

Europe's "Great Reset"

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TOMORROW'S WORLD

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The End of
Pax Americana

An Existential Threat

Many wonder what the Russian invasion of Ukraine means for the world. Those living far from the devastation, seeing heart-wrenching images of atrocities on television and computer screens, naturally want to know how far this will spread. Will it lead to a nuclear Armageddon? Make no mistake: It is of no small significance and has implications for your future.

Most view wars through the lens of their own country's perspective. We learn early in life to live in a binary world—someone or some country is either good or bad, with no shades of gray. Born just after World War II, I remember hearing my parents talk about the war as a fresh wound—and I picked up on what I heard from them. My friends and I used derogatory terms for the Japanese and Germans, even though most of us had never met one.

As I matured, I learned the history of the Second World War as most Americans viewed it—we were right and Japan, Germany, and Italy were wrong. Later, during the Cold War, I learned that we were right and the Soviet Union was wrong. However, as years have passed, I have come to realize that the world is more complicated than that.

More than One Narrative

Russian President Vladimir Putin points to Western promotion of immorality as one reason his nation is at odds with the West. This does not even remotely justify invading a bordering country and killing its citizens, but his concern does have some validity. While a confirmed United States Supreme Court Justice cannot say what a woman is, Putin can—and, even if in that only, most readers of this magazine will agree with him.

Sadly, expressing *any* such agreement often results in being labeled an apologist, so please do not misunderstand: Putin's current actions *cannot* be justified. Even contrarians who dispute the causes of the war find it difficult to fully support the Russian president, who has poisoned and imprisoned his opponents. And at least some of his troops are commit-

ting terrible atrocities against the Ukrainian people, if the pictures and stories coming out of the country are true.

Yet you have no doubt heard the saying, "The first casualty of war is *truth*"—and it is something for any fair-minded person to keep in mind, as propagandists on all sides shift into overdrive. If past military operations are a guide, it is likely that *both* sides are perpetrating some atrocities, but that is not the narrative one's own side will likely admit. An objective in any war is to control the narrative, in part to demonize the enemy.



In this case, Putin's past actions make that only too easy.

The truth is that Vladimir Putin and his supporters in Russia believe they have valid reasons for the invasion, seeing the world very differently than the rest of us. The loss

of somewhere between 20 and 27 million of their countrymen in WWII has not been forgotten. The estimate of their losses—using the middle figure of 24 million—is greater than those of Germany, Italy, and Japan combined. We must add the deaths sustained by Australia, Canada, the Dutch East Indies, France, Poland, the U.S., and the United Kingdom to approach the total deaths sustained by the Soviet Union alone (*NationalWW2Museum.org*).

This might help us better understand why Putin is concerned about NATO perching on his border in Ukraine. NATO expansion may be truly be little more than a convenient excuse for a man wishing to recre-

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ate the Soviet past, but Americans should remember that 60 years ago their own nation deemed nuclear-tipped missiles in Cuba unacceptable, even if confrontation risked nuclear war—which was, even then, termed “Mutually Assured Destruction.”

“Russia cannot afford to ‘lose’,” says Sergey Karaganov, former advisor to Putin and predecessor Boris Yeltsin. Sharing a Russian perspective in an interview with Bruno Maçães for the UK’s *The New Statesman*, Karaganov explained that a NATO-member Ukraine would be an existential threat to Russia, and that Putin needs to be able to proclaim some kind of “victory” before ending the war.

The stakes for Putin were highlighted by Graham Allison in a *Foreign Affairs* op-ed:

The Vladimir Putin who bombed the Russian city of Grozny into rubble in order to “liberate” it, and who joined Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad in razing Aleppo, certainly has no moral reservations about mass destruction. Moreover, the war in Ukraine is now unambiguously Putin’s war, and the Russian leader knows that he cannot lose—without risking his regime and even his life. So as the fighting continues, if he is pushed to choose between making an ignominious retreat and escalating the level of violence, we should prepare for the worst. In the extreme, this could include nuclear weapons (“Putin’s Doomsday Threat,” April 5, 2022).

The Most Vital Piece of the Puzzle

Not since the Cuban Missile Crisis has the world faced a greater threat of nuclear Armageddon, but what neither Maçães nor Allison—nor any other mainstream writer—understands is *biblical prophecy*. While the Bible does not speak directly about this current situation, it does warn of an unintended consequence: the prod to form a powerful economic and military force in Europe, which *is* prophesied to rise.

Until this Russian invasion, few in Germany—indeed, few in Europe—had any stomach for building a powerful European military. Yet such a buildup *will*

occur, according to biblical prophecy. It may take several years to construct that military, but the present crisis has resulted in Europe and Germany taking significant steps in that direction.

It is shocking to realize that, according to Allison, President Kennedy estimated a one-in-three chance that the Cuban Missile Crisis would end in a nuclear war, but was willing to take the risk because he saw nuclear-armed missiles in Cuba as an existential threat to America. Yet even Kennedy and his advisors did not have all the ugly facts that would come out later. “Analysts of this crisis have identified more than a dozen plausible paths that could have led to the incineration of American cities. One of the fastest begins with a fact that was not even known to Kennedy at the time.... [The] Soviets had already positioned more than 100 tactical nuclear weapons on the island. Moreover, the 40,000 Soviet troops deployed there had both the technical capability *and the authorization* to use those weapons if they were attacked” (emphasis mine).

Whatever Putin’s motives may be, the Cuban Missile Crisis is a study in just how dangerous war can be in the game of “nuclear chicken.”

So, what should we expect to happen next? We see no direct prophecy regarding this Russian invasion of Ukraine, but given the box Putin has put himself in, we are looking at a precarious future. We cannot know every twist and turn leading to Christ’s return, but we can know from the biblical outline of prophecy that the Ukraine war *will not* be the end of the world. It has, however, awakened a sleeping giant in Europe, which now sees an existential threat to its security. The longer the war continues, and the more brutal it becomes—especially if Putin introduces chemical or tactical nuclear weapons—the greater the impetus to build a powerful European deterrent. This is perhaps the most vital piece of the puzzle setting the stage for the prophesied “beast” to rear its seventh—and final—ugly head in Europe.

Keep watching—and keep reading *Tomorrow’s World* magazine!



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The End of **Pax Americana**

By **Wallace G. Smith**

For many decades the world has enjoyed the *Pax Americana*—the American Peace. When it began may be disputed, but the fact of it cannot. The global dominance of the military and financial power of the United States has provided the world with a certain level of global peace, stability, and prosperity that has raised standards of living for citizens of many countries across the earth.

But that period is coming to an end.

The “indispensable nation,” as the Clinton administration routinely called the U.S., is no longer considered so indispensable. Its threats are no longer quite so feared. Its presence in international affairs is no longer quite so accepted. And the global stability once nurtured by American strength has become a worldwide instability encouraged by American weakness.

What has changed? And what lies ahead?

As the record of the *Pax Americana* joins the darkened pages of other closed chapters of history, what is written in the new chapter we are now opening?

Periods of “Peace”

The term “*Pax Americana*” takes its form from the ancient *Pax Romana*, or Roman Peace. From the reign of Emperor Augustus through the reign of Marcus Aurelius (27 AD–180 AD), fear of Rome’s military strength helped to ward off the Empire’s enemies and inspire a feeling of security in regions under the umbrella of its protection—so long as they paid their taxes, governed themselves peaceably, and remembered who was ultimately in charge. Part of the nervousness of leaders in Jesus’ day can be explained by their desire to avoid causing Rome to see them as troublemakers unable to keep the peace and support Roman rule (John 11:47–48). Under such conditions, trade flourished and many prospered.

With the ascension of Aurelius’ son Commodus to the emperor’s throne, the *Pax Romana* came to an end. As the ancient historian Cassio Dio wrote of that loss, the end of that era involved a descent from “a kingdom of gold to one of iron and rust, as affairs did for the Romans of that day.”

Still, the *Pax Romana* has lived on in historical memory and has inspired historians to give later periods similar names. From around 1815 to 1914—between the Napoleonic Wars and World War I—much

of the world enjoyed what has been termed the *Pax Britannica*, when the unrivaled strength of the British Empire established an environment enabling free trade and relative global stability. The peerless might of the British Navy intimidated all who would upset the peace Britain maintained as the “world’s policeman.” Trade was bountiful—at great benefit to the Empire and its many colonies across the globe.

Of course, neither of these periods of “peace” were times of true, global peace. Rome fought when necessary to preserve its empire. Roman armies sacked Jerusalem during the Roman “Peace.” And, like the Pax Romana, the Pax Britannica saw the Crimean War and the Opium Wars, among other conflicts—yet the world’s “great powers” coexisted in relative peace, while prosperity flourished for many.

But nothing in this world lasts forever, and the Pax Britannica ended with the advent of World War I—a war that saw the rise of a new world power that would eventually take the mantle of leadership and bring a new period of relative global stability.

Letting Washington “Lead the World”

Before World War II began, a representative of the United Kingdom made an intriguing offer to then-President Franklin D. Roosevelt. *New Yorker* columnist Daniel Immerwahr described the event in a November 2020 article:

In 1939, shortly before the German invasion of Poland, a British emissary, Lord Lothian, visited the White House with an unusual request. The United Kingdom was unable to protect the world from the Nazis, Lothian told President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. “Anglo-Saxon civilization” would thus need a new guardian. The scepter was falling from British hands, Lothian explained, and the United States must “snatch it up.” Though informally made, it was an extraordinary entreaty. London was willing to step aside and let Washington lead the world.

Roosevelt was reportedly uninterested. As historian Stephen Wertheim notes in his book *Tomorrow, the World*, “The president of the United States pre-

ferred British world leadership to a Pax Americana: let them bear the brunt. What Great Britain had been to the modern world, Great Britain would remain to the world of tomorrow” (p. 36).

Yet history records Roosevelt’s change of heart, as the war in Europe began and expanded. And history records, as well, the crucial role of American power in the conclusion of World War II—a war that began with a joint Soviet-German Invasion of Poland and ended under the shadows of two mushroom clouds in Japan, announcing the birth of the world’s newest superpower: the United States.

The strength and dynamism of the post-war U.S. economy powered the economies of other nations and turned the U.S. dollar into the de facto reserve currency of the world—a financial asset whose future value could be trusted because of the powerful nation that backed it. And with the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, the U.S. became the world’s only true superpower, able to exert unprecedented strength and influence around the globe with little resistance. The *New York Post* recently summarized the blessings much of the world has enjoyed under the Pax Americana:

We are in the most peaceful period of recorded time, and it’s because of the post-World War II alliances forged by the West. How many regional conflicts were kept in check by NATO? How many dictators discouraged? And in the global marketplace this fostered, the quality of life rose for all. To take just one benchmark: 36% of humanity lived in extreme poverty in 1990. Today, it’s fallen to 9%, per the World Bank.

The United States quickly became the lynchpin of a relatively stable and generally profitable international world order, even as it shaped that world order as it saw fit to suit its own purposes. With military bases across the globe, deterring bad actors and offering the promise of aid at a moment’s notice, the Pax Americana seemed a global peace if there ever were one.

Speaking at the 2014 commencement ceremony at the U.S. Military Academy, President Barack Obama took note of his nation’s pivotal role:

Our military has no peer. The odds of a direct threat against us by any nation are low and do not come close to the dangers we faced during the Cold War.... From Europe to Asia, we are the hub of alliances unrivaled in the history of nations.... And when a typhoon hits the Philippines or schoolgirls are kidnapped in Nigeria or masked men occupy a building in Ukraine, it is America that the world looks to for help. So the United States is and remains the one indispensable nation. That has been true for the century past and it will be true for the century to come.

A Shift Across Administrations

The century to come, however, had other ideas. President Bill Clinton's administration in 1999 gave the world a "wake-up" call when U.S.-led NATO forces intervened for an easy victory in the Kosovo conflict—without United Nations authorization and with Russia and China opposing the unilateral U.S. action. For those who saw America as an ideological opponent, the high price of participating in the Pax Americana began to be clarified: sharing the world with a nation capable of imposing its will at will.

But after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, during the administration of President George W. Bush, things seemed to change. Few questioned the United States' legitimacy in declaring war on the Taliban in Afghanistan in response, but declaring war on Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 2003 was a different matter. While Iraq's military fell to U.S. power quite easily, the discovery that there were no weapons of



September 15, 2020: President Donald Trump participates in the signing ceremony of the Abraham Accords between Israel, United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain at the White House in Washington, DC.

mass destruction—meaning that the war was fought on a false pretext—was a devastating blow to America's perceived moral authority in the world.

Many wondered, if the U.S. could unleash its unprecedented military power without being held accountable for its mistakes, what could prevent the Pax Americana from becoming the American Empire. The integrity of the U.S. as an ally came into further question in its handling of a crisis in Syria. In August 2012, President Obama declared that Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad would be crossing a "red line" if he used chemical weapons against opponents in his nation's civil war. Yet when Assad did just that in 2013, the U.S. took no military action, causing the world to wonder just what a "red line" meant—beyond a relatively empty threat.

By the end of President Obama's term, the U.S.—both its citizens and its politicians—had grown weary of international involvement. Among the many reasons Donald Trump was elected was a growing sense that America needed to turn its focus inward to address growing domestic problems, such as its dangerously porous southern border. In his inaugural speech, President Trump promised that "a new vision will govern our land, from this day forward, it's going to be only America first." This meant pressing other countries to rely less on the U.S. for their own defense.

Still, one of the "last hurrahs" of Pax Americana occurred under President Trump, when he signed the Abraham Accords—historic agreements to normalize U.S. and Israeli relations with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. The Abraham Accords would have been considered a historic agreement for any presidential administration, potentially earning Mr. Trump consideration for a Nobel Prize. But in its collective irrational hatred for the President, American media effectively ignored the Accords, and the administration of Mr. Trump's successor, President Joe Biden, generally refuses even to call them by their official name.

Afghanistan: Symptom of a Dying Era

Since the Abraham Accords, successes for the Pax Americana have been hard to come by. Failures, on the other hand, have not been so shy.

Perhaps the most painfully obvious symptom of a dying "American Peace" is the Biden administration's disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan. After waging two decades of war, spending in excess of two tril-

lion dollars, and losing thousands of lives, the United States fled Afghanistan in a manner that many saw as the hurried retreat of a defeated nation, calling to mind images of U.S. troops pulling out of Saigon with the loss of the Vietnam War.

“We will not conduct a hasty rush to the exit,” the President had promised. “We’ll do it responsibly, deliberately, and safely.” But the images and reports that poured in appeared the very opposite: a rushed exit performed irresponsibly, haphazardly, and dangerously. America’s allies were devastated. In Britain, Lionel Shriver offered this comment in the *Spectator*:

In scheduling a scandalously shambolic withdrawal to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the World Trade Center attacks, Joe Biden has managed not to reverse the humiliation of 9/11, but to repeat it....

In the main, NATO is the United States. UN peacekeeping forces are a farce. So if the US is truly cowed (if not exactly humbled) and determined for the foreseeable to shelter in place, we’re looking at a future in which malefactors can get away with anything. Why, malefactors may think they can get away with anything already.

Recent events may indicate that Shriver’s speculation is accurate. More than one analyst has suggested that the most important factor encouraging Vladimir Putin’s foray into Ukraine was his perception of American weakness—if not yet a weakness of ability, certainly a weakness of will. Starting a full-scale war on the very doorstep of Europe, historically a region under the clearest and brightest of U.S. promises for protection, would once have been unthinkable—or, at the very least, a risk not worth taking.

But as the Pax Americana wanes and the world’s policeman all but walks off the job, risks once unthinkable become new opportunities. The world once again is available for carving up. Taiwan and China are surely taking note.

So is Germany. In February of this year, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz told an emergency session of parliament that his nation would pour US\$113 billion into its army in response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. As reported by the BBC, “There was an audi-

ble ripple of shock in parliament. Some MPs clapped, some booed, others looked stunned.” It is Germany’s largest military investment since the end of World War II—a step that would have been unthinkable before the war in Ukraine. And it is a step long encouraged by more than one U.S. administration, increasingly tired of maintaining the Pax Americana.

Is this a victory for the U.S.? As the nation will quickly learn, allies that do not need you may not remain allies for long—and perhaps America is learning already. In the early days of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, seeking support from allies, President Biden reached out to Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the U.A.E.’s Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan. According to the Wall Street Journal and others, both men declined his calls. Each did take a call, however, from Vladimir Putin.

What Comes Next?

Some observers have taken heart that the response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has shown the West to be more unified than it has been in recent years. A few have tried to credit President Biden for playing a leading role in that unity. But, for most observers, the writing remains on the wall for the “American Peace.” But if the Pax Americana has come and gone—having lasted for a shorter time than either the Pax Romana or the Pax Britannica—what will come next?

Biblical prophecy reveals details of the final, climactic period of world history. Scripture suggests that, while the world will see its share of momentary ups and downs before the end of this age, our fast-approaching future could contain yet one more global-scale “Peace.” One might call it the *Pax Europa*, the European Peace. Yet, even more than any previous war-stained Pax, it will be an utterly false peace fostered by levels of bloodshed and warfare unprecedented in human history. Perhaps a better name for it would be the *Pax Bestiae*—the Peace of the Beast.

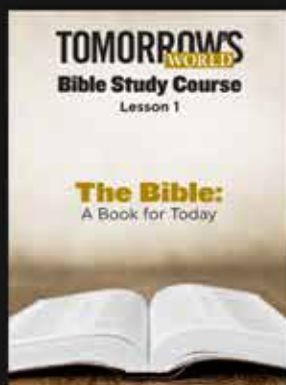
This coming “Peace” will be enforced by a globe-girdling superpower with enough military might to subjugate all who would dare to disagree with it. In fact, the book of Revelation describes this European “beast power” as being so unstoppable that the people of the world will marvel at it, asking, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with

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Giants On a Sea of Grass

American explorer Meriwether Lewis, serious and exacting, was awestruck upon first encountering the boundless plain that opened up to him in 1805. Under the summer sun, he faced “one continued level fertile plain as far as the eye can reach, in which there is not even a solitary tree or shrub to be seen” (Stephen Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage*, p. 216). On that plain, he found vast herds of elk, deer, buffalo, and pronghorn antelope. A naturalist ahead of his time, Lewis saw what scientists studying ecosystems today are just beginning to understand: ancient grasslands on all the continents are just as vital to the environment as great forests, sustaining varieties of plants and animals that are just as important as those of forested ecosystems. Finely balanced and tuned by our Master Designer, grasslands and grazing animals both contribute to healthy soil. They are just as stunning seen under today’s scientific lens as they were to Lewis and Clark’s gaze 200 years ago.

Choosy Eaters—By Design

Today—in the midst of over-plowed modern farmland with swirling airborne topsoil—one might not realize that early American settlers found prairies overspread with grasses so tall that one could have trouble finding a dugout shelter among them. Even further back in time, on the North American Great Plains, were waves of migratory grazers like the woolly mammoths and giant prehistoric bison, which long ago gave way to eventual populations of American bison and pronghorn antelope. (See TomorrowsWorld.org for more creationist insights on prehistoric animals.) At their peak, vast herds of American bison (“buffalo”) may have num-

bered 50 million, triple the population of American citizens of the 1840s. The lumbering nature of these land beasts belies a delicate relationship and symbiosis of prairie and prairie giant. Today, with little virgin land to study and soils depleted by modern industrial farming, grasslands are often neglected by ecologists in favor of more fashionable, forested ecosystems. Wildlife grazers and grasslands in Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, and North and South America were once examples of the beautiful design and engineering of our Creator.

Whether wrenching up bunches of tall grasses with a prehensile tongue or selectively plucking grass leaves with flexible lips, each animal has been designed with the eating style to meet its metabolism’s needs. The very distinct ways in which each species grazes have different effects on the grasses as well as on the soil. And, although they may seem to graze randomly, eyes on the ground, in fact, the animals’ movement serves the grasses and ground that feed them in a rather efficient manner, and even domesticated cattle, given the option, will not graze the same spot for more than one day. According to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, grazers seem to have a “reference memory” that actually maps a pasture so they don’t return to an area for 20 days or longer. Thus, grazed land has time to be replenished with healthy new growth.

The amount of grass blades or leaves has a specific effect on plant health. As they nibble the tips of field grasses, migratory grazers stimulate vigorous new, leafy plant growth by increasing the availability of nutrients. Young, green growth produces more food reserves for root and whole-plant development. The increased food reserves produced by new growth make for a more resil-

ient plant overall, but also feed the deepening root mass. A limited degree of root volume dieback contributes to sequestering carbon within the soil, enhancing the porosity of topsoil, which is then more easily penetrated and saturated with water, even slowly adding to topsoil depth. Animals that wrench grasses by their roots have some similar effects on the soil and make room for surrounding plants to spread out with new growth.

How Can You Get So Big Eating Nothing but Salad?

Many grazers, with their unique digestion, fall within the “ruminant” classification of herbivores. After the ingested plant matter is crushed by powerful molars and pH-buffered by saliva, the ruminant swallows the chewed food into the first of a series of compartments in its stomach. The food later reverses direction, powered by ingeniously equipped esophageal muscles, and the regurgitated food, cud, is re-chewed.

Once sufficiently chewed, the fibrous plant matter proceeds to a stomach compartment that functions like a bacteria-, protozoa-, and fungus-laden fermenting vat. This section of the stomach extracts carbohydrates from indigestible plant fibers. Incidentally, this digestive process is what makes grassland grazers such efficient manufacturers of meat for grassland predators—or, for that matter, beef-eating humans.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the animal, digested vegetable matter becomes nutrient-dense fertilizer and simultaneously disperses seeds—without the need for fuel-guzzling machinery. Long before today’s crude chemical fertilizers, manure from wildlife grazers supplied nitrogen, phosphorus, and minerals in a highly bioavailable, slow-releasing form. Spread throughout a pasture, it prevents leaching and reduces surface water contamination.

And as the grazers also trample unutilized, higher-carbon grasses and reeds into the ground, manure deposits increase the humus content of the soil, thereby building its structure and depth. Migratory wildlife and even the domestic simulations of frequent cattle/pasture rotation effectively sequester otherwise lost carbon back into the soil. That is part of why the soils of virgin prairies measured in yards deep, compared to today’s inches. According to historian Stephen Ambrose, Meriwether Lewis dug in American grassland soils to a remarkable 17 feet.

Destruction and Renewal, from Soil to Spirit

Around every turn are complex interplays and ripple effects of grazer and grassland for rebuilding soils. Grazers function like four-footed “mowers” that, with proper population balance, optimize grass health. They trample the old, underused vegetation and drop manure “fertilizer” for carbon-sequestration and enhanced soil structure. They utilize “solar-powered” (grass photosynthesis) vegetation to manufacture foodstuffs (meat) for carnivores and omnivores. Virgin soils under ancient grasslands demonstrate depth and quality that has tantalized farmers for centuries.

However, grasslands such as early frontier explorers encountered are fast being depleted. Excessive industrial soil cultivation results in tens of thousands of tons of topsoil lost as airborne dust every year. Landslides, “dustbowl”-level storms, soil depletion, and associated food shortages loom large on the horizon.

But a time is coming when the finishing touches will be put on a truly renovated planet with healed lands. The prophet Isaiah foretold that “the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes” (Isaiah 35:7). Dewdrops will sparkle on tall grasses buffeted in the breezes. Morning summer sun will again warm the backs of grazers on wide horizons of the grasslands Lewis admired.

Today, we can see that time only “through a glass, darkly” (1 Corinthians 13:12, *King James Version*). But we can be assured that grazers and grasslands will function together as part of soil-building, carbon-sequestering mechanisms in that future millennial period. The Creator God crafted not just the grasslands, but all of the earth’s ecosystems in fantastic balance and synergy for the well-being and enjoyment of humankind.

If we can have satisfaction, awe, and appreciation for God’s creation now, how much more is there yet to be discovered and savored in the future 1,000 years of perfect peace? Is it possible for us to experience in our lives now a foretaste of freedom from evil? Learn more about the millennial period of peace and how to let Jesus Christ be your King now in our booklet *The World Ahead: What Will It Be Like?*

—Bryan Fall



Europe's “Great Reset”

By **Dexter B. Wakefield**

Is the European Union about to have a Great Reset? The term “Great Reset” comes from the World Economic Forum, which is based near Geneva, Switzerland. The WEF advocates a reshaping of “global, regional, and industry agendas” to reset world economics, energy usage, and government social policies. *Tomorrow's World* magazine has reported on “The Great Reset” before (January 2021).

The European Union needs a reset. It has been struggling to maintain its unity while multiple forces operate to tear it apart. “Brexit”—Great Britain’s exit from the EU—proved that exit is possible, and perhaps even desirable, for some member states. Germany and France are very secular societies and exercise great influence over EU regulations, while more conservative and religious societies such as Poland have chafed at and even rejected some EU mandatory social policies regarding LGBTQ issues and immigration. And whereas some EU nations, such as Germany and France, are strong economically, others such as Spain, Italy, Portugal, and Greece are economically needy and press the stronger nations for expensive subsidies.

But where there are strong forces working to pull a union apart, often strong counterforces develop to offset them. Europe is experiencing such forces now.

Changing Perceptions

Many influential Europeans, in particular Germany’s Angela Merkel, thought that Russian expansionism

could be contained or at least mitigated by commercial engagement of the nation. They even had a word for the policy: “*Ostpolitik*.” Hence, Europe did not mind becoming heavily dependent on Russian gas and petroleum. That view has become much less widespread since the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The *Wall Street Journal* reported, “The Ukraine invasion has shocked Western Europe into recognizing that its reliance on Russian supplies has made it vulnerable to Vladimir Putin’s blackmail” (“A Question for President Biden on Oil and Gas,” March 14, 2022). To many Europeans, Mr. Putin appears to be “weaponizing” his control over the EU’s energy supplies and holding much of Europe’s expected oil and gas supplies hostage as he invades a European state.

Recently, Germany reversed decades of policy and committed to a substantial rebuilding of its military in response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz shocked much of Europe with the rapidity of this decision. *CNN* reported, “Germany has announced that it will buy 35 US-made F-35A fighter jets, the first major arms purchase to be publicly confirmed since Chancellor Olaf Scholz committed to ramping up his country’s defense spending in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine” (“Germany will buy US-made F-35 fighter jets as it ramps up military spending after Russia’s Ukraine invasion,” March 15, 2022). The F-35A is America’s most advanced stealth jet and can carry nuclear weapons.

Other nations in Europe are reevaluating as well. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has

admitted new member nations that were once in the Warsaw Pact and largely under the control of the old Soviet Union. Other new NATO members were formerly part of the Soviet Union but became independent when the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact dissolved in 1991. Many of these former Warsaw Pact nations and former Soviet republics joined NATO to preserve their security and political independence. They are the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland (1999); Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia (2004); Albania and Croatia (2009); Montenegro (2017); and North Macedonia (2020). Ukraine has expressed interest in joining as well.

Historical Context

The formerly Warsaw Pact nations are particularly nervous that Russian President Vladimir Putin may yearn for the *bad* old days of Russia's military and political rule. To understand the actions and reactions of Europeans, it is necessary to remember the historical context of the Warsaw Pact.

Today, Russians and Eastern Europeans see the Warsaw Pact era *very differently*. The geopolitical maneuvers of post-World War II Europe are complex, but in order to understand the current events in Eastern Europe, it is helpful to have a basic overview of that period, the Warsaw Pact, and some of the major events leading to its formation.

• Yalta Conference

In February of 1945, the defeat of Germany in World War II was in sight. U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin—the “Big Three”—met at the Crimean city of Yalta to negotiate the reorganization of postwar Germany and Europe. Concerning the countries that the Soviets had occupied during World War II, Stalin convinced Roosevelt and Churchill that the Soviets would allow free elections in the occupied countries that would be responsive to the will of the people. That was a promise he never intended to keep.

• Fall of Nazi Germany

The Allies in World War II were led by “the Big Three”—the United States, United Kingdom, and Soviet Union—but the coalition included forces from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the Free French

Resistance, and others. In 1945, Allied armies forced German forces back from North Africa, Italy, France, and other fronts in the west, while Soviet forces drove into Germany from the East. As Hitler's military began to collapse in Germany, allied forces raced in from the east and the west to take as much territory as possible for post-war occupation and negotiations. Germany surrendered unconditionally at General Dwight D. Eisenhower's headquarters in Reims, France in the early morning hours of May 7, 1945. The next day, an additional document was signed to the Soviets in Berlin.

• “Iron Curtain” Descends

What was called “The Iron Curtain” was a physical barrier erected by the Communist governments of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to seal their peoples off from the democracies of Western Europe. It consisted of over 4,000 miles (7,000 km) of extensive fences, minefields, watchtowers, checkpoints, and walls (including the Berlin Wall). An unauthorized attempt to cross that barrier could be deadly for Eastern Europeans.

• North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

After the end of World War II, there were various security crises that alarmed the governments of Western Europe about the political and military expansion of the Soviet Union. The blockade of Berlin, a Soviet-sponsored communist coup in Czechoslovakia, and other events added to concerns about Soviet aggression and expansionism in Europe. The North Atlantic Treaty was signed in 1949. Its purpose is summarized by NATO's Historian's Office:

In this agreement, the United States, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom agreed to consider attack against one an attack against all.... The collective defense arrangements in NATO served to place the whole of Western Europe under the American “nuclear umbrella” In the 1950s, one of the first military doctrines of NATO emerged in the form of “massive retaliation,” or the idea that if any member was attacked, the United States would respond with a large-scale nuclear attack. The threat

of this form of response was meant to serve as a deterrent against Soviet aggression on the continent. Although formed in response to the exigencies of the developing Cold War, NATO has lasted beyond the end of that conflict, with membership even expanding to include some former Soviet states. It remains the largest peacetime military alliance in the world ("North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 1949," Office of the Historian, *History.State.gov*).

• European Union

The post-war stability provided by NATO and the U.S. nuclear umbrella permitted the economies of Europe to prosper and to pursue joint trade agreements. As early as the 1950s, Winston Churchill, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and others were advocating the formation of a "United States of Europe." That was not realized in their lifetimes, but in 1993 European Union citizenship was established by the Maastricht Treaty. The EU currently consists of 27 member states, which includes some former Soviet republics and Warsaw Pact nations. The United Kingdom left the EU on January 31, 2020.

• Warsaw Pact

After the defeat of Germany, the Soviet army occupied most of Eastern and Central Europe. Some states were incorporated into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, including Ukraine, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Eastern Poland, Belarus, Moldova, and Kaliningrad. Others were formed into a Soviet-dominated alliance called the Warsaw Pact—Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union.

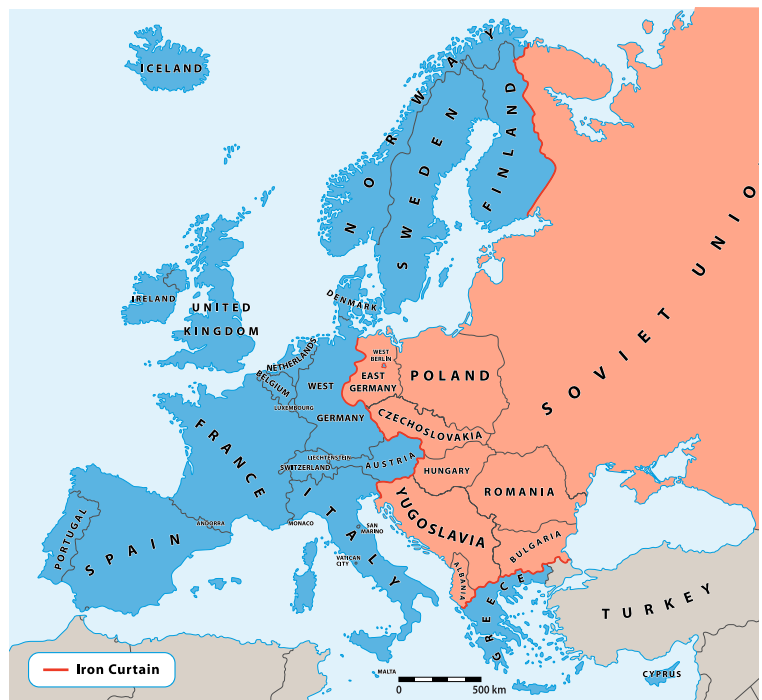
The Warsaw Pact provided the Soviets with an opposing force to NATO and implemented the systematic political and military hegemony by Russia over the participating countries under a unified military command. Around its rim, the Soviet Union had other satellite nations, such as Mongolia and Afghanistan, over which it maintained hegemony or sympathetic socialist governments.

Liberalization of Communist rule was not permitted. When Hungary tried to leave the Warsaw Pact in 1956, Soviet tanks and troops entered and crushed the revolt. In 1968, Alexander Dubcek's liberalization of Czechoslovakia—the "Prague Spring"—was crushed by an invasion of about 250,000 troops from the other Warsaw Pact nations.

By 1989, there was much discontent among the peoples of the Warsaw Pact nations and other Soviet Bloc nations. By the time the Soviet Union collapsed in December 1991, the nations of the Warsaw Pact had already declared the Pact ended the same year.

• "Cold War"

This was a period of military and political competition between the liberal democracies of the West, supported militarily by NATO, and the totalitarian socialist Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact. During this period, the Mutual Assured Destruction doctrine of nuclear war—"MAD"—prevented large-scale military conflict. The Cold War decades were dangerous times and there were instances such as the Cuban Missile Crisis that nearly resulted in a full nuclear exchange. It is generally agreed that the Cold War ended, at least temporarily, with the breakup of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact.



• Soviet Union Crumbles

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) began in 1922 and was presented as a federal union of various smaller states. In fact, the Soviet economy and government were a highly controlled and centralized one-party communist state dominated by Russia. When Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the Communist Party in 1985, the Soviet Union began a period of reforms and restructuring of the ailing Soviet economy, called *perestroika*. He later introduced *glasnost*, meaning openness, which allowed more freedom of the press and greater political freedoms—hence, more criticism of the government—and the inevitable result was more contact with the freer societies of the Western world. A series of spiraling events lead to the formal dissolution of the USSR on December 21, 1991.

A New European Order?

Ukraine has expressed interest in following the example of some other former Soviet republics by joining NATO, to strengthen ties with the liberal democracies of the West and for security relative to any future ambitions Russia might have. NATO nations, however, aware of the sensitivity of Ukraine's position, have so far refused to admit the nation.

The EU nations, particularly Germany, have until recently advocated integrating economically with Russia, reasoning that doing so would reduce the likelihood of armed conflict. They have seen Russia as an economic partner more than as a military and political adversary. But having been under Soviet domination after the end of World War II, the Eastern European nations that are in the EU or NATO have a different view.

Now, with the invasion of Ukraine, *all* the EU nations—not just many of the former Warsaw Pact nations—are uneasy about the Russian bear. They are concerned that Russia will try to reestablish its former empire by hegemony, destabilization, or outright military force. The *Associated Press* reported from Belgrade, Serbia:

For some European countries watching Russia's brutal war in Ukraine, there are fears that they could be next. Western officials say the most vulnerable could be those who aren't members of NATO or the European Union, and thus alone and unprotected—including

Ukraine's neighbor Moldova and Russia's neighbor Georgia, both of them formerly part of the Soviet Union—along with the Balkan states of Bosnia and Kosovo.

But analysts warn that even NATO members could be at risk, such as Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on Russia's doorstep, as well as Montenegro, either from Moscow's direct military intervention or attempts at political destabilization.... But the Biden administration is acutely aware of *deep concerns in Eastern and Central Europe that the war in Ukraine may be just a prelude to broader attacks on former Warsaw Pact members in trying to restore Moscow's regional dominance*. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell has said that "Russia is not going to stop in Ukraine" ("After Ukraine, Europe wonders who's next Russian target," *AP News*, March 10, 2022, emphasis added).

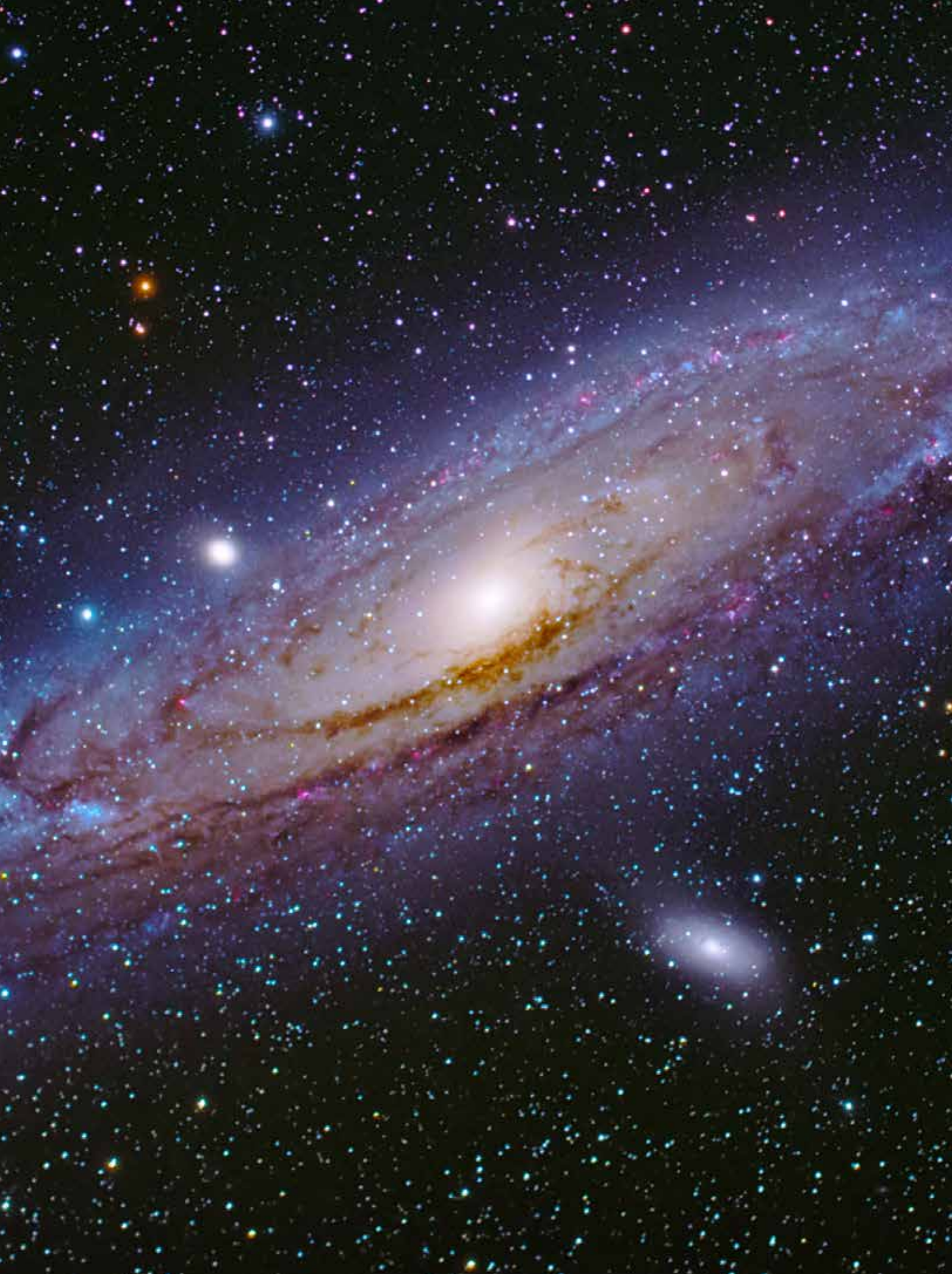
Under the NATO treaty, an attack on one NATO member is treated as an attack on them all. So, an attack by Russia on one of the Baltic states that used to be in the Eastern Bloc, such as Latvia or Estonia, would necessarily become a much larger confrontation between Russia and the rest of NATO—particularly with the United States, which would bear the brunt of the fighting. EU officials understand that they need to take serious measures for their security, and they need to move quickly.

Unintended Consequences

"Who controls the Rimland rules Eurasia, who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the world" (Nicholas Spykman, *The Geography of the Peace*, p. 44). The "Rimland" is the crescent of nations that surround the Eurasian continent. This theory has had prominent adherents in the last century. Does Russia see its potential greatness in this context?

Vladimir Putin hopes to use his invasion of Ukraine to reassert Russian dominance in Eastern Europe, to divide NATO, and to stop former Warsaw Pact nations, including Ukraine, from joining the alliance. However, the unintended consequence has been strengthening the unity and resolve of the EU nations, and that can go far beyond military and political matters.

EUROPE'S "GREAT RESET" CONTINUES ON PAGE 24



What Is the Greatest Reality?

Many scientists and philosophers claim to be seeking the ultimate basis of reality. Yet they refuse to accept the evidence on display right before their eyes!

By **Richard F. Ames**

How can billions of human beings live together on planet Earth yet see reality so differently? *Scientific American* magazine asked this question in its September 2019 issue, but the best they could do is propose that “truth is not entirely clear-cut” and that human beings must “make guesses about reality based on the sensory signals they receive.”

There is some truth to that. We “see in a mirror, dimly” (1 Corinthians 13:12). The Apostle Paul understood that, as human beings, we are limited in what we can see, hear, and know.

So, how can we make sense of it all? How can we sort through so many often-contradictory views of reality? How can we find the truth in a world that offers us so many competing “realities”? And what is the greatest reality of all? As Christians, this is one of the most vital questions we need to answer!

Are We Facing Reality?

We often hear social critics urge us to “face reality.” Nobody wants to be accused of living in a fantasy world of make-believe. But when information around us is increasing at unprecedented speed, how can we keep up with all that is real? Can something be real yet unimportant? Where do you and I fit in the real world? As Christians, we need answers to those vital questions.

If you look at a current television schedule, it is easy to see that many people these days like to watch what has come to be called “reality television.” Most often, however, such programs can more accurately be described simply as “unscripted” or “minimally scripted” drama. In the real world, nobody wins thousands of dollars for eating insects or voting their roommates out of the

house. Normal relationships aren’t launched with cameras pointed at an eager bachelor or bachelorette and with the prospect of big money for whoever comes out on top in what is basically an on-air game show.

Of course, despite a handful of obsessive fans, most recognize that “reality television” is far from reality. So, where can we turn to find reality? Surely, we may think, we can find it in the realm of science. In its September 2019 special issue, “Searching for Reality in Unreal Times,” *Scientific American* sought to explore reality through three topics: neuroscience, physics, and mathematics. The magazine’s goal? “To explore how it is that we can all live in the same universe yet see reality so differently” (p. 27).

Scientific American admitted that theirs was a difficult challenge. “Even in physics and mathematics, truth is not entirely clear-cut. And mounting evidence from neuroscience indicates that our perceptions are not direct representations of the external world. Rather our brains—each one unique—make guesses about reality based on the sensory signals they receive.”

Absolute Reality?

Certainly, there are some absolute truths within science and mathematics. Without them, twelve astronauts would not have been able to walk on the moon and astronomers would not have been able to land probes on the planet Mars to carry out years of remarkable explorations. For that matter, physics allows wingless human beings to design aircraft that carry us around the world at speeds our ancestors would not have believed. As *Scientific American* contributor George Musser put it:

Physics seems to be one of the only domains of human life where truth is

clear-cut. The laws of physics describe hard reality. They are grounded in mathematical rigor and experimental proof. They give answers, not endless muddle. There is not one physics for you and one physics for me but a single physics for everyone and everywhere. Physics often seems weird, but that's a good sign—it is not beholden to preconceptions. In a world that can seem claustrophobic, where the same debates go round in circles, physics injects some genuine novelty into life and jolts us out of the ruts we fall into (p. 30).

But we may ask: Where did those laws come from? Did they exist at the beginning of the universe? And just how rare and special is life and our planet Earth? Astronomer Carl Sagan called our Earth a “lonely speck” in the cosmic dark. Must we then conclude that we are so insignificant as to be meaningless?

Consider the precision required for the existence of the universe—and the existence of intelligent human life. Astrophysicists Stephen Hawking and Roger Penrose comment on the precision required at the origin of the universe:

WHEN WE LOOK UP TO THE SKY AND SEE THE VASTNESS OF SPACE ABOVE AND AROUND US, THE NOTION THAT WE LIVE IN A COMPUTER SIMULATION BECOMES ABSURD.

If the rate of expansion one second after the big bang had been less by one part in 10^{10} , the universe would have collapsed after a few million years. If it had been greater by one part in 10^{10} , the universe would have been essentially empty after a few million years. In neither case would it have lasted long enough for life to develop. Thus one either has to appeal to the anthropic principle or find some physical explanation of why the universe is the way it is (*The Nature of Space and Time*, pp. 89–90).

Some scientists are so desperate to avoid facing the reality of divine creation that they have advanced a theory of a “multiverse” in which there are infinite universes, such that our universe—however improbable it may be—must exist alongside countless failed universes not containing life, and others containing every possible variation of human choice and activity. When philosopher Nick Bostrom in 2003 published a paper suggesting that the world around us is actually a computer simulation, many scoffed. In subsequent years, however, the “simulation argument” has become a convenient way for agnostics and atheists to deny the reality of God. When faced with the very real evidence of intelligent design in the world around us, those who reject God are willing to imagine a superhuman entity creating a computer simulation of which we are part. But, then, who created the creator of the simulation? The “simulation argument,” at its core, is a lazy way to postpone acknowledging the reality of God as the Creator.

The Reality of Our Universe

When we look up to the sky and see the vastness of space above and around us, the notion that we live in a computer simulation becomes absurd. The simulation

idea reminds us of how creative the human mind can be, but also of how easy it can be to misdirect that creativity. For those of you in big cities with lights that obscure the night sky, perhaps you have visited an observatory or have visited the NASA website. Perhaps you have marveled at the “Cartwheel Galaxy” some 500

million light years away, or the Cygnus Loop supernova remnant, or the Crab Nebula, the Cone Nebula, the Swan Nebula, the Tadpole Galaxy, and so many others.

Those nebulae and galaxies can exist only in a universe in which predictable and absolute laws are operating. And if there are laws, there must be a Lawgiver. “There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy” (James 4:12).

And while we see evidence of the Lawgiver many thousands of light years away, we can also see that evidence in our own human bodies. In his book *A Short*

History of Nearly Everything, evolutionist Bill Bryson remarks on the amazing process of protein production in the human body. “Proteins can’t exist without DNA, and DNA has no purpose without proteins. Are we to assume then that they arose simultaneously with the purpose of supporting each other? If so: wow” (p. 289). Though Bryson retains a belief in evolution, he acknowledges its improbability. “For random events to produce even a single protein would seem a stunning improbability—like a whirlwind spinning through a junkyard and leaving behind a fully assembled jumbo jet, in the colorful simile of the astronomer Fred Hoyle.”

Just how information-rich is DNA? Writing for *Science* magazine, Robert F. Service explains its amazing capacity:

Humanity has a data storage problem: More data were created in the past 2 years than in all of preceding history. And that torrent of information may soon outstrip the ability of hard drives to capture it. Now, researchers report that they’ve come up with a new way to encode digital data in DNA to create the highest-density large-scale data storage scheme ever invented. Capable of storing 215 petabytes (215 million gigabytes) in a single gram of DNA, the system could, in principle, store every bit of datum ever recorded by humans in a container about the size and weight of a couple of pickup trucks (“DNA could store all of the world’s data in one room,” March 2017).

Similarly, Stephen C. Meyer of the Discovery Institute has studied extensively the evidence of intelligent design in the creation. In the powerful documentary film *Unlocking the Mystery of Life*, he explains that “everything we know tells us that information-rich systems arise from intelligent design—but, what do we make of the fact that there is information in life? In every living cell of every living organism? That’s the fundamental mystery. Where does that information come from?”

So, ask yourself: which requires a greater “leap of faith”? Belief in random chance? Belief that we live in a “simulation” designed by some unknown superin-

telligence? Or belief that we live in a wonderful reality designed by a loving God?

The Real Spirit Realm

Sadly, alongside the beauty and majesty we see all around us, we see deception—social, political, and even religious. “So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:9). In a world so full of lies and liars, it is vital that we hold fast to the truth. If there is a Lawgiver who has set into motion the laws that govern our universe, shouldn’t we expect that He has set into motion laws that govern human life? And shouldn’t we expect that when we understand those laws, we will be able to make the most of life? Jesus Christ told His disciples plainly that “you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

By ourselves, we could not expect to know the full truth about God and His creation. Christ explained that most of the world is deceived, except for a few whom God the Father has called to know the truth (John 6:44). Those few are not necessarily the great scientists and philosophers; indeed, Jesus prayed, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes” (Matthew 11:25).

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the young evangelist Timothy, there was not yet a “New Testament” canon. Yet he told the young evangelist:

But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:14–17).

Yes, the word of God is truth—and the Bible is the written word of God. And how does that relate to

every human being? Jesus made this plain statement: “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God’” (Luke 4:4).

The Creator has all power in the universe. Human beings have inflated images of themselves, but God compares them to “grasshoppers.” God also created all the galaxies and astral bodies and knows every star. “Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in” (Isaiah 40:21–22).

The Reality of Prayer

Physicists and astronomers have powerful tools with which they carry out their research. But God has given each of us a very powerful tool—the tool of prayer. Your Bible is filled with encouraging promises concerning prayer. Jesus gave one such promise:

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 7:7–12).

Unlike the “armchair philosophers” whose ideas cannot be tested and verified, prayer is a reality you can prove for yourself. And, as you claim God’s promises in prayer, He will give you light and encouragement to see reality with more clarity than before. He also gives us this amazing promise:

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things

that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Peter 1:2–4).

In what other ways has God promised to answer our prayers? Here are just a few:

- Provision for all our needs (Philippians 4:19)
- Peace of mind (Philippians 4:6–7)
- His inspired guidance (Proverbs 3:5–6)
- Strength to endure trials (1 Corinthians 10:13)
- The desires of our heart, *if* we delight in Him (Psalm 37:4–5)
- Forgiveness of sin (1 John 1:9)
- The gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; Luke 11:13)
- His love (Romans 5:5)

The prophet Isaiah exhorts us, “Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near” (Isaiah 55:6). The prophet Amos warns of a time when God’s truth will not be available: “‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD, but shall not find it’” (Amos 8:11–12).

If you are coming to understand what you are reading in this magazine, and you feel that God is calling you to become one of His faithful firstfruits in this age, please contact the Regional Office nearest you (listed on page 4). One of the most amazing realities is that the same God who created the vast universe and who is working out His prophesied plan here on planet Earth is also preparing that planet, and the whole universe, as an inheritance for His people. Yes, God tells us that faithful Christians will inherit “all things,” including the universe (Revelation 21:7; Ro-



mans 8:32). The universe exists as the environment for lowly human beings to recognize the greatest reality. And you can be part of that! God is not just all-powerful—He is all-loving. In fact, another of the greatest realities is that “God is love.” That’s not just a slogan; we find it stated plainly in the Holy Scriptures (1 John 4:8, 16).

Will You “Get Real”?

Scientists and philosophers can invent elaborate schemes for denying the reality of God and His power. What does God say about their efforts?


For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse (Romans 1:18–20).

So, how important is it that we understand not just that the universe exists, but why? Astrophysicist Hawking put it plainly: “If we find the answer to that, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason. For then we would know the mind of God” (*The Theory of Everything*, p. 136). How wonderful it is that Christians can come to know the mind of God—and

experience His power in their own lives. That power is at the heart of the greatest reality of all.

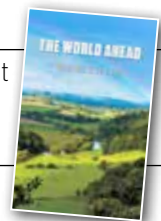
What is that reality? In three words, *God reigns supreme*. We find this encouraging truth throughout the Bible. “God reigns over the nations; He sits on His holy throne” (Psalm 47:8). Even in times of difficulty, we can have confidence that God is in charge—that He can use even the most challenging circumstances to bring about His desired purpose. We remember from the book of Daniel that the “Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses” (Daniel 5:21). If God has put a tyrant or a bumbler in place as the ruler of the nation where you live, you can take comfort in the reality that, as a Christian, your true citizenship is in heaven, awaiting the soon-coming Kingdom of God (Philippians 3:20).

The last book of your Bible, the book of Revelation, restates this most important reality: “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!’” (Revelation 19:6).

Finally, please do not ever forget that God’s word reminds us that this awesome omnipotent God is personally interested in the reality of your future: “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). The omnipotent God the Father sent His son, Jesus Christ, to shed His blood so that you can partake in the greatest reality of all. Will you respond to His loving offer? 

**MAY WE
SUGGEST?**

The World Ahead: What Will It Be Like? While you’re waiting on the world to change, find out what it will change into. Request this **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at TomorrowsWorld.org. PDF, ePub, and Kindle are also available.





The Fourth Horseman: Disease Epidemics

By **Douglas S. Winnail**

Biblical prophecies that warn of dangers at the end of this present age use sobering images of four horsemen to describe terrible events that will sweep over the earth just before the return of Jesus Christ. The fourth horseman (Revelation 6:7-8) pictures the outbreak of *pestilences and troubles* (Matthew 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11), including viruses and bacteria, that will ravage an entire quarter of the earth in tandem with violence, hunger, and “the beasts of the earth” (Revelation 6:8).

At the world’s current level of population, this means these calamities would kill just shy of *two billion people*. Even after facing the COVID-19 pandemic for the last two years, many may find it unbelievable to imagine disaster of such prophesied magnitude, especially considering advances in modern medical technology. Yet signs of conditions that would enable such devastating global catastrophes are appearing with increasing frequency—indicating that these ancient biblical prophecies are about to come alive as never before.

Communicable Disease Widespread

As our world deals with the sobering reality of more than 6 million COVID-19 deaths in a span of about two years, it may be easy to forget that other maladies continue to do great harm. The AIDS epidemic has seen the deaths of more than 35 million individuals since the mid-1980s, and even today the World Health Organization reports that more than 37 million are living with

HIV/AIDS, with about 1.5 million newly acquiring the disease in 2020 alone.

Meanwhile, other diseases, though rare in the United States and developed nations, continue to cause great suffering around the globe. Though physicians in the U.S. diagnose scarcely more than 2,000 malaria infections in a typical year, 2020 saw more than 240 million cases worldwide, leading to more than 600,000 deaths—mostly children in sub-Saharan Africa. *Statista.com* reports that in 2019, more than 1.2 million people around the world died of tuberculosis—a number that the WHO says increased to more than 1.5 million in 2021 because of limited treatment availability due to COVID-19 quarantines and restrictions. Even more significant than the raw number is that for the first time in many years, tuberculosis deaths have been *increasing* year to year.

The Limits of Medicine

In the past century, the development of antibiotics—the “magic bullets” of modern medicine—has fostered a false sense of security in which many assume that we are no longer threatened by infectious diseases. However, the appearance of microbes resistant to powerful drugs reveals that there are *limits* to what antibiotics can do.

In just a few hours, thanks to international jet travel, disease carriers can come into contact with thousands of people at airports and on planes, greatly increasing the rate of exposure. The rise of megacities, where millions of people live in close contact, also facilitates the spread of disease. In the developing world—where millions crowd together in slums with

little access to clean water, medical services, or the sanitary disposal of human wastes and garbage—these infectious diseases thrive. Social disruptions caused by war and political turmoil that plague Africa, the Middle East, and other areas of the world create fertile conditions for the spread of infectious disease. All these factors are present and growing in our world today.

The threat of biochemical terrorism—the deliberate release of toxic microbes or chemical agents in large urban centers—offers the scary scenario of large numbers of people being killed in very little time. In the last decade, our world has clearly become *more* vulnerable to the outbreak of global epidemics that have the potential of claiming millions of lives—which is exactly what the fourth horseman pictures.

Epidemics in Our Past

A quick glance at history reveals the devastating effect of disease-bearing bacteria. Award-winning Canadian journalist Andrew Nikiforuk reminds us that once they “start to reproduce in exponential numbers, they can alter entire ecosystems, food chains, and water systems—and even the fate of human empires” (*Pandemonium*, p. xii).


Epidemics in the past arrived unexpectedly and spread death and devastation over wide areas of the world. In the Middle Ages, leprosy, tuberculosis, cholera, and typhoid thrived in the filth and crowded living conditions of medieval cities. In 1348, an epidemic of plague, the “Black Death,” killed an entire third of the population of Europe—some 30 million—in just two years. The plague spread along medieval trade routes. Columbus’ sailors brought syphilis from the Americas, and the disease spread rapidly through Europe, aided by promiscuity. Europeans brought smallpox to the Americas, where it killed 100 million Native Americans in one century because they lacked natural antibodies to the disease.

A century before COVID-19, the flu epidemic of 1918 killed 50 million people in just 18 months. By contrast, the battlefields of World War I required four years to claim 15 million lives. When disease strikes, it can devastate a population with a speed and range that exceeds mankind’s ability to destroy itself through conventional warfare. The resurgence of infectious diseases clearly indicates that the fourth horseman is no less a threat to human health than it was before modern medical advances—and that it will ride again when conditions are ripe.

Lessons of History

Around 450 BC, the Greek physician Hippocrates observed that “diseases didn’t come calling unless there had been either great changes to human health or great changes made to the health of the land”—in other words, “humans make epidemics.” German pathologist Rudolf Virchow, considered the father of pathology, concluded more than a century ago that “epidemics resemble *great warnings* from which a statesman... can read that a disturbance has taken place in the development of his people” (Andrew Nikiforuk, *The Fourth Horseman*, pp. 21–22).

Human lives and the environment today are changing in unprecedented ways. Just look at the results of the population explosion: polluted air and water in garbage-ridden and growing cities, slums where millions live in squalor, forests destroyed by economic development, and severe temperatures that affect weather patterns and economies around the globe. Add to this the appearance of drug-resistant germs, diseases spread via jet travel, and immune systems weakened by stress, promiscuous sex, intravenous drug use, and malnutrition—and you have a potent prescription for global epidemics. Many of today’s diseases are the biological consequences of promiscuity, poor hygiene, and a host of high-risk behaviors on the part of people who ignore fundamental principles of health and are not prepared to take responsibility for the damage that their actions cause, even to others.

Long ago, our Creator warned that “if you *do not* obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes... the LORD will make the plague cling to you... the LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation... from which you *cannot be healed*” (Deuteronomy 28:15–28). The Bible reveals that because of mankind’s willingness to ignore fundamental physical and moral laws, we will reap the consequences of breaking those laws, and that “every sickness and every plague... will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed” (Deuteronomy 28:61). Jesus Christ also warned that, before His return, global calamities would threaten the existence of the human race (Matthew 24:21–22). When the fourth horseman begins its final ride, human beings will be at fault. These sobering prophecies are coming alive and moving towards fulfillment in the years just ahead. 

Retired Pope Benedict XVI, an influential and prolific writer, has a distinctive view of Europe. Shortly before he became pope, a collection of his speeches and papers was published in a book, *Europe: Today and Tomorrow*. In it, he asks, "Europe—what is it exactly?" And he answers, "Europe is not a continent that can be contemplated neatly in geographical terms: rather, it is a cultural and historical concept" (p. 11). He then explains that the very idea of Europe arises from its spiritual roots in Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

Benedict, like popes before him, believes that Europe is not so much a geographic place, but an idea. And historically, that idea has determined Europe's identity. Benedict points out that Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches provided the pre-political ethic that preceded the formation of the states of Europe and from which the very idea of Europe arises. In his mind, *no church means no Europe*. He and many others think that the EU should be declared a Christian state.

Like previous popes, Benedict XVI sees the continent of Europe extending not only to the western border of Russia, but all the way to the Ural Mountains, which form a north-south divide well inside Russia. Russians west of the Urals have long identified as much with Europe as with Asia. Is it possible that in seeking to divide Europe, Vladimir Putin also seeks to avoid the division of Russia?

As a former KGB agent, Mr. Putin surely remembers the political effect that Pope John Paul II's nine visits to Poland had on the Warsaw Pact nations. In 2019, a conference was held to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of his first visit. At that conference, "Dr Jarosław Szarek reminded [them of] the Pope's memorable words of *Europe's two lungs, the East and the West*, words which reverberated for years. He also mentioned that 'John Paul II addressed the issues of our identity and heritage, spoke about our tradition, culture and history. It is here in Gniezno, that we heard his words about the spiritual unity of Europe, words which influenced the fall of the Iron Curtain'" ("40th anniversary of the first pilgrimage of Pope John Paul II to Poland," Institute of National Remembrance, IPN.gov.pl, May 31, 2019, emphasis added).

In the view of many in the EU, there must be a strong church for there to be a strong, united Europe. The stronger the presence of the church, they feel, the more united the EU nations will be. In recent decades, the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches have had closer communication. A religious revival—a religious "great reset" in Europe—could bring both churches and the peoples they represent closer together politically. Does Mr. Putin see something coming in Europe that the U.S. does not?

An unintended consequence of the sanctions against Russia is the growing alliance between Russia and China. Throughout the last century, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China were often in conflict. But because of economic sanctions by the nations of the West, Russia is having to rely more and more on the assistance of China. Whether intended or unintended, an alliance between these two great powers is deepening and a realignment of world powers is in process, producing a major division between East and West. Perhaps this is Mr. Putin's goal and not unintended at all.

Additionally, an unintended consequence of U.S. sanctions on Russia may be the weakening—or replacement—of the dollar as the international reserve currency. China is already promoting its yuan as an alternative, and no one knows what the ultimate impact of digital currencies will be. Will a new European power move to fill the vacuum of a de-dollarized world? Clearly, China and Russia would like to.

Future History from the Bible

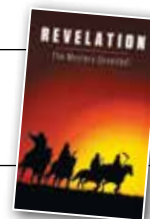
Tomorrow's World has long pointed out that biblical prophecy tells us of a ten-nation alliance in Europe that will arise as a dominant world power, particularly in trade and finance. The ten could be ten individual nations or ten groups of nations that give their power to one great autocrat, who will also be supported by a great religious institution. Could an unintended consequence of Russia's invasion of Ukraine be the solidification of a European common identity and a *European Great Reset*? For the answer, be sure to request a free copy of *The Beast of Revelation: Myth, Metaphor, or Soon-Coming Reality?* or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org. TM

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THE SOUNDS OF SUMMER

God has a plan to bring about what is best for our lives.

The sound of the cicadas filled my ears as I walked along the path on a summer Sabbath morning, enjoying the breeze and collecting my thoughts after a busy and eventful week. There was so much to think about and to make sense of from a biblical point of view, yet those cicadas were humming away so noisily that it was hard to concentrate!

As I walked along, though, it dawned on me that the sounds of summer are an affirmation of a promise God made long ago—a promise that can help us keep our bearings even when circumstances seem to go awry in ways that can leave us doubting and confused.

When you hear the sounds of summer—or of fall, winter, or spring—be encouraged and remember the promises of our loving God.

God knew that we would need to get our bearings from time to time. And soon after the Great Flood—the greatest natural disaster the world had ever seen—He made a promise: “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease” (Genesis 8:22).

God assures us that there will come a new season. Although difficulties may come and obstacles may arise, His plan is ever unfolding. The psalmist understood this when he wrote, “The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations” (Psalm 33:11).

In a similar vein, the prophet Isaiah recounts these powerful words given by God: “Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure’” (Isaiah 46:9–10).

Yes, God has a plan, and He is working to bring about what is best in our lives. We also read of this in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul wrote

these words that can give us great reassurance in times of trouble: “We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

So, when we are distracted by the world around us—or when we see loved ones suffer, or we face personal obstacles that may shake us—we need to remember the many plain statements in God’s word, and have confidence that as long as we do our part, our circumstances will turn out just as God wants them to, even if right now we cannot imagine how this could be possible.

As Paul so eloquently wrote, “I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38–39).

With these wonderful promises in mind, we can be prepared for the unexpected and the unthinkable—the upheavals and disruptions that we would prefer never to face but that can arise when we least expect. Through it all, God will provide the strength, the guidance, and the answers we need. We can follow in the footsteps of Paul, who reassured us, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

When you hear the sounds of summer—or of fall, winter, or spring—be encouraged and remember the promises of our loving God. With His help and guidance, we can and will make it through the difficult seasons that are sure to be ahead of us. So, take a walk. Meditate on the things of God (Philippians 4:8). And know that a time is soon coming when the whole world will be under His firm and benevolent, loving rule.

To learn more about that time, request a free copy of *The World Ahead: What Will It Be Like?* from the Regional Office nearest you (listed on page 4 of this magazine) or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.

–J. Davy Crockett III

him?” (Revelation 13:4). And Daniel 11 describes this supranational entity as coming against its foes “like a whirlwind,” overwhelming and subduing countries and moving on (vv. 40–41).

While this European “beast power” will wield an unprecedented capacity to wage war, it will be more than an unstoppable war machine. Prophecy reveals that it will enable a great deal of economic profit, as well. Merchants from all over the world will do business with the great city of this global powerhouse, trading in goods of every kind—including, even, the “bodies and souls of men” (Revelation 18:13). Indeed, as this end-of-days resurrection of the Roman Empire supplants the U.S. and Great Britain as the world’s unrivaled supreme power, it will even bring vanquished Americans and Britons from their militarily and economically devastated homelands to serve as slaves in other nations. For more details about the future of these nations, request a free copy of *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*, or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.

Many around the world will be made rich by co-operating with this coming European superpower, even as those at the other end of the scale will suffer its wrath. This “beast” will wage war against true Christians who maintain their faith in the face of a militant, global, counterfeit form of Christianity. Profoundly influenced by a powerful end-time false church, pictured as a harlot riding atop a great beast (Revelation 17), this behemoth will wield its military powers as tools of horrific persecution (Revelation 13:7). Literally billions will perish as conflicts between this prophesied “beast” and other powers of the world bring the deaths of one third of humanity (Revelation 9:18).


The coming Pax Europa will devolve quickly into the very *opposite* of peace, as global conflict reaches a brutal climax that will put all of mankind at the risk of extinction—conditions so dread that, in Jesus Christ’s own words, “no flesh would be saved” unless God were to intervene to prevent us from destroying ourselves (Matthew 24:22).

The Beginning of Pax Christi

Only then, in this moment of greatest despair, will hope for real peace finally arrive—for God *will* intervene.

After a prophesied series of cosmic displays in the heavens and miraculous events on earth, the world’s armies will turn their attention away from destroying each other and will join in battle against their common “enemy” descending from heaven—the returning Jesus Christ. But He will defeat them utterly and will reign in their place with His glorified and resurrected saints at His side, fulfilling the divine announcement made at His appearing: “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” (Revelation 11:15). Beginning at Jerusalem, His reign will spread all over the world until every knee has bent in acknowledgement of His Lordship (Philippians 2:10).

With the commencement of His reign, the world’s first *true* era of peace shall begin. One might call it the *Pax Christi*—the Peace of Christ. Yet while the Messiah will wield overpowering force in the world—indeed, greater than any potentate in history—such force will be far from the only key to His peace. Rather than merely crushing dissent or bribing other nations into agreement, as have been the keys to world domination ever since the Pax Romana, the returned Jesus Christ and His saints will accomplish what no other world power has ever been able to do: They will teach the world *how* to live in peace by helping people everywhere live in loving obedience to their Creator’s laws and commands. Indeed, Isaiah 11:9 says of this time, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” God will write that knowledge within human hearts through His Spirit, transforming human nature itself (Hebrews 10:16).

Only then will each fleeting *Pax* of the past fade into distant memory. A new era will have begun, and the world will finally be ruled by a leader capable of bringing true peace. Indeed, those who live under His reign will look to His capital in Jerusalem, reflecting on the manifold blessings He has brought to all who live under the safety of His wings, and will call His name “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). May God bring that peace soon. 

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

Question: In Matthew 12:32, Jesus Christ said, “Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.” Why would blasphemy be forgiven when it involves Christ, but not when it involves the Holy Spirit?

Answer: God takes blasphemy very seriously, and it is one of the human vices we are commanded to eradicate. In Colossians 3:5–8, Paul told us to “put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry... anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.”

In the Old Testament, the English word “blasphemy” is translated from the Hebrew word *n’atsah*, which means, literally, to scorn. The word *naqab* is also translated “blaspheme.” Although it literally

means to puncture or perforate, it can be used in the figurative sense as well. In the New Testament, the Greek word *blasphémēo* carries the same meaning. In a modern sense, blasphemy includes scorn, disregard, disrespect, or even hostility toward God.

In ancient Israel, blasphemy was severely punished. God told Moses, “Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. And whoever blasphemes

the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death” (Leviticus 24:15–16).

So, how does blasphemy relate to us today? Obviously, cursing, slandering, or reviling God is blasphemous and should never be done. Using replacement words such as “gosh,” “gee whiz,” or “golly” is also a form of blasphemy. These words may seem innocuous, but they show disrespect to God’s name and violate the Third Commandment (Exodus 20:7).

Christ explained that blasphemy, like all our sins, can be forgiven. He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, all


sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter” (Mark 3:28).

In fact, it is possible for people to blaspheme God without even realizing it.

This is part of what Christ was describing when He said, “Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him” (Matthew 12:32). When the people of Christ’s day saw Him, they saw a human being; they did not see Him in all His former glory and magnificence. In His humility, He understood this and forgave their slander, defamation, and even hostility.

Matthew 12:32 and Mark 3:29 allude to the knowing slander that threatens to put one beyond the reach of forgiveness. Where are people headed when they call evil that which they *know* is good, as the Pharisees did when they deliberately and purposely labeled the righteous work of the Holy Spirit as the work of Satan the devil (Matthew 12:24)? We find the answer in Hebrews 10:26–29:

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

God mercifully extends forgiveness to those who seek it and repent, not to those who knowingly and intentionally oppose Him. An intentional, knowing contempt toward God’s Holy Spirit is a potentially fatal attitude to have. If you’d like to learn more about what the unpardonable sin really is, visit us online at TomorrowsWorld.org to read “Are You Unforgivable?” and watch “This One Sin Cannot Be Forgiven.” 

God mercifully extends forgiveness to those who seek it and repent, not to those who knowingly and intentionally oppose Him.

Will Russia Keep Its “No Nukes” Pledge?

As 2022 began, five of the world’s nuclear powers—China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States—“pledged to prevent the proliferation of nuclear arms and... said that nuclear war is not an option” (*Deutsche Welle*, January 3, 2022). In their collective statement, representatives of the nations said, “A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”—echoing, as *Deutsche Welle* noted, the sentiments of previous international proclamations, such as those made in 1985 by former U.S. and Soviet leaders Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev. The statement goes on to say that the nations would work toward nuclear disarmament, and that any existing nuclear weapons should only be used for defensive purposes and to “deter aggression, and prevent war” (*Reuters*, January 3, 2022).

Many saw this meeting as a stopgap measure that will lower the geopolitical temperature. The effects of such discussions, if there will be any at all, remain to be seen. History records that, in 1928, 15 world leaders actually “outlawed” war—not long before the outbreak of World War II.

Biblical prophecy warns that as the end of the age approaches, there will be a lot of talk about peace, but to no avail. Leaders will say, “Peace, peace!” when there is no peace” (Jeremiah 6:14). The Bible also accurately prophesied inter-

national meetings in which leaders claimed to be working together, yet whose hearts were secretly “bent on evil” and who chose to “speak lies at the same table”—past events that may yet foreshadow future realities (Daniel 11:27).

Germany Strengthening Ties to Israel

Israel will buy three specially designed German-made submarines in a deal worth three billion euros (*Deutsche Welle*, January 20, 2022). The agreement, with delivery expected nine years from now, includes spare parts and a training simulator to be built in Israel. Germany will cover part of the cost of the project through a grant to Israel.

While Israel has invested heavily in German imports, now Germany is investing heavily in Israel (*Deutschland.de*, December 30, 2021). In addition to the sub deal, a new accord between the two nations was recently signed that will bring €850 million of German investment into Israeli industries, including defense companies. Many German high-tech and automobile manufacturing firms maintain research and development centers in Israel, and in 2021, several Israeli start-up companies collaborated with German firms. The relationship between the two countries appears to be deepening.

Why is this growing German-Israeli partnership noteworthy? Biblical prophecy

reveals that, at the end of the age, a three-and-a-half-year period known as “the times of the Gentiles” will occur, in which non-Israelite nations will control and “trample” Jerusalem (Luke 21:24). These growing German-Israeli ventures could add to future justifications for German-led European nations to intervene in events involving Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.

Weather and Biblical Prophecy

Weather patterns around the globe in 2021 were both astonishingly severe and terribly confusing. In fact, the contrast

even surprised some scientists who noted severe flooding in places like China, across Asia, and in European mountain villages (*The Conversation*, December 21, 2021), while intensifying droughts plagued Canada, Greece, Australia, and the U.S. Pacific Northwest.

In the United States, “something in particular stood out: a sharp national precipitation divide, with one side of the country too wet, the other too dry.” Storm after storm inundated the east, causing destructive flooding, while almost the entire western U.S. suffered drought and many towns burned. To the north,



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western Canada experienced a different disaster as it was hit by catastrophic flooding. And then we saw unprecedented and highly destructive tornadoes tear through central parts of America.

News reports and weather forecasts seldom look to the Bible for reasons behind weather-related events. However, what is happening today is what we would expect to see as we approach the end of the age—especially in Israelite-descended nations. The prophets warned that when those nations turn from God, “disaster will come upon disaster” (Ezekiel 7:1–26; cf. Jeremiah 18:7–8). Because of national sins, God said He will bring rain and destructive mildew on one city and drought and famine on another (Amos 4:6–9)—just as we are beginning to see today. God does exist, and He does determine what happens within and among nations (Job 12:23). Many end-time prophecies foretell not only more severe weather ahead, but other serious trials—especially for those nations descended from ancient Israel.

Orphans Exploited and Harmed

According to a report by children’s charity Lumos, 5.4 million children live in “institutions that cannot meet their needs and [that] neglect their rights.” These orphanages are well known for exploiting and harming these innocent children (*The Guardian*, December 14, 2021). This well-docu-

mented report reviewed evidence from 84 organizations in 45 nations and highlighted how orphanages are using children to make money through forced begging, prostitution, and entertaining potential foreign donors. Children are also sold or rented out to work for businesses like cocoa farms and gold mines. Some children are even purchased from disadvantaged families and sold to donors at a profit.

In some orphanages, as many as 80 percent of the “orphans” are not truly orphaned, their family status forged by orphanage operators. While the overall number of orphaned children in many nations has declined in recent decades, the number in orphanages has drastically increased. In Uganda, for example, the number of children in orphanages has increased 55-fold since the late 1990s. And in Cambodia, the number of residential-care orphanages has increased by 75 percent in the last ten years.

The Bible warns that, as the end of the age approaches, an increasing number of people will be “unloving” and will also be “lovers of money” (2 Timothy 3:1–4). It is heartbreaking to realize that innocent and trusting children, wholly dependent on adults, are increasingly seen as a commodity—a mere product—by unscrupulous and ungodly people. Followers of Jesus Christ should be motivated to pray fervently for God’s Kingdom to come! The reign of Christ will be a time when children can play safely

in the streets, watched over by loving parents and grandparents (Zechariah 8:4–5). The future holds out hope—including for children!

Sci-Fi Weapons Becoming Real?

Russia recently tested a hypersonic missile that travels at nine times the speed of sound, and China has recently tested one, as well. Defending against a hypersonic missile attack could include building a faster missile to shoot it down, or building a laser, which travels at the speed of light. Since the 1950s, science fiction stories have featured lasers and other “beam” weapons used to attack others or to defend against enemies. And, as science advances, many once-fictional technologies are becoming a reality.

The U.S. Navy has now tested what some call a “game changer”—a laser weapon mounted on a naval vessel (*The Telegraph*, December 15, 2021). The weapon worked successfully against both a flying drone and a floating target. The navy sees this weapon being used against “small boats, UAVs

[unmanned aerial vehicles] and potentially in the future for countering ASCMs [anti-ship cruise missiles] and ASBMs [anti-ship ballistic missiles].”

Solid-state lasers mounted to ships are surely just the tip of the iceberg in “futuristic” military technology, with many other technologies still under development or not yet revealed to the public. Such advanced technologies are often developed as defensive tools but can easily be used offensively. The Bible prophesies powerful military capabilities that will be deployed at the end of the age. Prophets of the Bible appear to have seen in vision various military technologies and weapons that were beyond their comprehension, resulting in their use of symbolic language to capture the sense of what they witnessed (e.g. Revelation 9:1–19). Yet God’s word is clear concerning the awesome destructive power of these devices in the hands of vast armies. Thankfully, the Bible also makes clear that these technologies will not destroy all mankind, but that Christ will return to prevent such destruction. ^[TW]



Mikoyan MiG-31 interceptor aircraft with hypersonic air-launched ballistic missile at rehearsal of 2018 Victory Day Parade

LETTERS TO TW

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK



Thank you so much for your valued information through your news magazine. In these days (the last days) your teachings are exactly what believers need as your teachings always are rooted in and verified by biblical passages.

—Subscriber in Mississippi

Hello, I'm from Papua New Guinea. I have watched a video about the mark of the beast uploaded by *Tomorrow's World* on YouTube. That video really surprised me. I thank God for revealing this truth about the mark of the beast through [your work]. And I also want to thank you people for sharing this video for all of us to watch it. Thank you very much.

—Subscriber in Papua New Guinea

Thank you so much for this great literature that I am receiving. I do enjoy reading the articles, more so because I just started being a Sabbath-keeper this year. My questions are answered, and I discovered more truths I did not know reading the articles. Have been greatly blessed by this very informative and mind/soul nourishing literature.

—Subscriber in Fiji

In reading your magazine, the February 2022 issue, I want to reassure you that I have read the opening article, "The Precious Few Who Get It." I know you ponder the question of "how many will read this column?" But you should know that at least this nobody, considered scum of the earth sitting in prison, cherishes

your words! I know that I've only been in contact with your Church and literature for a short time, but God has opened my eyes to His truth and I am so elated to know you all speak His truth! I've read five or six of your booklets and a couple of magazines, every word. Just know this guy truly appreciates your work. I truly thank you for your sending of your literature to me. Each day, I mean *each day*, I am taking time to pray, study, and read the Bible along with your literature. How encouraging it is!

—Subscriber in North Carolina

After reading your booklets and watching the telecast (even falling asleep at nights watching on YouTube, not that they are boring, mind you), I must say I am pretty much never going to be setting foot in another Church on Sunday! Never! I am fully convinced that it is definitely not the day of worship after just finishing the booklet *Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?* I actually never knew it would be so easy, after over a decade in a Pentecostal church, to decide to quit this Sunday foolishness. I have spoken with your Minister in Jamaica and he has really been helpful. He has accommodated me at the times when I call him. Thanks much and do pray for me as I do mean to walk with God.

—Subscriber in Jamaica

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of this magazine, or send email to Letters@TomorrowsWorld.org. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

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TOMORROW'S

WORLD

TELEVISION LOG



AUSTRALIA

Nationwide 7TWO SU 7:00 a.m.
 Nationwide SCIO SU 7:30 a.m.

BARBADOS

St. Michael CBC 8 SU 2:00 p.m.

JAMAICA

Kingston TVJ SU 7:00 a.m.

NEW ZEALAND

Nationwide TVNZ2 SU 5:00 a.m.
 Nationwide TVNZ2 +1 SU 6:00 a.m.

PHILIPPINES

Nationwide TV5 MO 11:30 p.m.

SOUTH AFRICA

Nationwide CTV/SA SU 11:00 a.m.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Nationwide CNC3-TV SU 8:00 a.m.

UK & NW EUROPE

WORD (TWN) Sky TV 590 SU 11:00 a.m.
 Sky TV 590 SU 12:30 a.m.
 Sky TV 590 FR 12:00 a.m.



CANADA

Nationwide Networks (All times Eastern)

Vision SA 3:30 a.m.

FaithTV SU 5:30 p.m.
 MO-FR 10:30 p.m.
 TU 5:00 p.m.

CHNU MO-FR 10:00 p.m.

CTV (Maritimes) SU 7:30 a.m.

CTV (Alberta) SU 1:30 p.m.

V-Télé (en français) SU 6:30 a.m.

UNITED STATES

Nationwide Networks (All times Eastern)

Circle TV SU 8:00 a.m.

The CW Plus SU 8:00 a.m.
 MO 2:00 a.m.

Binge SU 9:00 a.m.

getTV SU 7:00 a.m.

Impact TV SU 11:00 p.m.
 MO 10:30 p.m.

NewsNation (formerly WGN) SU 6:00 a.m.
 WE 4:00 a.m.

The Word Network SU 6:00 a.m.
 SU 7:30 p.m.
 FR 7:00 p.m.

The Walk TV SU 10:30 a.m.

Z Living SU 8:30 a.m.

DISH Network* (All times Eastern)

Impact Ch. 268 SU 11:00 p.m.
 MO 10:30 p.m.

DIRECTV* (All times Eastern)

World Ch. 373 SU 6:00 a.m.
 SU 7:30 p.m.
 FR 7:00 p.m.

For the most up-to-date listings please go to:

TomorrowsWorld.org/tune-in

AK Anchorage KYUR SU 6:00 a.m.

Fairbanks KATN SU 7:00 a.m.

Juneau KJUD SU 6:00 a.m.

AL Birmingham WABM SU 10:00 a.m.

Dothan WTVY (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

Huntsville WHDF SU 7:30 a.m.

Huntsville WAMY SU 9:30 a.m.

Montgomery WBMM (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

Opelika WLIZ SU 7:30 a.m.

AR El Dorado KNOE SU 7:00 a.m.

Fayetteville KHOG SU 7:00 a.m.

Fort Smith KHBS SU 7:00 a.m.

Jonesboro KAIT SU 7:00 a.m.

AZ Tucson KMSB SU 8:30 a.m.

Yuma KEYC (CW) SU 9:00 a.m.

CA Bakersfield KGET (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Chico KHSL (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

El Centro Eureka KECA-LD/KVIQ (CW) SU 9:00 a.m.

Monterey KION (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Palm Springs KCWQ (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Sacramento Sacramento Faith TV SU 3:30 p.m.

Salinas KION (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

San Francisco BAVC (Public Access) WE 8:00 a.m.

San Luis Obispo KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Santa Barbara KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Santa Maria KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

CO Colorado Springs KXTU SU 10:30 a.m.

Grand Junc. KJCT (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

CT Hartford WWLP (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

DC Washington DC WDCA SU 7:30 a.m.

DE Harrington WMDT (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

FL Ft. Lauderdale WBFS SU 6:30 a.m.

Gainesville WCJB SU 6:00 a.m.

Gainesville WCJB (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Jacksonville WCWJ SU 6:30 a.m.

Miami WBFS SU 6:30 a.m.

Panama City WJHG (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

Tallahassee WTLF SU 8:00 a.m.

Tampa Bay WTOG SU 8:00 a.m.

GA Albany WALB (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Albany WALB SU 11:00 a.m.

Augusta WAGT (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Columbus WLTX SU 7:30 a.m.

Thomasville WTLF (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

IA Des Moines KCWI SU 7:00 a.m.

ID Boise KYUU SU 7:00 a.m.

Idaho Falls KIFI SU 7:00 a.m.

IL Chicago WJYS SU 8:00 a.m.

Moline Mediacom MO 5:00 p.m.

Peoria WHOI SU 7:00 a.m.

Quincy WQEM SU 7:00 a.m.

IN Fort Wayne WPTA SU 7:30 a.m.

Fort Wayne Comcast SU 9:00 a.m.

KS Parsons TWPAP WE 7:00 p.m.

Wichita KSCW-TV 33 SU 11:00 a.m.

KY Bowling Green WBKO SU 7:00 a.m.

Latonia PEG WE 6:30 p.m.

Latonia PEG TH 10:00 p.m.

Lexington WTVQ SU 7:00 a.m.

Lexington Various SU 9:30 a.m.

Louisville WBNA SU 9:30 a.m.

LA Alexandria KBCA SU 7:00 a.m.

Alexandria KLAX SU 9:30 a.m.

Baton Rouge WBRZ SU 10:00 a.m.

Lafayette KATC SU 7:00 a.m.

Lake Charles KVHP SU 9:30 a.m.

Monroe KNOE SU 7:00 a.m.

New Orleans WNOL SU 7:00 a.m.

Shreveport KSHV SU 10:00 a.m.

West Monroe KMCT SU 6:00 a.m.

MA Boston WSBK SU 8:30 a.m.

Springfield WWLP SU 7:00 a.m.

ME El Dorado WABI SU 8:00 a.m.

Presque Isle WBPQ SU 8:00 a.m.

MI Alpena WBAE SU 8:00 a.m.

Lansing WLAI SU 11:00 a.m.

Marquette WBKP SU 8:00 a.m.

MN Cloquet MEDCLO SU 8:00 a.m.

Duluth KDLH SU 7:00 a.m.

Minneapolis MTN TH 12:00 a.m.

Minneapolis NWCT SU 8:00 a.m.

Minneapolis NWCT SU 8:00 a.m.

St. Paul KTTC SU 7:00 a.m.

Rochester CTV SU 7:00 a.m.

Roseville CTV WE 4:00 a.m.

Roseville CTV WE 12:00 p.m.

St. Paul Nhd. Network SU 8:30 a.m.

MO Columbia KOMU SU 7:00 a.m.

Joplin KFJX SU 8:30 a.m.

Kansas City KCWE SU 7:30 a.m.

St. Louis KPLR SU 6:30 a.m.

MS Biloxi WXXV SU 7:00 a.m.

Columbus WCBI SU 7:00 a.m.

Greenwood WBWO SU 7:00 a.m.

Jackson Spectrum SU 10:00 a.m.

Jackson Spectrum WE 4:00 p.m.

Meridian WTKO SU 7:00 a.m.

MT Billings KTVQ SU 7:00 a.m.

Butte KBZK SU 7:00 a.m.

Butte KXLF SU 7:00 a.m.

Glendive KXLF SU 7:00 a.m.

Great Falls KRTV SU 7:00 a.m.

Helena KMTF SU 7:00 a.m.

Missoula KPAX SU 7:00 a.m.

NC Charlotte WAXN SU 9:00 a.m.

Charlotte WMYT SU 8:30 a.m.

Greenville WNCN SU 8:00 a.m.

Hickory WHKY MO 7:30 p.m.

Raleigh WRAX SU 7:30 a.m.

ND Bismarck KXMA CW2 SU 7:00 a.m.

Fargo KJXB CW SU 7:00 a.m.

NM Albuquerque KBWB SU 8:00 a.m.

Albuquerque KCHF MO 7:30 p.m.

Albuquerque KCHF FR 9:00 p.m.

Santa Fe KCHF MO 7:30 a.m.

Santa Fe KCHF FR 9:00 p.m.

NV Reno KREN SU 8:00 a.m.

NY Albany-Troy Spectrum MO 3:00 p.m.

Binghamton Spectrum WE 10:00 p.m.

Binghamton Spectrum FR 8:00 p.m.

Binghamton Spectrum SU 8:00 a.m.

Brooklyn WBNG MO 4:30 p.m.

Canandaigua Finger Lakes SU 11:30 a.m.

Elmira WENY SU 8:00 a.m.

Oneida Access TH 2:00 p.m.

Oneida Access TH 7:00 p.m.

Queens Public Access MO 11:00 p.m.

Queens Public Access TU 4:30 p.m.

Queens Public Access SU 7:00 p.m.

Riverhead Cablevision SU 7:00 a.m.

Rochester Finger Lakes SU 9:00 a.m.

OH Cincinnati WSTR SU 9:00 a.m.

Cleveland WUAB SU 8:30 a.m.

Fairborn CAC TU 12:00 p.m.

Zanesville WBZV SU 8:00 a.m.

OK Ada KTVZ SU 7:00 a.m.

Lawton KAUZ SU 7:00 a.m.

Tulsa KQCW SU 8:00 a.m.

OR Bend KTVZ SU 8:00 a.m.

Eugene KMTR SU 8:00 a.m.

Medford KTVL SU 8:00 a.m.

Portland Community SU 12:30 p.m.

PA Erie WSEE SU 8:00 a.m.

Johnstown Atl. Broadband MO 10:00 p.m.

Philadelphia WPSG SU 7:30 a.m.

SA 10:30 p.m.

SU 4:30 a.m.

SU 10:30 a.m.

SU 7:00 a.m.

WE 4:00 a.m.

WE 12:00 p.m.

SU 8:30 a.m.

SU 7:00 a.m.

SU 8:30 a.m.

SU 7:30 a.m.

SU 6:30 a.m.

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SU 8:00 a.m.

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MO 7:30 p.m.

FR 9:00 p.m.

FR 9:00 p.m.

SU 8:00 a.m.

MO 3:00 p.m.

WE 10:00 p.m.

FR 8:00 p.m.

SU 8:00 a.m.

MO 4:30 p.m.

SU 11:30 a.m.

SU 8:00 a.m.

TH 2:00 p.m.

TH 7:00 p.m.

MO 11:00 p.m.

TU 4:30 p.m.

SU 7:00 p.m.

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SU 9:00 a.m.

SU 8:30 a.m.

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UPCOMING TELECASTS

Seven Keys for Bible Study

You can apply vital strategies to make the Bible a source of inspiration and knowledge!
May 26–June 1

The Book That Created Western Civilization

Can you imagine our world without the Bible? Sadly, millions today wish that were so.
June 2–8

Law or Grace?

Jesus Christ came to “magnify” God’s law. But do we understand His vital gift of grace?
June 9–15

The Christian Sabbath: Saturday or Sunday?

Why do so many people worship on Sunday instead of Jesus’ seventh-day Sabbath?
June 16–22

Russia, Ukraine, and Bible Prophecy

Will Putin and Zelensky bring Armageddon? You need to know what Scripture says!
June 23–29

A World on Fire

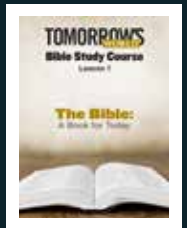
Our streets are filled with chaos and violence. Why? God’s word reveals the real answers.
June 30–July 6

Schedule subject to change

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Mondays 2:00 a.m. E.T.

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of this magazine.

