016, American sailors unknowingly drifted into Iranian waters and were humiliated by Iran before the whole world. Now, Iran is discrediting the U.S. before the nations—and America is just watching it happen. The U.S. possesses enough power to wipe Iran off the face of the Earth almost immediately! But it does not have the WILL to USE its power. Iran can sense that like a shark can sense blood in the ocean.

As far back as 1996, we forecast that Iraq would fall to Iran. Then when the U.S. deposed Saddam Hussein in 2003, I wrote in the June 2003 *Trumpet*, “It may seem shocking, given the U.S. presence in the region now, but prophecy indicates that in pursuit of its goal, Iran will probably TAKE OVER IRAQ.” How could we know that? Because of Bible prophecy! (You can read the specific reasons why we foresaw that Iraq would fall under its influence in my booklet *The King of the South*.)

Scripture makes plain that Iran is the king of the south. Iran is the tiger and the Islamic State is the mouse. There is no way we can ever solve our problems if we do not realize who our real enemy is and quit playing games.

Look at the disaster America has gotten itself into as a result of turning its back on God. These curses are going to intensify until we repent. When will this nation recognize that? When will you recognize that? Every person needs to answer that question for himself or herself—because the



WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS A mural in Hormuz Island, Iran, depicts an Iranian victory over an American warship in the Strait of Hormuz.

evidence is building all the time that something is dreadfully wrong with the U.S. today.

But even in all of this, there is good news. Daniel 11, which ends with the prophecy of the king of the south, should continue right through chapter 12 with no chapter break: “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time ...” (Daniel 12:1). This “time of trouble” is building now! We can see it right on the doorstep, and it is going to be unparalleled horror.

But notice how this verse concludes: “[A]nd at that time THY PEOPLE SHALL BE DELIVERED, every one that shall be found written in the book.” God promises to *protect* His people—those who are faithful in obeying Him today.

The good news continues: “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (verses 2-3). If we just obey God and give ourselves over to Him, then He is going to reward us beyond imagination! He says we will shine like the brightness of the stars FOREVER! God will give us that reward if we get our minds where they ought to be and help proclaim God’s message to this dying world.

Events are rapidly developing into the worst trouble that this Earth has ever experienced. God wants to stop this madness. If we heed God now, He promises to greatly bless us. Although the events just ahead are some of the worst that this weary Earth has ever seen, we can be protected from them. And thankfully, good news is on the horizon. God promises that the trouble will only last a short time—and then He will establish His Kingdom on Earth!

For more information, read our article “Bible Prophecy Right Again! The Islamic State WAS a Distraction” at theTrumpet.com/go/isis.

HOW COULD THE TRUMPET KNOW? Gerald Flurry proclaimed Iraq would fall to Iran over 20 years ago—using Bible prophecy. Study these prophecies and prove them for yourself: Request Gerald Flurry’s free booklet *The King of the South*.



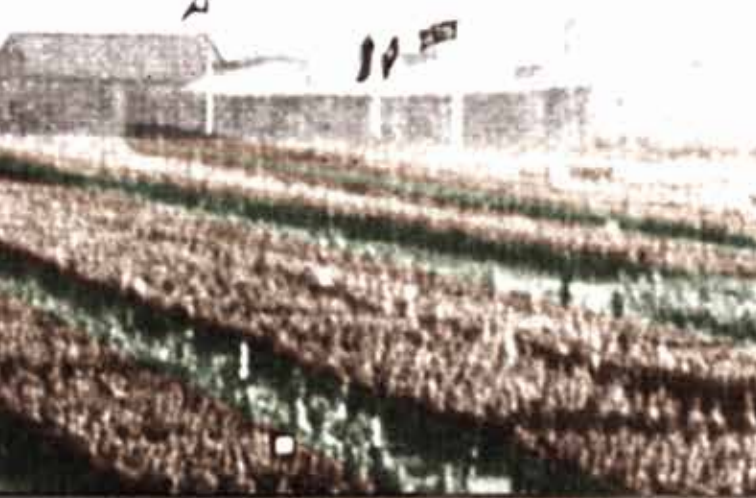


STRON

**It's a dramatic shift
in world affairs.
And it won't end well.**

BY STEPHEN FLURRY

THE NEW G MAN AGE



IT IS ONE OF THE MOST STUNNING REVERSALS OF history. For nearly two centuries, the dominant geopolitical trend in the world was the spread of democratic, free societies. The British Empire led the way in the 19th century. The United States did it during the 20th century.

This century will be totally different. The dominant trend thus far has been the rise of authoritarian STRONGMEN.

Vladimir Putin is Russia's most powerful leader since Joseph Stalin. Some of his countrymen consider him Russia's 21st-century CZAR.

Xi Jinping is China's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong. During the 19th Party Congress in October, Xi formalized his total control over the Communist Party, which controls all of China. He is now poised to rule China *for life*.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan rules Turkey with an iron fist. A military coup attempt in July 2016 failed miserably and gave him a pretext to strengthen his power even further.

North Korea's nuclear-armed madman, Iran's supreme leader, Saudi Arabia's royal family, Syria's Bashar Assad, the Castro dictatorship in Cuba, Mahmoud Abbas's never-ending "four-year term," the "big men" of Africa who have been immune to democracy for decades—the list of existing and emerging authoritarian leaders goes on and on.

Even Westerners are tired of the political correctness, the consensus-building, the bureaucrats and the establishment. The British voted to leave the super-bureaucracy of the European Union. Americans elected their first-ever president who has no prior political or military experience—a complete rejection of the establishment—based on promises to put "America first" and "make America great again."

European nations are now voting for stronger, more patriotic NATIONALISTS: Hungary's Viktor Orbán, Poland's Jarosław Kaczyński, Austria's Sebastian Kurz and the Czech Republic's Andrej Babiš.

This is the 21st century! We thought we were too "modern" for this! Yet here it is: a new age of strongmen. And with the notable exception of the American president, many of these strongmen are beginning to wield their power.

This global trend is actually prophesied in your Bible! Thousands of years ago, the Bible foretold of our day, when the world would revert to a much darker, more barbaric time of authoritarian rule that leads to war! Except this time, the barbarism will be carried out with weapons of mass destruction.

Today, we often call these strong leaders *authoritarians*, *dictators* or *autocrats*. The Bible calls them *kings* and *princes*. In Daniel 11:40, for example, it says "at the time of the end" the *king* of the south shall PUSH at the *king* of the north—two mighty KINGS colliding in a spectacular clash.

The *Trumpet* identified radical Islam as the "king of the south" in the early 1990s. We identified Iran as the leader of that movement back in 1994. And look at the power Iran's supreme leader has amassed since we made that declaration—*particularly* since 9/11. Some Iranians have attempted to weaken the power of the aptly named "supreme leader." Some have tried to establish more democracy in the Islamic "Republic" of Iran, like the failed Green Revolution in 2009. The United States government at the time let that revolution die. Today, America is celebrating the collapse of the Islamic State. But under the grip of a strongman and his clerics, Iran is the one collecting the spoils of war in Iraq and Syria.

The king of the north is the German-led European combine of 10 nations or groups of nations. Bible prophecy specifies that this superpower will be led by perhaps the most powerful political strongman of them all! Daniel 8:23 describes him as "a KING of fierce countenance." "And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper ..." (verse 24). This man has not yet attained power in Europe. But he will—soon. He will emerge from the strongest nation in Europe: Germany.

This Daniel 8 figure will be a strongman among strongmen. He will receive powerful support from 10 other authoritarian

MEISSA BARBERO/TRUMPET



INTRODUCING EUROPE'S EASTERN STRONGMEN

Political trends in Europe right now are tracking remarkably close to the Bible's prophecies.

BY RICHARD PALMER

EUROPEAN UNION BUREAUCRATS ARE STRUGGLING TO DEAL WITH A NEW TYPE OF leader. He is not sophisticated, multicultural and managerial. He is not soft, consensus-building and wary of giving offense. He is strong. He is patriotic. He is decisive. He is everything the European Commission in Brussels is not. European bureaucrats hate him. Yet this type of leader is emerging in country after country. Whether bureaucrats like it or not, these strongmen are Europe's future.

VIKTOR ORBÁN HUNGARY

EUROPE'S NEW STANDARD

HUNGARY HAS BEEN THE trailblazer for this trend. Viktor Orbán first became prime minister from 1998 to 2002. But it's his second incarnation that is more significant. In 2010, in the midst of a global financial crisis, he led his Fidesz party to an overwhelming victory.

His method of governing has become the standard strongman template—the comparison used to judge Europe's other strong leaders.

Orbán's guiding principle is simple: Hungary first. He pursues his country's national interest and pays little lip service to the European Union, consensus-building

and multilateralism. Orbán was putting Hungary first long before Donald Trump came along. The EU encourages its member countries to share the burden, to all join in and accept migrants, suffering individually for the greater good. Orbán is having none of it. "To defend borders is a national responsibility," he said last June. "As a state, you have to protect your own borders. I don't believe in a European solution."

Orbán has also concentrated political power in his office. He bluntly called checks and balances "a U.S. invention" that doesn't work in Europe. This isn't just talk: He has pushed through changes to the Hungarian Constitution to remove restrictions on his power over the rest of the government.



POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

JAROSŁAW KACZYŃSKI, ALONG WITH his twin brother Lech, is another key founder of this new movement.

In 2001 the two of them cofounded the Law and Justice Party in Poland. Jarosław was in power from July 2006 to November 2007, before his party lost its majority in parliament.

They won again in 2015, becoming the first party to win an outright majority in Poland's post-Communist history. The party now holds both the presidency and prime ministership.

Kaczyński himself holds neither of these positions; he merely leads the party. Yet as the *Guardian* noted in 2016, “President Andrzej Duda and Prime Minister Beata Szydło are entirely beholden to his patronage.” The *Financial Times* and Deutsche Welle called him “the most powerful man in Poland.” He is often referred to as the real power behind the throne.

Poles know Kaczyński's power over the government, and many put their hope in him personally. One common chant at his rallies is “Jarosław save us.”

Kaczyński has moved to reduce checks and balances on the executive branch, to

curtail the power of the judges. He also managed to take control of Poland's public broadcaster from leftists.

His party's approach is similar to Viktor Orbán's. His party calls for a “Fourth Republic” to replace Poland's current system of government. In fact, Kaczyński once openly said he aimed to “bring Budapest to Warsaw”—a promise to copy Orbán's strategies.

Kaczyński also has the same Christian values. “We want to restore a moral order,” he said. In May 2017, Polish Interior Minister Mariusz Błaszczak said that the presence of the largely Muslim refugee population is a “ticking bomb” in Europe.

Like Orbán, Kaczyński is subject to hysterical criticism from leftists everywhere. And also like Orbán, there's little or no evidence he is being undemocratic: Many Poles support his consolidation of power, and he is not accused of interfering in elections. Nevertheless, he is a new kind of European leader: a strongman who puts Poland first.



He also increased the government's power over Hungary's people. He has driven out foreign businesses and re-nationalized a host of industries including natural gas, electricity, pension funds, water, recycling and many banks.

Orbán has also shifted his politics to the right, borrowing ideas and language from Hungary's far-right Jobbik party.

He is one of Europe's most outspoken Christian leaders. He talks about “creating a Christian Hungary within a Christian Europe.” His opposition to immigration stems from this Christian identity. In 2015, he said with characteristic bluntness, “I think we have a right to decide that we do not want a large number of Muslim people in our country.”

Orbán calls for a new style of government. In his most famous speech, given in July 2014, he said, “The new state that

we are constructing in Hungary is an illiberal state, a non-liberal state. It does not reject the fundamental principles of liberalism such as freedom, and I could list a few more, but it does not make this ideology the central element of state organization, but instead includes a different, special, national approach.”

In his book *Orbán: Europe's New Strongman*, Paul Lendvai said Orbán is creating “Hungary's Führer Democracy.” “After seven continuous years of Fidesz rule and in light of all opinion polls, even Viktor Orbán's fiercest critics concede that at the age of 53, his position appears impregnable,” he writes. “His unlimited personal power is virtually unchallenged within Hungary, nor is it under threat from the EU.”

Leftists around the world hate what he is doing, and this colors much of

their coverage of him. There is a lot of hypocrisy in this reporting. In just about every Western nation, the left fill government jobs with people who agree with them. When Orbán does the same, the left screams blue murder.

It is important to note, though, that few are accusing Orbán of being undemocratic. The fact is, his approach is popular. When times are tough, most are happy with a little less liberty and a little more strength. Too often people look at Orbán through the lens of their own personal ideology. But both sides can agree that Orbán represents a new kind of “strongman democracy.” The historical connotations in the phrase “führer democracy” are unfair. But aside from that, it is a good description of the new Hungary-first regime that Viktor Orbán is building.



SEBASTIAN KURZ AUSTRIA

THE DANUBE MESSIAH

IN OCTOBER, NEW MEMBERS WERE inducted into the Strongman Club, including Sebastian Kurz. This 31-year-old wunderkind won Austria’s national elections on October 15 and is working to form a governing coalition.

As of this writing, he has not yet spent his first day in office at the Federal Chancellery, but he already has considerable power due to his election and his authority within his party. When Austrian People’s Party offered him the chairmanship in May, he set conditions. He would only take over if he was granted unprecedented personal authority. He would have power to appoint all the ministers and to nominate candidates for parliament—even if they were from a different party. His party agreed, and he almost single-handedly led them to victory.

In fact, candidates did not stand for the “Austrian People’s Party”; they were on the ballot as members of “Sebastian Kurz’s list.” The new administration will clearly be indebted to Kurz personally.

The European said Kurz was “like a Ferrari among politicians.” Other media call him the “Danube messiah.”

Serving as foreign minister before the election, Kurz almost single-handedly reduced the impact of the migrant crisis. In February 2016, he helped organize the Balkan states to block refugees traveling from Greece and Turkey toward Austria.

Kurz’s manifesto called for a crack-down on “political Islam” and immigration. The Freedom Party of Austria, his likely coalition partner, goes even further, saying that “Islam has no place” in Austria. The platform is clear—and popular: Austria first.

ANDREJ BABIŠ CZECH REPUBLIC

ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT MAN

THE SECOND NEW INDUCTEE TO THE Strongman Club, Andrej Babiš, won the national election in the Czech Republic on October 22 with almost 30 percent of the vote. His nearest rival won only 11 percent.

Like the other strongmen, Babiš ran on an antiestablishment ticket as the leader of the ANO party, which is only six years old. “ANO” means “yes” in Czech and is also the acronym for Action of Dissatisfied Citizens. Czechs said yes to overthrowing the establishment, empowering a newcomer party with Babiš at the head.

How will Babiš exercise his new power? He has indicated that he wants to dismantle the

Czech Republic’s checks and balances, and to abolish the senate and regional government. His platform focused on opposing immigration and reducing European Union influence over Czech affairs. It also focused on *him*. The BBC’s Rob Cameron wrote, “His message to voters—that he alone could heal the ills of the Czech political and economic system, that he alone could decapitate the hydra of corruption, that he alone could defend Czech national interests—appears to have been heard. They have given him a convincing mandate. He has truly crushed his rivals” (Oct. 22, 2017).

Like many others on this list of strongmen, Babiš openly admires Viktor Orbán. While Orbán puts Hungary first, Babiš will put the Czech Republic first.



A PICTURE OF EUROPE’S FUTURE

To learn the Bible’s prophecies for Europe, order your free booklet: **Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?**

NO TO ISLAM

ROBERT FICO IS THE STRONGMAN OF Slovakia. He has been the country's prime minister since 2006 except for a two-year period from 2010 to 2012.

He does not fit on this list quite as comfortably as the others. He is a leftist, but is unafraid of working with the far right. More importantly, he is a nationalist.

His nationalism drives him to stand up to Brussels. And he has become one of Europe's most outspoken critics of Islam and Muslim refugees. In May 2016, he said, "I do not want to see a Muslim community in Slovakia We do not want to change the traditions of this country, which are built on the Christian tradition."

"Islam has no place in Slovakia," he said. Slovakia first.



Are These Europe's Kings?

The *Trumpet* has consistently forecast the rise of a strongman in Germany—a dictatorial king. Many passages in the Bible talk about this king. You can read these in "Wanted: A Leader for Europe!" from the November-December 2017 issue (theTrumpet.com/16405).

In our free booklet *A Strong German Leader Is Imminent*, *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry writes: "This soon-coming ruler could literally be called a *king*. Even if he is not, the Bible gives him that label. When the Bible talks about a king, in most cases it's saying that this is not a democratic government. Even if he doesn't have that title, he is going to *lead like a king*. This vision in Daniel shows that the European empire is about to become a lot more authoritative."

But the Bible also prophesies that *under* this man will be a group of strong leaders—a group of kings!

Revelation 17 describes a beast that symbolizes a great European empire. This beast has 10 horns. Revelation 17:12-13 states that "the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have

received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast."

This prophecy describes a modern European power that will be ruled by 10 similar kings, authoritarian leaders who have power—which they give to an even stronger king.

Notice that these men have "one mind." They think alike.

The first few verses of Revelation 17 show that this beast is ridden by a woman—a symbol of a false church. We have already seen how all these leaders emphasize their nations' Christian heritage and want to keep Muslims out.

These leaders may have the same worldview, but they still represent nations with their own national interests. This is why Daniel 2:42 says

that this power "shall be partly strong, and partly broken." Despite their similar thinking, they don't mesh perfectly.

Ten Toes—Two Feet

Daniel 2 gives us another important detail about these 10 kings. It describes an enormous statue of a man, made up of four parts, each representing a powerful empire (verses 37-40). These four empires would reign, one after the other, until God sets up His own empire—His Kingdom ruling over all the Earth (verse 44).

The first empire, typed by the image's head of gold, the Bible tells us, was ancient Babylon. The next, symbolized by the statue's chest and arms of silver, we can easily see from history, was Medo-Persia. This was followed by the Greco-Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great, symbolized by the statue's brass stomach and thighs. The last part of the statue was the legs of iron, symbolizing the Roman Empire.

The split of the Roman Empire into two legs, or parts, is confirmed in history by the fact that ancient Rome had two capitals, Rome and Constantinople.

Rome fell long ago, but European powers have continually attempted to revive it, with men from Charlemagne to Napoleon to Hitler claiming to rule in place of the caesars of old. (For more on these resurrections of the Roman Empire, read our free book *The Holy Roman Empire in Prophecy*.)

This empire's division into two legs continues all the way to the end. The image has 10 toes, a symbol that the empire would be comprised of 10 kings. This adds an important detail. These kings would be split: Five would come from Western Europe, five from the East.

EUROPE'S STRONGMEN PAGE 32 ►



BIBLICAL IMAGERY
Revelation 17 and Daniel 2 provide
stunning details about end-time powers.

EMPEROR FOR LIFE?



of the enormous People's Liberation Army. "[H]e not only controls the military but also does it in an absolute manner," said Shanghai-based military affairs commentator Ni Lexiong. And Xi has used his military power to assert China's authority on the global stage.

Xi also waged an anti-corruption campaign resulting in the arrest or imprisonment of a breathtaking 1.4 million CCP members. This is like the entire population of San Diego suddenly being fired from important government positions and, in many cases, incarcerated.

These moves placed Xi at the center of what *Time's* Hannah Beech called "a personality cult not seen in the People's Republic since the days when frenzied Red Guards cheered Chairman Mao's launch of the Cultural Revolution" (March 31, 2016).

Here is an important reminder: Under Mao's despotic reign, between 65 and 75 million people were starved, tortured, bullied to suicide, or executed as traitors.

Lifted to Mao's Level

During his first term, Xi accumulated more power than any Chinese leader since Mao. But that was not the end of his rise. About the time that his first term ended in October, the CCP held its 19th National Congress. And as powerful as Xi was when this once-every-five-years meeting began, he emerged from it considerably more so.

At the Congress, Xi unveiled the new lineup in China's top decision-making bodies, the 25-member Politburo and seven-member Politburo Standing Committee. Both are now heavily stacked with Xi loyalists. These individuals are unlikely to challenge Xi in any meaningful way, thus greatly strengthening his grip on the most important levers of government.

Another momentous outcome from the Congress was Xi's break from the convention of naming a successor. Precedent stipulates that after a president completes his first term, he and the CCP name his successor during the National Congress. Five years later, after the president finishes his second term, the named successor becomes the new president. Xi's decision not to name a successor at the 19th Congress

Five years ago, Xi was basically unknown in Chinese politics. Now he has been lifted to the status of the hallowed Mao Zedong. What does this mean for Beijing and the world? **BY JEREMIAH JACQUES**

BEIJING

WALKING THROUGH THE STREETS and hutongs of China's vast capital city, it does not take long to notice that two faces are virtually everywhere. They peer benevolently at shoppers from countless commemorative keychains and plates. They look out at bustling streets from the covers of books, magazines and newspapers. They gaze with Mona Lisa smiles upon pedestrians from larger-than-life posters.

They are the faces of Mao Zedong and Xi Jinping. Mao was the founder of the People's Republic of China who ruled the nation with an iron fist from 1949 until his death in 1976. Xi is the nation's current leader.

The fact that Xi's status is now equal to that of the legendary authoritarian Mao has sobering implications.

From Obscurity to Potency

Five years ago, Xi Jinping was an obscure figure in Chinese politics. The public knew little about him except that

his wife was a celebrity singer, and that his father had been a comrade to Chairman Mao. As Xi assumed the office of General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in November 2012, many experts believed he would lead in the tradition of his most recent predecessors, unobtrusively and unambitiously maintaining the status quo.

But Xi's first five-year term confounded those early forecasts.

Instead of maintaining the "first among equals" style of leadership used by his recent predecessors, he adopted a strongman approach. He bypassed State Council authorities by forming policymaking party groups, many of which he chairs himself. He took personal control of writing policy on everything from China's economy and international relations to its environmental strategies and Internet regulations. He implemented painful military reforms that positioned him as unchallenged commander in chief

strongly indicates that he has no plans to relinquish power at the 20th Congress in 2022. This would give him an unprecedented third term and position him to rule China for the rest of his life.

Also notable was that none of the new Standing Committee members are younger than 60. This is the pool from which the next president is selected. And since committee members serve two five-year terms, and since CCP guidelines say Chinese politicians should retire at age 68, none of these men would be eligible to serve for two terms as Xi's successor.

Even more astonishing about the 19th Congress was the CCP's decision to etch Xi Jinping's name and personal ideology into the Party Constitution.

This is the rarest of honors. Both of Xi's most recent predecessors, presidents Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin, made contributions to the Constitution, but neither was named in the document. Even the contributions of the revered Deng Xiaoping were never named after him while he led China. Only after Deng's death in 1997 was his name added alongside his contributions.

The only other sitting ruler to have his name and ideology written into the Constitution was Chairman Mao. This essentially equates "Xi Thought" with "Mao Thought," lifting the president's status to the level as that of the near-mythical and notoriously despotic Mao.

The message this sends to Xi's potential rivals is that to defy him at this point would be ideological heresy. It makes any challenge to his power equal to an assault on the CCP itself. "I think it's intended to give [Xi] an ideological status that can't

be challenged, like Mao in that sense," said Beijing-based analyst Wu Qiang.

Asian affairs analyst Chris Buckley said this also means "Xi Thought" will now permeate all aspects of China. "While there may be no 'Little Red Book' of quotations for mass consumption like in the bygone Mao era, Mr. Xi's thinking will now infuse every aspect of party ideology in schools, the media and government agencies" (*New York Times*, Oct. 24, 2017).

Preparing for a Turbulent Era

It would be easy to view Xi's rise as the result of an ambitious individual maneuvering to make himself an authoritarian. But his rapid ascent could not have happened without the full consent and assistance of the upper echelons of the CCP.

The Chinese elite see that the global order is unraveling. They see American power declining and leadership vacuums opening up. They see that the international stage is primed for conflict, that there is a chance for China to take advantage of the volatility and to emerge as a superpower.

There is clear recognition in the highest echelons of Chinese power that, in order to attain superpower status, China's 1.4 billion people will need a ruler whose hands are not bound by red tape and who is not limited by checks and balances. They need a strongman at the helm who is free of political encumbrances and capable of streamlined decision-making. They need a new Mao.

It was based on these sentiments that the CCP elite created room for Xi's political star to rise so rapidly and so

high. Now he is the man who will guide China into the turbulent new era.

Xi, China and Bible Prophecy

The *Trumpet* watches Xi's tightening grip on power because Bible prophecy reveals that as America's influence in global affairs declines, two power blocs will emerge in its place: one, a European entity functioning in the tradition of the Holy Roman Empire; the other, an Asian bloc called in Scripture "the kings of the east," headed by Russia, with China in a secondary leadership position. The Bible makes plain—in such chapters as Jeremiah 50 and 51, Daniel 11 and 12, Revelation 16 and Matthew 24—that a clash between this European power and this Russo-Chinese-led bloc will end in the most violent conflict in human history.

The fact that Xi's face in China is now as ubiquitous as Mao's is deeply significant. His ongoing rise and increasing control over China's military and foreign policy is vital to watch, as it indicates how the Chinese president could fall in line with his fellow strongman in Russia, and how China will be brought onto its biblically prophesied collision course with Europe. It also indicates how near this future clash could be.

Although this points to a dark time in the near term, this is closely followed by the brightest imaginable future! As *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry writes in his booklet *The Prophesied Prince of Russia*: "This immense war between European and Asian forces will end in the return of Jesus Christ! ... The conclusion of that battle will mark the beginning of a peaceful and prosperous new age for the entire Earth!" ■

WHAT IS 'XI JINPING THOUGHT'?

The ideology that is now certain to infuse so much of Chinese culture is officially called "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism With Chinese Characteristics in a New Era."

Unwieldy as it may be, that phrase is saturated with significance.

"Xi Jinping thought" consists of 14 key principles. They include handing "absolute authority" of the military to the CCP; reforming the rule of law; closely following socialism with Chinese characteristics; and pursuing environmental conservation.

Its foundational message is that China must continue its rise to become the primary world power. During Xi's first five years in office, this ambition had already prompted him to focus his attention on muzzling domestic dissent, boosting China's military power, and

earning Beijing a larger role in international affairs. With Xi's eponymous ideas enshrined in the Constitution, the president will now be able to push toward these goals with redoubled intensity.

Also included in the constitutional revision were the formalization of several of Xi's core policy initiatives, including his "One Belt, One Road" plan to build infrastructure linking China to the West, and his desire to boost the government's role in China's economy.

The most important phrase of the "Xi Thought" expression is "new era." Xi breaks China's modern history down into three main epochs: Chairman Mao "liberated" the nation; Deng Xiaoping made it wealthier; now in this "new era," Xi is making it strong.

JEREMIAH JACQUES

JANUARY 2018 11

AUTHORITARIAN TRAILBLAZER



VLADIMIR PUTIN IS THE ORIGINAL strongman of the modern era. Seventeen years after he became Russia's president, his popularity is soaring, his grip on power is tighter than ever, and there's no indication he has any plans to relinquish control.

Before becoming Russia's president in 2000, Putin spent 16 years as an agent of the notorious KGB—the brutal secret service organization that succeeded Joseph Stalin's secret police, a force that helped the Soviet regime kill tens of millions of people. In parliamentary elections in 2003, Putin combined KGB methods with his presidential influence to manipulate the electoral process and ensure victory for his party. This allowed him to exert control over Russia in a way that recalled the nation's authoritarian history.

In the years since, Putin has cultivated a seductive personality cult, one week hugging a polar bear, one week riding shirtless on a horse, one week “discovering” ancient Greek artifacts while scuba diving, and the next week eloquently exposing Western hypocrisy before enchanted audiences.

The Russian people's adulation of him is based on far more than these publicity stunts. Largely because Putin lifted Russia out of the tumult of the 1990s, made the people wealthier, and made the nation a relevant force on the world stage, his approval rating has averaged around 80 percent. Although he has the power to pad this stratospheric number, there is no doubt that many Russians want a leader who will stand up to the West and return their country to superpower status. And they have one.

Making Russia Great Again

In 2005, Putin said that the collapse of the Soviet empire was “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century.” And he has made clear that he is determined to do what he can to rebuild Russia in the image of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In 2007, the Estonian government decided to remove monuments of its history under the Soviet regime. Russia retaliated by waging a massive coordinated Internet attack. It was history's first state-to-state cyberattack, and it crippled Estonia's newspapers, banks, ministries and parliamentary networks for days.

Later that year, Putin announced that the Russian Air Force would resume Cold War-style nuclear bomber flights in international airspace. Within weeks, nuclear-capable Tu-95 “Bears” were flying through the United Kingdom's airspace and near the United States military base in Guam. The *Washington Times* wrote on Aug. 19, 2007, “The message to the West is clear: The days of dismissing Russia as a spent force are over.”

These were distressing moves, but 2008 appeared to be the end of the line for Putin. The Russian Constitution limited presidents to two consecutive terms in office. Putin could not stay on as president beyond the 2008 elections without rewriting the law. So he pulled a Siberian switcheroo. He became prime minister and unofficially retained power, while Dmitry Medvedev, who was more or less a puppet, took the presidency. Putin remained in the Kremlin, continuing to steer the country as he wanted. He returned to the presidency in 2012, winning 64 percent of the vote.

In August 2008, Russia invaded the former Soviet Republic of Georgia. *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote in October of that year, “Russia's attack on Georgia in August marks the beginning of a dangerous new era in history. This was the first military strike of a rising Asian superpower—and there will be more! ... Will a crisis occur over Ukraine? That area is the breadbasket of Russia, and surely it is willing to wage war over that as well.”

Time proved that forecast remarkably accurate. In 2014, Putin's forces stealthily invaded Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula

and annexed it to Mother Russia. Putin had literally redrawn the borders of Europe. “THE FACT THAT ONE MAN—*one man*—IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS HUGE GEOPOLITICAL SHIFT IS DEEPLY SIGNIFICANT,” Mr. Flurry wrote (March 2014).

Since then, Putin has continued to wield his power to prevent Georgia, Ukraine and other former Soviet countries from developing closer ties with Europe. He is also turning Russia’s military into a modern and formidable 21st-century force. Putin pushed the U.S. out of his backyard in 2014 by persuading Kyrgyzstan to oust the Americans from Manas Air Base, Washington’s last military base in Central Asia. More recently, Russia has become deeply involved in the Middle East, sidelining America, aiding the brutal Syrian regime to retain power and helping Iran continue its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Inspiring Autocracy Worldwide

Outside of Russia, Putin’s strongman methods have inspired other ambitious rulers. As the *Economist* pointed out in October, “Personalized authoritarian rule has spread across the world over the past 15 years—often, as with Mr. Putin, built on the fragile base of a manipulated, winner-takes-all democracy. ... Mr. Putin’s brand of authoritarianism blazed the trail” (Oct. 26, 2017).

In his booklet *The Prophesied ‘Prince of Russia,’* Mr. Flurry explains that Vladimir Putin is mentioned personally in ancient Bible prophecies. Those prophecies state that his reign occurs at the end of this age: “Vladimir Putin is a sign, literally a *sign*, that Jesus Christ is about to return! This is one of the most inspiring messages in the Bible. ... We need to watch Vladimir Putin closely. I believe he is *almost certain* to be the ‘prince of Rosh’ whom God inspired Ezekiel to write about 2,500 years ago! We need to watch what is happening in Russia and how Europe responds to it.”

To understand the details of Putin’s role in Bible prophecy, order a free copy of Mr. Flurry’s landmark booklet *The Prophesied ‘Prince of Russia.’*

JEREMIAH JACQUES



SHINZŌ ABE JAPAN

MEDIA MUZZLER



WHEN SHINZŌ ABE WON A SNAP election in October, it set the stage for the 63-year-old to potentially become Japan’s longest-serving and most influential leader since World War II. With his fashionable suits and his regular overtures to American leadership, Abe appears at first glance to be pro-Western and deferential to Washington. But a closer look shows that he is a fiery Japanese nationalist, determined to tighten his grip on power in order to break Japan out of its dependence on America.

Muzzling the Media

Article 21 of Japan’s Constitution ensures freedom of “speech, press and all other forms of expression” and specifically

prohibits censorship. But under Abe, those media freedoms for Asia’s richest democracy are vanishing.

Early in his rule, Abe enacted the extremely controversial State Secret Act, under which civil servants found guilty of leaking government secrets can be imprisoned for up to 10 years. The law also says journalists and civilians who spill a state secret—or who repeatedly *inquire about* such information—can face up to five years in prison. And the government’s 19 ministries are under no obligation to explain which topics are related to a state secret. This means innocent civilians can be locked away for asking certain questions without even understanding that they were asking about a state secret and never finding out what their infraction was. It means whistle-blowers within the government are unlikely to help journalists.

BIBLICAL FIGURE

To learn more about who Vladimir Putin is in prophecy and what the Bible says he will lead Russia to do, order our free booklet *The Prophesied ‘Prince of Russia.’*

The law's effect on the Japanese press has been chilling.

The year before Abe became Japan's leader, the nation ranked 22nd in the World Press Freedom Index published annually by Reporters Without Borders. Now, after five years of removing prominent journalists at the government's request, and others learning to meticulously censor themselves, Japan ranks 72nd on the list.

Japan's once-esteemed NHK television network is now run by allies appointed by Abe. The change in tone is so glaring that many Japanese now call it "Abe TV."

Abe's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has also taken a page out of Vladimir Putin's playbook, creating an army of cyber operatives to pummel dissent and to saturate social media with their nationalist ideology.

"In Japan today, rather than the media watching the authorities, the government watches the media," said Shuntaro Torigoe, a former television news anchor and newspaper reporter.

What many of the sacked reporters have in common is that they once openly criticized Abe's effort to make Japan more aggressive militarily. "[W]hile the passage of these laws is frightening enough," the *Daily Beast* wrote, "it's all just a prelude to the ultimate goal—dismantling postwar Japan's Constitution and reverting back to the prewar version" (May 23, 2017).

Rolling Back Pacifism

In 2015, Abe scored a major victory in this "ultimate goal" when his government reinterpreted part of the Constitution and rammed through controversial laws that grant

Tokyo the right to "collective self-defense." This means

that even when Japan faces no direct threat, it can intervene in clashes between neighboring nations and use force to counter future threats.

On May 3, 2017, the 70th anniversary of the enactment of Japan's postwar pacifist Constitution, Abe proclaimed that he would establish a new constitution by 2020. The draft of the new document includes not just the normalization of a fully developed Japanese military but also the notorious ammunition that all aspiring authoritarians need: the "emergency situation clause." If Japan is attacked, suffers domestic unrest, or is hit by a natural disaster, this clause allows Abe to declare a state of emergency. Then, without any deliberation, his regime could issue orders that have the power of national laws. Constitution experts warn that this clause is alarmingly similar to the emergency decree clause promulgated by Article 48 in the Weimar Constitution, which was instrumental in the establishment of an unchallenged one-party Nazi state.

In May 2017, perhaps the most alarming sign yet of Abe's potential for authoritarianism arrived. The LDP pushed through a conspiracy bill that the *Daily Beast* said is "straight out of Imperial Japan's darkest days ... from 1925 to 1945 when people who criticized the government or wrote the truth about the war effort simply vanished in the middle of the night and were not seen again" (ibid).

The bill, called "the law regulating preparing for terrorism and other organized crimes," says that if two or more individuals prepare to commit a crime, they will be penalized even if they have not engaged in criminal behavior. Critics say the vague wording gives the government power to label nearly any civilian act as criminal.

Concerned over Japanese police trampling on civil liberties, the United

Nations high commissioner for human rights asked Abe to reconsider the law. "There is absolutely no justification for the Japanese government to behave in this way and push through seriously defective legislation in such a rush," the commissioner said. Abe dismissed the objections and rammed the legislation through.

To abandon Japan's pacifist Constitution, Abe still needs the approval of a majority of the Japanese public, which so far remains divided on the issue. But with media critics now subdued, government whistle-blowers muzzled, and with vague laws in place letting him easily slap a "criminal" label on adversaries, this Asian strongman could soon have an unshackled and independent military to do his bidding.

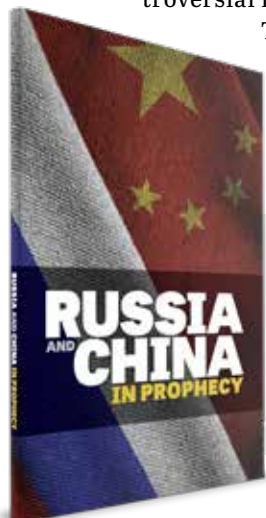
One of the Eastern 'Kings'?

"If you want to call me a right-wing militarist, please go ahead," Abe said back in 2013, months after he became Japan's prime minister. In the time since, he has given many indications showing that the title, if anything, understates his ambitions.

The *Trumpet* takes a keen interest in Mr. Abe's moves toward authoritarianism and remilitarization because Bible prophecy states that in the "time of the end," a powerful bloc of Asian nations will join together and play a major role in nuclear World War III. Scripture calls this conglomerate "the kings of the east." Ezekiel 38 shows that Russia will lead this end-time Asian bloc and lists several specific nations—called by their ancient names—that will rally behind Moscow. Among them are "Gomer" and "Togarmah," the ancestors of the modern Japanese.

To understand the role this power bloc will play in the end time, request a free copy of *Russia and China in Prophecy*.

JEREMIAH JACQUES



THE KINGS OF THE EAST

China, Russia and Japan will have their strongmen. To see what Bible prophecy says these men will do in the near future, request your free copy of Gerald Flurry's *Russia and China in Prophecy*.



RODRIGO DUTERTE PHILIPPINES

PUNISHER OF THE PHILIPPINES

FIRST AS A MAYOR AND NOW AS PRESIDENT of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte has cultivated a reputation as a benevolent gangster—equal parts killer and savior.

Since Duterte became president in June 2016 and declared a war on drug dealers and users, police and unofficial vigilante groups have killed at least 7,000 people—without using the legal system. It's a nationwide continuation of the same campaign he has waged in Davao, where he became mayor in 1988.

Stories of Duterte's personal contributions to the antidrug campaign sometimes sound as if they are lifted straight out of the pages of some dark comic book: He said that he has tossed a drug kingpin out of a helicopter, and a hitman who claims to have worked for him said Duterte personally finished off a justice department worker with a submachine gun, and ordered a kidnaper to be fed to crocodiles.

Whether or not the accounts are true, they help to build a cult of personality around Duterte. They have earned him endless nicknames like "Duterte Harry," "The Punisher" and "The Death Squad Mayor." They have also helped to earn him soaring popularity among

Filipinos who are tired of violent crime darkening their lives, and who are willing to let the government ignore the rule of law in order to fight it.

Duterte's populist style and fiery speeches differentiate him from the cultured but out-of-touch elites who have led the Philippines for most of the last 30 years. They win him the adulation of most of his people who view him as an agent of positive change and welcome his strongman tactics.

But in November 2016, Duterte suggested that he is willing to target noncriminals if they disagree with his policies, saying of human rights activists, "I will include you [in the killing] because you are the reason why [the drug users'] numbers swell."

In February 2017, an outspoken critic of Duterte's extrajudicial methods, Sen. Leila de Lima, was arrested on allegations that she had allowed illegal drugs to flow freely in the national jail during her time as justice secretary. She denies the charges and says she has been targeted because she criticizes the president. Duterte's vice president, Leni Robredo, called de Lima's arrest "the latest move in a persistent campaign of political harassment" by

Duterte. She called on supporters to "fight for the right to speak dissent."

Phelim Kine, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch, said, "Not only Congress, but other pillars of Philippine democracy from the press to the judiciary, should be worried about the future. The arrest of Senator de Lima suggests that Duterte is willing to debase Philippine governance to the level of personal vendetta."

Drug trafficking and the crime and misery that accompany it are major problems in the Philippines. It is clear that the country needs a leader who will take a tough stance on its drug and crime problems. But Duterte's willingness to circumvent law and to deny due process in order to tackle the problems creates a slippery slope.

The U.S.-based Human Rights Watch says that, in light of recent history, strongmen such as Duterte should be viewed as potentially dangerous to their nations. "We forget at our peril the demagogues of the past: the fascists, Communists and their ilk who claimed privileged insight into the majority's interest but ended up crushing the individual. When populists treat rights as obstacles to their vision of the majority will, it is only a matter of time before they turn on those who disagree with their agenda" (*World Report 2017*).

Although the Philippines has been a staunch ally of the U.S. for decades, Duterte has signaled that ignoring the rule of law is not all he will use his strongman power to do. He has also discussed a "separation" from the U.S. and a realignment with Russia and China.

Revelation 9:16 and 16:12 speak of an Eastern alliance called "the kings of the east," with the plural *kings* signaling that this will be a multinational force, a bloc of multiple Asian nations. Ezekiel 38 provides many more details about this Asian military bloc, including the fact that it will be led by Russia, with China in a number two position.

Asian strongmen such as Duterte tilting closer to Russia and China are laying the foundation for the "kings of the east" prophecy to be fulfilled. To understand the significance of this trend, read our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy*.

JEREMIAH JACQUES

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SELF-SERVING SULTAN

was nearing completion, the government decided it would instead be the president's residence. Why? Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was nearing the end of his term, so, like Russia's Vladimir Putin, he chose to become president to retain power. And whether he was prime minister or president, the man living in the palace would be Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

Today, the White Palace

symbolizes not only Erdoğan's vision for Turkey's future, but also his own place in history.

Erdoğan's Rise

The Justice and Development Party (known by its Turkish acronym AKP) came to power in 2002. Its leader, the former mayor of Istanbul, became prime minister from 2003 to 2014, then

transitioned to the presidency.

Over the past 15 years, the strongman has overseen a radical change in the governance of the state, transforming Turkey from a realm where secularism was sacred to one where Islam now dominates.

Turkey is a functioning democracy, and many Turks hoped that Erdoğan and his party would eventually be voted out of office and lose power. However, the past two years have vanquished that hope and have assured Erdoğan's place as Turkey's strongman for the foreseeable future.

On the evening of July 15, 2016, Turkish tanks rolled into Istanbul. Soon the sonic boom of tactical jets and the low thumping of helicopters could be heard flying overhead. A coup d'état was underway.

The military has protected Turkish secularism for more than 50 years. In 1960, 1971, 1980 and 1997, the military had preserved the modern secular democratic state by successfully overthrowing the government. In a day or two, it seemed, the increasingly

AT 2 MILLION SQUARE FEET AND boasting over 1,000 rooms, the "White Palace" on the outskirts of Ankara is fit for a king. That was likely the point. Costing \$615 million, the lavish building's Ottoman and Seljuk architecture and sculptured grounds revive the glory of the Ottoman Empire.

Originally the palace was to house the prime minister. However, just as it

MOHAMMAD BIN SALMAN SAUDI ARABIA

PUTIN OF THE MIDEAST

SAUDI ARABIA IS LITERALLY A KINGDOM. It does not pretend to be a democracy or a republic. King Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud is the absolute monarch of the Middle East's biggest country by landmass and the region's largest oil producer.

Saudi Arabia is a leader in the Middle East. It is a founding member of major regional institutions such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. It has forged alliances with other nations in the region and much of the Western world. Its agreement with the United States to price its oil in dollars has brought in arms and support from the world's superpower.

When Salman became king in January 2015 at age 79, he appointed his son

Mohammad bin Salman deputy crown prince and defense minister. The young prince wasted no time in defending Saudi interests. In March 2015, he assembled a coalition of 10 Middle Eastern and North African nations to fight Iranian-sponsored Houthi rebels, who had deposed the Yemeni government and seized the capital of Sanaa six months before. The U.S., Britain, France, Canada, Turkey, China and Germany supplied arms and logistical support.

In December 2015, Defense Minister Prince Mohammad announced the formation of a 34-nation counterterrorism coalition of Arab nations. Two months later, Saudi Arabia and 19 other Muslim nations conducted what the Saudi Press Agency called the "largest and most important" military drills in

Mideast history. Dubbed "North Thunder," they were meant to "send a clear message to Iran to stop interfering in Arab internal affairs," according to a *Gulf News* paraphrase of Middle East military expert Jamal Mazloum.

High-profile events have widened the rift between Iran and Saudi Arabia: Riyadh's execution in January 2016 of a prominent pro-Iranian Shiite cleric; Saudi Arabia leading regional allies to impose a blockade on Qatar for sponsoring terrorism and supporting Iran. Most recently, on Nov. 4, 2017, Riyadh allegedly pressured Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri to resign in protest against Iran's growing influence in Lebanon.

Domestically, Prince Mohammad has sought to boost the kingdom's oil-dependent economy, which has suffered from slumping oil prices. In April 2016, he launched a set of socio-economic

authoritarian and Islamic strongman of Turkey would no longer have the keys to the White Palace.

But Erdoğan managed to evade the revolutionaries as they descended on the coastal hotel where he had been staying. He then appeared on CNNTurk, calling on his supporters to take to the streets and use all means necessary to stop the insurrection. The people obeyed, defying the military's imposed curfew. Footage quickly emerged on social media of men in plain clothes trying to hold back battle tanks, some even lying in front of them as they plowed forward. This further motivated Erdoğan's supporters to come out in droves. The iconic moment of the coup came the next day. It wasn't the image the military had hoped for: Erdoğan in handcuffs. Instead, it was the image of soldiers laying down their weapons in surrender and being marched off the Bosphorus Bridge. The military takeover had failed.

Worse than just botching the coup, the futile military action gave the president the rationale he needed to remove dissenters from positions of power throughout the nation. In the year and a half since, Erdoğan has sacked 146,713 state officials, teachers, bureaucrats, academics and military personnel. He

has arrested 61,247 individuals, shut down over 3,000 schools, universities and dormitories, and dismissed 4,463 judges and prosecutors. To ensure the purge doesn't attract too much attention, he has shut down 187 media outlets and arrested 308 journalists.

With the military culled, the media silenced and anti-Erdoğan government technocrats removed, Erdoğan decided to go after the Turkish Constitution. On April 16, 2017, Turkey held a nationwide referendum on 18 constitutional amendments proposed by Erdoğan's party. The reforms passed in a close vote. Turkey can now transform from a parliamentary democracy to a presidential republic, and Erdoğan can remain in power until 2029 if he continues to win successive elections.

Where to Now

Erdoğan has been tightening his hold on power for years, but never as overtly as in the last two years. But surprisingly, most of his actions have the support of the majority of Turks. It was they who answered the call from the minarets to stop the tanks in their tracks. It was they who reelected him over and over in spite of his authoritarian tactics. It was they who approved

his constitutional amendments.

The West, particularly European nations, have a complicated relationship with Turkey, a pillar member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. They rely on its cooperation in many ways, and have shown themselves remarkably willing to overlook a great deal of unsavory behavior in order to preserve ties. The idea of Turkey becoming a European Union member, as it has long sought to be, is further from becoming reality than ever. Yet biblical prophecy says its ongoing alliance with Europe *will* play a role in end-time events.

Biblical prophecy does not say whether or not Erdoğan will continue to rule Turkey, but it does indicate that there will be a strong ruler in Turkey capable of navigating powerful alliances, especially with a German-led Europe. It also states that Turkey will be part of one of the greatest double crosses in history, against the modern nations of Israel (read more of these prophecies in our free booklet *The King of the South*). Given Erdoğan's self-serving alliance in NATO, as well as his cool relationship with the Jewish state of Israel, he becomes a probable candidate to lead Turkey to fulfill those prophecies.

BRENT NAGTEGAAL

reforms to expand Saudi Arabia's industrial power beyond oil production. These necessitated religious and cultural changes such as permitting women to drive and curtailing the influence of the Wahhabi brand of Sunni Islam, which has dictated Saudi cultural norms (and promoted Islamic terrorism) for decades.

In June 2017, King Salman declared Prince Mohammad bin Salman the heir apparent to the Saudi throne. The 32-year-old crown prince began consolidating his power by arresting his opponents in religious, business and political circles. On November 4, dubbed the "Saturday Night Massacre" by some commentators, dozens of businessmen, politicians and even Saudi princes and other royal family members were arrested for corruption. Some suggested the arrests were preemptive attacks on alleged coup plotters.

Saudi Arabia's crown prince is replacing the kingdom's consensus rule with his strongman rule. In many respects, he is already acting like a king. Some media outlets have dubbed him the "Vladimir Putin of the Middle East."

Prince Mohammad is using his power to push reforms that will make his country a more attractive ally for European nations. Europe is already taking sides in what has shaped up to be a battle for dominance in the Middle East between Saudi Arabia and Iran—and this development is certain to make that choice even easier. This aligns with the Bible's prophecy in Psalm 83 of the Saudis ("Ishmaelites") forging an alliance in the end time with other Middle Eastern states and *Germany* ("Assur"). You can read more about this in our free booklet *The King of the South*.

ANTHONY CHIBARIRWE



HOW TO BECOME A POLITICAL 'STRONGMAN'

Now that you have seen why strong leadership is essential for national security, you need to learn how to become the leader your country needs. There are six basic steps to becoming a strongman. Not every aspiring authoritarian makes it all the way to step six, but there are numerous examples of leaders around the world illustrating how to master each step.



ONE DEVELOP CHARISMA

To increase your political power, an aspiring strongman needs to be popular. This is especially true in a democratic republic. To build a popular following, personal charisma and eloquent oratory are indispensable skills. The newly elected chancellor of Austria, **Sebastian Kurz**, began his career as the charismatic and fiery chairman of the youth branch of the Austrian People's Party. Turkey's president **Recep Tayyip Erdoğan** honed his public speaking skills until hundreds of thousands of Turks were willing to brave a blistering afternoon sun at a vast outdoor sports complex just to hear him speak live.



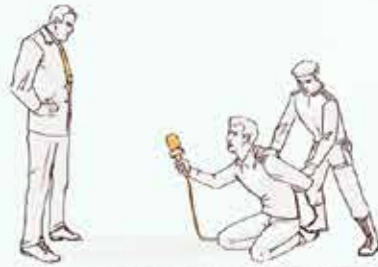
TWO IDENTIFY NATIONAL ENEMIES

An aspiring strongman must realize that people generally only surrender liberty in return for protection from a dire threat. Successful strongmen identify such threats and put themselves forward as the only real solution. Philippines President **Rodrigo Duterte** would never have been able to subvert civil rights like he has if his nation were not threatened by criminal drug cartels. Japanese Prime Minister **Shinzo Abe** would never have been able to get away with muzzling the free press if his nation was not under threat from a nuclear-armed madman in North Korea.



THREE CONSOLIDATE POWER

Once aspiring strongmen have built up popular opposition to a dire threat, they often work to remove legal constraints on their ability to take actions deemed to be in their nation's best interest. In practical terms, this means concentrating power in their own office by undermining constitutional check and balances. To protect his country from foreign immigrants, Polish politician **Jarostaw Kaczyński** is working to pass a bill that would eliminate the judicial role in Poland's system of checks and balances. Hungarian Prime Minister **Viktor Orbán** condemned checks and balances as a "U.S. invention" that does not work in Europe.



FIVE SUPPRESS THE PRESS

The most authoritarian strongmen view the free media as a threat to their power, and take steps to suppress free speech. Japanese Prime Minister **Shinzō Abe** enacted the extremely controversial State Secret Act, under which civil servants found guilty of leaking government secrets could be imprisoned. Then his administration started misconstruing the legislation to remove any journalist for even inquiring about such information. Poland dropped seven places in the 2017 World Press Freedom Index after **Jarostaw Kaczyński's** party tried to financially throttle independent newspapers that were opposed to its reforms.



FOUR ALTER THE CONSTITUTION

The most popular strongmen may be able to increase their own personal power by actually altering the text of their nation's constitution. Turkish President **Erdoğan** convinced parliament to pass an amendment that merged his office with the office of the prime minister, effectively granting himself a nearly all-powerful position as head of government, head of state and head of the ruling party. The Chinese Communist Party etched President **Xi Jinping's** name and personal ideology into its Constitution, lifting his status to the same level as the late authoritarian Mao Zedong.



SIX CRACKDOWN ON OPPOSITION

The most tyrannical strongmen augment their control over the electorate by suppressing opposition parties and rigging elections. Chinese President **Xi Jinping** runs a one-party state with perhaps the largest secret police establishment in the world. He routinely uses the secret police to purge the Chinese Communist Party of "tigers and flies," his term for political rivals and others with differing ideological views. Russian President **Vladimir Putin** is famous for imprisoning political rivals like Mikhail Khodorkovsky, and poisoning Russian dissidents like Alexander Litvinenko.



THE ANTIDOTE TO 'TOXIC MASCULINITY'

Sex scandals highlight a massive problem—but we can't solve it unless we correctly define it. **BY BRAD MACDONALD AND JOEL HILLIKER**

SHOCKING, REVOLTING DETAILS OF the Harvey Weinstein scandal came in a flood in October. The public learned that, over decades, one of Hollywood's most powerful men had sexually harassed and assaulted dozens of women, and was abetted by a large team that covered his tracks and suppressed the truth. Once Weinstein was finally exposed, the lid blew off a much larger and even more explosive story.

The story is that sexual predation is apparently everywhere.

Every day seems to bring fresh allegations of sexual harassment, carefully worded public statements, new apologies, resignations and firings. The accused include high-profile celebrities and leaders: actors such as Dustin Hoffman, Kevin Spacey, Richard Dreyfuss and Ben Affleck; comedians such as Louis C.K. and Andy Dick; film directors such as Oliver Stone, Brett Ratner and James Toback (accused by over 100 women). Scandals have hit media bigwigs such as Fox News's Bill O'Reilly (fired) and CEO Roger Ailes (resigned), as well as producers, publicists and publishers. The shock waves are hitting other professions: businessmen, doctors, educators, administrators, editors, chefs. They are shaking the political world: Mayors, congressmen, even former presidents

have been accused. One Democrat representative testified that Capitol Hill is "probably among the worst" of hostile work environments for women. In a similar scandal affecting Britain, politicians are resigning in droves.

Collective moral outrage has descended suddenly, with stunning fury. The "rules" governing many sectors of society have changed overnight. Immoral acts that were tolerated, even encouraged, are now repugnant. Some of the alleged offenses are decades old—but the new standard is the only standard. It seems no one is invulnerable, and the spreading scandals have no end in sight.

In many cases, evil predatory men are receiving punishment they richly deserve. Environments where harassment was condoned are getting cleaned up. This is undeniably positive.

But that is not all that is happening here. Now every misdeed, big or small, is being treated with the same indignation and scorn—and the same presumption of guilt. Many allegations are one person's word against another's, but no politician, commentator, reporter, manager or decision-maker wants to be seen as an insensitive chauvinist. So they automatically applaud every woman for courageously exposing her assailant.

This lightning-fast, potent moralistic about-face is happening for a reason.

Once you understand the reason, you can recognize the real solution.

'Toxic Masculinity'

The overarching lesson drawn by many critics of Weinstein and his brethren is that there is something *inherently pernicious* about MEN IN GENERAL. Many people now genuinely believe that traditional manhood is lethal and is destroying our nations.

Actress Emma Thompson responded to the scandals this way: "So what we need to start talking about is the *crisis in masculinity*, the crisis of EXTREME MASCULINITY which is this sort of behavior" (emphasis added throughout).

USA Today wrote, "It's the culture—both within and beyond Hollywood—dominated by TOXIC MASCULINITY that ignored Weinstein's problematic behavior, that let rumor remain rumor, and that endangers women everywhere if it's not curtailed" (Oct. 13, 2017).

"Literally and figuratively, TOXIC MASCULINITY IS KILLING US," wrote the *Boston Globe's* Renée Graham. "Mass shootings. Domestic violence. Fatal fraternity hazing. Rape culture. Workplaces and schools turned into cesspools of sexual harassment and assault. This is not consigned to one race, ethnicity or socioeconomic level. FERAL MASCULINITY affirms itself every day through violence and domination" (Oct. 17, 2017).

Many commentators say that unwanted come-ons or even conversational faux pas like "mansplaining" and "maninterrupting" are evidence of the same toxicity that produces male-only sins like sex slavery and rape.

One pundit insisted that this systemic issue has only one solution: Whenever a man in power is found guilty, fire him—and replace him with a woman.

Is *masculinity* the problem? Is there something *inherently toxic* about manhood?

"The concept of toxic masculinity is used in the social sciences to describe *traditional norms of behavior* among men in contemporary American and European society that are associated with detrimental social and psychological effects," the Wikipedia page on "toxic masculinity" informs us. "Such 'toxic'

masculine norms include dominance, devaluation of women, extreme self-reliance, and the suppression of emotions.”

Thus, if you are male and you subscribe to “traditional norms of behavior,” a growing number of people in this world, some in influential positions, consider you toxic. And what do you do with a toxic substance? You eliminate it.

There are some people who have been spurred by these scandals into a rational, good-faith effort to reduce sexual misconduct and raise moral standards. But that cause is being hijacked by an army of amoral, anti-religion, anti-tradition individuals and institutions with a more radical agenda. These people are seizing this opportunity to aggressively advance a long-held ambition to redefine, isolate, even eradicate traditional masculinity.

Attack on Real Manhood

It's working too. Today there are various programs, including university courses, with names like *Masculinity 101* and *Men's Project*, designed to help men purge their toxicity. For example, a program called *Rethink Masculinity*, offered by Washington, D.C.'s Collective Action for Safe Spaces, describes itself as a class where men “learn how social constructs of masculinity harm them and the people around them, and work to construct healthier masculinities.” This includes becoming “better allies with women, gender non-conforming people, and other people of marginalized identities.” Teachers, professors and intellectuals are condemning anything that promotes traditional male roles, including classic literature and Disney movies. Across the planet, famous males are publicly forswearing behavior associated with conventional masculinity.

By this view, all men are potential rapists, and are not sufficiently enlightened until they acknowledge this ugly truth.

There's no doubt about it: The last vestiges of traditional masculinity—already enfeebled after decades of being undermined and assailed—are being targeted for extermination.

If you consider yourself a traditional man, or if you are a woman in a relationship with one, you are a target. If you are a male who exhibits “dominance”—perhaps you're a bit of an extrovert, maybe you occasionally raise your voice, and

can give an order or two—you are a target. If you are a male who “suppresses his emotions”—who rarely sheds a tear or shares his feelings—you are a target. If you are a male who practices “extreme self-reliance,” you are a target.

Before you enroll in a reeducation program, though, realize that this whole movement stems from a spectacular failure to identify the real source of the problem.

Misidentifying the Problem

When you think of Weinstein and these other men, the fundamental problem is *not* traditional masculinity. The central issue isn't the masculine tendency to exert dominance or to treat women differently than men. It isn't even the abuse of power. The fundamental issue is ACUTE SELFISHNESS and VANITY, and a DESPERATE LACK OF SELF-DISCIPLINE.

These are not male-only sins. In fact, the Bible says the male *and* female heart is “deceitful above all things, and DESPERATELY WICKED” (Jeremiah 17:9). Various translations of this verse says the human heart, or *human nature*, is terminally ill. The way of human nature is “the way of vanity, lust and greed—of jealousy and envy—of competition and strife—of rebellion and deceit,” explained Herbert Armstrong in *The Incredible Human Potential*. Harvey Weinstein, Kevin Spacey and the rest of these individuals were walking in the way of *human nature*.

This doesn't justify their behavior, but it does explain it. Fundamentally, the cause of these problems is not traditional masculinity. IT IS HUMAN NATURE.

Moreover, understanding the truth about human nature makes the solu-

By this view, all men are potential rapists, and are not sufficiently enlightened until they acknowledge this ugly truth.

tion obvious. Whatever problems are caused by toxic masculinity can only be solved if we understand the real problem. The solution isn't to wage a war on traditional masculinity, IT IS TO WAGE WAR ON HUMAN NATURE.

And for men, this means developing *more masculinity*—that is, right, proper, BIBLICAL MASCULINITY. If toxic

masculinity is the problem, *biblical masculinity is the solution*.

Biblical Masculinity

What is biblical masculinity? First, traditional masculinity as it is understood today is *not* biblical masculinity. To be sure, some *aspects* of traditional masculinity are rooted in biblical teaching and principles, but these principles are often misunderstood or misapplied. Moreover, traditional masculinity *does not* include the essential biblical knowledge about godly manhood.

Recognize that God created men and women, and with purpose (Genesis 1:26-27). He designed masculinity and femininity, including obvious, complementary differences in the sexes' bodies and physiques. Unbiased study shows clear, complementary differences in mental, emotional and psychological tendencies. God made all this because He intends men and women to fulfill different, complementary roles within family and society, and to be mutually dependent on one another.

God engineered certain proclivities and ambitions within men to make them builders of families, communities and societies. He then provided invaluable instruction for men on how to direct those energies toward truly productive ends. A man who follows that direction builds character and becomes a blessing to those around him.

God also designed sexuality, including attraction and beauty. He shaped several factors and forces that draw men and women together into the intimate and binding relationships of marriage and family. Then He provided

laws to help everyone undertake that process in a positive, upright way that builds character and stabilizes society.

The Bible contains plenty of instruction *specifically* for men, detailing the duties God gives men—particularly husbands and fathers—and how men should act. For example, in Ephesians 5, God says a man's primary responsibility

within marriage is to LOVE his wife and to sacrifice himself for her good. 1 Timothy 5:8 says a man has a duty as a *provider* to fulfill his family's material needs. God gave men a greater capacity for physical strength (e.g. Proverbs 20:29), and commands that we use that for unselfish *good*, treating women with genuine respect (e.g. 1 Timothy 5:2). Though God equipped men physically and psychologically to be the initiator in the relationship, He forbids men to be predators—He expects them to serve as women's *protectors* and *defenders*. He commands men to regard women *with honor*, as the “weaker vessel” (1 Peter 3:7).

Love, honor, provide, protect—are these toxic characteristics? These are aspects of true, *biblical* masculinity. A man who is *obeying God* simply will not be taking advantage of women, harassing them or using his power to secure sexual favors. Instead he will be self-controlled, skilled at restraining his lusts, and faithful to his wife.

Ultimately, being masculine means using the power of God to CONQUER selfish human nature, to submit to God's will, and to FULFILL THE RESPONSIBILITIES that come with being a man. Fundamentally, a man's job is to *love* and *serve*: God first, then family, then fellow man. These are traits that produce happiness and joy, that build stable, contented, thriving families, communities and nations.

Can you see it? The problem isn't toxic masculinity; IT'S TOXIC HUMAN NATURE. And the solution is to *conquer* that human nature!

Sadly, this is a solution society is unwilling to consider—yet.

A Lesson We Mustn't Miss

Modern society has renounced God's standards and laws. It mocks His morality and flouts His definitions of right and wrong. God condemns fornication—we embrace it. He condemns adultery—we accept it. He commands that sex be confined to within marriage—society sneers. Jesus Christ said merely *looking* on a woman lustfully is committing adultery in the heart (Matthew 5:28). But we live in a pornographic playground and celebrate it.

Until suddenly, we decide we don't like some of the effects.

And that is exactly what we are seeing in all these harassment scandals: the EFFECTS—the INEVITABLE EFFECTS—of the choices we have made. ALL the “toxic masculinity” ugliness is a result of pushing God aside and doing what seems right in our own eyes.

Society views the roles God designed for men and women with contempt. Now it has no idea what godly masculinity is, or femininity. People generally are woefully ignorant of what God intends men and women to be. And we are suffering immeasurably for it.

For example, to our great shame, society no longer teaches men to honor and protect women. A basic, intrinsic part of masculinity designed by God and embraced by most human beings for most of history is now condemned by modern society. Feminists consider it demeaning for a man to think of himself as a protector; it is more enlightened to let women fend for themselves. Now look at the disasters that occur when men abdicate their role.

To take another example, God commands modesty (1 Timothy 2:9). He says women should dress and behave modestly—not in hijabs or burkas, but with tasteful apparel and mannerisms that do not misuse the undeniable *power* of their sexuality. But society is convinced women should be able to dress and act however they want and expect men to treat them with the highest honor.

Here is Samantha Field writing for *Relevant*: “It may seem counterintuitive, but our concept of modesty is rooted in the idea that women are sexual objects. When we see a woman and condemn her clothing choices, we've accepted the idea that a woman's body is primarily sexual. Ankles, collarbones, shoulders, cleavage, knees, thighs—they're not treated as part of a person, but as objects that can tempt men to lust. ... Victim blaming is a cornerstone of Christian teachings about sexual purity. ... In this purity culture, women are to blame for what

abusers do to them” (Oct. 11, 2017).

Nonsense. The truth is that in God's eyes, WE ALL have our part to play in preserving the sanctity of sex.

As we stand in a moral cesspool of our own creation, can't we finally be honest and acknowledge the *rotten results* of our *own choices*?

Rather than blaming all these problems on some kind of design flaw in men, we need to recognize that this is what happens when you throw away the manufacturer's Instruction Manual.

If men and women in Hollywood and elsewhere kept God's laws regarding sex, none of this would be happening. These scandals prove that God is real, that He knows what He is talking about, that His law is still in effect and is binding on us today, and that when we break it, we are the ones who end up broken.

Spiritual Dimension

God designed men and women and family. Family is actually the heart of His plan for humankind (request our free booklet *God Is a Family*).

That is why family is such a target for attack in a world ruled by God's adversary, the devil. Satan hates family and is undermining and destroying it. If he can prevent men from fulfilling their responsibilities to their families, he can destroy families. He has already succeeded wildly in undercutting male leadership and putting women at the heads of families and society (Isaiah 3:1-5, 12). The exploitation of these sex scandals to redefine manhood is part of a much larger, longer-term, coordinated effort.

You can do your part to fight the trend by embracing God's vision for family, and by committing to conquering your own human nature. If you are a man, you can accomplish both of these goals by embarking on the Spirit-led, Spirit-infused crusade to develop biblical manhood!

Download our free e-book ***Biblical Manhood***. This book is a field manual for developing biblical masculinity. It provides a detailed guide to the moral, principled life God expects a man to lead. Find it at theTrumpet.com/go/manhood.



Unmasking Antifa



A group that promoted Communist dictatorship in Germany is now rising to prominence in the United States. **BY ANDREW MILLER**

AT LEAST 100 DEMONSTRATORS MARCHED THROUGH THE streets of Portland, Oregon, on November 4, chanting, “Whose streets? Our streets!” and “No KKK. No fascist U.S.A. No Trump.” Many of these demonstrators wore the logo of Antifa, the far-left movement that has been making headlines across Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States. This demonstration was organized by Refuse Fascism PDX—a joint venture between the Revolutionary Communist Party USA and the Democratic Socialists of America. Its purpose, according to its organizers, was to call for the removal of “the Trump-Pence regime.”

This march was not marred by violence, but masked Antifa agitators caused nearly \$100,000 worth of damage to the University of California–Berkeley campus last February during a protest against a speech by a Breitbart News editor. During those protests, Antifa members started fires, broke windows, painted graffiti on nearby businesses, destroyed automatic teller machines and assaulted bystanders.

Six months later, Antifa agitators announced their presence on August 12 by brawling with neo-Nazis in Charlottesville, Virginia. Then, they again made headlines for assaulting demonstrators at a “No to Marxism in America” rally on August 27.

As violent protests and demonstrations rise up across the country, many are now asking, “What is Antifa?”

Where ‘Anti-Fascism’ Began

Antifa is actually not a new political force. It is a loosely connected network of groups named in honor of the military wing of the Communist Party of Germany. The movement was founded in the 1920s as part of the Soviet Union’s efforts to transform Germany into a Communist dictatorship. The group’s name is an abbreviation for “*anti-fascist*,” and its strategy is to label all of its rival parties as “fascist.” During the 1920s and 1930s, Antifa worked to convince Germans that mainstream political parties like the Social Democrats were no better than the Nazis. This strategy successfully convinced hundreds of thousands of Germans to join the ranks of the Communist Party.

The Antifa movement experienced a resurgence in the 1980s, when far-left activists in Germany and the United States resurrected the strategy of labeling free-market advocates and constitutional conservatives as fascists. In the U.S., Antifa leaders specifically link the free market to white supremacy.

Mark Bray, an Antifa sympathizer and author of *Antifa: The Anti-Fascist Handbook*, wrote in the *Washington Post* that Antifa activists “reject turning to the police or the state to halt the advance of white supremacy.” Instead, they advocate mob opposition to what they label as fascism, and resistance to free-market forces that they say support fascism. Popular Antifa chants include, “*Cops and the Klan go hand in hand*” and “*No Trump. No wall. No U.S.A. at all.*” That’s right: NO U.S.A. AT ALL.

By creating an environment where people lose faith in government institutions, Antifa hopes to swell its ranks, and the ranks of groups like Democratic Socialists of America. While it is difficult to pin down exact numbers on Antifa groups in the United States, an NPR/PBS poll from August shows that up to 5 percent of the American public are sympathetic to Antifa’s cause. By polarizing the political scene into fascist and anti-fascist camps, Antifa is eroding the democratic center—like it did in 1920s Germany.

Where Lawlessness Is Leading

A dangerous trend toward lawlessness is taking root in America. Together with major media outlets and allied groups like Black Lives Matter, Antifa is promoting a narrative that America’s system of constitutional checks and balances is only a mask for wealthy, white European men to dominate. They say this system must be torn down.

There is a dark spiritual force behind the unrest. “Republicans and Democrats are divided like never before,” wrote editor in chief Gerald Flurry in the October 2017 *Philadelphia Trumpet*. “Rather than trying to solve the nation’s problems, the radical left is stirring them up. Some people believe they are bringing down President Donald Trump, but are they instead bringing down America itself?”

The Bible prophesies this about America’s near future: “Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers” (Isaiah 1:7). Why would God allow such devastation? Because Americans have rebelled against His law.

In a companion prophecy in Ezekiel 5, God reveals that there will be a time of violent rioting in the cities of America (as well as Britain) just before they suffer a foreign invasion. The dangerous level of ideological division in modern-day America is leading to the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy.

The extent to which Antifa will specifically contribute to the unfolding of this nightmarish scenario remains to be seen. But its openly subversive aims and its revolution-oriented violence are beginning to gather dangerous momentum in American society. Expect it to grow far worse. ■

To understand why God is allowing this attack from within to happen, request *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry’s free booklet ***America Under Attack***.



Astronomy, Mathematics and

Evidence that the biblical patriarch influenced ancient scientific genius **BY CHRISTOPHER EAMES**

SOME OF THE EARLIEST chapters in the Bible focus on a man named Abraham. The scriptural record of his life begins with God telling him to

leave his country and take a journey of faith to the land of Canaan.

Did you ever wonder why God told Abraham to do this? Surprising as it may sound, archaeological discoveries and ancient texts suggest that

Abraham's journey actually related to *astronomy and advanced mathematics*. These clues have helped shed light on the remarkable life of Abraham before his sojourn in Canaan—and one reason he had to leave.

THE GENIUS OF ANCIENT BABYLON

Modern scientists have been coming to grips with the sheer mathematical genius of the ancient Babylonians. Here is an example: You may remember the Pythagorean theorem from the math classes you took in school. Around the early 500s B.C., Greek mathematician Pythagoras discovered the theorem for working out the hypotenuse, the longest side of a right-angle triangle. Since that time, Pythagoras's name has been given to the method. But the Babylonians had *already* discovered it *over 1,200 years earlier!*

A mathematical tablet discovered a century ago and dating to around 1800 B.C. showed text fulfilling the triangular equation of $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$. The artifact, known as Plimpton 322, has only recently been reexamined. Scientists have been stunned, not only by this one equation, but also by the general knowledge of trigonometry the tablet displays. Like the Pythagorean theorem, trigonometry was classically attributed to the Greeks, dated to around 120 B.C. Yet this Babylonian document displays

trigonometric understanding around 1,700 years earlier! What's more, Babylonian methods of figuring trigonometric calculations are to a certain extent *more advanced* than ours today.

Mathematician Daniel Mansfield stated: "Our research shows [Plimpton 322 is] a trigonometric table *so unfamiliar* and advanced that in some respects it's superior to modern trigonometry" (*Independent*, Aug. 24, 2017; emphasis added).

In addition, the Babylonians had at least a pretty good idea of the value of π : 3.125 (today, we know it to be 3.14...).

And their genius went beyond complex mathematics—it was also evident in astronomy. Some of the earliest known astronomy texts from Babylon describe observations of the planet Venus. The Babylonians were able to predict where certain planets could be found in the sky at a given point in the future. They also could work out and predict, hundreds of years in advance, when and where eclipses would occur.

In the fourth century B.C., Greek philosopher Callisthenes acquired



PLIMPTON 322 (c. 1800 B.C.)
Babylonian tablet listing Pythagorean triples

a series of Babylonian astronomy documents covering observations from throughout the previous 2,000 years. And some time after 400 B.C., a Babylonian tablet was written showing a "trapezoid procedure" for calculating the path of the planet Jupiter. This method displayed one of the foundational principles of *calculus*—thought to have been discovered 1,400 years later.

What does any of this have to do with the patriarch Abraham?

ABRAHAM: ASTRONOMER AND MATHEMATICIAN

The book of Genesis states that Abraham was originally from the Chaldean city of Ur. The Chaldeans were a Babylonian tribe of especially gifted scientific people. Abraham grew up right in the golden age of scientific discovery in Babylon during the 1900s to 1800s B.C. But he wasn't merely *exposed* to Chaldean-Babylonian astronomy and mathematics; ancient historians record that he was a *leading light* in these fields.

Third-century B.C. Chaldean historian Berosus wrote, "In the 10th generation after the Flood, there was among the Chaldeans a man righteous and great, and skillful in the celestial science." While Berosus did not name this man, first-century A.D. historian Josephus stated that he was referring to the patriarch Abraham. (This aligns with the biblical account, which speaks not only of Abraham being "righteous," but also in Genesis 11 of his being born

in the 10th generation after the Flood.) Further, Josephus pointed to sixth-century B.C. Greek historian Hecataeus, who composed an entire *book* about the patriarch's exploits. (Sadly, only two fragmentary works from Hecataeus's many writings have survived.) First-century B.C. historian Nicolaus of Damascus also wrote of Abraham's prominence before his sojourn in Canaan.

Sir Walter Raleigh's *The History of the World* (1614) referenced

Abraham

first-century A.D. historian Philo of Alexandria, saying that Abraham, through astronomy, “together with the motions of the stars and other heavenly bodies ... found out the knowledge of the true God, while he lived in Chaldea.” He further referenced a number of ancient historians who collectively agreed “that Abraham, the holiest and wisest of men, did first teach the Chaldeans, then the Phoenicians; lastly, the Egyptian priests, [astronomy] and divine knowledge” (Chapter 2, Section 2).

Thus we see Abraham attributed by many as one of the chief *instructors* of the elite Chaldeans in their advanced knowledge!

But Abraham did not just study and teach science for science’s sake. Through science, *he proved the existence of the one true God.*

Josephus wrote: “[Abraham] was the first that ventured to publish this notion, That there was but one God, the Creator of the universe This his opinion was derived from the irregular phenomena that were visible both at land and sea, as well as those that happen to the sun

and moon, and all the heavenly bodies, thus:—‘If [said he] these bodies had power of their own, they would certainly take care of their own regular motion; but since they do not preserve such regularity, they make it plain, that in so far as they cooperate to our advantage, they do it not of their own abilities, but as they are subservient to Him that commands them; to whom alone we ought justly to offer our honor and thanksgiving’” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, 1.7.1).

Abraham lived in a world where multiple gods were worshiped, including planetary deities. As an astronomer, he knew that the paths and patterns of heavenly bodies were constant and *predictable*. Thus, he knew that they could *not* be freethinking, independently behaving gods. In addition, the fact that they even *existed* in the first place, and all worked together in perfect harmony, proved that there is a *Creator* who established the mathematical *laws* by which the heavens perfectly operate. Thus, Abraham proclaimed the existence of one God, the Creator and Lawgiver, to his fellow Chaldeans.

REJECTED BY CHALDEA, EMBRACED BY EGYPT

Of course, one can imagine that in a society such as Abraham’s, the teachings of the true God were not well received. The skilled mathematicians and astronomers of Chaldea were certainly discerning enough to understand Abraham’s arguments, but they refused to teach them to the people. Instead, they continued to peddle the

popular doctrine to the Babylonian populace that they were subject to the whims of a plethora of celestial gods.

The quarrel with Abraham came to a head, as Josephus described: “For which doctrines, when the Chaldeans and other people of Mesopotamia raised a tumult against him, he thought fit to leave that country; and at the command and by the assistance of God, he came and lived in the land of Canaan.”

This is where the familiar biblical story picks up: in Genesis 12, with God’s instruction to Abraham to emigrate to a new land.

After Abraham arrived in Canaan, a famine forced him to relocate temporarily to Egypt. Josephus provided further details about Abraham’s time in Egypt: “For whereas the Egyptians were formerly addicted to different customs, and despised one another’s sacred and



TABLET OF OBSERVATIONS OF THE PLANET VENUS (c. 600 B.C.)

The tablet itself dates to the seventh century B.C.; however, the observations on it go back as far as c. 1700 B.C. (Fæ)

For astounding facts and figures about our universe—including proof of how and why it came to be—request our booklet **Our Awesome Universe Potential.**

It contains further detail about how Abraham came to an understanding of astronomy and shows that he was not the first expert in this field—that astronomy went back as far as Adam’s son Seth.

accustomed rites, and were very angry one with another on that account, Abram conferred with each of them. ... He communicated to them arithmetic, and delivered to them the science of astronomy; for, before Abram came into Egypt, they were unacquainted with those parts of learning; for that science came from the Chaldeans into Egypt, and from thence to the Greeks also” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, 1.8.2).

Thus we see Abraham had a massive impact on the education of the Egyptians in transferring to them the primarily Chaldean skills in mathematics and astronomy. Not coincidentally, it was after this time that Egypt began to rise as a truly powerful empire.



AKKADIAN IMPRESSION (c. 2300 B.C.)

New year ritual: (left to right) Ninurth with a bow, Ihtar with wings, Shamash—the Babylonian sun god—with sun-bird and saw, and Ea.

ABRAHAM'S LEGACY

The Abraham of the Bible is known as the righteous, faithful patriarch—father of the Israelite peoples through his son Isaac, and father of the Arab peoples through his son Ishmael. Yet we see through multiple complementary historical accounts that he was also a renowned astronomer and mathematician whose instruction positively influenced the ancient Chaldean and Egyptian worlds. And while his name hasn't yet been discovered in ancient Babylonian inscriptions, the scientific tablets that *have* been found give a unique insight into Abraham's world—and could even be the product of some of his own teaching!

What we are rediscovering about the skill and knowledge of ancient Babylonia is truly remarkable. Ancient Babylonian wisdom has been preserved to this day—such as contributing to our 360-degree circle, our 60-second minute and our 60-minute hour.

To a limited extent, modern science has even followed Abraham's wisdom in astronomy. We know that it is ludicrous to worship as gods the planets, stars and moons with their perfectly predictable patterns and behaviors. But we have gone too far in the opposite direction, now believing that there is *no* God.

Abraham used the cosmos to *prove* the existence of God. The fact that celestial bodies exist, and that they follow specific patterns and *laws*, necessitates a Creator and a *Lawgiver*. And the particular, astounding aspects of the universe, becoming plainer all the time, show more and more clearly that *this did not just HAPPEN*—it is all the result of careful, deliberate design, engineering and *creation*.

We like to think of modern society as being the most “advanced” in history. Yet to believe that *no* God exists—that every particle, law and function in the universe is a product of accident and chance—is as unsupportable and foolish as the antiquated beliefs in numerous gods.

If he were somehow brought back to life, how would Abraham fare as an educator, mathematician or astronomer in today's academic and scientific climate? Undoubtedly our godless societies would drive him out as well. ■

The Fatal Flaw in

As knowledge increases, so do world evils. Here's why science can't solve our problems.

BY GERALD FLURRY

GIVE US SUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE, AND we will cure all the problems in the world. In effect, that is the promise science has made to modern society. Many people are in awe of science. It has become the modern messiah.

Scientists have uncovered myriad laws of nature and put them into mankind's service. Each new invention is more dazzling than the last—to the point that scientists think the highest thing in existence is the human mind. All it needs is more knowledge.

Uncovering and using the laws of nature has brought immense good. But even though science has led to stunning advancements, something is wrong. We *do* have exponentially multiplying amounts of knowledge. But that knowledge has not solved immorality, illiteracy, broken homes, crime, insanity, hatred or war. In fact, our evils are *multiplying*. We need to admit that something is dreadfully wrong with our knowledge.

“We are face to face with the stern fact that increasing evils have escalated alongside increasing knowledge!” Herbert W. Armstrong wrote. “That is not to say that the increased knowledge CAUSED the growing evils. It DOES mean that the knowledge produced did not cure existing evils or prevent new evils!” (*Plain Truth*, May 1985; emphasis mine throughout).

Has science given us hope for the future? Then why are so many people both young and old continuing to wreck their lives with drug addiction, sexual deviance and other sorts of crippling vices? In many ways, science is a FALSE messiah that threatens to become a FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER.

What is wrong with science?

I recently read the introduction to *Timescape*, a science-fiction novel. It expresses the hope that science will create a Garden of Eden—a paradise on Earth. Has God not already done that?

Could He not do it again? In fact, He WILL do it again—IN SPITE of man! And this will happen very soon—in most of our lifetimes. Yet scientists push God out of the picture.

Believe it or not, the problem with science is actually REVEALED in the biblical record of the *original* Garden of Eden!

Where Rebellion Against God Began

In Eden, Adam and Eve rejected the tree of life and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As a consequence, God expelled them and cut them off from the tree of life (Genesis 3:22-24).

From that point, God allowed human beings to devise their own systems of science, religion and education—apart from His revelation and direction.

We have accumulated more and more godless knowledge, and we have become more and more disdainful of God. We are following in the footsteps of the first man and woman. Just as they did, we say, *We don't want God, we want knowledge*. But doesn't the explosion of evil around us *prove* that we can't *acquire* true knowledge on our own?

Jesus Christ said, “[T]his people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and *their eyes they have closed*” (Matthew 13:15). Scientists won't even CONSIDER the possibility of a supernatural Creator. They shut off their senses to any proof of God's existence.

The introduction to *The Black Cloud*, another science-fiction book, declares the possibility of physical life with no spiritual origin—a creation that can spontaneously organize into more complex forms. That is TOTAL FICTION and FANTASY! WHERE IN THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE CAN YOU FIND A SYSTEM THAT CAN SPONTANEOUSLY ORGANIZE INTO MORE COMPLEX FORMS? What we see instead is total DISorganization: Man is about to blow himself off the planet!

“Academic freedom is defined as the independent judgment allowed teachers, scholars, scientists and students in the pursuit of knowledge,” Mr. Armstrong wrote. “Science as a whole, and higher education, have exercised

Modern Science

the academic freedom to postulate a creation without a Creator. They have engaged in the activity of knowledge production with TOTAL REJECTION of any possibility of the miraculous, the supernatural, the existence of God—or anything outside the realm of the material. They have utterly rejected revelation as the source of basic knowledge!” (ibid).

Some scientists devote their lives to researching the origin of Earth and mankind. But they won't accept the truth. Instead, they promote the unprovable hypothesis of evolution. God tells us to “[p]rove all things” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Scientists are big on proof, observation and logic—yet they don't prove all things!

Rejecting God

It should be no surprise that scientists today reject the Creator. After all, those in Christ's day reviled and denied the Son of God in the flesh. “And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day” (Matthew 11:23). Those in Capernaum were “exalted unto heaven,” filled with intellectual vanity. They wouldn't even be taught by Jesus Christ! That is the problem with scholars, scientists and man in general.

“But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee” (verse 24). Intellectual vanity is more dangerous than the sexual sins of Sodom!

Consider: Modern civilization has enormous amounts of knowledge, some of it good, some of it evil—and we find that our greatest problem today is whether or not the human race will even *survive!*



“At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes” (verse 25). God purposely keeps scientists, intellectuals and the vast majority of mankind under a cloak of ignorance. Only the humble, teachable *few* that He selects can receive God's truth. “My people are DESTROYED for lack of knowledge,” God says (Hosea 4:6). This clearly isn't referring to physical knowledge: Human beings have that in abundance. People are sorely lacking in the *knowledge of God* because they are eating from the wrong tree—the tree that leads to physical death, and to the destruction of ALL HUMANITY!

Mankind simply is not equipped to solve world problems. *Physical knowledge—good mixed with evil—isn't enough!* We are missing the Spirit of God, which combines with the human spirit to give human beings *real*

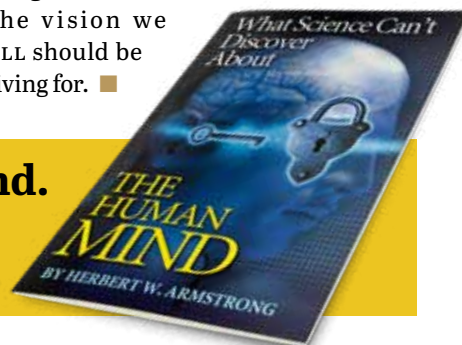
understanding, understanding that can actually begin to *solve* our evils. Without God's Spirit, the carnal mind is naturally hateful toward God (Romans 8:7) and *unable* to solve its evils.

“But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them” (Matthew 13:16-17). Those whom God blesses with this understanding possess the only TRUE academic freedom.

Science has only scratched the surface of the tremendous WONDER that fills the universe. But a superior WONDER is about to return to Earth in the personage of Jesus Christ Himself! He will cut man's suffering short and establish God's Kingdom. That is the vision we ALL should be living for. ■

There's something special about the human mind.

It's not visible to light nor can scientists measure it, but it makes all the difference between man and animal. To find out what makes the human mind so special, order Herbert W. Armstrong's free booklet ***What Science Can't Discover About the Human Mind***.



Catholics, Protestants commemorate Reformation

TOGETHER AGAIN
Pope Francis
joins Lutheran
Martin Junge on
the Reformation
anniversary.

On Oct. 31, 2017, Catholics and Protestants celebrated the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Ironically, they celebrated it together.

At the anniversary service in Westminster Abbey, the Anglican Communion presented a resolution supporting a recent Catholic-Lutheran agreement, “resolving the theological dispute behind the Reformation.” These

groups, plus the World Methodist Council and the Communion of Reformed Churches, “are agreed on the essential aspects of our salvation in Christ,” said Dr. John Gibaut, the Anglican Communion’s director of unity, faith and order.

“Just 100 years ago, the idea of a joint commemoration of the Reformation anniversary probably would have seemed almost unthinkable, or, at the very least,

Germany signs submarine deal with Israel

The German government approved a \$1.5 billion deal on October 23 that allows ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems to build and sell three submarines to the Israeli Navy. The vessels can carry up to 16 torpedoes and cruise missiles.

Defense experts say the subs will become operational within a decade, and that Israel will likely use them to spy on Iran and to carry nuclear warheads to provide second-strike capability in case of nuclear war with Iran.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the memorandum of understanding signed between the two nations “has strategic importance for Israel’s security, and its signing reflects the commitment

of Germany and Chancellor Angela Merkel to Israel’s security and the deep cooperation between the countries.”

The submarines will replace three older subs, also supplied by ThyssenKrupp. Israel’s entire fleet of five submarines is German-made. It is also German-subsidized: As in previous sales, Germany will pay up to 30 percent of the cost of the vessels. Chancellor Merkel’s spokesman said the submarine deal reflects Germany’s “historical responsibility toward the State of Israel.”

Netanyahu described the subs and other warships from ThyssenKrupp as “strategic weapons systems that ensure the future and ... the very

terribly avant-garde,” said *Crux*’s John L. Allen Jr. (Oct. 31, 2017). Now, not only are these groups memorializing the Reformation together, but almost all the major disputes that caused Protestant churches to split from the Catholic Church have been resolved. In many cases, Protestant churches and the Catholic Church recognize each other’s baptisms as valid. As a speaker at Kenneth Copeland Ministries, a large American Pentecostal group, put it, “Luther’s protest is over.”

Herbert W. Armstrong prophesied as far back as 1939 that Catholics and Protestants would unite. The *Trumpet* has continued forecasting this unity, pointing to a prophecy in Isaiah 47:1-8 that indicates that the Catholic mother church will reabsorb its protesting daughter churches. The 500th anniversary celebrations marked an important step toward this prophesied event. To learn more, read “Returning to the Fold” from our booklet *He Was Right* (theTrumpet.com/go/hwr). ■



existence of the State of Israel for decades to come.”

The *Trumpet* closely watches ties between Israel and Germany, not only because of the obvious historical associations but because of the prophetic implications. Bible prophecy describes a time when the Jewish state is so threatened that they reach out to the Germans—with terrible consequences. Read Chapter 2 of our booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy* (theTrumpet.com/go/jip). ■

ATTACKS Rescue workers try to save people after a truck bomb hit Mogadishu.



Africa is suffering its own 9/11s

The 2016 Global Terrorism Index by the Institute for Economics and Peace showed that terrorism and radical Islam are affecting Northern Africa with greater frequency. The report ranks the nations most affected by terrorism.

Nigeria is third on the list: It has been embroiled in a horrific war with Boko Haram, the al Qaeda offshoot and Islamic State affiliate infamous for kidnapping nearly 300 schoolgirls in 2014. According to the report, terrorist attacks in Nigeria in 2015 killed 4,940 people and injured 2,786 more.

Somalia ranks seventh. In 2015, terrorists murdered 659 Somalis and injured 463 others. One of Somalia’s worst terrorist attacks occurred in the capital of Mogadishu on Oct. 14, 2017, when a truck bomb destroyed a hotel, government offices, restaurants and kiosks, killing more than 300 people and injuring roughly 300 more.

Egypt ranks ninth, with 662 killed and 835 injured in attacks in 2015, nearly all of which were instigated by the Sinai Province of the Islamic State.

Libya was largely untouched by terrorists before the 2011 Arab Spring. But it ranks 10th on the list, with terrorists killing 454 and injuring 660 in 2015.

As editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote in the April 2013 *Trumpet* issue, “Northern Africa is turning into a battleground with enormously important prophetic implications.” ■

Revealed: More links between Iran and al Qaeda

On Nov. 1, 2017, the United States Central Intelligence Agency declassified information including a 19-page document that reveals more evidence of collusion between Osama bin Laden and Iran.

The document was purportedly written by a senior leader of bin Laden's al Qaeda terrorist organization. It was released along with some 470,000 files that were recovered by U.S. Navy SEALs during their raid on bin Laden's compound in Pakistan in 2011. The document discussed how Iran considered al Qaeda its "Saudi brothers" and offered al Qaeda terrorists "everything they needed": money, weapons and "training in Hezbollah camps in Lebanon, in exchange for striking American interests in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf."

The document also confirmed that Iran provided visas and safe travel through Iran to Iraq and sheltered blacklisted al Qaeda operatives, both before and after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on America that killed 2,996 people.

The bin Laden files grabbed headlines, but they "don't tell us anything we didn't already know," former CIA official Ned Price said. In fact, the State Department's latest Country Reports on Terrorism indicate that Iran is *still* supporting al Qaeda.

Iran is not only the biggest enabler of al Qaeda, it is the biggest enabler of all radical Islamic extremists.

Bible prophecies about a "king of the south" led *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry to warn about Iran as early as July 1992, when he wrote an article titled "An Islamic King of the South." His free booklet *The King of the South* explains those prophecies. ■



Islamic State attacks New York

On Oct. 31, 2017, a terrorist driving a rented pickup truck turned onto a bike path in Manhattan and mowed down pedestrians, runners and cyclists, killing eight and injuring 12 more. The driver then hit a school bus, injuring students inside. Police sources say he

exited the vehicle shouting "Allahu Akbar" and waving a paintball gun in one hand and a pellet gun in the other until he was shot by a New York City police officer. Inside his vehicle, authorities found notes pledging loyalty to the Islamic State.

As Islamic State forces lose ground in the Middle East,

Iran urges Russia to ditch U.S. dollar

During a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Iran on Nov. 1, 2017, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called for more cooperation between the two countries and urged Putin to beat American sanctions by ditching the United States dollar.

"By ignoring the negative propaganda of the enemies who seek to weaken relations between countries," Khamenei told Putin, "we can nullify U.S. sanctions, using methods such as eliminating the dollar and replacing it with national currencies in transactions between two or more parties; thus, isolating the Americans."

Russia has been negotiating an "oil for goods" program with Iran since 2014. According to statements from Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak in March 2017, this

program would allow Russia to buy 100,000 barrels of Iranian oil per day using Russian goods and equipment as payment instead of U.S. dollars.

Russia is also working with China to conduct oil sales between the two nations using the yuan instead of the dollar. Sergey Glazyev, an adviser to Putin, has explained that such deals are aimed at hastening the collapse of the U.S. economy. "The more aggressive the Americans are, the sooner they will see the final collapse of the dollar, and by getting rid of the dollar this would be the only way for victims of American aggression to stop this onslaught," Glazyev told the Russian government's TASS news agency. "As soon as we and China dump the dollar,

their leaders are encouraging strikes on Europe and the United States. The group has even published a manual of terrorist tactics that includes instructions on the logistics of using a rental truck to kill pedestrians. Last year, a terrorist driving a cargo truck in Nice, France, murdered 86 people and injured more than 400. This year, dozens more have been injured or killed by homicidal Islamist truck drivers in Canada, England, Israel, Sweden and the U.S.

Since the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, radical Islamists have killed at least 158 people on American soil. Yet this tragic statistic pales in comparison to the more than 2,000 people killed by terrorists in Europe and the tens of thousands killed across Africa, Asia and the Middle East. ■



it will be the end of the U.S.'s military might."

When America abandoned the gold standard in 1971, the dollar became a fiat currency until President Richard Nixon negotiated a "petrodollar" agreement with Saudi Arabia in 1973. In return for military hardware, the Saudis agreed to sell oil exclusively in U.S. dollars. Other nations followed, and the dollar became a de facto oil-backed, instead of gold-backed, currency. If enough nations stop using dollars to buy oil, it will revert to a fiat currency—backed only by paper. ■

Beijing quietly ramps up militarization of South China Sea

ISLAND-BUILDING
A satellite image taken Aug. 5, 2017, shows a new helipad and renewable energy infrastructure on Tree Island.

New satellite imagery shows that while the world's attention over the last several months has fixated on the crisis with North Korea, China has continued quietly increasing its illegal land reclamation and militarization in the contested waters of the South China Sea.

Satellite photos published by Reuters on Oct. 31, 2017, show that from November 2015 to October 2017, China made considerable progress in developing installations on Tree Island and the North Reef of the disputed Paracel chain. China, Taiwan and Vietnam all claim the Paracel Islands as their

territory; some features are also claimed by the Philippines and Malaysia.

China is converting these and several of its other artificial islands into naval and air bases to strengthen its claims of sovereignty over nearly the entire resource-rich, strategically located South China Sea.

Bonnie Glaser, a China expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said, "They've built these extensive facilities, and both Chinese civilian and [People's Liberation Army] experts have always made it clear that when the strategic time is right, they're going to start using them more fully. I think it is a question of when, rather than if, China will start to assert its interests more forcefully in the South China Sea" (Reuters, Oct. 31, 2017).

Trumpet editor in chief Gerald Flurry has said Beijing's ongoing land reclamation and militarization projects in the South China Sea "should alarm the world." In his July 2016 cover story, "China Is Steering the World Toward War," he wrote that this activity will help fulfill a Bible prophecy recorded in Deuteronomy 28:52, which says China and other powers "shall besiege" America and Britain, the modern descendants of ancient Israel. He wrote that China's ongoing militarization of the South China Sea is one of several areas where we "can already see this prophecy moving toward its fulfillment." ■

China and South Korea restore warm relations

China and South Korea agreed on Oct. 31, 2017, to move past a yearlong freeze in their relations that began after South Korea deployed an American antimissile system.

The South Korean government said it allowed the deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system in response to the growing threat from North Korea, saying that it wants United States forces to be positioned to shoot down any North Korean missiles that endanger South Koreans.

China was angered by the decision, fearing that the

same U.S. forces could use the advanced THAAD radar to peer across the Yellow Sea and spy on Chinese activities. After the South Koreans ignored Chinese objections, China boycotted South Korea's tourism, auto, retail, entertainment, cosmetics, confectionary and other sectors that heavily depend on Chinese consumers. The boycott inflicted significant economic damage and led to months of frosty relations between the two nations.

Now, however, the governments representing the world's second- and 11th-largest economies said that the cold season is over.

"Both sides shared the view that the strengthening of exchange and cooperation between Korea and China serves their common interests and agreed to expeditiously bring exchange and cooperation in all areas back on a normal development track," the South Korean Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The *Trumpet* takes a keen interest in efforts by Asian nations to cooperate among themselves, because the Bible prophesies that in the "time of the end" a powerful bloc of Asian nations will join together and



fight against other nations in nuclear World War III. Scripture states that this "kings of the east" conglomerate will field an army of 200 million men (Revelation 16:12; 9:16). Ezekiel 38 lists several specific nations—called by their ancient names—that will be a part of this end-time Asian bloc. Among them is "Magog," which includes modern China, and "Gomer," the primary ancestor of modern Korea. ■

Most Americans do not have enough for retirement

The United States Government Accountability Office published a report on Oct. 18, 2017, warning that unless the nation makes drastic changes, America will face a serious retirement crisis in a few years. The government projects that by 2035, Social Security will be unable to pay what it has promised retirees.

In 2015, 3 out of 5 American retirees relied on Social Security checks for at least half of their income, more than 1 in 3 relied on them for 90 percent of their income, and 1 in 5 relied on them for their entire income.

Ten thousand baby boomers hit retirement age every day, yet

research shows that the vast majority of retirees don't have enough savings to last through retirement. Teresa Ghilarducci, a labor economist specializing in retirement security, told the *Washington Post*, "There is no part of the country where the majority of middle-class older workers have adequate retirement savings to maintain their standard of living in their retirement" (Sept. 30, 2017).

Ghilarducci's research shows that people nearing retirement age are behind recommended savings by almost a *third*. Less than 25 percent of baby boomers believe the money they have saved will last as long as they need it to. ■

U.S. drug overdose deaths triple in 16 years

In the United States, the number of deaths from drug overdoses has more than doubled in the last 16 years across all demographics. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a report on Oct. 20, 2017, stating that more than 52,000 Americans died of drug overdoses in 2015. That figure is 211 percent higher than the 16,849 drug overdoses

in 1999. Drug overdoses now kill more people than suicide, homicide, car crashes or firearm deaths. ■



Millennials are becoming witches

An October 2017 Pew Research Center report reveals that 56 percent of United States adults surveyed say "it is *not* necessary to believe in God to be moral and have good values." This number is up 7 percent from the figure reported in a 2011 survey.

If more Americans say it is not necessary to believe in God to be moral, what do they believe in?

MarketWatch's Kari Paul wrote that the millennial generation (ages 18 to 29) is staying spiritual by embracing witchcraft and astrology: "Interest in spirituality has been booming in recent years while interest in religion plummets, especially among millennials. ... The percentage of people between



the ages of 18 and 29 who 'never doubt existence of God' fell from 81 percent in 2007 to 67 percent in 2012. Meanwhile, more than half of young adults in the U.S. believe astrology is a science, compared to less than 8 percent of the Chinese public."

The psychic services industry grew by 2 percent between 2011 and 2016. It is now worth \$2 billion annually. This industry includes astrology, mediumship, tarot-card reading, palm-reading and other "metaphysical services." ■

Doctors encouraging British teens to change genders

The United Kingdom's National Health Service (NHS) is now referring 50 children a week to transgender clinics based on their claims that they are trapped in the wrong body, the *Daily Mail* reported on Oct. 28, 2017. The report said many parents believe "overzealous therapists" are pressuring their teenagers to undergo transgender operations.

Concerned parents fear that clinic staff are "blindly accepting" children's claims that they were born with the "wrong" gender, and that they are failing to treat serious mental health conditions.

According to the *Daily Mail*, doctors refuse to even question a confused teenager about gender changes because they "fear being sued after the NHS



signed a 'memorandum of understanding' banning staff from challenging patients who believe they are born the wrong sex."

Many teens are confused about their gender because people in the entertainment industry, social media and even the government are aggressively promoting transgenderism. The *Daily Mail* gave several examples of children who have been pressured and bullied by their peers to seek sex-change procedures. One mother was horrified to learn that her 15-year-old daughter was referred to the transgender clinic after only a 40-minute consultation. ■

Based on this prophecy, Herbert W. Armstrong forecast for decades that several nations in Central and Eastern Europe would break away from behind the Iron Curtain. In 1980, Mr. Armstrong wrote, “Will Poland free itself from Soviet domination and join with Yugoslavia, Romania and possibly Czechoslovakia—and with Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal and Austria—in a resurrected medieval ‘Holy Roman Empire’ to dominate Europe and equal the USSR and the U.S.A. in world power?” (member and co-worker letter, Aug. 27, 1980).

Does the symbolism in Daniel imply a split among the 10 kings? A degree of separation between the five kings in the east and five in the west? Could the two halves of this empire come together as separate groups of five, before merging to form the whole? *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry has certainly suggested such a formation.

“History reveals the significance of the *two legs*, as the Roman Empire was divided, with its western capital in Rome and its eastern capital in Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey, today),” he wrote in 2014. In the same article he said, “I believe the eastern leg could be formed in months.”

“[T]he eastern leg and even parts of the western leg of that empire are really beginning to develop,” he wrote (*Trumpet*, May-June 2014).

The January 1986 *Plain Truth* raised similar possibilities: “Notice further that the ancient prophecies of Daniel picture this system as a human image standing on two legs. ... Thus it is probable that the coming reconstituted Roman Empire will also be composed of two distinct yet cooperative parts: one comprising nations of Western Europe, the other incorporating nations released from Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe. ... Given the fact of five toes on each foot, it is possible that five entities will come from Western Europe and five from the east.”

Intriguingly, four out of five of these kings already mentioned belong to the same club, a regional group of nations called the Visegrád Group—and the fifth is thinking of joining (sidebar: “The Visegrád Group”).

A Trend to Watch

The five kings discussed in this article may not be the final five. These five countries may not be the ones in the eastern leg. Austria, especially, may fit better in the western leg.

But however these events play out, we see clear movement toward something that looks remarkably like what biblical prophecy describes. Countries across Europe want strongmen. Men with personal charisma and personal power are taking office. Voters are willing to hand these men unprecedented authority—to

make them “kings.” And these men want to combine into a regional grouping of like-minded leaders.

The popularity of these men has spread beyond Eastern Europe—especially in Germany. *Die Presse* wrote that Sebastian Kurz “also has many loyal fans in Germany, especially in Bavaria. With his appearance in the talk shows of ARD and ZDF, he has filled the gap left by the involuntary departure of Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg” (May 16, 2017; *Trumpet* translation). Germany’s Christian Social Union has made a point of supporting Viktor Orbán, even as Angela Merkel criticizes him.

The eastern leg of Europe is forming before your eyes! The western leg is getting ready to form. We can almost see the 10 toes of the Daniel 2 image.

Daniel 2 says that “in the days of these kings”—these kings that we are starting to see right now—“shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever” (verse 44).

It appears we are watching these very kings emerge! The Bible is clear that these kings will wreak a lot of destruction. But at the same time, it is clear that during the days of these kings, Jesus Christ returns. We are getting incredibly close to that day. ■

THE VISEGRÁD GROUP

The Visegrád Group is an alliance of European nations: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. In Austria, Sebastian Kurz’s potential coalition partners are very keen on joining the group.

These states have a lot of shared history. The group first met in the Hungarian town of Visegrád in 1991. The site was chosen because it was the location of an important meeting between Hungary, Poland and Bohemia in the 14th century.

The group has taken on increasing significance in recent times. These powers all

have the same concerns about migrants. They also have similar feelings about Russia: They fear it, are not confident they can defend themselves, and are wary of trusting Germany or America to defend them.

But Visegrád is not the only regional group. Another important alliance is the Inter-marium. First proposed by the key Polish leader Józef Piłsudski after World War I, it is a kind of European Union, but for Eastern Europe. The word simply means “between the seas”—in this case, between the Black Sea and the Baltic. In recent years, the idea

has been revived as a way of containing Russia. Poland and Romania, especially, have been cooperating militarily.

Hungary has been more reticent to confront Russia. It is far enough away that it believes Russia is less of a threat unless provoked. But there are signs this is shifting: Hungary joined Romania and Bulgaria in Black Sea military drills for the first time in June 2017.

A similar alternative is the Three Seas Initiative. This adds the Adriatic to the list of seas, making it a buffer against Turkey and Muslim immigration, as well

as a block to Russia. This group is much larger; it includes Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia and Croatia. The group has received the backing of United States President Donald Trump, who attended a July 2017 meeting of the Three Seas Initiative.

To sum up, in Central and Eastern Europe there is a group of strongmen, or kings. They are actively working to form some kind of alliance—with a few different options on the table right now. **RICHARD PALMER**

The Number One Lesson of Family



It is embedded in the Fifth Commandment.

WHEN SHE WAS 2 YEARS OLD, MY FIRSTBORN DAUGHTER made a decision. She decided that she wanted to be the boss of my family.

My wife and I forcibly showed her, that's not the way it works in this house. We taught her, with a lot of effort, to obey our instructions exactly, without back talk and without a bad attitude. We taught her the difference between her role as a child and our roles as parents.



JOEL HILLIKER

A child needs this perspective, because otherwise he goes through life thinking he's the boss. He develops an attitude of superiority toward people who are more experienced, wiser, stronger or more honorable than he is.

Most problematically, he has a much harder time relating to God, and seeing himself in proper perspective to God.

In a sense, we parents are representatives of God to our children. By teaching them the proper way to interact with us, we establish their future relationships with God.

The Fifth Commandment says, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12).

Ephesians 6:2 calls this "the first commandment with promise." God will not break a promise! If a child honors his parents, God promises him *long life*. In this dangerous world, he won't suffer a violent death from war, disease, starvation, crime, overdose or accident. This protection will extend to him as long as he honors his parents, even when he is an adult.

That puts a strong responsibility on us as parents: We are the ones who will determine whether our children grow up knowing how to honor us.

If we teach them to honor us, we help them receive these wonderful blessings from God. If we fail to teach them to honor us and to obey God, we are guaranteeing them problems and curses in life. Parents who truly love their child will make sure he *honors* them, so he can be blessed.

This commandment shows the basis for God's family government.

Notice that the Fifth Commandment is not some variation of this: *Parents—thou shalt takest care of thy children. Thou shalt givest thy children what they want. Thou shalt makest sure thy children have really high self-esteem.* The commandment is directed TOWARD THE CHILDREN: *Make sure you give your parents honor!*

The word *honor* means "to esteem or to hold in high regard, to prize or to reverence." It is respect intermingled with love and devotion, the kind of honor or deferential respect you would show a king or dignitary.

We all need this perspective in life. After all, we are God's children. We need to give *Him* honor! This is, in fact, the NUMBER ONE LESSON OF FAMILY. It is the primary point we *must* get right in our lives in order to prepare to be part of God's Family!

God created physical family to prepare us for the God Family. He designed our physical development to occur slowly, so that we are totally dependent on our parents for several years. Why? So we learn how to trust the one in authority over us.

And He commands us to *obey* our parents and to honor them. Why? So we learn how to extend that same obedience and honor to Him. We *all* need to obey the spirit of the Fifth Commandment—to the point of honoring God the Father and our spiritual mother, which Scripture reveals to be "Jerusalem above," a type of the Church (Galatians 4:26; Revelation 21:2; 19:7-8; Ephesians 5:25-32).

God tells all of us: Unless you become like a little child and learn your proper role within a family, you will not make it into the Kingdom of God (Matthew 18:1-4).

The commandment doesn't say, "Honor your father and mother as long as they are honorable." Some think their parents aren't particularly deserving of honor. But we all need to honor that office, and show our parents love and respect. (Of course, that doesn't relieve parents from the responsibility of being honorable.)

The devil is always promoting and broadcasting hostility to parental authority: *Mom and Dad don't really know what's going on. I don't need to listen to them.* Just as he stirred my 2-year-old daughter to ignore us and do things her own way, he pushes that message on all of us—all through our lives! It's a powerful message, of which he has successfully convinced most people (Proverbs 14:12). Children the world over believe this, and their parents are doing nothing to convince them otherwise.

That is the opposite of how God thinks. Over and again God exalts and seeks to strengthen the relationship between parents and children. Over and again He emphasizes the responsibility of parents to love, teach and correct, and the responsibility of children to honor and obey. When you understand the spiritual principle, you clearly see why it cannot be any other way. We as God's children are preparing for eternal life with our Father as we learn and practice this number one lesson of family!

Simply the best! For the most important, clear, accurate, honest news, and how it relates to you, visit theTrumpet.com! Just when I thought you couldn't get any better, you outdid yourselves again. Thank you for all of the work you do in service to the Lord, and how we all benefit from it. You are all such a blessing!

Karen Bell

I look so forward to reading and learning from you and the *Trumpet*. May God bless you always and a huge thank you from me for all the help you give to those of us who believe and prepare for our Lord's return. Love the magazine and updates.

Sandy Kespohl

Outstanding! Thank you! This is exactly what a mature, knowledge-seeking, increasingly active mind needs to balance out the days ahead in faith. Agape to you and yours.

Arlene

There is a great comfort with the *Trumpet*, when everything else is empty.

Rod Lindsey

Yes, the good thing is, we are all still here. The bad thing is, the world is in confusion and will

continue to publish garbage based on the imagination of man's heart. The brilliant thing is that God has blessed our eyes and ears to receive the truth grounded in the sure Word of God. I am so consumed by all the excellent articles and broadcasting on the *Trumpet*.

Jacob Faircloth NORTH CAROLINA

I love hearing from you and receiving your magazine. I learn so much from all of you. I love looking up the verses you cite. It amazes me how we are following the Bible each and every day. Our leaders and elites do not know the Bible; therefore, how would they know it tells us exactly what is going to happen?

Sandy Miller

I sincerely thank you for the two *Philadelphia Trumpet* magazines, August and September 2017, which I received today. I was extremely



interested in the article in the August issue on the subject of climate change. This has been a major worldwide topic that I have tried to follow over several years, and I have to say I agree with you 100 percent on what you say.


Ian and Jackie Sanderson RAROTONGA, COOK ISLANDS

The cover designs to the *Trumpet* magazine are top-notch and always interesting to look at. The articles are well written, and Stephen Flurry's Principles of Living articles are an inspirational read.


Ashton Hunt CALIFORNIA

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The World Needs a Strong Leader

Here is an undeniable reality: The only hope for human survival is a benevolent global authority strong enough to enforce world peace.

BY ANDREW MILLER

THE WORLD IS PLUNGING INTO CHAOS. WARS AND RUMORS OF wars make daily headlines. Worsening conflicts in Middle East and Latin America are driving waves of refugees into Europe and North America. Murderers slaughter half a million people around the world each year. Frightened citizens are buying guns, knives and pepper spray to protect themselves and their families. But such weapons only work against petty criminals; they offer no protection from madmen with nuclear warheads.

More and more people are coming to understand that world peace is impossible without a global authority to enforce it. Absent such a global authority, they are turning to strongmen for protection. Yet, national strongmen historically trample on the rights and liberties of the very people who gave them their power.

What most people do not yet realize is that we are proving the point we are trying to disprove. We simply are incapable of justly ruling ourselves. Selfish human nature always wins in the end. If world peace is ever to come, it will have to be brought by someone without selfish human nature; someone with perfect, righteous character.

Fortunately, the Bible promises that this is exactly what will happen.

Two thousand years ago, the greatest prophet of all time, Jesus Christ, foretold of a time when authoritarian strongmen would wage a war so terrible that it would destroy all life on Earth—unless it was forcibly stopped. Jesus then promised that this war *would* be stopped—for the elect's sake (Matthew 24:21-22).

Other scriptures show exactly how Christ will save us from self-annihilation. “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And


he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords” (Revelation 19:11-16).

Jesus Christ will return to Earth. In the Valley of Jehoshaphat, He and His army will defeat the armies of the strongmen who rebel against Him, and end World War III.

Jesus will then establish God's government on Earth. He will put down rebellion by force and rule with a “rod of iron”! But unlike human dictators, He will do so not for selfish gain, or because of megalomania or paranoia. He will teach, command and enforce the way of righteousness, and root out attitudes of hatred, selfishness and violence.

Christ's government will not be a democracy. Nor will it be socialism, communism, feudalism or fascism. It will be a divinely established constitutional monarchy, with the law of God as the constitution and Christ the reigning King of kings.

The government of God will not be a government by the people. But it will be a government for the people. The people will have no votes, and no human being will hold government office. All in government service will be divine spirit beings, members of the God Family, specially appointed by Jesus Christ to reign as kings and priests (Revelation 1:6; 20:4). All government officials will have already overcome their selfish human nature. Therefore, they will rule with perfect outgoing concern for the ruled. They will rule for the highest good of the people. The Spirit of God will give all in authority the wisdom and power to govern righteously.



IF WORLD PEACE IS EVER TO COME,
IT WILL HAVE TO BE BROUGHT
BY SOMEONE WITHOUT
SELFISH HUMAN NATURE;
SOMEONE WITH PERFECT,
RIGHTEOUS CHARACTER.

“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked” (Isaiah 11:1-4).

Mankind desperately needs a strong leader to save us from our problems. But only a leader with perfect, holy, righteous character can do it: the King of kings!

leaders in Europe. Notice Revelation 17:12-13: “And the ten horns which thou sawest are TEN KINGS, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power *as kings* one hour with the beast [the European superstate]. These have one mind, and shall *give their power* and STRENGTH unto the beast.”

This United States of Europe will unleash a hurricane-like force of destruction against Iran and its radical Islamist followers. This Daniel 11:40 clash will ignite World War III, a time of trouble like no other since the beginning of the world (Matthew 24:21-22).

During the Great Tribulation, Daniel 11 also says that tidings out of the *east* and *north* will trouble the European beast power. The reference point for prophecy is Jerusalem. Much of radical Islam is located south of Jerusalem. The rising European superpower lies to its north. And to the east and north of Jerusalem lie Russia and China. God refers to these and other nations in the prophesied Asiatic military alliance as the KINGS of the east (Revelation 16:12).

More kings! The head of the Asiatic hordes will be Vladimir Putin in Russia. The original Hebrew words in Ezekiel 38:2 prophesy of a PRINCE of *Rosh*—Russia. That prince is here today: Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Again, notice how many of these latter-day prophecies contain references to authoritarian *princes* and *kings*.

Notice, also, that the U.S. and Britain aren't mentioned anywhere in these prophecies! There is no “king of the west.” These once great powers are nowhere to be seen! Prophecies like Isaiah 3:1-2 specifically say that America and Britain will be *without strong leadership* in the end time. Christ described the period just before His return as the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24). America and Britain's time on the global stage is at its end, opening the way for powers like Russia, China and Germany to rise.

In this *Trumpet* issue, we look more closely at how this trend is playing out in countries all over the world—in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. You will see what a vivid illustration of fulfilled prophecy this trend is!

For millennia, human beings have lived and died under authoritarian rulers who have taxed them, oppressed them and sent them to war. In the 19th and 20th centuries, many nations experimented to see if power over people could successfully be taken away from authoritarians and given to the people themselves—and if that democratic form of republican government would lead to a better world. Now we are seeing that this experiment has failed, and we are falling back into a dark age. Except now, the KINGS can press a button and destroy millions of people!

This makes the case—as powerfully as it can be made—that *we don't know how to rule ourselves*. This makes the case that we need a strong leader. But not another strong MAN. We need the leadership of a strong GOD! We need to end this experiment of rebellion against Him that started in the Garden of Eden, and we need to put our hope—*our very last hope*—in the soon-coming rule of Jesus Christ, the KING of kings. ■

THE KEY OF DAVID



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

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Toledo WMNT 8:00, Sun
Youngstown WYTV 11:30, Sun
Zanesville WBZV 9:30, Sun
Oklahoma, Ada KTEN-DT 8:30, Sun
Lawton KAUZ-DT 8:30, Sun
Oklahoma City KOPX 5:00, Fri
Tulsa KTPX 5:00, Fri; KQCW 9:30, Sun
Oregon, Bend KTVZ-DT 9:30, Sun
Eugene KEVU-TV 10:00, Sun; KLSR 8:30, Sun; KMTR-DT 9:30, Sun
Medford-Klamath Falls
KTVL-DT 9:30, Sun
Portland KPXG 6:00, Fri
Pennsylvania, Erie WSEE-DT/WICU-DT 9:30, Sun
Philadelphia WACP 9:00, Sun; WPPX 6:00, Fri
Wilkes Barre WQPX 6:00, Fri
Rhode Island, Providence
WPXQ 6:00, Fri
South Carolina, Anderson WYCW 9:00, Sun
Charleston WCBD-DT 9:30, Sun
Florence WWMB-DT 9:30, Sun
Greenville WYCW 9:00, Sun
Myrtle Beach WWMB-DT 9:30, Sun
Spartanburg WYCW 9:00, Sun
South Dakota, Rapid City KEVN 6:30, Sun
KWBH/KNBN-DT 8:30, Sun
Sioux Falls (Mitchell) KSFY-DT 8:30, Sun
Tennessee, Chattanooga WFL110:30, Sun
Jackson WBJK 8:30, Sun
Knoxville WPXX 6:00, Fri
Memphis WPXX 5:00, Fri
Nashville WNPX 5:00, Fri; WZTV 6:30
Texas, Abilene KTXS-DT 8:30, Sun
Amarillo KVII-DT/KVIH-DT 8:30, Sun
Beaumont KFDM-DT 8:30, Sun
Brownsville KCWT/KNVO-DT 8:30, Sun
Corpus Christi KRIS-DT 8:30, Sun
Dallas KDAF 7:00, Sun
Harlingen KCWT/KNVO-DT 8:30, Sun
Houston KPXB 5:00, Fri
Laredo KYLX 8:30, Sun
Longview KYTX-DT 8:30, Sun
Lubbock KJTV 8:00, Sun
KLCW-DT 8:30, Sun
Midland KWES-DT 8:30, Sun
Odessa KWES-DT 8:30, Sun
Port Arthur KFDM 8:30, Sun
San Angelo KDXE 8:30, Sun
San Antonio KPXL 5:00, Fri
Sherman KTEN-DT 8:30, Sun
Sweetwater KTXS-DT 8:30, Sun
Temple-Bryan KYLE 9:00, Sun
Tyler KYTX-DT 8:30, Sun
Victoria KWVB 8:30, Sun
Weslaco KCWT/KNVO-DT 8:30, Sun
Wichita Falls KAUZ-DT 8:30, Sun
Utah, Salt Lake City KUPX 5:00, Fri
Vermont, Burlington WVNY 10:30, Sun; WPTZ-DT 9:30
Virginia, Charlottesville WVIR-DT 9:30, Sun
Harrisonburg WVIR-DT 9:30, Sun
Norfolk WPXV 6:00, Fri
Richmond WUPV 8:00, Sun

Roanoke WPXR 6:00, Fri
Washington D.C. WPXW 6:00, Fri
Washington, Pasco KIMA-DT/KEPR-DT 9:30, Sun
Richland KIMA-DT/KEPR-DT 9:30, Sun
Seattle-Tacoma KWXP 6:00, Fri
Seattle KCPQ 7:00, Sun
Spokane KGXP 6:00, Fri; KAYU 7:30, Sun
Yakima KIMA-DT/KEPR-DT 9:30, Sun
West Virginia, Beckley WVVA-DT 9:30, Sun
Bluefield WVVA-DT 9:30, Sun
Charleston WLPX 6:00, Fri
Clarksburg WVPX-DT 9:30, Sun
Oak Hill WVVA-DT 9:30, Sun
Parkersburg WCPW 9:30, Sun
Weston WVPX-DT 9:30, Sun
Wheeling WBWO 9:30, Sun
Wisconsin, Eau Claire WXOW-DT 8:30, Sun
La Crosse WXOW-DT 8:30, Sun
Madison WREX 10:30, Sun
Milwaukee WPXE 5:00, Fri
Rhineland WAOW/WYOW 8:30, Sun
Superior KDHL-DT 8:30, Sun
Wausau WAOW-DT/WYOW-DT 8:30, Sun
Wyoming, Casper KCWY-DT 8:30, Sun
Cheyenne KGWN-DT/KCHW 8:30, Sun
Riverton KCWY-DT 8:30, Sun

CANADA

Nationwide satellite
Galaxy 3 Trans. 17, 21 11:30 ET, Tue/Thu
Nationwide cable
Vision TV 4:30 pm ET, Sun
CHCH 11:30 ET, Sun
Atlantic Provinces
CTV Atlantic 11:00 AT, Sun
Alberta, Red Deer KAYU 8:30, Sun
Calgary KAYU 8:30, Sun
Edmonton KAYU 8:30, Sun
Medicine Hat KAYU 8:30, Sun
Lethbridge KAYU 8:30, Sun
British Columbia,
Vancouver CHEK 9:00, Sun;
CHNU 5:30 pm, Sun; KCPQ 7:00, Sun
Victoria CHNU 5:30 pm, Sun
Manitoba, Winnipeg CIIT Joy TV 11:00, Sun
New Brunswick, Moncton CKCW-DT 11, Sun
Saint John CKLT-DT 11, Sun
Nova Scotia, Halifax CJCH-DT 11, Sun
Sydney CJCB-TV 11, Sun
Ontario, Ottawa CJOH 5:30, Sun
Toronto WADL 10:00 Sun;
WUTV 10:00, Sun;
CHNU 8:30 pm, Sun
P.E.I., Charlottetown CKCW-DT 11, Sun
Quebec, Montreal WVNY 10:30, Sun
Saskatchewan, Saskatoon CFQC 5:30, Sun;

CARIBBEAN

Regional satellite
Galaxy 3 Trans. 17 11:30 ET, Tue/Thu
Bahamas FOX W Chan. 216, 10:30, Sun
Puerto Rico WSJX 8:00, Sun


LATIN AMERICA

Regional satellite
Galaxy 3 Trans. 17 11:30 ET, Tue/Thu

AUSTRALASIA

Australia
Nationwide 9GEM 8:00, Sun
Adelaide TV44 11:30, Sun; 5:00, Wed
Perth WTV 11:30, Sun/Sat
New Zealand TVNZ 1, 5:30, Sun
Philippines TV4 7:30 PHT, Sun

CBS United Kingdom

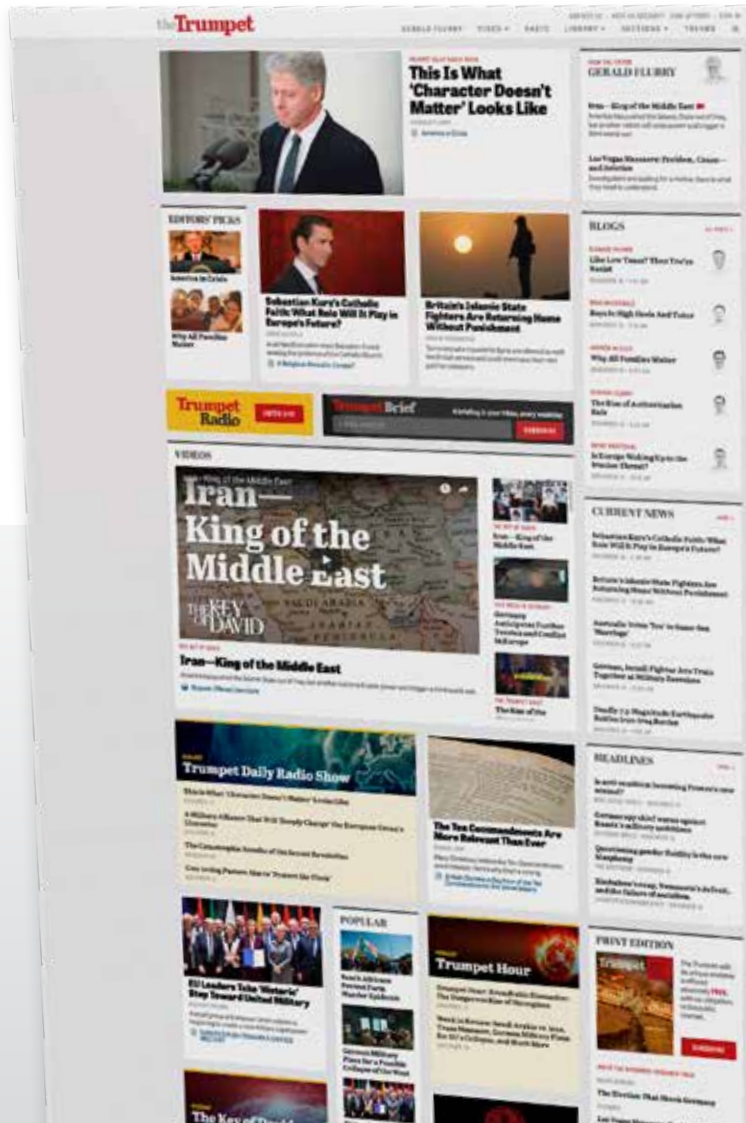
Station	Day	Time	sky			
CBS Action	Saturday	8:30 am	Ch. 148	Ch. 128	Ch. 64	Ch. 137
CBS Drama	Sunday	7:30 am	Ch. 149	Ch. 197	Ch. 74	Ch. 134
CBS Reality	Sunday	8:00 am	Ch. 146	Ch. 148	Ch. 66	Ch. 135

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