

# Perspective

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## Jerusalem, a Burdensome Stone for the World

The mission was to help secure Israel and protect the United States from any potential nuclear strike by a rogue nation. It looked simple enough—knock out the ability of Iran to have a nuclear weapon. Use the powerful weapons of war of the United States and pummel their nuclear installations and then the Iranians would surrender. So, we have destroyed their air force, navy, and most of their missile launchers, and a couple layers of their leadership, including the Ayatollah Imam Khomeini. The Iranians have not surrendered; they and their proxies have a goal to drive Israel into the Mediterranean Sea. Zechariah warns anyone entering the arena in which Jerusalem is involved: *“The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: ‘Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.’”* (Zechariah 12:1-3). Jerusalem has indeed become a very heavy stone for every nation to bear. Where is this heading?

## Peace is an elusive thing

Peace in our time can be compared to a mirage in the desert. It appears like there is a pool of refreshing water ahead, but there is only more of the same desert. We may see a forced peace deal, but in the end, it will be an illusion. In the apostle Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians, he contrasts the world’s false sense of safety with the timing of prophecy. The Thessalonians had been taught about the return of Christ, but Paul wanted to drive home the suddenness and unpredictability of that event --- Just as Jesus said in His ministry: *“Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”* (Matthew 24:42-44)

The apostle Paul wrote in I Thessalonians 5:3, *“For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.”*

We do not know the turn of events immediately ahead of us, so we need to stay alert spiritually. Iran is not to be trusted, and swift change could be imminent. Any peace will be temporary, because no one knows the way to peace, least of all the Iranians (Isaiah 59:8).

## The Cretans are always liars

Titus 1:12 has a curious statement: *“One of them, a prophet of their own, said, ‘Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.’”* Jamieson-Faussett-Brown commentary states: “To Cretanize” was proverbial for *to lie*: as “to Corinthianize” was to engage in wanton and immoral behavior. Crete is an island in the Mediterranean where Paul had preached and where many were converted to Christianity. In Titus 1:6, Paul admonishes Titus to ordain elders in every city who could *“encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it”* (verse 9). He warns him that in Crete there were many rebellious people and deceivers who must be silenced as they were teaching falsehood for financial gain (verses 10–11). Paul then quotes a famous Cretan who wrote, “Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons” (verse 12). That writer was Epimenides of Gnosus, a seventh-century BC poet, prophet, and native Cretan who characterized his own people as liars. Epimenides wasn’t the only one to describe Cretans in this way. This is why Paul tells Titus to *“rebuke [the Cretans] sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith”* (Titus 1:13).

The war in Iran is shaping up to reveal this very same character quality in Iranian leaders. They cannot be trusted—they will lie about everything. If one relies on their word as truth, they do so at their own peril.

## Israel has been made a burdensome stone for the world

Iran’s threat on Israel has become a burden for the nations of the world. Iran’s push to bombard Israel and the intervention of the U.S. to destroy Iran’s nuclear capabilities is having unintended consequences upon the whole world. The Strait of Hormuz has had considerable media coverage since roughly 20 million barrels per day, nearly 20% of global petroleum, flows through that chokepoint. Major oil supply shortfalls have occurred often;

such as during the time of the Yom Kippur War in 1973, the Iranian Revolution in 1979, the outbreak of the Iraq–Iran War in 1980, and the Persian Gulf War in 1990.

What makes the closure of the Strait of Hormuz different than these previous oil supply shortfalls is immensity. For example, in 1973 and 1990 only a little more than 6 percent of global oil supplies were removed from the market and in 1979 and 1980 just about 4 percent. The shortfall the Iran War caused is close to 20 percent, making this event three to five times bigger in impact on nations economically. Even with the Strait of Hormuz now open, experts are saying gas prices are unlikely to return to prewar levels for months—possibly beyond the end of 2026. The reopening of the strait has restored a major oil shipping route, but prewar supply levels have not yet been restored. More than 1,200 cargo ships representing \$125 billion in world trade were stuck for over 100 days after the closure of one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, exposing Europe, Japan, and China to economic trouble. China imports half of its crude oil; it flows through the Strait of Hormuz, and a closure immediately disrupts 4.6–5.8 million barrels per day, causing sharp price spikes.

Analysts say it will take time. Texas Public Radio (tpr.org) reported: “Even if shipping through the Strait of Hormuz resumes soon, University of Houston energy economist Ed Hirs says motorists should not expect oil and gasoline prices to fall immediately. ‘If peace were to break out, it would probably be eight months before we could see production and throughput from the strait restored and inventories restored, so that we could get back to a prewar equilibrium of a lower price with higher production...’”

Oil shortages have tightened energy markets, raised industrial and household costs, disrupted food supply chains, and tested Europe’s energy security and economic stability. The economic impact could deepen if the Strait of Hormuz does not remain open.

### **The Iran War accelerates the rise of the next superpower**

The war the United States waged against Iran may have impacted its European allies in unintended ways. It has sped up the formation of the EU superpower. Msn.com published an article, “Allies Are Learning to Hedge.” It states, “The Iran war did not end America’s role in global security. It changed how allies think about that role. For many U.S. partners, the lesson is not that Washington has become irrelevant. The lesson is that Washington remains powerful but unpredictable, indispensable but not always sufficient, and capable of acting in ways that expose allies to consequences they did not fully control. That is the meaning of a ‘less American world.’ It is not a world without the United States. It is a world in which even friendly governments are looking for backup plans.”

Europe is currently undergoing a major military buildup, driven by geopolitical tensions and the need for enhanced security. This includes both individual nations and the European Union (EU) as a whole, which is preparing its most extensive defense initiative since the Cold War. Germany has announced plans to invest heavily in its military, with a defense budget projected to rise almost 80% by 2029. This includes a special fund of €100 billion established to modernize the Bundeswehr (German Armed Forces). CBS News reported on December 14, 2025: “The goal is to expand the active-duty personnel from around 182,000 to at least 203,000 by 2031, with some estimates suggesting up to 240,000 soldiers.”

Chancellor Friedrich Merz and his government have made it clear that the Bundeswehr should become the strongest conventional army in Europe, a goal backed by a new military strategy. We have long believed that Germany is a type of modern-day Assyria and will head up the coming Beast Power which will rise out of Europe with incredible military might (Daniel 11:38-42; Isaiah 10:5-7; Revelation 13:4). It will be the 7th and final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire comprised of ten kings and nation, and they will fight Jesus Christ at His return (Revelation 17:12-14). God used ancient Assyria to punish Israel for its sins against God: “*Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hand is My indignation. I will send him against an ungodly nation, and against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, to seize the spoil, to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.*” (Isaiah 10:5-6)

This prophecy applies to the people of modern-day Israel, the United States and Britain and most of the countries of the Western world. We are “*the people of My (God’s) wrath,*” and the ungodly people, or as the King James Version says, “hypocritical.” God will use a German-led beast power of Europe to destroy the United States, Britain and the West, take away their power and influence and take our people captive.

What are we to do? Our Lord instructs us in Matthew 24:13-14: “*But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*” Jesus also said, “*Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.*” (Luke 21:36).