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Europe in Crisis—Is This the End of the European Union?

French and Dutch voters have rejected the new European constitution, while Paris and London are fighting over European finances. Will the European Union survive the current turmoil?

by Melvin Rhodes

Exactly 190 years after the Battle of Waterloo, when the British defeated Napoleon and ended one dictator's ambition of global conquest, the British and French were fighting again over the future of Europe. This time, the Brits were outnumbered 24-1.

Less than a month earlier French voters had rejected their president's recommendation and voted "non" on the proposed European constitution. Three days later, Dutch voters followed suit.

But somehow, less than four weeks later it was the British who were considered the bad Europeans and the chief obstacle to further European unity.

The European summit chaired by the prime minister of Luxembourg, Jean-Claude Juncker, June 16 and 17, failed to resolve major differences between Britain and France. The British have been major net contributors to the EU since membership in 1973, while France has been a major recipient.

In 1984 Britain's prime minister at the time, Margaret Thatcher, demanded and won an annual rebate of the U.K. subsidy to even things



Reuters/Thierry Roge

British Prime Minister Tony Blair talks to French President Jacques Chirac before opening of the EU summit in Brussels, June 16.

out. The other 24 countries of the EU want the rebate ended. The British insist it remain until the French agree to reduce farm subsidies. These eat up 40 percent of the EU budget, while only 5 percent of Europe's people are employed in farming.

The French, with multiple small-scale farms, are major recipients of farm support. In effect, the British would be subsidizing the French, if

(See "EUROPE," page 3)



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"Whom heaven must receive until the times of

Restoration

of all things . . . ACTS 3:21

Why Prophecy?

This publication is all about Bible prophecy and how today's news shows that this world is on the path to a rendezvous with God. In light of a high interest in prophecy and the fact that some misunderstand why the Bible contains a great deal on the subject, it may be helpful to look at some basic purposes of this important subject.

Keep in mind that prophecy is not only news in advance but is also a key way God deals with humans in His quest to bring many sons to glory. Prophecy shows us the grand purpose of our lives and motivates us to right conduct as we move toward that goal.

First, prophecy tells us there is a God. By directing the course of events, that is, by telling us in advance what will happen and then following through to make it so, God proves His sovereignty over this world. Fulfilled prophecy is also a proof the Bible is His revealed Word to mankind. By foretelling what will happen, God proves He is.

I have a good friend who grew up in an atheist home, taught there was no God. Yet he was a keen student of history, and when he began to read the Bible and understand that it had something to say about history, he saw that many events God foretold did come to pass. This helped him to see that the Bible revealed a Creator who controlled human destiny. So prophecy played an important part in his coming to know God.

A second reason for prophecy is to understand God's covenant with the faithful, to bless them so long as they live as He said to live. God clearly lays down specific expectations for human behavior in the Bible. Those expectations are spelled out, along with the consequences for obedience and disobedience to His instructions.

Leviticus 26 is one chapter that explains this principle in more detail. God shows the rich blessings that come from obedience to His teachings and laws. "Obey Me," He says, and "I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit" (Leviticus 26:4).

When man chooses disobedience, God says the consequence is "terror . . . wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart" (verse 16). Choices have consequences, and God makes it very clear which way we should choose. He shows in advance—that is, He prophesies—the consequences of our behavior.

Finally, prophecy shows God will restore us upon repentance. It is not His desire that men suffer. At the end of a chapter of pleading with Israel to return to obedience, God says: "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways . . . Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions, which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die . . . ?" (Ezekiel 18:30-31).

Prophecy is an urgent means of teaching the right way to live, showing the benefits of God's way and seeking to correct behavior that leads to suffering and sorrow. It is the loving response of a God who cares about His creation. It is God's way of shaping and molding these lumps of clay into His image—the family of God.

Prophecy, when properly used, tells the truths at the heart of the gospel message. The world of man's creation is racing headlong toward a time of distress and trouble. It is a frightening thing to look at what lies ahead. The aim of our articles each month is to help you understand the real meaning behind the headlines and their true significance in the light of Bible prophecy. But look carefully at all that we say. We also point you to the hope, the only hope any of us have, that God will intervene in history and bring a time of true and lasting peace to all peoples.

The apostle Peter sums it up. He asks, in light of the tragedy of end-time events, "What manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness?" (2 Peter 3:11). Therein lies an answer to our question, "Why prophecy?" It is to motivate us to good works. May it be so for you.

—Darris McNeely

“EUROPE,” (Continued from page 1)

they give up the rebate Mrs. Thatcher negotiated!

Europe vs. the United States

Sometimes it's hard for Americans to understand Europe, as it is for Europeans to understand America. Europeans and others have little comprehension of just how big the United States is.

Americans, on the other hand, have difficulty understanding that each European country is distinct from the others, with its own ethnic identity, language and way of life.

Americans also fail to understand how old Europe is, with a long history of over two millennia of conflict between the various European tribes.

It is impossible to equate the European Union and the United States, as their origins are so different.

The United States was formed by the coming together of 13 British colonies. All were dominated by English-speaking people with similar ideas that had evolved over centuries in England itself. It wasn't easy to bring all the colonies together and it took decades to do so, with the Civil War being the major test almost a century after independence and the formation of the new republic.

On the other hand, Europe is a continent comprised of many different nation states, each dominated by a distinct ethnic group. These nations have often been in conflict with each other throughout history, most recently in the two world wars of the last century.

The European Union was (and still is) a valiant attempt to bring the nations of Europe together so that war between them will never happen again.

Six western European countries formed the European Economic Community in 1957. Those six have expanded to 25. The “ever closer union” they pledged themselves to form in the Treaty of Rome eventually led to the European Union. A few years ago 12 of the then 15 members dissolved their own currencies to share the euro. Thirteen EU countries have abolished all passport requirements between them, making travel in Europe much easier. All 25 member countries



Reuters/Thierry Roge

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, Netherlands Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende and Luxembourg's Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker arrive for the EU summit in Brussels June 16.

are committed to the basic ideals of the new Europe.

Leaders of the 25 member countries agreed on a new constitution just a few months ago. The parliaments of some member countries approved it, while in others, it was put to a referendum of the people. Ten nations have approved the constitution. But voters in France and the Netherlands said no. Since all 25 countries must agree, Europe's future is in doubt.

Does this mean the end of the European enterprise?

British historian Niall Ferguson asks a similar question in the U.S. magazine *The New Republic*: “Does the constitution's likely demise mean that the European Union is stuck where the United States would have been if the 13 states had never got beyond the Articles of Confederation?” His answer: “No. The European Union is already much further along the road to federation than the United States was in 1787. And that is why the rejection of the new constitution does not spell the end of Europe. The existing EU arrangements may be a mess, but they are workable” (“Federalist Style,” June 20, 2005).

Interestingly, he adds: “Without the new constitution, Europe will look less like the United States and more like the Holy Roman Empire . . . with a bewildering agglomeration of overlapping institutions and jurisdictions . . . [R]ather than a single, strong executive arm, it will have multiple, overlapping tentacles.”

Mr. Ferguson gives some insight into what he sees as the primary reason French and Dutch voters rejected the proposed constitution: fear of German domination.

Polls showed French concern about the imposition of the Anglo-Saxon economic model through the new proposed constitution, while both the Dutch and the French expressed anxiety about further enlargement, particularly into Islamic Turkey. But both were concerned that the new constitution would give Germany a greater say in European affairs, as Germany is the biggest single nation in the EU.

“Herein lies the real significance of the constitution. It would have signally increased the importance of Germany, a major worry to the French and the Dutch. Unsurprisingly, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder is trying harder than any other European

leader to keep the constitution alive.”

Interestingly, the countries that have approved the new treaty include those that formed the Axis powers of World War II.

Iron mixed with clay

The biblical books of Daniel and Revelation prophesy of a coming European-centered superpower often referred to as the Beast power. The reference is to Daniel’s vision of four beasts in chapter 7.

Daniel received his vision 2,600 years ago. It accurately predicted the fall of Babylon and its replacement by the Medo-Persian Empire, followed, in turn, by the Greek and Roman Empires. The Roman Empire was to continue down through the centuries until “the Ancient of Days was seated” (Daniel 7:9), a reference to the coming Kingdom of God. The European Union, founded by the Treaty of Rome, is the latest attempt to unify Europe.

Europe has come a long way in less

than 50 years, since the founding of the European Common Market in 1957. It is today the world’s biggest trading bloc and biggest single market. Its economic clout is felt around the world. Yes, there are some serious economic problems—high unemployment and slow growth being the two main ones. But the positive accomplishments of the EU should not be overlooked.

The greatest challenge for the EU is building “an ever closer union” when each country is populated by a distinct and separate ethnic group with its own language, governmental system and history. The book of Daniel describes this mix as “iron mixed with ceramic clay” (Daniel 2:43). In other words, it’s far more difficult to bring the European nations together than it was to unite 13 English-speaking colonies in North America over two centuries ago.

It should also be noted that the 25 nations of the European Union are not the same as the 10 nations that form the final resurrection of the Roman

Empire. “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings [or governments] who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast” (Revelation 17:12-13).

Whereas it is possible that the 25 countries could eventually be transformed into 10 regions that come together to form the “beast” power, it seems more likely that the present EU will divide into what is often referred to as a “two-tier Europe.” This would be a central core of countries (the 10) that would commit to full political, military and economic union, with a second tier of loosely confederated countries that would be a part of the trading bloc.

This does not mean the EU has failed. The EU has succeeded in its central mission of economically uniting Europe to such an extent that war between its members is hard to imagine. The EU has gradually evolved over the last five decades into what it is now.

The proposed new constitution may or may not go ahead, but the nations of Europe are unlikely to jettison the good that has been accomplished—the single market and the trading system that has helped all Europeans to achieve political stability and economic prosperity unrivaled in their collective history. ❖

How Can You Make Sense of the News?



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So much is happening in the world, and so quickly, that it’s almost impossible to sort it all out.

Where are today’s dramatic and dangerous trends taking us? What does Bible prophecy reveal about our future? Is prophecy coming to pass before our eyes? How can you know the answers?

You’re probably very concerned with the direction the world is heading. So are we. That’s why we’ve created the *World News & Prophecy* Web site—to help you understand the news in the light of Bible prophecy.

This eye-opening site offers you a perspective you won’t find anywhere else—the perspective

of God’s Word, the Bible. Here’s some of what you’ll find:

- Articles analyzing world news in the light of Bible prophecy.
- An online blog discussing the latest news and trends.
- Audio discussion (podcasts) of what’s happening in the world around us.
- Links to significant news items from hundreds of news sources around the world.
- Free booklets to help you better understand Bible prophecy.

To understand the meaning behind the news and where the world is headed, visit us at www.wnponline.org today!



Recommended Reading

The book of Revelation remains mysterious to most people today, but offers great insight into the events in Europe and around the world leading up to one of the world’s most momentous events—the return of Jesus Christ! For more information, request *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*. It is free of charge.



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Is Africa Dying Before Our Eyes?

Entire countries are struggling for survival. Does the world want to help? Is it too late? Has God cursed the continent?

by Cecil E. Maranville

We have written before about the crisis of western Sudan, where armed militia known as “Janjaweed” (literally, “devils on horseback”) raped, murdered and pillaged the people of Darfur. The horror and death continues with no end in sight.

Sudan’s government at first denied anything was happening. Then it denied that it licensed or abetted the Janjaweed. Fearing international sanctions imposed by the United Nations, Khartoum (the seat of Sudan’s government) finally allowed humanitarian organizations to enter the country to begin to care for the IDPs (internally displaced persons). And Sudan’s leaders managed to get the Janjaweed to ratchet down the attacks over which they supposedly “had no control.”

U.S. President George W. Bush and then Secretary of State Colin Powell correctly called what was happening a “genocide.” But the UN refused to characterize it as such, which would require economic sanctions on the fragile Sudanese economy. The United States subsequently backed off from that language, perhaps because Khartoum has cooperated in the war on terror, providing the CIA with intelligence about terrorists in Muslim countries.

But they are still dying in Darfur. And it’s not been easy even to count the victims. The survivors have been hesitant to talk, but the story of the inhumanity is becoming clear.

Marc Lacey of *The New York Times* paints a gruesome picture: “Darfur’s dead have been tossed into the bottoms of wells, dumped into mass graves, interred in sandy cemeteries and crudely cremated. Children have been snatched from the arms of their mothers and thrown into fires, villagers dragged on the ground behind horses and camels by ropes strung around their necks” (“The Mournful Math of Darfur: The Dead Don’t Add Up,” May 19, 2005).

Another *New York Times* writer, Nicholas



A medic examines a malnourished displaced Sudanese child in the Kalma camp in the Darfur region of Sudan where Arab militias have been attacking African villagers (photo by Reuters/Antony Njuguna).

Kristof, tells of nine young boys the Janjaweed captured, stripped and horribly mutilated, before shooting them and throwing them into the village well as a warning to others to get out (cited by Nat Hentoff, “Darfur: How Many More Will Have to Die?” *Jewish World Review*, June 20, 2005).

There wasn’t either time or means to issue death certificates whereby an accounting could be made for the number who perished.

Across Africa untold thousands are dying every day from violence, starvation, AIDS and other diseases. Several countries face crises that rival the tsunami that so grieved the world last December.

Census figures for Sudan are woefully out of date, so they are no help either.

Many more dead than tsunami victims

Some died in the process of fleeing. Others have died from diseases directly related to malnutrition and to the lack of adequate water. The Coalition for International Justice, a nongovernmental organization (NGO), put together a sophisticated estimate, based upon a combination of sources: 400,000 dead, with people continuing to die at a rate of 500 per day.

Salih Booker, executive director of the Washington-based Africa Action, puts the figure much higher. She says that unless there is immediate help, “up to a million people may be dead by the end of this year” (ibid., emphasis added). If this estimate is anywhere near accurate, the man-made disaster of Darfur has surpassed the death toll of the “Christmas tsunami” of 2004, which so grieved the entire world.

The international community, led by the United States, is mounting the second-largest relief effort in the history of mankind to help the Darfurians. It is second only to relief for survivors of the tsunami. But the Darfur project is severely underfunded, as many are weary of the never-ending need for donations. (Even the contributions for tsunami relief are falling far short of promises made in the emotion of the moment.) Reflecting on the growing phenomenon of donor fatigue, Adam Koons of Save the Children USA lamented, “How many times can the international community bail a country out?” (op. cit., Lacey).

Complicating matters, it will soon begin to rain in Darfur. Normally, rain means life, for it brings the hope of another crop. But a relief organization’s delivery of food that would take hours before the rains will take days afterwards. (And, trucks are in constant danger of being hijacked and robbed by roving bandits.) Tragically, up until two years ago, this was one of the most productive farming areas of Africa. Now it is largely paralyzed,



Reuters/Finbarr O'Reilly

Under tight security, a Congolese miner in the jungle town of Mubi bags raw chunks of cassiterite, the chief source of tin.

Fighting continues in the vast central African state despite peace deals to end a five-year war that has killed more than 3 million people, most from hunger and disease.

all because of man’s inhumanity to man.

How did it happen? Competing religious ideas, jealousies between rival tribes and an oppressive government all contributed to this now out-of-control disaster.

And, those who are still alive are dying in a different way: Their hope is lost. They are unable to work or to provide for their families; they see no chance of returning to their homes or lands; they are unsure that they will ever feel safe again; they have no guarantee that they will have food or water in the coming weeks and months—and they have no control over their destiny.

Twice as many dying in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

It is horrifying to see the world’s powerful nations quibble over words, while the people of Darfur die. But an even greater tragedy is playing out slightly to the southwest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Warlords, each with his private mili-

tia, battle among themselves for control of the country’s considerable natural resource wealth.

But the wealth is doing little good to the Congolese who are perishing in the fighting. They are dying at more than twice the rate of Darfurians at 1,000 per day. Inexplicably, this monumental disaster is barely mentioned in the world’s media. There is plenty of time and space to report on celebrity and political gossip, but next to none for this crying need.

Even though the problems persist in Darfur, it at least has caught the attention of many. Not so for the Congo. Why don’t we hear about this heartbreaking catastrophe? Have the world’s nations simply decided that there is no way to stop the fighting, the killing and the dying from disease and starvation?

An entire nation facing extinction

Let’s now travel south nearly to the bottom of the continent to the tiny nation of Swaziland, population 1 million. That’s not a very large

number of people in the context of the rest of Africa. But the problem facing Swaziland is huge in proportion. Therein lies the story of this African tragedy.

A mind-numbing 426,000 of the million citizens are infected with HIV or AIDS. David Blair of *The Telegraph* (United Kingdom) writes, "Already, one Swazi in every 15 is a child orphaned by AIDS. In five years AIDS orphans . . . will make up an eighth of the population. An army of orphans can be found in every town and village ("Will This Be the First Country to Die From AIDS?" June 4, 2005).

It will only grow worse. As many of our readers are aware, a dark pall sits over the entire African continent, which is looking at the staggering figure of 80 million AIDS deaths by 2025.

Not under a special curse

Some mistakenly assume that God has cursed Africa for the sins of its ancestors. Of course, this reasoning is false. Such critics are unaware of or overlook the wealthy African empires of ages past. They also forget that the continent thrived as part of the British and other European empires (even though some exploited the people and the land).

A major cause of the current suffering is the dictatorial rule of a few selfish leaders, who enrich themselves at the expense of their people. Additional problems stem from religious superstitions and a lack of education. These lead to sin, which, in turn, leads to suffering.

Mankind is hurting itself in appalling ways. Just as Jesus said to the citizens of Judea in the first century who struggled to understand a tragedy at that time, "unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

James wrote to the scattered Israelite tribes in the first century, taking his readers to task for the suffering their peoples were causing. "Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and can-



A resident of Ngwenya village attends a candlelight memorial for AIDS victims May 21, 2005. Impoverished Swaziland is battling the highest HIV infection rate in the world, with around 40 percent of adults living with the disease (photo by Reuters/Mike Hutchings).

not obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures" (James 4:1-3).

The U.S. government is beginning to funnel its aid through NGOs, rather than through corrupt government officials, to help meet the immediate physical needs. You may choose to contribute to them too. But the needs are too great and the momentum too overpowering for all the wealth in the world to change the course of all the disasters unfolding in Africa.

We must pray that God will send His Son to rescue the dying and to end the evils of this world forever. "Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" is more than a song and more than a sentiment. It must be the cry of the heart of every believer. Let a chorus of such prayers cascade onto God's throne every day, until He gives Christ the order, "Let's roll!" and our

Savior brings true relief.

Read the good news of how God plans to do just that in the booklet *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. And join this true relief effort. ❖

Recommended Reading

Our world, and especially Africa, desperately needs some good news. Almost 2,000 years ago Jesus Christ came to earth prophesying a wonderful future for humanity. His message, called "the gospel," means good news. For more information, request *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. It is free of charge.



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America's Handwriting of Warning

In fulfilling His overall purpose, God has brought nations to their knees with one quick unexpected strike. He overthrew Babylon in one night through the Persian army. Egypt was crippled when its army went to the bottom of the Red Sea. Could America's global dominance end in similar fashion?

by Darris McNeely

The United States today is the undisputed global power in all the measurements that count. Its military power can be projected unchallenged anywhere in the world. Its economy is the main engine of the global system. When disasters strike, America has the will and the means, along with other nations, to provide massive aid to areas in need. Its wealth flows to many areas of the globe.

Because of all this, it is hard to imagine a world without America having this dominant role. For many of you reading this, it may be difficult to grasp that Bible prophecy has much to say about the role of the United States and Great Britain in the modern world. The rise of both nations was long foretold through the words of Jacob, the biblical patriarch, as he blessed the sons of Joseph (Genesis 48).

Time of trouble

Yet God also shows there is coming a period of national decline for the U.S. and British peoples called the “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7-11). It will precede a time of world trial unprecedented in history (Daniel 12:1). Jesus spoke of this as a time of “great distress” (Matthew 24:21-22, New International Version).

The reason for this time of trial is the blatant national sins of sexual immorality, corruption and violence against the covenant of God (Ezekiel 7:2-4, 25, 27). Sin is the breaking of the great spiritual law of God. This includes an almost total disregard for the law given at Sinai, which invites God’s judgment. Among the often unrealized violations of the Ten Commandments are Sabbath-breaking and idolatry—two reasons for His judgment against the modern descendants of ancient Israel (Ezekiel 22:3-13).

There are indications in prophecy that a turn of events could come swiftly, seemingly without warning. Notice how Jeremiah terms it. “O my soul, my soul! I am pained in my very heart! My heart makes a noise in me; I can-

not hold my peace, because you have heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried, for the whole land is plundered. Suddenly my tents are plundered, and my curtains in a moment” (Jeremiah 4:19-20).

Yet how could America be brought so quickly to the point of collapse? With all our early warning defense systems, satellites and intelligence systems, wouldn’t we detect and prevent an enemy attack of such proportions? But remember, 19 Arab terrorists were able to penetrate these systems on Sept. 11, 2001, and launch an attack on America. Americans have learned a great deal since, and no doubt further attacks have been prevented due to that vigilance. But there are reports that warn of the possibility of a greater attack.

Since 9/11 we have been more acutely aware that Islamic militants like Osama bin Laden have been plotting to destroy America. We know that North Korea has nuclear capability and Iran is close to achieving the same.

These groups have hostile intentions toward the United States. Keeping them from obtaining or developing any weapon of mass destruction is a primary goal of the U.S. government. But it is possible that such an opponent could obtain a specialized nuclear weapon that could effectively bring the United States to its knees in an instant. The weapon is known as electromagnetic pulse (EMP).

How does this work?

Frank Gaffney, a former assistant Secretary of Defense and expert in nuclear forces and arms control policy, recently spoke on this subject and gave a brief explanation about how this type of nuclear device works.

“A nuclear weapon produces several different effects. The best known, of course, are the intense heat and overpressures associated with the fireball and accompanying blast. But a nuclear explosion also generates intense outputs of energy in

It is possible that an opponent could obtain a specialized nuclear weapon that could effectively bring the United States to its knees in an instant. The weapon is known as electromagnetic pulse (EMP).

the form of X- and gamma rays. If the latter are unleashed outside the earth's atmosphere, some portion of them will interact with the upper atmosphere's air molecules.

"This in turn will generate an enormous pulsed current of high-energy electrons that will interact with the earth's magnetic field. The result is the instantaneous creation of an invisible radio frequency wave of uniquely great intensity—roughly a million-fold greater than that of the most powerful radio station.

"The energy of this pulse would reach everything in line-of-sight of the explosion's center point at the speed of light. The higher the altitude of the weapon's detonation, the larger the affected terrestrial area would be. For example, at a height of 300 miles, the entire continental United States, some of its offshore areas and parts of Canada and Mexico would be affected.

"What is more, as the nuclear explosion's fireball expands in space, it would generate additional electrical currents in the earth below and in extended electrical conductors, such as electricity transmission lines. If the electrical wiring of things like computers, microchips and power grids is exposed to these effects, they may be temporarily or permanently disabled" (speech to Hillsdale College, May 24, 2005).

Last year the Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic Pulse Attack submitted a report to Congress detailing the threat to America and the West from such an attack. It clearly stated the vulnerability to an attack from several sources.

The report said: "The electromagnetic fields produced by weapons designed and deployed with the intent to produce EMP have a high likelihood of damaging electrical power systems, electronics, and information systems upon which American society depends. Their effects on dependent systems and infrastructures could be sufficient to qualify as catastrophic to the nation" (*Report of the Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic Pulse Attack*, p. 9).

The critical structures that sustain our modern technologically based society would be wiped out in an instant. The electric power grid, telecommunications

and the Internet would be gone. The means of getting food, water and medical care to citizens would be crippled. Industrial output would cease. The lifelines of trade with other nations would be cut. It is likely the blast would destroy the electronic circuitry of modern automobiles, thus rendering them useless.

Vulnerable

America's electric power grid is already vulnerable to accidents that can shut off power to millions of citizens. On Aug. 14, 2003, a power outage due to faulty equipment caused a massive blackout to 50 million customers in the Midwest and on the East Coast of America. A similar outage was narrowly averted in May of this year (www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/20/AR2005062001449.html?referrer=email&referrer=email).

It is well known that the U.S. electric grid is overloaded, outdated and vulnerable. Should an EMP attack occur, it would take a long time to rebuild the network to current levels. The commission's report commented on the long-term impact of an attack:

"The longer the outage, the more problematic and uncertain the recovery will be. It is possible for the functional outages to become mutually reinforcing until at some point the degradation of infrastructure could have irreversible effects on the country's ability to support its population" (*Report of the Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic Pulse Attack*, p. 10). Society's clock would be turned back 150 years.

In short, America and other Western nations are critically vulnerable to such an attack. In one stroke the nation would be brought to its knees, leaving it open to further attacks from those who wish it harm. Its power, and its pride, would be destroyed. What God prophesied in Leviticus 26:19, the breaking of the "pride of your power," would take place nearly instantaneously. The door to fulfilling the many prophecies of Scripture would be opened. These threats are very real and are being discussed at the highest levels of government.

So why do we bring this to your attention? Is this just a sensational attempt to scare you and preach a message of gloom

and doom? No, that is not our intent. But the events of Sept. 11, 2001, brought their own sensational gloom. And there are more frightening stories being told in the mainstream media and through government commissions like this than at any other time in recent memory.

The men behind this study on EMP are respected scientists and leaders in the fields that would be impacted by an attack. They are sober realists who are sounding an urgent warning in an effort to move the United States to some preventive action.

Their threat assessment provides a possible answer for a realist who sees today's world scene, with America at the pinnacle of power, and casts a skeptical question, "How could this powerful nation be cut down in its prime?"

The answer is it could happen virtually overnight and tear the calm fabric of our society to shreds. It is, therefore, not surprising that the U.S. government is trying to disrupt the development of nuclear arsenals in nondemocratic nations, as well as attempting to disable similar efforts by terrorist groups. The United States is trying to prevent a scenario such as an EMP strike from becoming a reality.

Not in darkness

Nonetheless, the apostle Paul wrote, "But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 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.

"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness" (1 Thessalonians 5:1-5).

Paul is saying we should let prophecy mold us into people of faith and righteousness. You can be a "son of light and day" by taking seriously this and other warnings of the clear and present dangers in our world. Let them move you to a change and a closer walk with God, your Creator. It is the only way to deal with the fear and uncertainty of our times. ❖

Why Understanding World News Is So Important!

Never before have we had such a dire need to truly grasp the meaning of today's world events—at the very time when normal news outlets are in obvious decline. In this connection the Bible itself explains how we can face both present and future happenings with much greater confidence.

by John Ross Schroeder

Back in 1995 a *Newsweek* feature stated that the old media outlets were in decline. Now, 10 years later, the numbers of people watching normal news coverage have only gotten smaller at a time of considerable population growth. The news audience is shrinking in the United States, and studies show that new sources like the Internet are not fully replacing the old ones, especially among young people.

Yet a recent article in *The Wilson Quarterly* explained, “The appetite for news, and for engagement with civic life, must be nurtured and promoted, and it’s very much in the public interest to understand the task . . . Only by reaching a collective judgment about the value and necessity of vigorous news media in American democracy can we hope to keep our public watchdogs on guard and in good health” (Spring 2005).

This principle is especially important when properly understood from a biblical point of view.

The Bible underscores the need for an informed citizenry

Jesus Christ fully understood the importance of grasping what’s occurring in the world in direct connection with His prophesied second coming—the greatest news headline event yet to be written.

The gravity of our times is highlighted by the historic/prophetic warning words He uttered in what theologians call the Olivet Prophecy. Christ said:

“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, *no flesh would be saved*, but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:21-22, emphasis added throughout).

Can we grasp the incredible global impact of those fateful words, spoken nearly 2,000 years ago? In this pivotal prophetic chapter Christ also spoke of major wars, religious deception, famine, disease epidemics and earthquakes in different

places. And Jesus predicted that lawlessness would abound in our societies and that the persecution of Christians would lead to martyrdom for some.

In the context of world events, Christ commanded His true followers to “*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” (verses 42-43).

What He said next is of the utmost importance to those who follow Him. “*Therefore you also be ready*, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (verse 44). Christians should always be on the alert for whatever may happen. Apathy and complacency are not viable options.

Watching world events and spiritual readiness go hand in hand as the account in the much shorter Gospel of Mark clearly reveals. In context Jesus connects His second coming to all the prophesied events in the Olivet Prophecy as a whole.

Mark’s three-part warning

Mark’s primary addition to the story involves highlighting Christ’s stark degree of emphasis. In the light of this whole prophecy, this Gospel writer wrote these words of Jesus: “*Take heed, watch and pray*; for you do not know when the time is” (Mark 13:33). Note carefully the combination of words, *watch and pray*. We are to do both.

Christ likens the Christian’s task to waiting for a man (meaning Jesus Himself) who goes to a far country, giving authority to His servants (true Christians), assigning them work to do and also commanding a doorkeeper to watch for His return (please see verse 34—it’s very important that you read these accounts for yourself in your own Bible).

Then Jesus repeats His command to watch a second time: “*Watch therefore*, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—*lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping*” (verses 35-36). Continual

Mark recorded these words of Jesus: “Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is” (Mark 13:33). Note carefully the combination of words, watch and pray. We are to do both.

alertness and awareness is clearly required by your Savior.

Finally Christ concludes these warning words with yet a third command to watch. “And what I say to you, *I say to all: Watch!*” (verse 37). The English translators understood the emphasis and added an exclamation!

No member of the Body of Christ is exempt from this crucial responsibility. And the account implies getting this message to others as much as possible. That is part of the work Christ assigns His servants to do (verse 34).

Luke’s warnings against apathy and complacency

Uninformed persons may think that one Gospel account describing the same overall event is sufficient. But the facts show again and again that each of the three synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) make their own unique contribution to understanding vital details. That is why having a harmony of the Gospel accounts would be a valuable addition to the Christian’s small library of Bible helps.

A portion of Luke’s version of the Olivet Prophecy is found in the last half of the 17th chapter as well as later in Luke 21. Note a part of chapter 17 first.

“And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man [when Jesus comes again]: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all” (verses 26-27).

Then Jesus mentioned the time of Abraham’s nephew Lot and showed how the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah behaved in like manner until fire came down from heaven and destroyed them all (verses 28-29).

Notice Christ’s crucial concluding remarks for the latter days or the end time when He would return to this earth: “Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed” (verse 30).

The general populace will be drugged with a fatal dose of apathy and complacency—just carrying on with the normal cares of this life as if chaotic world conditions did not demand their urgent attention. A fool’s paradise!

The primary part of Luke’s version of the Olivet Prophecy is located in the 21st chapter. Jesus’ general warning against



An artist’s conception of the destruction of Sodom.

apathy is repeated here in slightly different terms. “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare *on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth*” (verses 34-35).

Notice that this prophecy is global in nature! It is not just intended for the United States or the Western world alone. That is one reason Christians must take this warning message to as many nations as possible, as Christ commanded (Matthew 24:14; 28:18-20).

Historically, the peoples of the ancient pre-Flood world did not heed Noah’s warnings. Remember that this patriarch was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5). Nonetheless, God wants the whole gospel of Christ (including His sacrificial death as well as the warning and witness message) to reach all nations.

God has a plan for each person, and the Bible reveals that though many will not respond now, their hope is not forever lost (see our booklet *What Happens After Death?*).

But regardless of whether people in general act on the warning now or not, you will have done your part if you participate in His work. God in His mercy has somehow caused you to subscribe to this publication. What you need to do now is to heed its message and then take what steps God shows you.

Notice Christ’s concluding words in Luke 21:36: “*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.*”

What things? The events mentioned in the context of the whole Olivet Prophecy: religious deception, wars, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, spiritual complacency, etc.

The Bible and the news

As we have shown, world news must be properly understood. Grasping the “signs of the times” (Matthew 16:3) as Jesus described them is supremely important. Consider that at one time the Bible depicted the descendants of Issachar as those “who had *understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do*” (1 Chronicles 12:32). The same principle applies today.

Bare-bones news facts, without the background of a serious biblical understanding, will prove pretty useless. Even the secular world grasps the principle of this point, at least to some degree.

The Wilson Quarterly stated: “The most influential journalists understood that news is rarely news in the sense of being undisputed facts about people or policy, but news in the sense that it’s a product made by reporters, editors and producers. They knew that news is about facts, but that it fundamentally reflects editorial judgments about whether particular facts are ‘news,’ and if they are, *what the news means and what its consequences may be.*”

These secular articles recognized the fact that “reporting is essential in a country whose self-governing people *need information to make all kinds of decisions.*” (Of course, it should be understood that people of all nations need essential knowledge for their decision making.)

Comprehended in the light of biblical prophecy, this basic principle cannot be properly implemented without the knowledge of God—without a working understanding of the great purpose of human life and how it fits into both present and future world events. We cannot make sensible spiritual decisions without the knowledge of God as revealed in the Bible.

That is why the United Church of God publishes several booklets that help explain the background you need to understand the importance of what is occurring today. Prominent among these are: *What Is Your Destiny? Are We Living in the Time of the End? You Can Understand Bible Prophecy* and *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*. All are free. ❖



A Page on the World

Reviews of books that count, endure and light the path ahead

Books That Changed the World

Robert B. Downs gives landmarks in the history of ideas that can assist us in coming up to speed with many of the foundational thoughts that have shaped and molded the world for the past 500 years.

Reviewed by Robin Webber

World News and Prophecy is dedicated to offering a biblical framework for the dynamic events that are swirling around us today. Perhaps many in our reading audience are taking an interest in what this life is all about for the first time. Where is humanity headed? How did we get here in the first place? Can humanity by itself solve the seemingly overwhelming problems that commonly beset us?

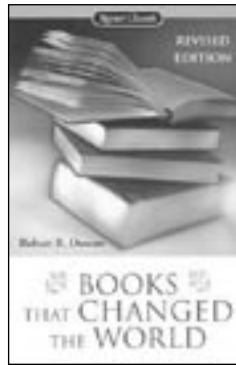
But, as you are following along with the various articles and opening your Bible for the first time, you also notice we are commenting on matters of history, philosophy, sociopolitical development and science. You have the interest and desire, but maybe you are a little hesitant to move forward, because perhaps history or American and English literature were never your thing in high school or college. So often, we didn't connect with our teachers at an early age for one reason or another and thus some subjects still remain a mystery to us.

The antidote for such a dilemma is found in a book titled *Books That Changed the World* by Robert B. Downs (a Mentor Book published by The New American Library, Inc., initially written 1956). This is a book that can assist you in coming up to speed with many of the foundational thoughts that have shaped and molded the world for the past 500 years.

The subtitle of the book is "16 Landmarks in the History of Ideas." The author offers 16 selections of books, manuals or pamphlets that changed the world over the past 500 years. Downs' goal is not to focus on the size of the book, but rather the size of the idea and its ultimate effect on humanity.

Some books were immediately noticed by millions of people due to their emotional appeal or call to arms, while others were read by a few and would later affect the daily lives of millions for decades if not centuries to come. Downs observes that "books can be forces for both good and bad. The intention here, in any case, is not to measure moral values, but instead to demonstrate that books are dynamic and powerful instruments, tools, or weapons" (p. 16).

The books are divided into two main sections: 1) The World of Man and 2) The World of Science. The list of books, authors and chapter headings in the first section are as follows: *The Prince* by Niccolo Machiavelli, "Anatomy of Power Politics"; *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine, "American Firebrand"; *The Wealth of Nations*



by Adam Smith, "Patron Saint of Free Enterprise"; *Essay on the Principle of Population* by Thomas Malthus, "Too Many Mouths"; *Civil Disobedience* by Henry David Thoreau, "Individual Versus State"; *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, "Crusader for the Lowly"; *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx, "Prophet of the Proletariat"; *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* by Alfred T. Mahan, "Leviathan Against Elephant"; *The Geographical Pivot of History* by Sir Halford J. Mackinder, "Heartland and World Island"; and *Mein Kampf* by Adolf Hitler, "Study in Megalomania."

The second section dealing with the World of Science includes *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* by Nicolaus Copernicus, "Celestial Revolution"; *De Motu Cordis* by William Harvey, "Dawn of Scientific Medicine"; *Principia Mathematica* by Sir Issac Newton, "System of the World"; *Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin, "Survival of the Fittest"; *The Interpretation of Dreams* by Sigmund Freud, "Psychologist of the Unconscious"; and *Relativity: The Special and the General Theory* by Albert Einstein, "Godfather of the Atomic Age."

Each entry is given 10 to 12 pages of description. Downs' account in each chapter gives breath and life to the authors, the times in which they lived and the ultimate impact of their writings. These always leave the reader pondering as to the sheer power of the written word.

This book will allow the readers of *World News and Prophecy* a greater insight into this present age of man that is rooted in the soil of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17) and how humanity has properly or improperly exercised the spirit in man (1 Corinthians 2:11) that God has placed within us.

For those who want to take some of the mystery out of history, this is your book. Many of the ideas covered in these seminal books are on the minds of our magazine's staff as they strive to offer accurate commentary on world history or current events in the light of biblical prophecy.

Remember, it's not how much you read, but what you read that makes the difference. *Books That Changed the World* is a crisp and concise tool that will make your time, thoughts and understanding count.

(Note: A revised edition is now available that has been expanded to 352 pages, covering more books.) ❖

In Brief...

World News Review

Iran Opts for Hardliner

In June, Iran elected Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to be its new president. Largely unknown outside Iran (reportedly, he has never even traveled outside the country), he's being called "an ultra-conservative." The White House immediately expressed its skepticism about the honesty of the election.

Spokesman Scott McClellan also relayed Washington's doubts that Britain, France and Germany would be able to succeed in dissuading Iran from its pursuit of nuclear weapons technology. Prime Minister Blair promised to continue a firm approach with Tehran.

For its part, Tehran tried to allay international concerns following Ahmadinejad's election. Who is he? Why do Western nations look on him as a hardliner?

He is a 49-year-old man of humble beginnings, the son of a blacksmith. His commitment to the Islamic cause began with his university days when he was drawn to the Khomeini revolution against the shah. He was the university student's representative in the OSU, an organization set up by Khomeini's principal confidant to organize Islamic students.

"The OSU played a major role in the seizure of the U.S. Embassy and its diplomats in Iran in November 1979," reported UPI's Claude Salhani in "Analysis: Who Is Ahmadinejad?" published June 27, 2005. The hostages were held for 444 days.

As we go to press, a story is breaking on the possibility that Ahmadinejad was one of the hostage takers, if not one of the leaders. Former hostage Charles Scott, 73, told *The Washington Times*, "The new president of Iran is a terrorist" (Joyce Howard Price and David R. Sands, "Iran Leader Linked to '79 Embassy Crisis," June 30, 2005).

Salhani said Ahmadinejad assisted Khomeini in cracking down on univer-



Iranian president-elect Mahmoud Ahmadinejad speaks during a news conference June 18 (photo by Reuters/Morteza Nikoubazl).

sities, purging dissident lecturers and students, many of whom were arrested and later executed. Ahmadinejad then worked in Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corp's Internal Security, where he "earned notoriety as a ruthless interrogator and torturer."

In 1986, as a senior officer in the Revolutionary Guards' headquarters in western Iran, he planned and oversaw terrorist operations in other countries. "He was, according to Iranian opposition sources, the mastermind of many assassinations in the Middle East and Europe, including the assassination of Iranian Kurdish leader Abdorrahman Qassemlou, who was shot dead by senior officers of the Revolutionary Guards in a Vienna apartment in July, 1989. This claim was confirmed to United Press International by Western intelligence sources" (Salhani).

Then he was twice appointed mayor of towns in northwestern Iran, and the minister of Islamic Culture and Guidance made him his cultural advisor. The minister had been a fellow officer in the Revolutionary Guards.

Ahmadinejad was also appointed, not elected, to his most recent responsibility as mayor of Tehran. His Islamic superiors have commended him for handling the job "efficiently."

Even if the presidential election was not manipulated by Iran's hardline clerical leaders—many believe that they did—they can still overrule any presidential or parliamentary decision.

For a detailed report of Iran's tangled web of bureaucracy, see "Keep Your Eyes on Iran" in our July 2004 issue (www.ucg.org/wnp/wnp0407/eyesoniran.htm).

The prospects are indeed dim for an agreement on the nuclear issue that would be satisfactory to the international community. Tehran appears to be resolutely committed to developing nuclear weapons.

India Moving Toward China?

While the rise of China as an economic power is beginning to be noticed in the West, another rapidly emerging power, India, has been quietly making moves toward a constructive partnership with its old enemy Beijing.

Could an alliance between these two "Nuclear Club" nations become a lasting reality? What would be the economic and military results of such an alliance?

What makes this such an astonishing development is that China and India have had a recent history of military conflicts, starting in 1962 and 1967, with numerous skirmishes into the 1990s over ownership of the borderland.

China's armament of Pakistan

(See "NEWS," page 15)

“BEACHHEAD,” (Continued from page 16)

These are the heroes who helped end a war.”

Why did you do it?

“Forty summers have passed since the battle that you fought here. You were young the day you took these cliffs; some of you were hardly more than boys, with the deepest joys of life before you. You risked everything here. Why? Why did you do it? What impelled you to put aside the instinct of self-preservation and risk your lives to take these cliffs? What inspired all the men of the armies that met here? We look at you and somehow we know the answer. It was faith, and belief; it was loyalty and love. The men of Normandy had faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead or on the next.”

President Reagan then introduced real people and their prayers. The president spoke of Colonel Wolverton, who, when he asked his troops to kneel in prayer, told them, “Do not bow your heads, but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we’re about to do.” And he spoke of “General Matthew Ridgeway on his cot listening in the darkness for the promise of God made to another warrior named Joshua [Joshua 1:5]: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”

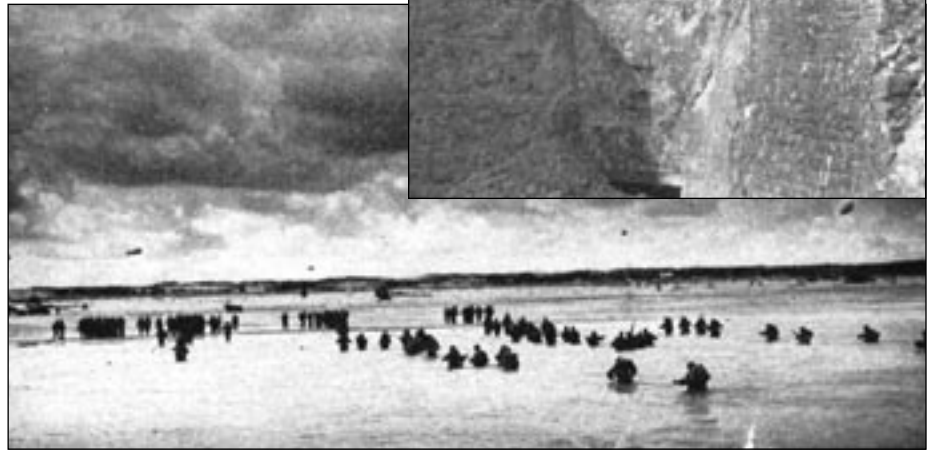
Reminding a people

Historian Douglas Brinkley, in an article appearing in *U.S. News and World Report* June 6, 2005, titled “Remembering Reagan,” comments: “With the timing of a maestro, Reagan galvanized that generation into performing one last task; reminding a nation cynical after Vietnam and Watergate that America truly was still that shining city on the hill . . . What Reagan was trying to engineer was a *combustible patriotism*, one that would spread like wildfire” (emphasis added).

The thematic simplicity and elegance of Ronald Reagan’s speeches about champions, heroes and courage were not something he had to go searching for, but, rather, they were close to his heart. His words of hope

were like the steady beat of the blacksmith’s hammer on the anvil drumming a message to all who might listen: There is sacrifice, but it is worth it, for indeed you are a part of a greater purpose than yourself. You have been blessed to be a citizen of a city shining on a hill.

With this story vividly in our mind, I want to remind you that there is an ultimate Great



“The men of Normandy had faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead or on the next.”
People who are seizing a beachhead for God’s Kingdom will also be called upon to give their all . . .

Communicator who shares a message of vision, courage and sacrifice to those who will listen. And He, too, reminds us of words of hope to shake us from our personal world of malaise and create in us a combustible faith that will not only lift us, but also elevate and guide those around us. Yes, He, too, speaks of a world at war, a world of darkness, held captive by a spiritual dictator of darkness, none other than Satan the devil.

He also speaks of the “captain of our salvation” whose job is to “destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).

And He speaks of those who go up against the ramparts of Satan’s defenses, calling them “firstfruits” (James 1:18; Revelation 14:4). In other words, those who go ahead of everyone else, not out of conscription, but out of heartfelt desire, just as the

boys of Pointe du Hoc. These are the men and women who in the spirit of Isaiah 6:8 respond to the ageless call of God, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” With Isaiah, they say, “Here am I! Send me.”

Consider for a moment that in another time and place, another beachhead against this present spiritual bulwark of evil was established. Not on a beach, but in a manger! Just like the events of Pointe du Hoc, not everyone was aware of what was going on. The beginning of the end had started. A foothold in Satan’s kingdom was established as “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

They did not love their lives to the death

From that rough and tough start in the hills of the Holy Land others have

followed and fallen, each thinking beyond himself, beyond the momentary pain or setbacks, all the while advancing the cause in striving to break the grip of Satan on a world held captive.

Well, the beachhead has held. Prophecy indicates a climactic assault on the forces of evil that will even overshadow the valor of those heroic moments of Normandy. Revelation 12:9-10 gives us the detail:

“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. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.’”

And then in verse 11, notice the prophetic commendation of God about these spiritual warriors: “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.”

People who are seizing a beachhead for God’s Kingdom will be called upon to give their all as they move forward with a combustible faith, knowing that “nothing restrains the LORD from saving by many or by few” (1 Samuel 14:6). In the highest of all compliments, the author of the book of Hebrews lifts their sacrifice up before each of us by proclaiming, “. . . of whom the world was not worthy” (Hebrews 11:38).

God’s words, “This is the way, walk in it,” as stated in Isaiah 30:21, are exemplified for us in Colonel Wolverton’s words offered on bended knee as his men were about to confront the forces of darkness: “Do not bow your heads, but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we’re about to do.”

Their day of accomplishment is past. Seizing and maintaining a beachhead for God’s Kingdom is a calling and work still in motion. Thus, we must maintain the rhythm of combustible faith by thinking beyond ourselves, looking up and climbing! ❖

“NEWS,” (Continued from page 13)

(which India believes gave Pakistan its nuclear weapons capability) as well as India becoming a military client of the old Soviet Union (a rival of China) were great sources of distrust and fear between the two nations. China had also backed Pakistan during India’s wars with Pakistan over the disputed Kashmir territory, while India allowed the Tibetan government-in-exile to exist there, much to China’s consternation.

But in 1999 China declared itself neutral in the Kashmir dispute, making an important gesture to India. And since 2003 India has reciprocated by turning over new Tibetan refugee seekers and escapees to the Chinese government.

These and other diplomatic efforts have allowed India and China to become important business partners.

“It is in this context that the interactions between India and China have resulted in increasing mutual trust making India the largest trading partner of China from South Asia since 1993,” said Indian political commentator, Dr. Swaran Singh (in.rediff.com/news/2002/oct/28chin.htm).

Both India and China supply cheap labor to U.S. companies seeking to outsource their production and customer service. An economic alliance could have powerful effects on the markets. China, in particular, is flooding the United States with inexpensive goods, much to the long-term detriment of the U.S. economy.

Militarily, China has the largest active-duty army in the world. The United States is second, but India is third, and also has the world’s seventh-largest navy. An Indian alliance with China would make them the undisputed superpower in Asia!

One reason for this shift in alliances can be attributed to the post-9/11 world and the radical Islamic revolution. Both countries have large Muslim minorities. Another is that China has as its goal to overtake the United States as the world’s superpower, and cooperation with India would further that objective.

Bible prophecy warns of a future great army of 200 million (Revelation 9:13-16). Could this be the beginning of that enormous military buildup?

Sources: Rediff.com (Mumbai, India); *Asia Times Online* (Hong Kong).

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by Robin Webber

Seizing a Beachhead for the Kingdom

It was a score of years ago plus one that the “Great Communicator,” Ronald Reagan, stood on the wind-swept cliffs of Normandy and offered meaning to the long-ago sacrifice of an aging breed of warriors. June 6, 1984, was the 40th anniversary of the D-Day landing of World War II.

On that day, the greatest amphibious assault in history commenced. The Allied forces were to throw all their might against the Fortress Europe, to seize and secure a beachhead that would open a hole for the armies of liberty to begin their long march toward the capital of an evil regime to crush it.

On that day, all was on the line. They would determine whether millions would begin to taste freedom or remain enslaved by the Nazi regime.

A story to be told

Now 40 years later a man of that generation spoke on behalf of its remaining survivors in a speech that has come to be known as “The Boys of Pointe du Hoc” address in honor of the 2nd Ranger Battalion that volunteered to scale the 100-foot-high cliffs of Pointe du Hoc and take out the German gunnery. Of the 225 men who began the arduous task, only 99 would survive. Now, yesterday’s boys were old men and their story was to be told.

President Reagan, with that famous shock of black hair blowing in the breeze, began: “We’re here to mark that day in history when the allied armies joined in battle to reclaim this continent to liberty. For four long years, much of Europe had been under a terrible shadow. Free

nations had fallen, Jews cried out in the camps, millions cried out for liberation. Europe was enslaved, and the world prayed for its rescue. Here in Normandy the rescue began. Here the allies stood and fought against tyranny in a giant undertaking unparalleled in human history.”

They began to climb

The master storyteller continued to weave his spell on the audience: “The air is soft, but 40 years ago at this moment, the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men and the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the roar of cannon . . .

“The rangers looked up and saw the enemy soldiers on the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them with machine guns and throwing grenades. And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot rope ladders over the face of these cliffs and began to pull themselves up. When one ranger would fall, another would take his place. When one rope was cut, a ranger would grab another and begin his climb again. They climbed, shot back, and held their footing.

“Soon, one by one, the rangers pulled themselves over the top, and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs, they began to seize the continent of Europe.”

Then, the president shifted his message from times past and centered on the audience in front of him by honoring the assembled survivors: “These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc. These are the men who took the cliffs. These are the champions who helped free a continent.

(See “BEACHHEAD,” page 14)