

*TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY*

# **WATCH**

*Vol. 26 No. 4*

*Fourth Quarter 2023*



**“We have only one goal in sight  
- TO DESTROY HAMAS.”**





# IRAN: EXPORTING TERROR

*by Mark Armstrong*

By all accounts, Israel has seized control of northern Gaza. They've urged civilians to move south as the city streets are turned to rubble. They've dropped leaflets letting civilians know what is about to happen and suggesting they take the route south. We've heard of civilians not being able to leave (the terrorists won't let them), and now we hear that Hamas fighters have, in some cases, fled south, too. The Biden clan has Israel in its close embrace, and that's causing some suspicion. Israel's spokesmen keep telling us that Hamas will be eradicated. But Washington keeps giving advice.

The Houthis are shooting at U. S. ships in the Red Sea. Maybe you've seen Lloyd Austin talking about it, and warning. As of this writing, there's been nothing but words. Strong words, but words. So far the attacks have not resulted in any deaths, lucky for the Houthis. Not only military ships, cargo vessels flying various flags have been targeted.

According to every source, Iran is behind all the mayhem. They're rich now, thanks to the

policy changes of this "administration." Iran is supplying and funding nearly every bad actor across the Middle East, and all the commentators in the media are saying it.

Our bases and ships in the area have absorbed many, many attacks, and so far, nothing. Maybe something will happen by the time you read this, but the main concern seems to be expansion of the conflict.

Israel has bombed Gaza city to oblivion. You've witnessed the scenes of boys and men descending on the scene of a recent bombing to retrieve anything of value. Listening to officials, the Israelis say they won't quit until Hamas is thoroughly defeated for all times. This would never have happened, except for the policies of the big guy. Iran was broke. Now they're every terrorist's benefactor. They're selling oil like it's going out of style.

Who's idea was it to hold a global warming conference in Dubai? One of the oil sheiks has come out and said these green policies are going to drive us back to into caves. John Kerry

isn't looking too happy. In fact, he's getting angry. He jets around the world, and nobody's treating this with the proper urgency. At this rate... We've got all kinds of stipulations about power generation, and the rest of the world isn't paying any attention. They can kill all prosperity in the United States, but the "underdeveloped" world isn't ready to ban cheap electricity. They don't even have electricity!

The global-warming alarmists have shown up in their private jets. What could go wrong?

Jets frozen to the tarmac in Germany, unable to attend dignitaries. That might be a problem, along with being told the world doesn't want to go without electricity. We don't care what kind of look John Kerry gets on his face, we're not going back to the stone age!

Somebody must have made a huge mistake! They went to a country dependent on oil exports to have their global warming conference. And got told off. The shiek is walking back his statements, but it's too late.

All the news channels are

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Israel strikes at Hamas in Gaza. Iran's financial support of Hamas is well documented. They also provide rockets, weapons, and training.

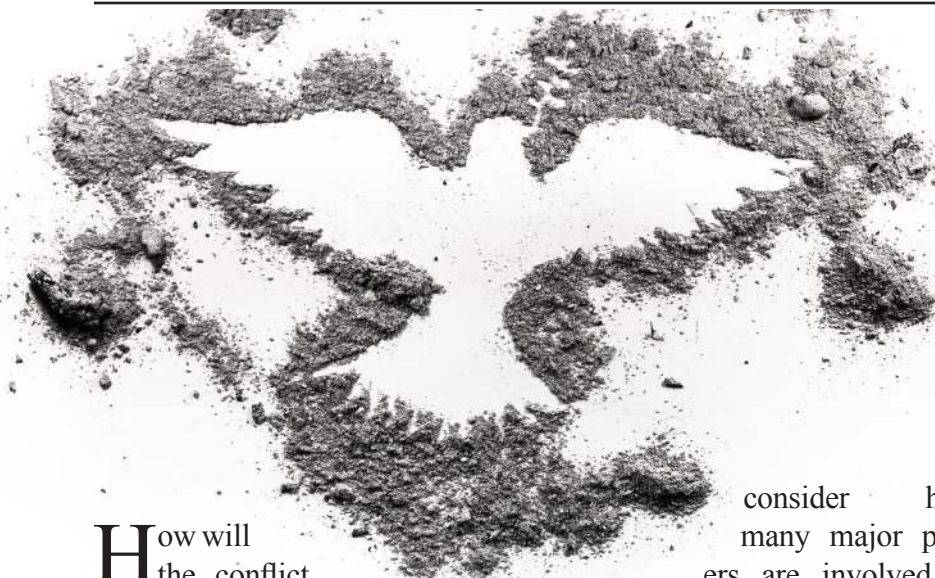
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# Will There Ever Be Peace?

by Michael Armstrong

**H**ow will the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians be settled? The world is still reeling from the heinous attack on the morning of the Last Great Day, an Annual Holy Day. Israel's response has leveled much of Gaza. At this writing some of the hostages have been released, but the majority remain captive. Their stories contain unimaginable horror. These months of turmoil have brought cultural and religious tensions to a boil around the world, spilling over into actual violence at times.

Israel has vowed to utterly destroy Hamas, the ruling faction of Gaza. They have been in power since elections held after Israel's withdrawal in 2005. Peaceful reconciliation has never been part of their agenda. Nor are they alone. Groups like Islamic Jihad have come into the spotlight over their role in the murderous raid. If you believe their own statements, there are those who will never make peace under any circumstances. With this in mind, how can there ever be a settlement that satisfies all sides?

It is really remarkable to

consider how many major powers are involved in trying to answer that question. Others use the conflict to their own advantage. Throughout the Arab Muslim world there are strong feelings of solidarity when it comes to confronting Israel. Indeed, the struggle is their own if we date our current crisis to the inception of Israel in 1948. This is particularly true of the nations that share land borders. Conversely, they have also been the first to make peace, though often over violent protests from their own citizens.

That is a factor in the current situation. Tensions being what they are, there is still the potential for a wider war. In the politics of the Middle East, it is dangerous to be perceived as "soft" on Israel. It is easy for radical elements to fan popular hatreds amid the scenes of destruction in Gaza. This can pressure governments to take actions more likely to result in conflict.

Jordan has stationed troops along its border with Israel. Egypt has the uncomfortable task of managing the only open border crossings into Gaza. Rockets

fly into Israel from southern Lebanon and are answered in kind. Hezbollah (a projection of Iranian influence) has played a large role in the government of Lebanon for decades. Another Iranian proxy, the Houthis in Yemen, have actually declared war on Israel. Likely due to physical distance, their actions have been limited to drone and rocket attacks and a couple of instances of piracy against vessels with real or perceived connections to Israel. The US military has struck back against them in some instances.

Widespread protests across the Middle East have illustrated popular discontent and an appetite for war with Israel. Reuters reported a crowd of tens of thousands in Baghdad, Iraq. Most were draped in white shrouds, a symbol of their willingness to fight to the death. Tapping into this fervor and blood-lust creates an opportunity for radicals, themselves hungry for power. Resisting it can be dangerous for Arab rulers.

King Abdullah I of Jordan was assassinated by a Palestinian man in 1951 while attending prayers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. The former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Riad al Solh,

had been gunned down only days before. Both were thought to be negotiating peace with Israel. The killing of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981 was on account of the Camp David Accords, a peace agreement with Israel. During the First Intifada, which lasted into the 1990s, Palestinians executed nearly 1,000 of their own people for “collaborating” with Israel.

Unfortunately, it is against this backdrop that we must consider any future attempts at peace. Will they be successful? Let us briefly consider both Israeli and Arab viewpoints. The Jews have maintained a presence in the area that stretches back to the history described in the Bible. Following Roman rule and the rise of Islam, the Jews were by no means a ruling majority, but usually maintained a tolerable coexistence. Naturally there are exceptions to such sweeping summaries, but history furnishes us such oddities as Jews and Muslims fighting side by side against Christian crusaders.

Of course there are underlying tensions between Judaism and Islam. These began to flare up in the late 1800s while the land was still a dominion of the Ottoman Empire. Many Jews, having spread abroad and multiplied for centuries, began to face persecution. This was particularly true in eastern Europe. They fled, and tens and even hundreds of thousands would eventually seek refuge in their ancestral homeland. This development was not well received by Arabs in the area.

Their anger was also exacerbated by the defeat of the

Ottoman Empire and the oversight of the British during the Mandate period from 1922-1948. The end of WWII, as the world came to grips with the horrors of the Holocaust, brought a flood of desperate Jewish refugees out of Europe. The United Nations’ solution was to create independent states of Israel and Palestine, with Jerusalem as an internationally administered city. In its main points it was the same as the “two-state solution” many still clamor for today.

The Arabs of that day rejected it violently. War immediately followed and both sides recruited officers from Europe. Sympathies between the Arabs and the Axis powers led to some German officers fighting on their

side. Israel emerged victorious thanks to abundant foreign aid and support. Can we even imagine the experience of those who survived the slavery and degradation of the concentration camps having to again fight for their very existence?

These facts are burned into the Israeli consciousness. They have been reinforced as successive generations have faced sporadic violence as well as major regional wars in 1967 and 1973. Military service is mandatory for men and women. Israel lives in perpetual danger of attack, recent events bear that out.

Most Arab nations still do not formally recognize Israel. The most radical elements are still bent on its destruction. The problem







goes far deeper than any sort of just settlement for the Palestinians. It is politically convenient to claim that, to say there must be a two-state solution for peace. It allows blame to be placed on Israel for not making enough concessions or giving up enough territory. It is a false pretense. Even Jordan only gave up its claim to the West Bank in 1988.

Previous withdrawals have not brought peace. Pulling out of Gaza in 2005 only led to the election of Hamas, rocket attacks, fighting, and the unspeakable atrocities of October 7, 2023.

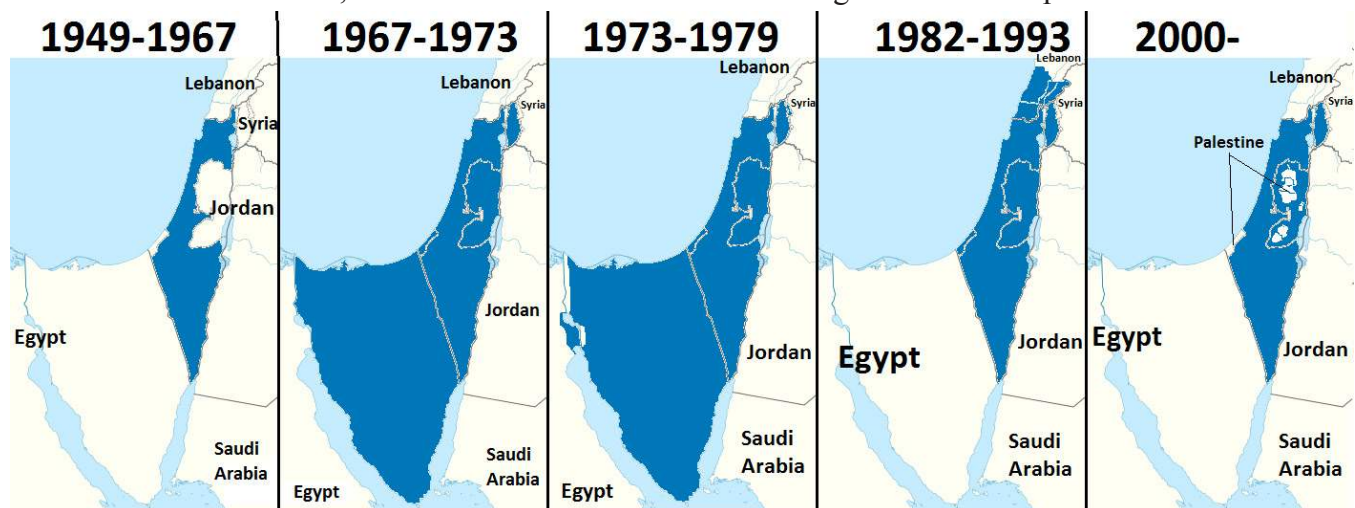
What guarantee of security can there be if Israel should withdraw to its pre-1967 borders? None that a nation missing over 100 hostages, sickened by the still emerging stories of murder, rape and dismemberment, will accept.

Anger and emotion run just as hot on the Arab side. Even if they repudiate the actions of Hamas, many have lost parents or children, family or friends. The death toll in Gaza at this writing has surpassed 15,000. Will the survivors be inclined to make peace? It will be only too easy to blame Israel for their grief.

Another chapter in a long running historical grievance with no shortage of tragedies to galvanize each side.

This is not a recipe for peace. Not the combined efforts of the most influential nations, nor all the skillful diplomats, not money, land or autonomy will heal these wounds. We hope they are successful, as far as they are able, in ending the current conflict and preventing it from engulfing the entire region. We pray for those who have spent the last months in captivity. We pray for all those caught up in a quarrel they want no part of.

Would that peace were possible. Even a temporary settlement would be a relief, but we are forced to acknowledge that the root of the problem is virtually irreconcilable. At least by human means. The region lies at the heart of the end-time events described in the prophecies of Matthew 24, Luke 21 and the book of Revelation. From this we know the issues surrounding it will not truly be solved short of God's kingdom. It is the reason we watch the events that transpire there. □



Top: Houthi Rebels. Their slogan reads, "God is the Greatest; Death to America; Death to Israel; A Curse Upon the Jews; Victory to Islam." Bottom: Israel's territorial fluctuations.



# THE GRIM DILEMMA OF GOVERNMENT



*by Garner Ted Armstrong*

Government is the biggest business on earth. In many nations, the government is the biggest land owner, the biggest employer, the biggest investor, the biggest spender, and has the biggest headache and the biggest hangover.

The whole history of man revolves around the attempt of human beings to govern themselves without interference from any outside source. Government implies order. Government means law.

But, paradoxically, these tremendous and worthwhile commodities are becoming increasingly sparse in a lawless and chaotic world. Today the greatest attempt of man at world government in all history appears doomed to failure!

With the continuing dilution of the United Nations, and the creation of several new nations each year, the world finds itself with a grim new set of problems for which there appear no solutions.

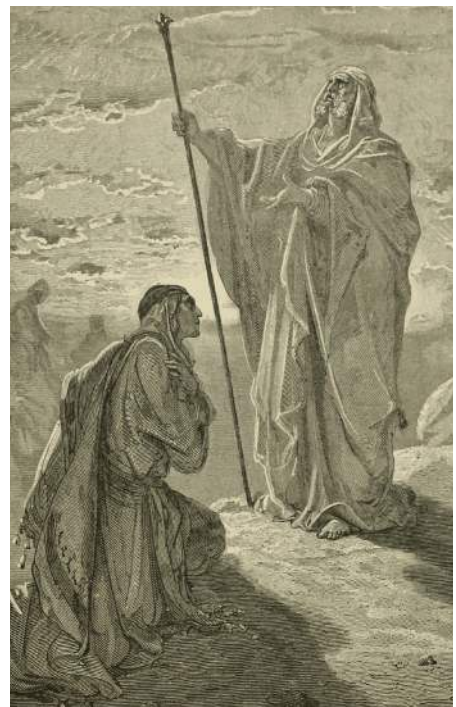
## THE PROBLEMS LABELED “INSOLUBLE”

Strangely, in this world of giant headaches and huge hangovers, the United States and Great Britain seems to automatically inherit all the problems labeled “insoluble” around the world.

The biggest and most all-consuming headache facing any government today is how to achieve world peace!

Yet, no existing government knows. Each new administration in the United States realizes it is saddled with the almost impossible burden of leading all other governments who strive toward peace on earth, the rights of the individual, and the settlement of international disputes through world courts of law.

The problems of government today are no longer confined to the domestic considerations of food, shelter and



***Samuel Blessing Saul, by Gustave Dore. “And the Lord said unto Samuel, ‘Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.’” - 1 Sam. 8:7***

*Continued next page*



clothing for any given nation. Rather, the governmental system of each nation, no matter how

domestic crises of small, forgotten, seemingly unimportant areas of the world are fraught

*Governments today represent every extreme from totalitarianism to the “democratic” or republican form of rule by the majority.*

small, has suddenly become the headaches and problems of every other nation, no matter how large!

Time was when the domestic crises of many a small nation not only escaped the attention of the average citizen in other countries, but couldn't have captured his interest if he heard of it.

Today, however, the entire picture has changed. Now the

with terrible dangers for the big powers!

**EACH “NEW” GOVERNMENT  
ATTEMPTS SUCCESS WHERE  
OTHERS HAVE FAILED**

The most immediate problems of any government are the three basics of life: food, shelter and clothing for the populace of the nation.

All governments have,

while differing greatly in their methods of achieving these things, the same basic goals. They seek to govern their peoples in the particular fashion which that government has deemed most appropriate to give those peoples these basic essentials of life.

Government signifies by its very term, law and order!

Yet, many governments are lawless and chaotic.

Governments today represent every extreme from totalitarianism to the “democratic” or republican form of rule by the majority.

Time and again — and in many cases in very recent history — nations have wildly supported a new-found champion who promised relief from their



**Red Square in Moscow (1801) by Fedor Alekseev.** The Red Square has been used in public function since antiquity, throughout the reign of the Tsars, the Soviet Union, and into the present day.



misery, higher wages, a burgeoning economy, settlement of all strifes and domestic issues, and a place of greater stature in the world — only to find their new-found “saviour” was just a leap from the frying pan into the fire.

Witness Cuba with its former government of corruption and police rule; the very epitome of the totalitarian state. After his successful revolution, Fidel Castro began his tireless and endless series of executions, vast reforms, and eloquent promises.

With brother Raul and Che Guevara immediately established in dizzying pinnacles of power, the inevitable occurred. The economy began to stagnate, people were living in fear, and all the usual trademarks of the

power-drunk dictatorship began to appear: heavy taxation; nationalization of industries, transport and communications; agrarian “reforms;” compulsory military conscription; state control of all education; with increasing hardships and less food for all!

And the same pattern is being repeated in many a nation around the world, from Africa to Indonesia and Vietnam; from Uruguay and Guatemala to the Sudan.

The plain truth is, NO GOVERNMENT, no, not in the history of the world, has ever brought its people lasting peace, prosperity, and happiness!

True, certain governments have succeeded in achieving remarkable military conquests and

glamorous economic heights. But each, in its own turn, tottered and toppled, leaving only the splintered shards, ruined buildings and dust-covered monuments to mark its passing.

Believe it or not, the problems of government are easily understood.

And it’s exactly as simple as “two plus two equals four.”

From the time the first men began to organize themselves, seeking to govern or rule their fellow men for the fulfillment of their hopes and dreams (whether those hopes and dreams were personal or national) each attempt at government has failed!

Look how simple it really is — and understand. From the time Cain killed Abel, men have sought peace on earth. Today, in



**The Coronation of Napoleon (1805-1807) by Jacques-Louis David.** Napoleon designed a new coronation ceremony as Emperor of France, choosing to crown himself.

*Continued next page*





**Het Binnenhof (The Hague), Netherlands. The world's oldest seat of government still in use, built in the 1300s.**



**People bow to statues of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il in North Korea. The hereditary dictatorship is virtually worshiped.**



**United Nations building in Geneva, Switzerland.**

this modern world of the yawning gap of orbital satellites and illiteracy, this world stands in momentary jeopardy of that “ultimate insanity:” nuclear war, which would annihilate every last man, woman and child on earth!

This war-weary world seems, at this moment, further from world peace, harmony and understanding between nations than it has ever been.

And so, just as simply as two plus two equals four, it is true that the attempts of mankind to achieve peace, and to do it his own way, apart from his God, have resulted in this modern culture of chaos.

Where will it all end? How will it all resolve itself? What lies ahead in the future? These are the really big questions today – and apart from the revelation of Almighty God, the most unanswerable!

#### **NO GOVERNMENT KNOWS THE WAY TO PEACE**

In many countries where government is the biggest, and sometimes the only industry in the entire country – there exists, nevertheless, an equal voice in world affairs with the United States and Russia!

Does it make any sense? Does it portend safety, peace, productivity and a new era of prosperity for the world? Hardly. In many cases, it means only more suffering for already impoverished peoples – now subjected to shaky and inadequate governments of their own.

And so, instead of law, order, education, understanding, magnanimity, long-suffering, patience, kindness, justice, equity, trust, faith, a deep grasp of human nature, total lack of racial and religious bias; and all of the lofty qualities which



The European Parliament building in Strasbourg, France hosts the world's largest international parliament.



should go into any government – you find illiteracy, selfishness and egotism to the point of embarrassment; an insane desire for personal power; graft and corruption, lying, cheating, injustice, and inequality; insane, crazed, violent racial bigotries and hatreds, and a struggle for immediate status among elder nations of the world!

Is independence wrong, then? Should these nations return to colonial rule?

Let's get to the point! None of the methods of government in this world today have brought this world peace. Not one of the

governmental systems of this world have brought a real and a lasting peace, even for its own peoples!

Look at the tribal bloodshed in Africa; the violent religious battles in Vietnam; the stifling economies of much of Latin America; the impending famine in India; the worsening crime, deepening moral decay, and the sickness of “too much” blighting the big powers. There is no peace today!

This article is not intended to extol the virtues of any man-made system of government — but to show clearly the failings

of all systems!

Not in all human history has any attempt of mankind to govern himself led the world toward peace.

Today, we are closer to human extinction through the squabbles of governments than ever before in human experience.

Point to the government that has brought the world peace. Identify, if you can, the one great system that has always succeeded. Yes, just as two plus two still makes four, so does the very fact that mankind's searching for peace, man's way, always leads toward greater wars! □

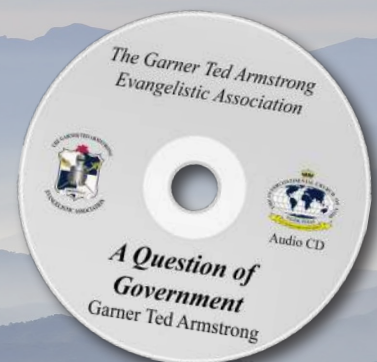
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## ***A Question of Government***

by Garner Ted Armstrong

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# INFORMATION COMPLIANCE

## *Bill Passed to Demolish Free Speech*

**Governments and tech giants enact censorship through laws like Canada's Online News Act, prompting Meta and Google to ban news content.**

*by Dr. Joseph Mercola*

If you think freedom of speech has gone down the tubes, you haven't seen the half of it yet. September 19, 2023, the U.K. passed a new law to "regulate" (read, censor) online content. The so-called Online Safety Bill has been described as "one of the most far-reaching attempts by Western democracy to regulate online speech."

Interestingly, the bill has been in the works for the last five years, again proving that online censorship is not something that sprang up in response to COVID. Governments have been steadily moving in this direction for a long time.

As reported by *The New York Times*, the bill forces online platforms to "proactively screen for objectionable material and to judge whether it is illegal, rather than requiring them to act only after being alerted to illicit content."

### **OUTSOURCING CENSORSHIP**

Of course, we now know that flagging material for removal is how the U.S. government has illegally circumvented constitutional free speech rights for the past few years.

September 8, 2023, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld part of the lower court's injunction, banning the White House, surgeon general, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the FBI from influencing social media companies

to remove "disinformation."

Unfortunately, the appellate court also reversed, vacated and modified other parts of the original injunction, leaving the door wide open for certain federal agencies to continue their censorship activities.

Importantly, officials from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) were excluded, even though CISA has played a major, if not central, role in the government's censorship of Americans.

CISA partnered with the Election Integrity Partnership (EIP), later renamed the Virality Project, and in an Atlantic Council interview, EIP head Alex Stamos openly admitted that the partnership was set up to outsource censorship that the government could not do due to "lack of legal authorization."

Chances are, other Western countries have been using similar kinds of censorship schemes up to this point. Now, however, the U.K. and EU have enshrined censorship in law, requiring companies to do their dirty work.

This is because, of course, someone will have to decide what kind of information is "legal" and what's not, and that decision is most likely going to come either from the government, or some unelected deep state organization like the World Health Organization.



If a similar law makes its way to the U.S., it would effectively constitute an end run around the Constitution, because the Constitution does not allow the government to outsource freedom of speech restrictions, which is basically what the Online Safety Bill does.

#### NEW LAW ASSUMES PRECOGNITIVE ABILITIES

Lorna Woods, a professor of internet law at the University of Essex, who helped draft the law, told *The New York Times*:

“At its heart, the bill contains a simple idea: that providers should consider the foreseeable risks to which their services give rise and seek to mitigate — like many other industries already do.”

One wonders whether she’s talking about the endless warnings companies place on their products, like “Warning: Coffee may be hot!” or “Do not hold the wrong end of a chainsaw,” “Do not operate while sleeping,” or “Do not drive with sunshield in place.” But can anyone truly foresee the risks of sharing information?

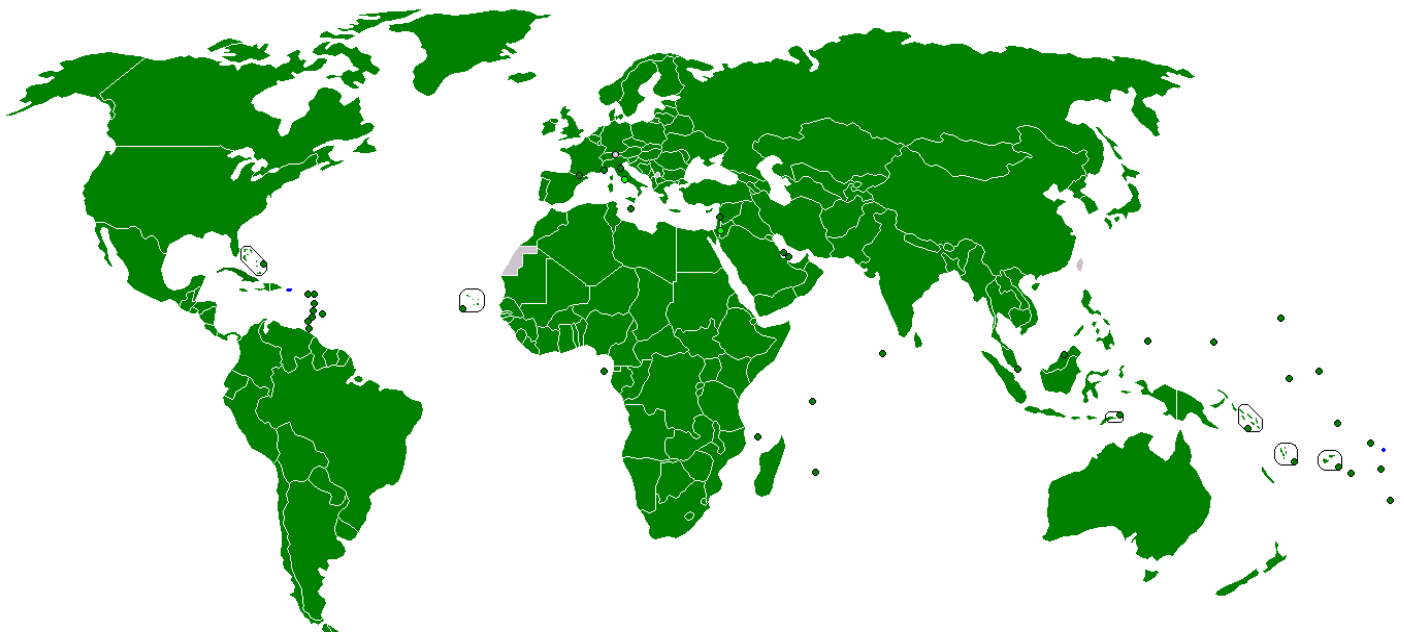
Sure, those who champion the bill highlight the risks of sharing pornography and information that might promote suicide, self-harm or eating disorders. That kind of information must either be restricted, using age-verification and other measures, or eliminated.

Few ought to have qualms about that, but we can be sure that that’s not the primary aim of this bill. Ultimately, it will be used to stifle or ban information that is inconvenient to those in power. “Vaccine misinformation,” for example, will be barred under the new bill, along with any other material that may be “harmful to health.”

But who decides what might harm health? Those in power, of course, whether we can identify them or not. We know, however, that the World Health Organization’s pandemic treaty and the International Health Regulation (IHR) amendments designate the WHO as the final arbiter of truth regarding health.

Considering the WHO is owned by its funders, with Bill Gates topping that list, we can be assured that things like holistic health and accurate dietary information will end up on the chopping block, as it already has.

Incidentally, many argue that “anti-vaxxers” must be censored lest they profit from their misinformation, but recent research actually found that “Contrary to expectations, websites promoted in pro-vaccine venues do more to monetize attention than those promoted in anti-vaccine venues.” In other words, pro-vaccine sources are profiting from their information sharing to a far greater degree than those sharing information that is derogatory.



**A global map of countries by World Health Organization membership status.  
WHO members - dark green; observers - light green; invited delegations - blue.**

*Continued next page*



### JUDICIAL PROCESSES ARE OUT THE WINDOW

We've also seen how the bill is already being used to silence specific individuals, such as Russell Brand, who is being accused of sexual improprieties and other abuses by four women he allegedly accosted between 2006 and 2013. Curiously, these accusations only arose after he started supporting Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s presidential campaign and warning about the global coup underway.

In September 2023, Dame Caroline Dinenage, chairwoman of the British Commons' Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee — whose husband was commander in the British Army's psy-ops division — wrote a letter to Rumble asking them to demonetize Brand's channel.

By then, he'd already been demonetized by YouTube, based on the sexual abuse allegations levied against him. YouTube reportedly justified their action saying Brand had violated its "creator responsibility policy."

As noted by The Gray Zone, "This marks the first time a content creator has been financially punished by the company for reasons other than the videos published on the site." A spokesperson for YouTube confirmed that the platform will now "take action" "if a creator's off-platform behavior harms our users, employees or ecosystem."

Rumble's chief executive Chris Pavlovski refused to demonetize Brand, stating, "We regard it as deeply inappropriate and dangerous that the U.K. parliament would attempt to control who is allowed to speak on our platform or to earn a living."

That refusal may ultimately lead to Rumble being banned in the U.K. under the new law. It's even been suggested that Rumble executives may be at risk of being arrested should they visit the U.K. Brand, for his part, has accused the British government of "bypassing judicial process." Speaking in a live stream, Brand said:

"You know I've been demonetized on YouTube. You are aware that the government wrote to social media platforms to demand that I be further censored.

"In a sense, the bypassing of judicial process, right to punitive measures, financial ones, seems

like an interesting stance for a government minister to be suggesting to a big tech platform.

"What we appear to be looking at here are a set of collaborating institutions that have an agenda, and pursue that agenda, even when in pursuing it they have to bypass, obstruct, or absolutely ignore existing judicial or regulatory bodies by moving straight to punitive measures."

It doesn't matter how you feel about Brand, or whether you believe the accusations against him. The danger inherent in these punitive measures should be self-evident to everyone.

Anyone can falsely accuse you of something and effectively destroy your ability to make a living if government and/or tech companies have the ability to act as judge and jury. Is that really the kind of society we want?

### MANY COMPANIES WILL NOT BE ABLE TO COMPLY

It's quite clear that many companies will not be able to comply with the new law. The Wikimedia Foundation, for example, which operates Wikipedia, has already said it'll be unable to do so, and may be blocked in the U.K. as a result.

This isn't a great loss, per se, considering Wikipedia is an information warfare tool, but countless other information brokers will likely find that they are unable to predict the "foreseeable risks" of the information shared on their platform.

Compliance failures can cost companies up to \$22.3 million, or up to 10% of global revenue, whichever is higher. Company executives can also be held criminally liable if they fail to comply with investigative efforts and/or fail to comply with rules related to child safety and the sexual exploitation of children.

Considering the liabilities, those who decide to abide by the new law will likely follow the rule of "better safe than sorry" and use their censorship powers with an excessively heavy hand.

In the end, what we may be left with is state-sponsored propaganda and videos of puppies and kittens. Everything else will be too risky to keep on the platform, because who knows what information might become inconvenient next?



### EU REQUIRES PLATFORMS TO POLICE SPEECH TOO

The new U.K. law is not alone in requiring censorship. The European Union's Digital Services Act (DSA) also recently took effect, and it too requires online companies to actively police their platforms. As reported by The Verge:

"Starting on August 25th, 2023, tech giants like Google, Facebook, Amazon, and more must comply with sweeping legislation that holds online platforms legally accountable for the content posted to them ...

"Under the new rules, online platforms must implement ways to prevent and remove posts containing illegal goods, services, or content while simultaneously giving users the means to report this type of content."

On the upside, the DSA also bans targeted advertising and restricts ads targeting children. It also requires platforms to be more transparent about how their algorithms work, and requires "very large" platforms — any online company with more than 45 million monthly EU users — to allow users to opt out of profiling and personalization engines.

This includes Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Google, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Shapchat, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, Bing and several others.

On the other hand, the law also requires very large platforms to share data with researchers and authorities, and to cooperate with "crisis response requirements." The Digital Services Coordinator and the EU Commission will also have the power to "require immediate actions where necessary to address very serious harms."

Compliance failures can cost a company up to 6% of their global revenue, and repeated refusal to comply with rules or requests for action can result in suspension of the platform within the EU.

### CANADA ANNOUNCES NEW RULES FOR STREAMING SERVICES

Canada is also upping the ante. September 29, 2023, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) announced all "online streaming services that offer podcasts" must now register and conform to regulatory controls. As reported in an official press release:



**Allegations of a lack of censorship of antisemitic content led some advertisers to boycott X, formerly Twitter. Owner, Elon Musk, vigorously disagreed, leading to some notably colorful statements: "Is that clear? I hope it is."**

"Today, the CRTC is advancing its regulatory plan to modernize Canada's broadcasting framework and ensure online streaming services make meaningful contributions to Canadian and Indigenous content ...

"First, the CRTC is setting out which online streaming services need to provide information about their activities in Canada.

"Online streaming services that operate in Canada, offer broadcasting content, and earn \$10 million or more in annual revenues will need to complete a registration form by November 28, 2023 ...

"Second, the CRTC is setting conditions for online streaming services to operate in Canada. These conditions take effect today and require certain online streaming services to provide the CRTC with information related to their content and subscribership.

"The decision also requires those services to make content available in a way that is not tied to a specific mobile or Internet service. A third consultation is ongoing. It considers contributions traditional broadcasters and online streaming services will need to make to support Canadian and Indigenous content."

### LARGE-ENOUGH CONTENT PROVIDERS MUST REGISTER AS WELL

Initially, the CRTC promised that content

*Continued next page*



providers who simply upload their podcasts to available broadcasting services would not be impacted, but that turned out to be another bait-and-switch. What's more, the CRTC conveniently didn't mention this detail in its press release. For those details, you have to read through the actual regulatory policy. As reported by independent journalist Michael Shellenberger, October 2, 2023:

"For months, representatives of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government insisted that their plans to regulate Big Tech social media platforms wouldn't impact independent news outlets or podcasters ... But it turns out that the government is, in fact, going to regulate content providers, not just Big Tech social media platforms.

"The government regulator, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), announced on Friday that it would require registration by independent content producers, including online news companies and 'individuals that host podcasts on their own websites.'

"The CRTC says that the law only covers media companies with \$10 million or more per year in revenue and that the information it is demanding is minimal ... But, notes Canadian legal analyst Michael Geist, 'The takeaway from the decision is

obvious: registration is the first step toward regulation ... In fact, the rationale for the CRTC to include many of the services is that without such information, it is not well positioned to regulate.'

"The Liberal Party plainly misled the public into thinking that platforms would only be regulated, not content providers. There are many independent media companies with over \$10 million annually in revenue that will be forced to register."

### CANADA'S ONLINE NEWS ACT

Earlier this year, Canada also rolled out its new Online News Act, which requires "dominant platforms" to "compensate news businesses when their content is made available on their services." As a result, Facebook and Instagram ended up eliminating Canadians' ability to view any news on its platform, regardless of where the news originates from. As explained by Facebook, June 1, 2023:

"In order to comply with the Online News Act, we have begun the process of ending news availability in Canada ... News links and content posted by news publishers and broadcasters in Canada will no longer be viewable by people in Canada ...

"News publishers and broadcasters outside of Canada will continue to be able to post news links and content, however, that content will not be viewable by people in Canada ... People in Canada will no longer be able to view or share news content on Facebook and Instagram, including news articles and audio-visual content posted by news outlets."

### SYNCHRONIZED CENSORSHIP PUSH

What we're seeing is a synchronized push for more radical censorship, upheld by law, and while it's currently focused in the EU, Britain and Canada, we can be sure that it's coming to the U.S. as well.

It would be here already were it not for our Constitution, which is slowing things down. Still, the noose is tightening with each passing day, as the U.S. government is working overtime to figure out how to circumvent the highest law of the land.

There are no easy answers to this problem. One basic suggestion, however, would be to withdraw support from censorship-based platforms like YouTube, and support free speech platforms like Rumble instead. □



**Facebook ended news availability in Canada starting August 2023 due to the Online News Act. They state, "People in Canada will no longer be able to view or share news content on Facebook and Instagram, including news articles and audio-visual content posted by news outlets."**



# BIBLE STUDY

by Dr. James & Natalie Ricks



# Antisemitism and Replacement Theology

Antisemitism is hatred for Jewish people. It is emotional and irrational. It has persisted throughout history for thousands of years, which makes it unique. Satan hates Jesus Christ who is Jewish and the entire Jewish nation because they preserved the words and Laws of God.

Romans 3:1-2, “What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.”

Actually, God gave His truths to all thirteen tribes, but the northern ten were lost to apostasy, thanks to Jeroboam, Jezebel and others. Only the southern three tribes, known collectively as the house of Judah, maintained the oracles of God. They preserved the Bible. Almost all the books of the New and Old Testament were written by Jewish authors and one by a Jewish proselyte.

Replacement theology is the doctrine that says the nation of Israel has been replaced by the New Covenant church and God has no further present or future dealings with Israel. Like most things, there are variations in the doctrine but that is the basic idea. They twist a few words of the Apostle Paul to support this doctrine. But what does Paul actually say about this doctrine?

Romans 10:21, “But to Israel he says: ‘All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people.’”

Romans 11:1-2, “I say then, has God cast away

His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.”

Paul bluntly poses the question of whether God had forsaken Israel and answers it with a “Certainly not!” We know the replacement doctrine is wrong, but why is it so attractive to clerics?

## THE NEGATIVITY BEHIND REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

While anti-Judaism usually refers to opposition to the religious ideas and customs of Jews, antisemitism is a prejudice and hatred against Jews. It seems reasonable to assume that hatred led to and preceded the replacement theology doctrine. Suppose church leaders in the second and third centuries turned violently anti-Semitic. Truly converted leaders did not engage in this behavior. The false cleric Marcion even went so far as to sponsor an anti-Hebrew bible. Some have even tried to make the New Testament a party to this kind of misguided theology. These people were motivated by hatred and used replacement theology as a vehicle to eliminate the Old Testament and some of God’s Laws.

1 Timothy 4:1-3, “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the

*Continued next page*

## BIBLE STUDY

faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.”

The author of most of the New Testament predicted that this would happen. It will grow even stronger as we get closer to the second coming of the Messiah. All the replacement clerics and scholars accentuate some form of discontinuity with Israel and the Old Testament, but Paul did the opposite; he worked to unite Jews and Gentiles.

Ephesians 4:13, “Till we all come to the unity of the faith...”

1 Corinthians 12:13, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

Galatians 3:28-29, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

“And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Both true Christianity and the apostle Paul taught love and unity, not hatred. Note that Paul mentions the Old Testament Patriarch Abraham as the spiritual father for all believers — a direct repudiation of the replacement doctrine. Misguided church leaders in the first few centuries spewed hatred which led them to embrace replacement theology. However many who now believe in it do not hate anyone and are probably unaware of the motives behind this doctrine. Sixty percent of churches believe in replacement doctrines!

### FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST CAN BE JEW OR GENTILE

Paul believed that true worshipers of God exist in both groups. He promoted love and unity and stated that sometimes we cannot fully know of many of the good believers.

Romans 11:3-5, “‘LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life’?”

“But what does the divine response say to him? ‘I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.’

“Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”

Though the Jewish leadership had rejected Jesus, a large number of Jews believed. Note the large numbers converted during the first Pentecost period. Many Messianic Jews exist today in Israel. Over time, the shift of converts focused on the gentile, pagan world, but it would not be reason to hate Jews as Paul makes clear.

Paul says a remnant of Israel now believes and possibly a larger percentage of gentiles were converted. For example, the book to the Romans has over forty direct quotes from the Old Testament as support for Paul’s teachings. Furthermore, much of the New Testament cannot be truly understood without knowledge of the Old Testament writings. Gentiles were grafted into Israel as the spiritual children of Abraham. The idea of anyone replacing Israel is wrong!

Romans 11:17-18, “And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.” (NKJV)

### GOD HAS NOT, NOR WILL HE, FORSAKE ISRAEL

A TEMPORARY divorce of Israel existed for many centuries, but God would never renege on His promises to Abraham, Jacob and others.

Jeremiah 31:34, “No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says



## BIBLE STUDY

the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

The day is coming when all Israel will know the truth and have an opportunity for conversion.

Jeremiah 31:35-36, “Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar — the LORD of hosts is His name:


“If this fixed order departs from before Me, says the LORD, then shall the descendants of Israel cease from being a nation before Me forever.”

That is about as clear a statement as one can get of God’s intentions. As long as the sun shines, Israel is still an important nation in the eyes of God. Further, those who bless Israel, which includes the Jews, will be blessed and those who curse Israel will be cursed. The prophet Balaam was paid to curse Is-

rael and God inspired the profound message found in Numbers 24:5-9.

### PRAY FOR LOVE AND THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM

A propaganda battle is being waged for the hearts of the world. Most media outlets are useful idiots for those who are full of hate, but we should all love and pray for the historic people of God. Pray for peace for the Jewish people and we will be blessed! And pray that the hearts of most Americans will do the same, in spite of the media and academia.

Psalms 122:6 says, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.” 

# Listen on Spotify



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Church of God



## Iran: Exporting Terror

*Continued from page 2*

saying the same thing, and using the same words again. This time it's Donald Trump, dictator. That's right, Liz Cheney has come out and declared that Trump would, more than likely, never give up power if he was to be elected. They're starting to realize that there's a strong possibility that Trump will be

re-elected, and there's nothing, NOTHING they wouldn't do to prevent that. He would enact the brutal policies of history's worst dictators! Run for your lives!

They played live scenes from the border this morning. It's unbelievable. Apparently they've got themselves so tangled up legally, they think there's nothing that can be done. No nation on earth lets refugees stream in unconstrained. Europe let the

Muslims stream in, and nothing has been the same since.

I guess there's something of an apology in order, but not really. Some people write and tell me to drop the politics. What is the story of the Bible, and history itself but the stories of rulers and empires, and peoples? We need to know what's going on, and despite the occasional criticism we're going to continue to live up to our name. □



Iran hosting an International Conference in 2017 supporting the Palestinian Intifada, which they consider one of the most pressing issues facing Islam. Ayatollah Khamenei (center) has been quoted at different times saying Israel was, “a rabid dog,” “a cancerous tumor of a state,” and, “will not exist in 25 years.” Notice the map of Israel colored with the Palestinian flag.



# The Middle East Beckons Europe!

## Part 1

by Craig M. White,  
*FriendsOfSabbath.org*

Twenty-First Century WATCH 21

Once again, Europe has to do something about a crisis building from within. And another a short distance away — in North Africa and the Middle East. The Hamas attacks on Israel from Gaza and the ensuing demonstrations around the world have left Europe still wallowing in its stupor.

Once again, its leadership is huffing and puffing but doing so little. Yet the world is on edge, only waiting for a major trigger to force Europe to finally rise up to defend itself and its interests.

Many Bible students have been waiting patiently, anticipating a fascistic United Europe with Germany at the helm, building up a super military that will storm into the Middle East. Is this fulfillment of prophecy nigh?

### **The Middle East Can Explode At Any Time**

The Muslim population in Europe numbers over 44 million (plus millions of people representing other religions). Christianity (both Catholic and Protestant) is in decline while the Eastern Orthodox variant has been reviving steadily. In Western Europe, more and more people are exiting the churches and becoming irreligious, agnostic or even atheist.

On the other side of the Mediterranean, little Israel is surrounded by massive Islamic countries. Israel is currently an ally of Europe, which is confused as to whose side to take in Middle Eastern conflicts and attempts to walk a tightrope. This cannot last forever.

But huge German reparations to Israel and WWII victims each year totaling over \$80 billion since 1952 (source: *Germany and Israel: Bilateral Relations, German Federal Foreign Office, 28*

*February 2023*) has helped Israel to survive. The United States also assists Israel with several billion dollars each year (source: [www.foreignassistance.gov](http://www.foreignassistance.gov)).

Meanwhile, under the encouragement of the Left to have few children and to instead abort the unborn, Europeans are decreasing steadily in number.

And what if America experiences a mini Civil War that some have been predicting? The consequent withdrawal of the American military presence and power around the world will leave a vacuum that another power will have to fill.

In Europe, something has to give. Will a new leadership arise to reverse these downward trends which would otherwise inevitably result in the end of Western Civilisation, something which has long been sought and encouraged by the Left?

A new leadership that returns Europe to its roots must take hold in Europe. But how will that eventuate?

In the 1980s and into the 1990s many were of the opinion that because there was still a strong conservative element in European Right of Centre political parties, the Catholic Church and also the European Parliament, it was thought that a trigger (such as an economic collapse or world conflicts) would result in European nations sliding toward the extreme Right.

Instead, the opposite happened. A resurgent neo-Marxist Left began to push for further social liberalism, virtual open borders, mass immigration to the continent with opposition stifled and even sent to prison for “hate speech.” Conservative governments in Hungary and Poland were harassed and threatened by European leaders and institutions.

*Continued next page*

A warning to the mainstream media: your misrepresentation of today's conservative Centre Right parties as "far right" is a distortion and will only fuel further suspicion and disdain for the woke Left.

Centre Right parties such as Alternative for Germany (AfD), Brothers of Italy, the National Rally in France and others have been wrongfully labelled in the media as "far right." This gives the impression that they are imperialistic, fascist or even neo-Nazi. Such is not the case for there is little difference in social, national and religious values of these parties and the post WWII leaders such as Adenauer, de Gaulle, Churchill and later Thatcher and Kohl.

But what if these parties were able to take over all the main countries of Europe and co-operated to once and for all keep the Left down and out? Could they slide from the Centre Right to the extreme Right?

Or will other parties emerge that are truly "far right" and take Europe back to its roots with a European police force and single military to both protect its borders and project its might? Another scenario is that military coups might take place in some European countries and enforce far-right policies.

A move toward the extreme Right seems the more likely scenario than the liberal, neo-Marxist Europe we currently see before us. A pitifully weak Europe that refuses to stand up for itself and which allows the Left to push it toward integration in a

world system cannot represent the final Beast Power.

### A BACKLASH IS LOOMING

Europe remains weak, emasculated, liberal, globalist and woke. It has been put to slumber by the radical left as part of the agenda to integrate the world into one. This plan may get close to its goals or even succeed for a while, but such world governance will not and cannot last for long.

Rather, nations will divide along historic ethnic and religious "civilizational fissures" to quote political scientist Samuel Huntington, author of the remarkable *The Clash of Civilizations*. Although published way back in 1996, the book still has a large following and many of its predictions have come to pass or are looming. He was years ahead of his time.

More recently, an article appeared in a mainstream newsletter, *The National Post* (Joel Kotkin, "Samuel Huntington was right — cultural and religious clashes are driving war today," 25 October, 2023) admitting that Huntington was correct after all:

"In *Clash*, Huntington predicted the Ukrainian conflict as well the resurgence, at the expense of the West, of many cultures, including Indian, Chinese, Arab and Turkish. He noted all seek recompense for steep declines during the period of European predominance. Rather than a world shaped by the logic of markets and the rule of law, this is engendering the ascendancy of autocrats and intensifying



(Left to right) Marine Le Pen, France; Georgia Meloni, Italy; Geert Wilders, Netherlands. Considered "far-right" candidates, they represent popular disillusionment with entrenched neo-Marxism.



tribalization and primitivist religious movements...

“The dangerous conflict in the Middle East further reinforces the ‘clash of civilizations.’”

Consider that the heart of Europe remains Christian and despite decades of undermining of traditional values, conservative concepts are still held to tightly by the peoples of Europe and especially those residing in eastern and southern Europe. Europe’s ancient civilisation is broadly composed of the northwest (liberal, Protestant); the mid-Western and southern (mainly Catholic and has roots deep into the Holy Roman Empire); Mittel Europa (eastern Europe); and Russia with her allies. Germany, together with other European nations (10 nations or groups of nations according to Daniel 7 and to which Revelation 17 refers) will form the final Beast Power.

#### EUROPE’S COMING DICTATORSHIP

Historic precedent suggests — or even insists — that the coming German-led European Super Power will not be left-liberal or woke. But rather, it seems, it will be a backlash against current trends. Most people are unaware of how similar woke ideology is to that of the early, original communists which advocated the abolition of marriage and the family; fusion of all the nations of mankind; legalization of homosexuality, abortion, euthanasia, radical feminism and such like. The later communist leaders including Stalin, Mao Zedong, Fidel Castro and other post WW2 communist leaders eschewed much of this and reintroduced nationalism and formed a communism that was a mix of socialism, nationalism, and even some social conservative values. Marx, Lenin and Trotsky would be turning in their graves if they were aware of such heresies.

In the Western World, the social (more so than the economic) teachings of the original communists began to take hold from the late 1960s — they were known as the New Left. Later their ideology became known as “political correctness” which morphed into wokeness. This form of social Marxism today is a fusion of government intervention, international corporations, green advocates and social liberals — all who view world governance, the selfish gene and the triumph of the individual as their ultimate goal. Everyone would be an individual in a global state,

freed from the “prison” of marriage, the family and nations.

Yet deep down in Europe, South America and areas of the Middle East, Asia and Africa lurks a deep disgust with most of the woke-globalist agenda.

Expect this anti-woke sentiment to sweep across continental Europe resulting in a backlash that can slide from conservatism into fascism and dictatorships.

#### A WHIRLWIND INVASION OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Slowly, Germany is waking from its slumber. Even their leftwing defence minister, Boris Pistorius, remarked recently that “We have to become capable of fighting” (quoted in “War in Europe is possible — German Defence Minister,” *Ukrainska Pravda*, 30 October, 2023).

“He added that Germany will do everything in the Middle East conflict to prevent further escalation... However, Pistorius noted that the Bundeswehr had been neglected for a long time.

“Unfortunately, everything that has been spoiled for 30 years cannot be fixed in 19 months,” he said.

At the same time, Pistorius stated that “**by the end of this decade, Germany will be in a completely different position.**” [emphasis mine]

With this in mind, let us turn to Psalms



**Boris Pistorius, German Defense Minister**

chapter eighty-three which is a vital prophecy, a pivotal prophecy if you wish, concerning certain peoples of the Middle East:

“Keep not Thou silence O God ...

“For lo, Thine enemies make a tumult ...

“They have taken crafty counsel against Thy people ...

“They have said, ‘Come and let us cut them off from being a nation: that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.’

“They are confederate against thee:

“The Tabernacles of Edom [Turkey and Central Asia], and the Ishmaelites [Saudi Arabia], Of Moab [Jordan, with some in Syria and Iraq] and the Hagarenes [Saudi Arabia]:

“Gebal [in Lebanon] and Ammon [Jordan], and Amalek [Central Asians]: the Philistines [Berbers or possibly the Palestinians] with the inhabitants of Tyre [southern Italians, symbolic also of the U.S. of Europe]

“Assur [Germany] also is joined with them (Ps 83:1-8).”


Notice: Germany is in the picture! And Egypt, Ethiopia and northern Africa are not mentioned as allies of Germany. But Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq are. Refer to the table Comparison of Psalm 83 with Daniel 11 for further details on the role of these nations in the last days.

Consider the historical precedence: in WWI,

the Turks were close allies of the Axis forces as were many of the Arabs. In WWII, they maintained neutrality because of the impacts of the Great War. Should they have aligned with the Fascists militarily, there may have been a different outcome. If the Turks had combined with the Iraqis and Iranians (whose populace were German sympathizers), the Russian Caucasus and India would probably have fallen to the Axis powers.

In any event, certain prophecies indicate that many of the Middle Eastern Arabs and Turks will once again be allies of the soon-coming European Empire! That is why these nations will initially escape the wrath of Europe (Dan 11:41). But Egypt, Ethiopia and Libya (i.e., the northern African nations) or “King of the South” will be deemed enemies of Europe and worthy of invasion (Dan 11:42-43; Ezek 30:4-5; 32:17-24; Is 20:4-6; Nah 3:8-10).

It seems that later, United Europe may even turn on some of their Arabian and other Middle Eastern allies, slaughtering and destroying the populace (see Is. 16:7-8; 21:13-17; Jer 49:28-29; 47:1-4; Zech 9:5-6).

In Part 2 we will explore what this future Beast of U.S. of Europe will look like (socially, economically, ideologically, values and its symbols) and its ultimate fierceness. And signs for Christians to identify that it is truly a Beast, unlike today’s feeble and woke Europe. 

**A brief scan of history will reveal a basic template or model of invasion of North Africa (especially Egypt) and Palestine. A future U.S. of Europe will follow this model.**

- Assyria (673-663 BC)
- Babylonia (Nebuchadnezzar c567 BC)
- Persia (Cambyses II c525 BC)
- Greece (Alexander c323 BC)
- Roman Empire (Tunisia 202 BC - in response to Punic wars and Hannibal - followed by spread across North Africa and Near East)
- Imperial Roman Restoration (Justinian’s general, Belisarius, reconquered parts of North Africa 533 AD)
- Holy Roman Empire (Muslim attacks countered by Charlemagne. Attacked Moors in northern Spain; Crusades 1096-1291 AD – response to Muslim attacks)
- Napoleon (entered Egypt 1798-1801 AD as a proposed stepping-stone to India (he also entered the Holy Land)
- Germany (assisting their Turkish allies in WWI and fighting the allies in the region 1914-18 AD)
- Italy (wars in Ethiopia in 1890s and 1930s)
- Germany and Italy in WWII (1940s)



# Comparison of Psalm 83 with Daniel 11

Below are a list of prophecies on the nations of northern Africa and the Middle East. Look up each one of them and see what God's Word reveals about them.

Psalm 83	Daniel 11	Other Prophecies	Comment
Assur	King of the North		German-led Europe
---	King of the South		North & East Africa
---	Egypt	Isa 20:1-6; Ezek 29:1-12; 30:1-5, 6-26; 31:2-3, 10-12; 32:1-16; Jer 46:1-24; Nah 3:8-10 and Isa 19:1-25; Jer 25:19; Hos 7:16; 9:6; 12:1; Joel 3:19; Amos 2:10; 3:1; Nah 3:9; Zech 10:11; Ps 68:31; Jer 44:1; Ezek 29:14; Deut 2:43; Amos 9:7	Egyptians
---	Phut	Ezek. 27:10; 30:5; 38:5; Dan 11:43; Jer 46:9	Black Africans
---	Cush	Psa. 68:31; 72:10; 87:4; Isa. 11:11. See also Is. 20:3-5; 43:3; 45:14; Ezek. 29:10; 30:4-5, 9; 38:5; Jer. 46:9; Dan 11:43; Amos 9:7; Hab. 3:7; Nah. 3:9; Zeph. 2:12.	East Africans
---	Lubim	Dan. 11:43	Fulbe
Edom	Edom		Turkey
Moab	Moab		Jordan, some in Syria & Iraq
Ammon	Ammon	Is 11:14; 16:1-5, 13-14; Jer 9:26; 12:5; 25:21; 27:3; 48:9-11; 49:1-3, 6-9; 50:44; Ezek 25:1-10; 21:30; Zeph 2:8-11; Zech 11:3; Amos 2:1-3	Jordan
Ishmael	---	Jer 2:10; 3:2; 25:23-24; 49:28; Ezek 29:21; Is 42:11; 60:7	Saudi Arabia and Northern Egypt
Hagarenes	---		Saudi Arabia
Gebal	---	Lebanon: Is 10:34; 14:18;	Lebanon
Amalek	---		Central Asiatics
Philistines	---		Berbers (possibly also the Palestinians)
Tyre	---		Southern Italy & southern Europe





# WORLD NEWS BRIEF

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

### VENEZUELAN OIL SANCTIONS REMOVED

The US began easing sanctions on Venezuelan oil in mid-October of this year. In exchange, Maduro is expected to allow opposition politicians to participate in elections and respect the rule of law. Already there are indications those expectations may be disappointed. However, that has not stopped a flurry of activity as oil companies from around the world descend on Caracas. Venezuelan crude has been selling at a significant discount, with shipments priced at around \$65 per barrel. This is well below even what most Russian crude sells for, with the “\$60 per barrel price cap” over their actions in Ukraine largely ignored. The move to open up Venezuela is likely a warning to OPEC, which has continued cutting production to prop up the price of oil against US wishes. Venezuela has the largest proven oil reserves in the world in addition to massive untapped natural gas fields.

### SOCIAL JUSTICE IS FOR THE BIRDS

Literally. The American Ornithological Society is taking the fight to a new frontier, giving hope to the untold millions long oppressed by the names of birds. By ridding our feathered friends of offensive monikers they hope to restore the joy of bird-watching to a more diverse community. In English, all birds bearing the names of people will be changed. Bird species are often called by the name of the individual who first identified them. By changing them all, the Society is avoiding debating names one at a time and passing judgment on the life of everyone who ever named a bird. A

biologist on the name-changing committee responsible for the decision is reported by NPR as saying, “They’re important for the people who watch birds and the communities who may or may not feel very welcome, if all the birds are named after these old European ornithologists.”

### REMOVING GUARANTEES

During COVID, the UK government guaranteed emergency loans to sustain businesses through mandatory lockdowns. The grand total issued exceeded 30 billion pounds (£). The vast majority are still making payments. While 5 billion has been fully repaid, over 6 billion in bad loans have been made good by the government. Now the guarantee has been canceled for an additional 1 billion. Fraud is an issue, but lack of due diligence by lenders is the primary cause. Banks will be responsible for any losses that ensue. Other fallout from an overzealous embrace of emergency measures by private institutions includes Pfizer in the US. The return of over \$5 billion worth of unused products led to the company’s first quarterly loss in years.

### ANOTHER DAMAGED PIPELINE

The Baltconnector pipeline transports natural gas from Europe through Estonia to Finland. It was ruptured, and the damage was initially thought to be sabotage. Two different communications cables were also compromised. Investigators have attributed the damage to a large anchor, found broken underwater near the pipeline. A Chinese vessel, the NewNew Polar Bear, passed over all three. The Chinese government has vowed to cooperate



with the investigation, but it will be virtually impossible to establish if the damage was accidental or intentional. Baltconnector was Finland's only established means of importing natural gas, though it only accounts for 5% of electricity production.

### MICROPLASTICS

They are what they sound like, tiny bits of plastic. Where do they come from? Where *don't* they come from... Some even occur naturally. The industrial use of plastic revolutionized life in the 20th century. Consider its prevalence in all types of products, not to mention packaging, synthetic clothing, cosmetics, soaps, etc. Microplastics are a byproduct of production and a result of plastics breaking down over time.

They can now be detected almost anywhere it is possible to look. They are present in air, water, and soil samples; in the ice at both poles; even some clouds contain them. Recent studies have discovered them in every human tissue and 80% of blood samples. They were even discovered in breast milk for the first time. Potential health effects are unknown. Some studies are beginning to link high concentrations in humans and animals to neurological issues, metabolic disorders, subdued immune response and impaired reproduction. Plastics have been immeasurably beneficial to health and quality of life in other ways. They are practically irreplaceable, even if the downsides become prevalent or are fully substantiated.

### CATS AND DOGS

A police raid recently freed over 1000 felines in China. The animals were being transported for sale as meat, but disguised as pork or lamb. Eating cats and dogs is not widely popular in China (thus the subterfuge) but it is not illegal on the federal level either. Only certain cities have banned the practice, while the government has just recently restricted the sale of wild animals for consumption. Illicit substitutions are a problem however, as with the student who found a rat's head in a meal the university tried to claim was duck. In South Korea, dog has been a longstanding traditional dish. It has declined in popularity though, and the government

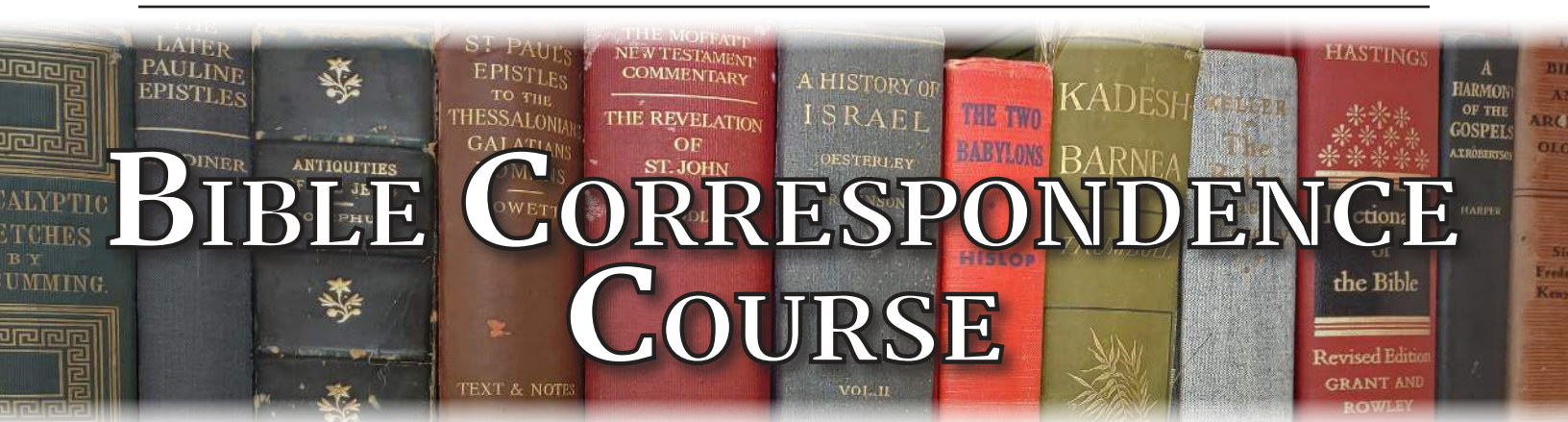
has recently banned it. There is a grace period for it to be phased out. Literally thousands of breeders, meat processing plants and restaurants are affected by the new law.

### POLAND'S FUTURE

Recent elections left the ruling Law and Justice party short of the majority needed to remain in power. While receiving the most votes, no other party will agree to enter a coalition with them. It is expected that Donald Tusk (formerly Prime Minister and also President of the European Council from 2014-2019) will end up as Prime Minister. This represents a major change. Tusk is consistently pro-EU, and many of the contentions of recent years will likely be dropped. The change may also cause a \$22 billion purchase of munitions from South Korea to fall apart. It will do nothing to smooth relations with Russia, however. Former President Medvedev is quoted as saying the deterioration of their relations, "could lead to the death of Polish statehood in its entirety."

### MITIGATING AI RISKS

The G7 agreed upon and issued guidelines in an attempt to make the development and deployment of artificial intelligence safer. It is in line with new legislation in the EU and an executive order in the US. The limitations are somewhat vague. The language includes phrases like "take appropriate measures," "mitigate vulnerabilities," and "work towards responsible information sharing." There is an obvious problem in trying to regulate a technology with unknown capabilities and applications. There are also widely differing schools of thought on how quickly the technology should progress and how accessible it should be. Such divisions are believed to factor in the drama over OpenAI CEO Sam Altman. He was fired only to be reinstated days later, with the board responsible for the decision being ousted instead. Some believe AI must be deployed to progress, and to find and correct errors. Others fear an uncontrollable scenario where it makes decisions and takes action without human input. How it is applied and what safeguards are in place could very well make the difference. □



# BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

## LESSON SIXTEEN: LAW OF GOD, PART THREE

*The law of God as revealed in the Bible is a good, right and perfect system of eternal directives and principles which reflects God's character and serves as a means of expressing His love toward man. God's law teaches man how to properly worship God, how to love his fellow man, how to live life abundantly, and, at the same time, how to prepare for an eternal spiritual life in the family of God. The law of God is represented in both the Old and the New Testaments and is expressed by both physical actions and spiritual motivations.*

### LAW IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The importance of law in the Old Testament is easily accepted even though its exact implications may be debated. It is the subject of God's law in the New Testament that has been much misunderstood. The question affects not only the totality of the Christian life but also how the New Testament — and its relationship with the Old Testament — is understood. It would be out of place in this section to attempt to take up the entire New Testament teachings on conversion, salvation, morality, conduct and so on. (Many of these points are discussed in detail under other major headings.) Here we will therefore concentrate on the background situation in New Testament times, the reason why certain new approaches to law are emphasized, and why some contrasts are made with the Old Testament position.

The New Testament is very much rooted in the Judaism of the time. The picture of Judaism in the first century is only now becoming clear as a result of recent scholarship, while many old assumptions (unfortunately widespread in many of the major reference works) are no longer tenable. The reconstruction of early first-century Judaism that emerges from new methods and documents is quite different from that of Judaism after the period 70-135 A.D.

The Judaism of New Testament times was rooted in the Old Testament. The Hebrew Bible was

the major traditional literature (even if read only in Greek translation, as it was by many in the Diaspora). The religious center was the Temple and its sacrificial system. There were also many different popular preachers and religious sects of diverse persuasions. However, actual membership in the sects was quite small. The vast majority of Jews were not members of any sect and were not overly scrupulous or religious in conduct. That is, despite a general piety which undoubtedly characterized most of them, they were too busy making a living to devote their time to sectarian taboos, religious harangues or denominational disputes.

This does not mean that certain of the sectarian leaders and teachers were not looked upon with a certain respect or that the temple worship was neglected. But the picture of a populace dominated by strictly observed Pharisaic rules of purity and halakah is not accurate. This is not to say that the Pharisees did not have considerable prestige or that they were without influence. On the other hand, there were only a few thousand Pharisees, and their rules and opinions were not dutifully followed by the people and were emphatically not followed by most of the temple priests.

Yet we must also keep in mind the previous centuries of Jewish history. The destruction of Jerusalem and the exile in 587 B.C. were very traumatic



experiences. With the return of the exiles, there was a determination not to repeat the original causes of that exile. One of the major causes was considered to be Sabbath-breaking (Neh. 13:16-18; Ezek. 20:24). In the centuries that followed, the Jewish faith had its ups and downs. The one episode which threatened to submerge Judaism entirely came in the middle of the second century B.C. The Seleucid king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, waged war against Judea, allying with the renegade Jews, defiling the temple and stopping the temple service.

At this time the Jews waged a long war to preserve their religion and autonomy. Although Jerusalem was retaken and the temple services restored after three years, the Maccabean state continued to fight with the Syrians for decades. The priesthood was combined with the political leadership in the Hasmonean (Maccabean) dynasty which ruled Judea for the next century. This autonomy came to an end in 63 B.C. when Rome intervened in civil strife resulting from rival claims to the high priesthood.

Nevertheless, under Roman rule, with the Herodian family as the major figure of political control, the Jewish state still maintained a considerable amount of freedom. Not only was worship not restricted but Herod the Great even began a lengthy process of beautification and restoration of the Temple. Objections to Rome were primarily of a political and not of a religious nature. The Jewish religion was a thriving concern. The main thing to remember is that Judaism was a pluralistic phenomenon of many differing aspects with the Temple as its focus; it was not a Pharisaic or rabbinic monopoly.

It was onto this stage that Jesus stepped — the stage on which He began His teachings. It was on this same stage that the early Church began. The apostle Paul concentrated his efforts in the Diaspora. The Jews in the Diaspora, despite some differences, seemed to cover the same basic religious spectrum as the Jews in Palestine. As a people and as a religion, the Jews and Judaism were very well known in the first century throughout the Roman Empire. This is borne out by many historians of the period. Preaching the gospel in the Gentile world meant building upon a Jewish, and hence Old Testament, foundation.

The New Testament teachings presume the Old Testament and the Judaism of that time. This is clear to anyone who studies the historical and cultural

background as well as the New Testament itself. Thus, what sometimes appears to be a radical statement about Judaism or the law or the Old Testament, is really either a spiritual modification or an amplification or both, rather than a rejection or repudiation of it. In other words, the New Testament writers — including Paul — did not reject the Old Testament or the law or even their Jewish background. They rejected a few things, they modified or changed the emphasis of many things, and they especially taught the newly revealed spiritual meanings involved. It is critical for a full understanding of God's law in the New Testament to realize that the apostles assumed a great deal as intuitively and publicly obvious, without seeing any need to discuss it specifically.

To take one example, perhaps the heart of the New Testament, we can look at the "Sermon on the Mount." Much within this vital section is not new; that is, it can be paralleled with sections in the Old Testament. The Old Testament law is presupposed: "Think not that I have come to abolish them but to fulfill them . . . Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great" (Matt. 5:17-20).

What is revolutionary about the "Sermon on the Mount" is its complete emphasis on matters of the heart rather than just on external practice. Here is the ultimate in the complete rejection of egotism; the highest form of absolute concern for others and for God. Many Old Testament commands are made more strict by becoming matters of the spirit: sexual desire, divorce, repayment for wrongs, swearing, murder and hate, to name some of the major ones. Jesus was making things harder, not easier. As the disciples said about the subject of divorce in another context, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is not expedient to marry." Jesus' answer was that, "Not all men can receive this precept, but only those to whom it is given" (Matt. 19:10-11).

Jesus was not doing away with the law; He was, rather, magnifying and lifting it to a spiritual plane, revealing its full spiritual intent. He was making it a matter of the spirit rather than only of the letter. He was showing the laws intent and purpose as opposed to its bare physical statement. The basic overall result was the introduction of a system of law which could

be kept only by means of the Holy Spirit. Old Testament law could be kept in the letter by any ordinary physical individual with character and self-discipline. New Testament law in its spiritual form could in no way be kept without divine help.

In the Old Testament, righteousness was primarily judged by what one did, by external conformity to the laws. This does not mean that there are not many statements about the attitude and intent of the heart and its importance — there are. But the emphasis is nonetheless on adherence to the letter of the law, something that was possible for the ordinary person. The New Testament goes much further, stating that external obedience is not enough. Despite all one's attempts, full service to the spiritual demands of the law is unattainable in the flesh. No one can be completely righteous without perfect obedience. Since this is impossible, no one is, by himself, righteous.

This view was, of course, quite contrary to the then current view of things. To persons such as the Pharisees who put great emphasis on their scrupulous observance of their own ritual laws of purity, it was rather galling to be told that their faithful

practice was so much dung (cf Phil. 3:8). Paul is not castigating obedience; he is not denigrating the Old Testament law. Rather, he is showing that the real source of forgiveness and salvation is Jesus Christ. That His sacrifice for our sins and His resurrection are the really important things, as opposed to the less important do's and don'ts of the law.

Paul is often misunderstood in this regard simply because his teachings are not understood against their background. He himself strictly conformed even to what were considered ritual observances (Acts 16:3; 18:18; 21:17-26). On the other hand, some things which are often relegated to the level of ritual were not ritual but essential parts of worship which Paul observed and taught (such as the Sabbath and the Annual Holy Days).

Furthermore, Paul was teaching not just Jews but Gentiles. The Old Testament promises were purely physical, made to a physical Israel that did not understand the spiritual intent of circumcision, even though Old Testament writings speak of an inward circumcision not of the flesh (Jer. 4:4; Deut. 30:6; Joel 2:13). The requirement of physical circumcision



**Painting by Raphael, 1515, *Saint Paul Preaching In Athens*.**



for males was a major problem in the early Church, with the decision being made that such circumcision was not for the Gentiles. The message Paul took to the Gentiles was that they no longer needed to become Jews outwardly, in the flesh through circumcision, to gain salvation. Membership in the Israel of God was a matter of the heart.

Paul's epistle to the Romans is replete with vigorous statements in full support of the law. The law is not void by faith, but fully established (Rom. 3:31). Christians are admonished not to continue in sin (Rom. 6:1-2), but to become "servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:18). The law is good (Rom. 7:7), it is spiritual (Rom. 7:14), and "holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom. 12:7). The carnal mind that leads to death (Rom. 6:23; 8:6) is defined as being "enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God" (Rom. 8:7).

Paul's statements in Romans 2:25-27, while often quoted, have been somewhat neglected as a powerful affirmation of the fact that Gentiles need to be lawkeepers. In this passage Paul is showing that the issue of circumcision is irrelevant for the Christian, in contradistinction to the issue of keeping "the righteousness of the law" which is extremely relevant. If the uncircumcised Gentiles fulfill the law, they are immeasurably superior to circumcised Jews who transgress the law. So a Gentile in the Church who keeps the law becomes a true Jew inwardly, because he is fulfilling what God wanted all along. The condition is to keep God's law. Paul's use of the term "law" cannot mean the entire Sinaitic covenant, since circumcision itself was a part of that covenant and therefore it would be logically impossible for an uncircumcised person to keep the "whole" law. Paul must be referring to the moral law, the Ten Commandments, in Romans 2:25-27.

Paul knew that some would conclude that, because he continually stressed that salvation cannot be earned by law-keeping, the law was annulled or worthless. "Do we then void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Rom. 3:31). This is important because, if the law were done away or became invalid, then sin would be dead (Rom. 7:8), no transgression would exist (Rom. 4:15), and God could not impute sin to make the sacrifice of Christ meaningful. "The strength of sin is the law" (I Cor. 15:56): the law is the standard of what sin and

what righteousness are. If that standard is removed, there is no need for Christ. So by accepting Jesus, the true Christian is indeed establishing the law, by admitting its full empowerment in condemning him (Rom. 6:23). As a result, the true Christian, with the help of the Holy Spirit, can fulfill the righteousness of the law (Rom. 8:4) and with Paul shall "delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom. 7:22).

The book of Galatians is often used as support in an attempt to do away with God's law. This is not the issue dealt with in the epistle at all. The focal point of Paul's letter to the Galatians does not deal with the abrogation of the law but rather with the question of how one is justified. Justification means forgiveness for past sins — being counted as just and pure through Jesus' blood. That is what Paul is dealing with. In other words, there are two systems. One began with the covenant at Sinai. The other is the system of faith in Christ. The one system, of relying on the fact that you are circumcised, etc. for justification does not lead to eternal life. Paul shows that this only condemns — brings bondage — because no provision exists for real forgiveness and pardon for sin. So the system of the first covenant will not save anyone. Some were denying that to the Galatian Church. They were looking to their physical adherence to the way of life of the Sinaitic covenant, especially to circumcision, to earn salvation.

But the question was not whether Gentiles could covet, or kill, or steal, or break the Sabbath. Rather, the question was whether a Gentile had to be physically circumcised (Gal. 2:3-4). Paul categorically denied this. Galatians 2:14 portrays the problem further: the Jews were even practicing racial discrimination for religious reasons. They felt superior to their Gentile brethren because they were physically a part of the heritage of Israel. But Paul showed in Romans that this should only have made them see their sins more, since they knew God's law so well. So the question has to do with circumcision and the manner or customs that one follows.

Why, then, is Paul so upset over this? Because carried to their logical conclusion these requirements would mean that Jesus' death was not necessary. If being a Jew could save a man, if being physically circumcised could bring favor with God, then Christ died in vain. It would mean that just having the law would be enough. But having the law — having the

whole system of the Sinaitic covenant — was not enough to attain eternal life; in fact, it only pointed out sin more and more. To rely fully on the law, one would have to keep all of it perfectly, which is impossible. So when Paul uses “law” in Galatians he means all that is involved in being a Jew; the whole system of the Sinaitic covenant, especially the ceremonies and rituals which were “added because of transgressions” until Christ should come (Gal. 3:19), and he specifically singles out circumcision as an issue.

Justification must be by faith (Gal. 3:11) and the law of the Sinaitic covenant was given not to save us, but as a schoolmaster or “pedagogue,” to teach us the meaning of obedience, to bring us to Christ.

This, then, is the core of Galatians. Much of Paul’s reasoning is the same in Romans as in Galatians. But in Romans, Paul is dealing with moral law — sin and grace — whereas in Galatians, the problem is circumcision and understanding the place of the Sinaitic covenant, the whole system called “law.” But the same conclusions are arrived at by complementary arguments.

In Romans, Paul uses as an example the law of God concerning coveting (Rom. 7:7ff). Why cannot that law save us? Because it only emphasizes the sin. If we rely on works of the law — our keeping of this law — we will fail. We are sinners and have all coveted. The only solution is justification by faith. But after justification we must keep the law through God’s Spirit. The law is holy, just and good; it is spiritual and eternal.

In Galatians, Paul deals with the law of circumcision. We cannot be saved by being circumcised, because if we go to that whole system of which circumcision is a part for salvation we receive no grace or pardon, only condemnation. We cannot, with our natural human strength, keep the law (i.e., the Ten Commandments. We can keep circumcision; it is painful, but possible). So the only solution is again Jesus and justification by faith. What about after justification? Are we then to follow circumcision and the system of the Sinaitic covenant? No, that would be to deny Jesus and our need for Him.

Once again, the reasoning in Romans and Galatians is basically the same, but the issues are different. The first is universal: the question of sin and morality. The second is the question of the historical

place of the Sinai covenant in God’s plan. Remember that the Ten Commandments did not originate with the Sinaitic covenant but with God at Creation and since. So they are not affected when the covenant is changed. They are universal and tell us what sin is.

Ephesians 6:1-3 is a very significant statement concerning the position of the Ten Commandments in the Gentile churches. Here, the fifth one is cited. Notice the comment in verse 2. It is “the first commandment with promise.” Not just that it was, it still is. And what does Paul mean by “the first”? He is obviously referring to a set of commandments — a group of them. And they still apply. This simple statement by Paul gives us an important insight into the attitude of the Gentile churches towards the Ten Commandments. He does not have to introduce them or say that, “Honor your father and mother” was once a commandment with promise, for it is a commandment at this time.

If Gentile Christians were indeed taught to honor and keep the Ten Commandments, why, then, does Paul make certain mitigating comments about “law”? The answer is rooted in the historical reality that Christianity at this time was viewed as a Jewish sect in the general public opinion. And therefore, much of what has been taken as a castigation of the Old Testament law in the New Testament is actually an antidote to the idea that Gentiles had to become Jewish Proselytes before they could become Christians. This idea probably gained credence simply because Gentile Christians were taught and read their Old Testament, and various proselytizing Jewish groups were spreading the message that Gentiles had to follow the whole system of first-century Judaism in order to partake of the salvation offered by the God of Israel. Certainly to Gentiles who had never heretofore been taught the Holy Scriptures, apostolic Christianity and contemporary Judaism must have seemed extremely similar (much as Methodism and Seventh-Day Adventism might seem similar to a Buddhist today). Paul therefore had to take great pains to show how Christianity differed from Judaism. He had to do this because the two religions clearly had so much in common.

Nearly everybody knew what Judaism and the Old Testament taught. The Sabbath and annual Holy Days, for example, were commonly known. What Paul had to do was not reemphasize the Old



Testament laws already known, but rather teach the new revelations about Jesus Christ and His spiritual magnification of the law that nobody knew.

No attempt was made by the New Testament writers to repeat everything of relevance in the Old Testament. To have done so would have made the Old Testament redundant. It would also have been utterly ridiculous, since the Old Testament was commonly presupposed to be inspired Scripture, the Word of God. It was the only Scripture then in existence.

Converts from paganism were, of course, tempted to revert to the religious culture from which they had come. They were influenced by various popular religions, syncretistic cults and astrological clans. But the contrast between Christianity and paganism was fairly clear. What was not so clear was the difference between Judaism and Christianity. Thus, even though Paul has to fight the influences of paganism and the contemporary culture, he seems to have found many problems from the Jewish side as well.

When this is understood, most of the presumed antinomian, anti-Jewish and anti-Old Testament sentiment in Paul's writings evaporates. Despite some differences because of his specific mission to the Gentiles, Paul suddenly looks a great deal like James and Peter and John in teaching what Jesus taught. Paul was no longer a Pharisee, but he remained a faithful Jew as well as becoming a Christian.

The book of James has been a perennial problem for those who would have the New Testament discard God's law. James calls the law of God "the royal law" in 2:8. He quotes Leviticus 19:18: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," which is the epitome of the last six of the Ten Commandments (Rom. 13:9-10). James goes on to show that if you break one point of the law — meaning any one of the Ten Commandments — you are guilty of all (James 2:10-11). God's law is at the same time the "law of liberty" (2:12), since it frees man from the bondage of sin.

But it is the last half of the second chapter of James, verses 14 to 26, that gives antinomian Christians their biggest problem. James repeatedly emphasizes that "faith without works is dead" (vv. 17, 20, 26), that the best way to show real faith is by works (v. 18), that by works faith is made perfect (v. 22), and "that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (v. 24). James 4:11-12 is a proper conclusion

to this theme, putting the question directly to any who would do away with God's law: "if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge."

In the epistles of John, the subject of keeping the commandments comes up several times. I John 2:4 is direct: "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him." I John 3:4 is powerful in its blunt assertion that, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." Likewise, John 15:10 (cf. I John 3:22-24), where Jesus tells His disciples before His death to keep His commandments as He had kept His Father's commandments.

Certainly these commandments included all of Christ's commandments, but the expression clearly includes the only set of commandments, the Ten Commandments. Compare Matthew 19:16-19 in this context. Here Jesus tells a rich young man, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." The young man asks, "Which?" And Jesus responds by enumerating five of the Ten Commandments.

The necessity to keep God's commandments is reemphasized in the book of Revelation. The Church — "the rest of [the woman's] offspring" — is identified as keeping the commandments of God in 12:17. The saints are defined as those "who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" in 14:12. And finally, those who shall be in the incomprehensibly awesome new heaven and new earth of chapter 21 shall be only those who "do His commandments."

All the New Testament writers presuppose the Old Testament and often quote or allude to it. It was decades after the founding of the Church before Holy Scripture comprised more than the Old Testament. Furthermore, since Jesus Christ was the very personality who had given His law to humanity in general and to Israel in particular at Sinai. He would scarcely have discarded (and He did not discard) in the New Testament the very law He had established in the Old.

The Old Testament is an essential part of the biblical canon. It is as much the Word of God as the New Testament. However, to New Testament Christians, the Old Testament has a special status in that it is not to be taken alone: it must be read in the light of the New Testament. ■

**SUMMARY: Read these scriptures in your own Bible:**

- 1 Corinthians 15:56 - The strength of sin is the law.
- 1 John 2:4 - He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him.
- 1 John 3:4 - Sin is the transgression of the law.
- Ephesians 6:1-3 - Paul tells the Gentiles to keep the commandments.
- Isaiah 42:21 - ...the Lord will magnify the law and make it honorable.
- James 2
- John 15:10 - Jesus tells the disciples to keep the commandments as He did.
- Luke 24:44 - Jesus accepts the authenticity and inspiration of the entire Old Testament including the Law.
- Matthew 19:16-19 - Jesus tells a rich man to keep commandments.
- Matthew 22:36-40 - The two commandments on which all the law and prophets hang.
- Matthew 4:4 - Man shall live by every word of God.
- Matthew 5:17-20 - Think not that I (Jesus) came to destroy the law.
- Psalm 119:97-99 - Meditate on the law.
- Revelation 12:17 - Church identified as keeping commandments.
- Revelation 14:12 - Saints defined as those keeping commandments.
- Revelation 14:21 - Those in new heaven and new earth will be those who keep the commandments.
- Romans 2:25-27 - Paul referring to the moral law, the 10 commandments.

**QUESTIONS (ANSWERS BELOW):**

1) Divine law is the totality of the means or way by which God instructs man on how to live most abundantly in this physical life. True or False?

2) New Testament writers express a [positive, neutral, negative] attitude towards God's law.

3) According to 1 John 2:4 a person who says, "I know Him," and keeps not His commandments is a \_\_\_\_ [what?].

4) The New Testament teachings presume knowledge of the Old Testament and the Judaism of the time. True or False?

5) It is critical for a full understanding of God's law in the New Testament to realize that the apostles assumed that a great deal of the law and the Old Testament was publicly obvious, and therefore saw no need to repeat it all in the New Testament. True or False?

6) Jesus was...

- a) not doing away with the law
- b) was magnifying and lifting it to a spiritual plane
- c) making it a matter of the spirit rather than just the letter
- d) was showing the law's intent and purpose
- e) introducing a system of law which could be kept only by the Holy Spirit
- f) all of the above

7) No one can be completely righteous without perfect obedience. Since this is impossible, no one is, by himself, righteous. True or False?

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- 8) Paul...
- a) never spoke of the law
  - b) was in full support of keeping the law
  - c) preached the law done away
- 9) If there is no law, there is no need of Christ. True or False?
- 10) The Law is...
- a) Holy
  - b) just
  - c) good
  - d) spiritual
  - e) eternal
  - f) all of the above
- 11) The 10 Commandments originated with the Sinaitic covenant. True or False?
- 12) In Ephesians 6, Paul tells the Gentiles to keep the 10 commandments. True or False?
- 13) Faith without works (of faith) is dead. True or False?
- 14) The book of Revelation never mentions the keeping of the 10 Commandments. True or False?
- 15) Since it was Jesus Christ who established the law in the Old Testament, He would never have discarded it in the New Testament church. True or False?
- 16) The Old Testament is an essential part of the biblical canon. True or False?

#### LESSON SIXTEEN — ANSWERS:

- |             |             |           |               |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| 16. (True)  | 12. (True)  | 8. (b)    | 4. (True)     |
| 15. (True)  | 11. (False) | 7. (True) | 3. (True)     |
| 14. (False) | 10. (f)     | 6. (f)    | 2. (positive) |
| 13. (True)  | 9. (True)   | 5. (True) | 1. (True)     |

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