

**RUSSIA
AND CHINA**



**IN
PROPHECY**

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and CHINA
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America's status as the world's lone
superpower is rapidly fading.

Other nations and groups of nations are
angling to fill the void.

Rising in the East is an emerging power bloc
of tremendous potential—in manpower,
economic heft and military might.
Its growing presence is intensifying
global competition for resources and
for geopolitical influence.

Where will this trend lead? You can know!
Biblical prophecy provides a remarkable,
penetrating preview of Asia's future!

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Chapter 1

The Emerging Asian Superpower

IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS, THERE WILL BE A STAGGERING TURN IN world events! A giant Asian superpower, with a modernized Russia and China at the helm, will dramatically affect the course of history. This emerging power bloc—a conglomerate of peoples which comprise one fourth of the world's population—will be deeply involved in the tumultuous tide of events that will lead to the conclusion of mankind's 6,000 years of self-rule!

How can we know this?

In Matthew 24 and Luke 21, Jesus Christ described the key events leading to His return. Many other passages add critical details. Russia, China and their Asian allies are prophesied to be heavily involved in these climactic end-time events.

BIBLICAL IDENTITY OF ASIAN NATIONS

After the Flood, God told Noah and his family to go and replenish the Earth (Genesis 8:15-18). Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. Each son was the beginning of a separate race. Shem was the father of the white race; Ham the father of the black; and Japheth, the yellow race. Herbert W. Armstrong explained in *Mystery of the Ages* that Japheth evidently married an Oriental woman, and Ham a black.

Genesis 10:2-3 list the sons of Japheth: "... Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah."

In his book *Compendium of World History*, Dr. Herman Hoeh correctly identified Meshech and Tubal as fathers of those who comprise greater Russia today. Magog fathered the people of China and Mongolia. Gomer fathered the Japanese people as well as the Cambodians, Thais, Burmese, Laos and Vietnamese.

Greek historian Herodotus wrote that the descendants of Noah's grandson Cush split into two branches: a dark-skinned, curly-haired branch that migrated to Africa and a dark-skinned, straight-haired branch that migrated to India. This group of people later intermarried with Aryan settlers from Persia, producing the brown coloration of the Indian peoples today (Herman Hoeh, "The Truth About the Race Question," *Plain Truth*, July 1957).

Mr. Armstrong concurred with Dr. Hoeh's research. He said, "There is general agreement among students of prophecy that 'Gog' in the land of 'Magog' is the vast regions of northern Eurasia extending from the Baltic to the Pacific. 'Meshech' is Moscow, 'Tubal' is Tobolsk. The Bible margin says 'Prince of Rosh,' which is Russia" (*Plain Truth*, April 1981).

These identities are critical for us to understand where modern nations fit in biblical prophecy.

At the same time, understanding the history of these peoples will help us identify certain character traits that resurface even in modern times.

HISTORY OF RUSSIA AND CHINA

History between Russia and China reveals a relationship vacillating between cooperation and conflict.

Oriental influence in Russia came with the advance of the Tartar Mongol horsemen. Under Genghis Khan and his successors, the Mongols had, by A.D. 1250, established the Golden Horde Empire extending across China, much of Central Asia and Russia.

By 1368, the empire had collapsed. Mongolia came under Chinese domination, ruled by the Ming Dynasty. It was not until 1480 that Ivan the Great finally ended Moscow's subjection to the Mongols.

Following the Middle Ages, the first Russian settlers reached the sparsely populated areas north of the Amur River

in what is now far eastern Russia. Although the Chinese Empire claimed this territory, it never effectively controlled it. Three hundred years of border clashes between Russia and China ensued. Sporadic fighting continued until 1689, when the Treaty of Nerchinsk defined the border well north of the Amur River.

Conflict reignited in 1870, when an imperialistic Russia seized the Chinese border province of Ili. With China weakened by the various opium wars of the 19th century, Russia was able to force the Chinese to sign the Treaty of Aigun, ceding to Russia everything north of Amur plus a large slice of land east of the Ussuri. This established today's frontiers.

After the Russian Civil War (1918-22), the Chinese were driven out of Outer Mongolia. The Mongolian People's Republic was established in 1924, closely tied to the Soviet Union.

For some time after World War I, Marxism gained popularity in China, culminating in the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921. With the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Chinese government under Mao Tse-tung modeled its political structures on those of the Soviet Union. This attracted Soviet loans and boosted growth in the Chinese economy.

After Mao signed a mutual defense treaty with the Kremlin in February 1950, he declared that the Chinese-Soviet friendship would be "everlasting, indestructible and inalienable." Within 15 years, however, this friendship dissolved and tensions deepened.

Mao launched his disastrous Great Leap Forward in 1958. When it failed two years later, Russia openly criticized Mao and cut off military aid to China. By 1968, following the failed ideological initiative of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," China had descended into anarchy. The government, fearing a Soviet invasion, called in the army to restore order. By then China had drifted far from Soviet Russia both philosophically and strategically.

Clashes erupted on China's eastern border with Russia in 1969. Emergency talks between premiers Alexei Kosygin and Zhou Enlai in September that year curbed hostilities, and formal demarcation talks commenced.

In 1971, China gained membership in the United Nations, raising its status as a major world political power.

The histories of these two great powers show a record spotted with tension and battle. Strategically, Russia has needed to remove the possibility of a war on two fronts: Europe and China. The Russians have seen in China a nation capable of amassing an army of unheard-of proportions.

China has also had much to fear in Russia. Though the Russians wouldn't be able to field as many soldiers, they have a sizable stockpile of superior weapons. Many observers have speculated that the Russians would have long ago launched a preemptive strike, conventional or nuclear, against China to destroy its weapons-making capability if not for the U.S. and other Western powers threatening retaliation. So the Chinese have made great efforts to match the military might of the Russians.

Throughout the Cold War, Russia and China played their usual game of cat and mouse. At the same time, however, another factor existed that would have the opposite effect: to draw these two great nations together into cooperation.

This is where biblical prophecy enters the picture in a most intriguing way.

THE SPREAD OF COMMUNISM

For decades, both Russia and China have had their eyes fixed on conquering Middle Asia, Indochina and Southeast Asia. Their ultimate goal, said Mr. Armstrong, is not just frontier expansion, but *global control*.

Reality dictates that achieving such a goal is only possible if these two countries cooperate.

The December 1959 *Plain Truth* revealed some of these Communist plans—including Russia and China's goal to *form a coalition*: "Russia's program is not to take Europe and to attack the United States, first. *The Communist program, which our leaders should know, calls first for the seizure of Asia.* Lenin wrote that the way to Paris, London and New York is via [Beijing] and Delhi! ...

"[P]art of the Communist plan [is] to place India and Pakistan in a giant vice between Russia and China. ...

“Red China insists it has a legal right not only to Tibet but to many parts of India and Southeast Asia. ... [The Mongols and Chinese] constant dream for centuries has been ultimate world conquest! ... *China knows, however, that in this highly industrialized age she can accomplish this dream only as an ally of Russia.* ...

“China is now ready to begin devouring the rest of Asia with Russia’s secret military backing. The plans were laid bare in [the Korean War]. China, not Russia, intervened in Korea. Korea became divided. China, not Russia, launched attacks in Indochina and seized control of North Vietnam. Vietnam became divided. Next, the Chinese Communists took over all Tibet. From Tibet the Chinese plan conquest of India by dividing her and devouring her a piece at a time! ...

“[T]he Communist Party will ultimately control not only the Russian states, but China ... and India as well!” (emphasis added throughout).

Remember, that was written in 1959. It was the thick of the Cold War, and *communism* was thought to be the factor that would unite this Eastern bloc. History appears to have since largely left that political and economic theory behind. But the forecast of a Russia-China alliance that would come to envelop the rest of Asia remains as viable today as it was half a century ago! That’s because what informed those remarkable statements, in addition to the histories of these nations, were the *biblical prophecies* about Asia that we will examine in this booklet.

The *Plain Truth* did forecast some geopolitical changes that, at present, yet remain unfulfilled. But based on prophecy, it warned—even while the U.S. stood at the pinnacle of world power—of America’s impending international setbacks in Vietnam. Notice this from the November 1961 issue: “Having advanced virtually to the brink of another ‘Korea-type’ war over Laos, the United States would almost certainly have to fight a major battle in either Thailand or South Vietnam ...”

In May 1968—seven years before the unconditional surrender of South Vietnam to communism—the *Plain Truth* stated, “Bible prophecy reveals that not even America, with all of her nuclear muscle, can prevent Southeast Asia from eventually being overrun by communism”—or, more accurately, from being drawn into a Chinese-Russian-dominated geopolitical bloc.

China, with the USSR's help, continued to push into middle and Southeast Asia throughout the 1960s. In December 1962, the *Plain Truth* reported on the Chinese-Indian border conflict: "[The Soviets are] supplying the Chinese with technical know-how and letting China's 600 million people gobble up the rest of Asia! ... It is part of their propaganda that these areas once were under Chinese control."

The article also said, "A cunning two-point Red thrust has again caught the West off guard. While Soviet Russia was secretly establishing a missile beachhead in Cuba, the Red Chinese were assembling immense supplies, 100,000 men and heavy armor for an attack on India.

"Red Chinese have already captured more than 50,000 square miles of Indian territory. ...

"Almost no one, it seems, is aware that India is far more important to Communist leaders than is Cuba. Cuba is an extra prize which the Communists chanced upon. But the NEXT BIG GOAL in Communist thinking is India. ...

"The petty jealousies between Moscow and [Beijing] are not deterring either from their joint goal: world conquest.

"This is all part of the great Communist plan enunciated by Lenin 30 years ago."

The *Plain Truth* continued to track the Sino-Russian affinity throughout the next several years. In July 1966, it made this startling prediction: "India knows Red China is completing massive troop buildups on the Indian border. India knows Red China has the atomic bomb, and possibly the HYDROGEN bomb. That means, in the most urgent considerations of national security, *India must have the bomb!* Purely as a DEFENSIVE measure against Red China, of course.

"But then there's Pakistan! ... [Pakistan is] born of violent hatreds between Hindu and Muslim. *Should India build the bombs, Pakistanis would turn in desperation to the big powers—they would be forced to obtain nuclear weapons!*"

By 1998, this forecast came to pass: Both India and Pakistan had tested nuclear bombs, abruptly pronouncing themselves members of the exclusive nuclear club.

In addition to pushing into Middle Asia, China would attempt to pull some of its island neighbors into its grip. On this issue, Western leaders have tried to appease China

through various “peace talks,” generally to no avail. The very non-politically correct *Plain Truth* of the 1960s didn’t mince words regarding this problem. “The Asiatic mind is totally *different* from the occidental [Western] mind. It doesn’t *reason* in the same manner. Try though we may to delude ourselves into believing our dollars, trade missions, military advisers and arms shipments, our hospital ships, our missions, our food supplies are helping stem the tide of the advancing threat of communism in these Eastern nations—we are *failing!*”

“These simple peoples *are impressed with strength, not talk*. They feel a much closer *kinship* with other peoples of the Asian sphere than they do with the far-away ‘Yankees’ with customs, languages and religions so totally different from their own” (November 1961).

Yes, eventually the forces pushing Russia and China apart would be overwhelmed by forces driving them into each other’s arms.

Just as the *Plain Truth* said would happen—based on the prophecies of the Bible.

IMPROVING RELATIONSHIP

Following the Cold War, Russia and China found themselves isolated and in need of cooperation if they were to survive. Economic and political unions forming between the Americas, a newly united Europe and other such cooperative efforts necessitated the Russians and Chinese forging a positive relationship.

Even before the collapse of the Soviet empire, in 1989 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev visited China to repair ties and revitalize dialogue on the demarcation disputes that were still mired in 17th-century detail. In 1991, Russia and China signed a border agreement, beginning a practical demarcation process. In April 1997, China and Russia—along with former Soviet republics Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan—signed an accord in Moscow on troop reduction and security-building measures along the 4,700-mile border between China and the former Soviet Union.

As a clear sign of surging cooperation between their two countries, Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Chinese President Jiang Zemin signed a declaration in November 1997

ending disputes over the implementation of the 1991 accord. This seemed to confirm that Russia and China, long vacillating between a historic relationship as friend and foe, were entering a new era of cooperation in strategic partnership to counter the perceived dominance of Western military and economic power.

Another significant effort at unifying was a 1998 joint venture to design and build a nuclear power plant in China.

Sino-Russian relations further improved under the leadership of Yeltsin's successor, Vladimir Putin. In July of 2001, Russia and China signed a "friendship cooperation" treaty. The two nations held joint military exercises in 2005 and have staged many rounds of joint military drills of all kinds in the years since then. Many regarded these exercises, organized by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, as the symbolic emergence of a *military bloc* that could eventually rival NATO.

Other economic and military treaties have improved trust and cooperation. Both nations are reaping the benefits, realizing their very existence depends on good relations with each other.

THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE

Sino-Russian relations have evolved out of common interests. Both share common defense concerns, which include radical Islam in and around Central Asia, expanding Western power in NATO, and the prospect of taking advantage of a weakening U.S.

Trade between Russia and China blossomed in the early 1990s. In 2000, \$8 billion in annual transactions took place between the two. By 2008, Russian-Chinese trade had leaped to an astounding \$56.8 billion. China is now Russia's largest trading partner. In fact, because economic partnerships have proven to be mutually beneficial, the prospect of filling *other* needs is bringing Russia and China even closer together—especially with respect to energy supplies. Of all nations, Russia is uniquely able and willing to provide the secure source of energy needed to power China's rapid industrial and economic growth. Russia has the oil, natural gas, uranium and nuclear technology needed to provide power for the billion inhabitants of Earth's most populous country.

There appears to be no alternative for these great powers. Both share common philosophies economically, politically and

militarily—and both have a common enemy in the West.

The way that China, for decades, counterbalanced Russia's presence in Asia benefited the United States geopolitically. But that equation is changing as Russia and China reach a military alliance!

The *Intelligence Digest* of May 3, 1996, reported, "For China, a good relationship with Russia gives it another card to play against the United States, with which relations are very poor at the moment. Russia is also China's best hope of closing the gap in military technology with the United States, which has been a principal objective of Beijing's ever since the revelations of the Gulf War." With Russia's help, China is rapidly closing that gap. Post-Soviet Russia has supplied more than 90 percent of China's weapons imports, including advanced destroyers, nuclear submarines, and fighter aircraft technology. Russia is also assisting China in the construction of aircraft carriers. In January 2000, China's defense minister, Chi Haotian, visited Moscow to solidify the Chinese-Russian military alliance. Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeev said military relations between the two nations were "intensively expanding." The relationship continued to expand when the newly elected Chinese President Hu Jintao chose in 2003 to call on Russia for his first foreign visit. In 2008, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev reciprocated by making China his first foreign port of call.

Meanwhile, America's relations with both Russia and China have notably deteriorated.

In fact, for some years now, several nations, including these two Asian giants, have shaped their foreign policy largely around a desire to contain American power. Russian strategic bombers have once again taken to the skies to challenge U.S. airspace, and Russian pilots taunt U.S. interceptors off the coast of Alaska. Russia's navy has also extended its tentacles into waters generally considered America's backyard. The nuclear-powered cruiser Peter the Great and the submarine destroyer Admiral Chabanenko conducted war games in the Caribbean with the Venezuelan Navy in 2008—Russia's first venture into the Caribbean since the end of the Cold War. In August 2009, two Russian attack submarines were sighted off America's East Coast, apparently the first such sighting for 15 years.

In the Pacific, conditions have been just as tense. In 2007, an undetected Chinese submarine surfaced inside a U.S. convoy formation and within easy torpedo range of the USS Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier that the convoy was protecting. Other incidents, including collisions between U.S. and Chinese naval vessels, have become increasingly common as China has adopted a more confrontational approach with its growing naval strength.

In 2001, after a couple of high-profile incidents that saw the U.S. expel Russian diplomats and the Chinese intercept an American spy plane, U.S. intelligence firm Stratfor noted, “This period will be remembered as the end of the post-Cold War period, and the beginning of a new era in international relations. ... *At stake is the international system’s composition*” (April 10, 2001).

These are huge stakes—global stakes! It is about the composition of the international system that governs world business and communications, and economic, social, political and military interaction. And the deterioration of relations between the U.S. and both Beijing and Moscow has contributed to shaping a new set of global alliances.

It is evident that both Russian and Chinese officials are working to form a new alliance and counter American dominance of world affairs. Russian diplomats want to create a multipolar world, and they know that the most expedient way to do so is to cement relations with their closest neighbor to the south.

Chapter 2

Russia Frightens Europe—and Fulfills Bible Prophecy

FOR OVER A DECADE AFTER THE FALL OF THE SOVIET UNION IN 1991, Russia was outside the mainstream of world affairs. But under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, who was elected president in 2000, things have changed radically.

Putin has called the Soviet Union's collapse the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe" of the 20th century. He has dedicated himself to reversing that "catastrophe" and restoring Russia to what he sees as its rightful position as a formidable world power.

He has already been very successful—and he isn't finished.

Russia's return to great-power status has tremendous prophetic importance. Not only because of the role Russia is prophesied to fulfill in world affairs, but also because its aggressive actions are provoking alarm and urgency within *Europe*—and that is the power that we *really* must watch!

The Europeans still remember how violent Russia was in World War II, and Russia is a close neighbor with massive piles of nuclear weapons.

Russia's bold moves are triggering a fear that will hasten the uniting of the European Union. This fear will cause Germany and other European nations to want stronger leadership.

Throughout history, Germany has often sought a strong leader. Bible prophecy says it will do so again—for the last time!

These events are about a rapidly approaching World War III. You can prove this for yourself by writing for our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*.

POLITICAL EARTHQUAKE

In parliamentary elections in 2003, President Putin cemented control over Russia in a way that recalled that nation's authoritarian history. We should remember that Mr. Putin was shaped and molded by the infamous KGB—the ruthless, murderous secret service arm of the Russian government made famous by Joseph Stalin.

Clearly, Putin had used his presidential powers to manipulate the process to ensure a victory for his United Russia party. His strong-arm moves struck intense fear in Europe.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) complained that the elections “did not meet international standards” and represented a “regression in the democratization of this country.” Stratfor wrote, “What bothers the OSCE is less the hardball campaign tactics than the size of Putin’s win. Putin has nearly a two-thirds majority in both chambers of parliament. The liberal parties have been devastated. ... The shape of Russian politics is shifting as anti-authoritarian parties disappear. Increasingly, the choice is between mild or hard *authoritarianism*” (Dec. 9, 2003; emphasis added throughout).

The *Wall Street Journal* reported how the election expanded Putin’s power. “What the elections foretell is a compliant Duma [lower house of parliament] implementing the agenda of an essentially liberal government, albeit one that wants more control of its single most strategic asset, oil. ... This means that if Mr. Putin wants to take Russia in the direction of dictatorship (or, as fashionable jargon has it, toward ‘managed democracy’) the Duma could speed him on his way” (Dec. 9, 2003).

Russia’s “single most strategic asset” is oil. From the beginning, Mr. Putin has sought to control that asset, no matter how much Western powers thundered in protest. The soaring

price of oil from 2003 through 2008 thrust Russia back on the world stage as a dominant power.

Just before the 2003 election, the Russian government arrested the country's richest man, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, CEO of the country's largest oil company, Yukos. That move eventually led to Yukos declaring bankruptcy and the government purchasing the private company at a firesale price (experts called it "scandalous," "daylight robbery"). These events dramatically increased the Putin government's control over Russia's oil.

By taking such control over Russia's vast oil and gas resources, Putin gained considerable global influence. Russia is the second-largest oil supplier in the world, and with global demand for oil increasing even as oil supplies are dwindling, Putin has a lot of leverage over other nations.

Jane's intelligence firm wrote shortly after the Khodorkovsky arrest, "[I]t is becoming clear that Russia is undergoing a *profound political convulsion*. This amounts to NOTHING LESS THAN THE BIRTH OF THE SECOND RUSSIAN REPUBLIC.... The new republic will continue to be a mixture of market and state-controlled economic forces. But it will be a country in which President Vladimir Putin controls both the political and economic levers of power. The Russian president has *staged his own coup*" (Nov. 5, 2003).

Those were very accurate statements! This article called Putin's moves "the birth of the Second Russian Republic"! A new Russia has been born. Mr. Putin "staged his own coup"! He took over this new Russia. Now the world has another major reason to tremble! Russia is indeed "undergoing a profound political convulsion"—one that will convulse Europe and many other nations!

Notice more of what Stratfor wrote after the 2003 election: "[T]hat is why the OSCE is getting *nervous*.... Putin is, first and last, a Russian nationalist, utterly pragmatic (or ruthless) in the tools he will use to strengthen the Russian state. He has greater power now than anyone in Russia since the collapse of communism. He can reshape the regime. Consequently, the OSCE and Europe are *nervous* about where Putin is taking Russia. They have every reason to be: Putin is slowly and systematically changing Russia's direction. When

Russia changes direction, the rest of Europe should indeed be *nervous*” (op. cit.).

Stratfor used the word *nervous* three times for special emphasis. Europe has not forgotten Russia’s recent dictatorial history. It is *nervous* for good reason. And it is going to get a lot more nervous in a few short years.

Europeans are not the only people who should be nervous. The whole world should be alarmed. Mr. Putin is changing the course of world history. And Bible prophecy reveals exactly where it is leading.

PIPELINE POWER

Vladimir Putin went on from the 2003 parliamentary election to amass more power both at home and abroad. In 2004, he enacted a law whereby regional governors, rather than being elected by the people, would be appointed directly by the president. Sergei Mitrokhin, a former liberal parliamentary leader, called the move “a step toward dictatorship.”

Putin also took further major steps to consolidate the government’s control over Russia’s natural resources—most importantly, oil and gas. Russian firms were absorbed into state-controlled companies. Foreign companies were forced to sell out or face heavy fines for imaginary offenses. Russian oligarchs who resisted were imprisoned or fled the country.

Putin was busy building a powerful weapon. And in the winter of 2005-06, he unveiled it publicly for the first time.

Early that winter, Ukraine rebelled against Russia: In presidential elections, the people rejected the pro-Russian candidate in favor of pro-Western Viktor Yushchenko. It was termed the Orange Revolution. Yushchenko immediately moved his country away from Russia’s influence, applying for EU membership.

Russia was not happy—and it soon demonstrated its new weapon. In the middle of winter, it cut off gas to Ukraine and said it would only resume supply when Ukrainians paid a far higher price. Ukraine had no choice but to cave in. The gas cutoff also affected *Europe*—a timely reminder that Russia could make European states pay if they dared cross the Kremlin. As of 2006, the EU imported 56 percent of its energy,

mostly from Russia. Germany, Italy and France imported 90, 91 and 95 percent of their daily oil needs respectively, and the vast majority of their natural gas needs.

Russia continued to grow bolder and more belligerent. In 2007, strong evidence pointed to Russian involvement behind a massive and organized Internet attack against Estonia. For three weeks, the nation's computer systems were under constant assault in what some called the first state-to-state cyberattack in history. In August that year, Vladimir Putin announced that the Russian Air Force would resume Cold War-style nuclear bomber flights into international airspace. That summer, Russian bombers entered UK airspace, and flew on an intercept course toward the U.S. military base in Guam. "The message to the West is clear: The days of dismissing Russia as a spent force are over," wrote the *Washington Times* (Aug. 19, 2007). In February 2008, American fighter jets intercepted two Russian bombers, one of which buzzed the aircraft carrier *uss Nimitz*.

Russia also increased its power through strategic arms sales, courting nations throughout Asia, South America, and even the Middle East. "The Russians are not indiscriminately selling arms," Dr. Alexey Muraviev, a strategic analyst at Curtin University of Technology in Australia, said. "Russia has pursued a policy driven by strategic design. If it creates a strong client base, that can later be transformed into a larger relationship."

Then in December 2007, after a parliamentary election that consolidated yet more power under Putin, the Russian president officially rejected the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty. Thus, Europeans no longer had any guarantee that Russia wouldn't station thousands of tanks on their eastern borders.

But 2008 looked like the end for Putin—at least to some. Under the Russian Constitution, the president is limited to two consecutive terms in office. Putin could not continue as president beyond the 2008 elections without changing the constitution. So he switched jobs. He became prime minister, and kept the power, with Dmitry Medvedev, more or less a puppet, taking the presidency. Putin remained to continue to push his belligerent policies and returned to the presidency in 2012.

FIRST MILITARY STRIKE!

Another towering indication of the direction Russia is taking came in August of 2008, when Russia attacked the former Soviet republic of Georgia. This was the first MILITARY STRIKE of the *rising Asian superpower*—and there will be more!

Look at a map of the Caucasus region. Much of Russia's oil comes from the Baku region on the western Caspian Sea. The Baku-Supsa oil pipeline cuts right through Georgia, and until Russia's invasion it transported oil through this strategic area *free from Russian control*. That is no longer the case. Russia not only owns the oil in the ground, it now controls the pipes distributing it to Europe, amounting to many billions of dollars' worth of energy!

Russia is *determined* to be an ENERGY SUPERPOWER in an age when the whole modern world is hungry for energy. If Russia sees a prime source of oil being threatened, it is going to fight!

We can understand Russia's violent actions within Georgia far better in light of some recent history in the Balkans, specifically Kosovo. There, Russia felt Western nations basically declared war in 2008. Georgia was Russia's retaliation.

But even before that, tensions were heating up. "U.S. Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton had promised the Russians that NATO would not expand into the former Soviet Union empire," wrote George Friedman of Stratfor. "That promise had already been broken in 1998 by NATO's expansion to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic—and again in the 2004 expansion, which absorbed not only the rest of the former Soviet satellites in what is now Central Europe, but also the three Baltic states, which had been components of the Soviet Union" (Aug. 12, 2008). Russia was deeply unsettled by these developments.

President George W. Bush also tried to bring Georgia and Ukraine into NATO, and failed. It seems high unlikely Russia would *ever* allow that to happen. Making Georgia a part of NATO would put that Western organization on Russia's doorstep, placing the security of Russian oil on the western Caspian at serious risk. All it would take is 30 minutes of bombing to knock out this major source of Russian energy! So as far as Russia is concerned, THIS IS A MATTER OF SURVIVAL.



THE BALKANS AND THE CAUCASUS

But it's not really the United States that Russia is afraid of. The nation the Russians truly fear is *Germany*.

TURNING KOSOVO OVER TO GERMANY

In February of 2008, Kosovo, a republic in the Balkans, declared its independence from Serbia. Moscow was against the move because it didn't want similar independence movements in Russian territories getting any stronger. Dr. Friedman wrote, "The Russians publicly and privately asked [the U.S. and Europe] that Kosovo not be given formal independence, but instead continue its informal autonomy, which was the same thing in practical terms. *Russia's requests were ignored.*" Europe and the U.S. supported the separation anyway.

"From the Kosovo experience, [Moscow] concluded that the United States and Europe were not prepared to consider Russian wishes even in fairly minor affairs. **THAT WAS THE BREAKING POINT.** If Russian desires could not be accommodated even in a minor

matter like this, then clearly *Russia and the West were in conflict*. For the Russians, as we said, the question was how to respond. Having declined to respond in Kosovo, the Russians decided to respond where they had all the cards: in South Ossetia” (ibid).

RUSSIA WANTED A WAR—and for an important reason! Kosovo was the breaking point.

Remember that history. In 1991, Germany supported the independence of Croatia and Slovenia. All of Europe and America were openly hostile to Germany’s action at that time, but Europe caved in when Germany threatened to pull out of the European Union. Soon, civil war broke out in Yugoslavia. The U.S. secretary of state at the time said Germany was responsible for the war in the Balkans—but he quickly shut his mouth. The “superpower” America fell in step with Germany!

This foreign-policy shift in 1991 enraged America’s traditional allies Britain, France and the Netherlands. These nations saw what Germany was doing, not only in Yugoslavia, but all over Europe. Postwar Europe had *hoped* to keep powerful Germany under control—with help from the U.S.! Instead, America helped Germany enforce its will on Europe!

Once the U.S. released and then supported this European beast in Croatia and Slovenia, there was no stopping it. It didn’t cease until *all of Yugoslavia* was under its strong influence or control!

Kosovo was a turning point in the Yugoslavia war. After this state essentially came under German influence and control, the rest of Yugoslavia was certain to fall. When Germany’s oppressive influence moved beyond Croatia and Slovenia, the careful observer could see that Germany’s ambition was to control all of Yugoslavia.

Germany’s defense minister at the time, Volker Rühle, urged the use of force against Serbia regardless of backing from the United Nations. “WE MUST AVOID TO BE DEPENDENT ON A RUSSIAN VETO,” he said at a meeting of NATO defense ministers. He said that the relationship between NATO and Russia meant that “Russia has no veto whenever NATO needs to act.” Russia was going to veto it, and Germany wanted to get around that—and convinced the U.S. to join in!

So Germany led the U.S. into breaking its promises to Russia.

You can read about this history in my free booklet *Germany's Conquest of the Balkans*. In that booklet, I call Yugoslavia “the first military victim of World War III”—that is how significant this was!

Russia rightly blames the U.S. for what happened. We lied to Russia about expanding NATO, and then ignored Russia over Yugoslavia, which culminated in Kosovo declaring independence in 2008.

The U.S. allowed itself to be a tool of Germany—and helped its rise! America bombed Serbia into submission and then handed it over to a German-led European Union! If you know Europe's history and prophecy, you realize what a SHAMEFUL ACT that truly was! America likes to think of itself as squeaky clean and righteous, driven by only the purest motives. But this was truly an act of treachery—and incredible weakness.

We have written quite a lot about this issue, and receive many sympathetic letters from Serbs who were double-crossed by America. Remember: The Serbs were America's ALLIES in World Wars I and II, and Germany was our enemy! In the Yugoslav wars, EVERYTHING WAS TURNED AROUND.

America is one of the modern nations descended from biblical Israel. We have a history with God. We should be setting the example for the world! When we make a promise, we should keep it! And we should be placing our faith in God rather than in our enemies. Today, Yugoslavia is gone because of our evil.

The *Intelligence Digest* of August 11-25, 1995, said this: “Germany's control of Western Europe is exercised through the European Union (EU), and AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR GERMAN DOMINANCE OF THE EU HAS BEEN EVIDENT SINCE AT LEAST 1990. ... [WASHINGTON] IS FOLLOWING AN INTENTIONAL POLICY THE PURPOSE OF WHICH IS TO LEAVE BOTH EAST AND WEST EUROPE UNDER COMPLETE GERMAN DOMINATION. ...

“SO GERMANY, WITH THE FULL BACKING OF AMERICA, IS TO BE THE SOLE GREAT POWER OF EUROPE.”

In biblical prophecy, God CONDEMNS America for treating the Germans like our “lovers”! He prophesies that this relationship will end in our destruction! (See Ezekiel 23; you can read about this prophecy in our free booklet *Ezekiel—The End-Time Prophet*.)

RUSSIA'S REVENGE

Russia shrewdly evaluated these events and saw an opportunity.

After watching and not interfering as Germany and the U.S. sponsored Kosovo's independence, Moscow reasoned that it had the right to sponsor the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia from Georgia. Those two breakaway regions have many Russian sympathizers. And if the U.S. or Europe objected, Russia could say, *Hey—that's what you did in Kosovo and the Balkans—you just went in and conquered the whole area! Don't accuse us for simply doing what you did!*

When Russia made its move in August 2008, the strategy worked to perfection. "The Russians knew the United States would denounce their attack," Friedman wrote. "This actually plays into Russian hands. The more vocal senior leaders are, *the greater the contrast with their inaction*, and THE RUSSIANS WANTED TO DRIVE HOME THE IDEA THAT AMERICAN GUARANTEES ARE EMPTY TALK" (op. cit.).

Does Russia fear America? Not very much. And it used this opportunity to make the U.S. look STUPID AND WEAK BEFORE THE WHOLE WORLD!

Russia had been *planning* for this invasion for some time. As Ralph Peters wrote in the *New York Post*, "Let's be clear: For all that U.S. commentators and diplomats are still chattering about Russia's 'response' to Georgia's actions, the Kremlin spent *months* planning and preparing this operation. Any soldier above the grade of private can tell you that there's absolutely no way Moscow could've launched this huge ground, air and sea offensive in an instantaneous 'response' to alleged Georgian actions. ...

"Every *one* of these things required careful preparations. In the words of one U.S. officer, 'Just to line up the airlift sorties would've taken weeks.'

"Working through their mercenaries in South Ossetia, Russia staged brutal provocations against Georgia from late July onward. Last Thursday, Georgia's president finally had to act to defend his own people.

"But when the mouse stirred, the cat pounced" (Aug. 12, 2008).

This was a war of revenge, and it was planned months, perhaps years, in advance.

Vladimir Putin is really the dictator of Russia. He may not appear to exercise the kind of brutality of some of his predecessors, but he certainly is intent on using whatever power is necessary to secure his country's resources and make Russia into a global power! When this former KGB agent calls the Soviet collapse a "disaster," you have to believe he is going to do something about it! Remember how Adolf Hitler told the world exactly what he was going to do in his book *Mein Kampf*, years before he did it? Why will we never heed such warnings?

Friedman concluded, "The war in Georgia, therefore, is RUSSIA'S PUBLIC RETURN TO GREAT POWER STATUS" (op. cit.).

That is exactly right. The Bible warns us to expect a GREAT POWER RISING FROM THE EAST. It calls it "the kings of the east" (Revelation 16:12). The attack on Georgia was the FIRST ACT OF WAR FROM THE KINGS OF THE EAST!

RUSSIA, GERMANY BEHIND THE SCENES

Things aren't always what they seem in the world of geopolitics. Often there is more to an event than most people realize. Russia's invasion of Georgia was an example.

Russia has much at stake in the Caucasus and is extremely sensitive to anyone who gets close to that area. Again, it doesn't fear the U.S. much—but it does fear Germany, and will do what it needs to in order to neutralize it.

Actually, Russia and Germany *fear each other*. Russia supplies quite a lot of Europe's energy—especially Germany's—and that gives it power.

By attacking Georgia, Ralph Peters wrote, "The Kremlin is telling Europe: *We not only have the power to turn off Siberian gas, we can turn off every tap in the region, any time we choose*" (op. cit.).

The *Wall Street Journal* added, "... Putin's Russia got its hands around the energy-needy throats of Germans, the French, Italians and many other Europeans." This is a cut-throat business! "When this crisis ends, Georgia will be either a model for a world that works or a world whose members do business with knives," it said. "If the world's foreign

ministries, CEOs, investors and policy intellectuals can't see the implications for their world in Georgia's fate, it's time to reorder our best efforts to playing by Mr. Putin's rules" (Aug. 14, 2008).

That is the way it is so often in this world! That is reality—and it is about to get even more fiercely competitive!

But look at history. Every time competition between Russia and Germany heats up, they form a deal with each another—JUST BEFORE GOING TO WAR! A few of these agreements came before World War I, including German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's Three Emperors' League with Russia and Austria. In 1922, four years after the Great War ended, Germany and Russia stunned the world with a pact signed in Rapallo, Italy, that opened complete diplomatic relations between them. Europe's power balance had shifted overnight. Through the pact, the German Army could test weapons in Russia that were forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles. Even when Hitler became chancellor in 1933 and a wave of anti-Russianism gripped Germany, the Nazis made a move that seemed contrary to their anti-Soviet policy. Hitler's foreign minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, secretly flew to Moscow in August 1939 to sign a non-aggression pact with Russia's Stalin. With Russia neutralized, Hitler's eastern flank was secure. One week later, Hitler invaded Poland, and Russia took the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). Two years later, Germany violated the pact and attacked Russia.

The history is quite clear. Whenever it has wanted to expand its empire, Germany has always first removed the Russian threat through diplomacy. Its fear of Russia drove it to arm and become strong on the one hand, and seek peace with Russia until it had finished dealing with the rest of its enemies on the other.

There is evidence that such a deal was struck before the Georgia invasion.

When U.S. President George W. Bush was pushing for Georgia and Ukraine to enter NATO, Europe initially supported the idea. But in April of 2008, Germany's minister of foreign affairs, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, suddenly came out *against* the plan. He said Georgia wasn't qualified because of unresolved territorial conflicts. Berlin officials also argued, off the

record, that “Russia has no veto, but Russia’s views must be taken into account”; “Russia is a factor [in decision making] and this is undeniable,” and “Russian concerns cannot be ignored if we want a real partnership with Russia” (*Eurasia Daily Monitor*, April 1, 2008).

This was opposite what Germany said a year before, when it wholeheartedly supported these nations’ entrance into NATO. Why the sudden change? What did the German leaders say privately to the Russians about Georgia and Ukraine?

Germany knows Russia can be very brutal. Perhaps Putin told Germany, *We didn’t do anything about Kosovo and the Serbs—you’d better stay out of the Caucasus! If you give us problems over Georgia or Ukraine, we’re cutting off your energy—or we’re going to war! And we have a lot of nuclear weapons!*

Germany may well have been *complicit* in Russia’s plan to attack Georgia! If Russia formed an agreement with Germany over the Georgia situation, then Russia would have known the only possible other nation to be concerned about was the U.S. And Russia knew America was too weak to do anything about it!

Russia has Germany—and all of Europe—over a barrel. Cutting off part of the flow of gas to a country would wreak havoc on its economy!

Steinmeier’s about-face on Ukraine and Georgia smells rotten! The U.S. is EXTREMELY FOOLISH to trust in Germany—to treat it as a “lover.” THAT IGNORANCE IS SURE TO END IN THE GREATEST POSSIBLE DISASTER!

The fact that Steinmeier was so quick to dismiss the idea of NATO membership for Georgia and Ukraine tells us something else: Germany sees that it doesn’t have a future with NATO anyway! Its ultimate plan is to kick NATO aside and stand as an independent power! It doesn’t respect America’s view on these nations. So America ends up being a dupe *all along the way*.

The relationship between Russia and Germany is very tense right now. Germany ignored Russia over Kosovo—but Russia will not be ignored anymore. The presence of a deal between these two nations is not a sign of peace. Like the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, and so many others before it, it is a sign of exactly the opposite. Both of these nations are looking to secure their shared border—so they can pursue their

imperialistic aims elsewhere! IT IS A PRECURSOR TO WAR! That is the way they operate! And the U.S. has no clue.

Will the Georgia strike actually spark European unification? Will a crisis occur over Ukraine? That area is the breadbasket of Russia, and surely it is willing to wage war over that as well.

The summer of 2008 marked the beginning of a NEW ERA! We saw an extraordinary military strike by one of the kings of the east! China, another of those “kings,” is also making inroads all over the world. What POWER those kings of the east are amassing—and so quickly! Europe can see it! And it is formulating a counterstrategy.

The whole world should see this developing and realize:
THIS WILL INEVITABLY END IN NUCLEAR WAR!

NUCLEAR ARSENAL

Russia has publicly stated that nuclear weapons remain key to the nation’s defense strategy—even that it is not averse to the possibility of launching preemptive strikes, if necessary to defend its interests!

Experts tell us that once a nuclear war starts, it cannot be stopped.

Such a monstrous Russian nuclear power is going to impact this world. The nuclear “genie” is out of the bottle. We have reached the point of no return.

How can these words and events not strike fear in all of us? Do we realize this Earth is like a ticking nuclear bomb, waiting to explode?

This world is in a kind of madness! It is precisely the way Christ prophesied that it would be almost 2,000 years ago. “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved [alive]: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (Matthew 24:21-22). These words should cause us to tremble—and repent!

If Christ didn’t intervene and stop the madness, there would be no flesh saved alive. Not one person or animal would be left alive!

Do the major media carry more weight with us than Christ's own words? Do we listen to our political leaders more than we heed Christ's own warnings?

It's time for plain speaking and writing.

ALL ACCORDING TO PLAN

Europe's growing nervousness about events in Russia gives us a flash of light into a terrifying Bible prophecy. It is building now—at this moment—to a spectacular fulfillment! These events in Russia and Europe are working out according to God's master plan.

Even the Russian people don't understand why their nation has returned back to the center of global events. But you can know. All we need to do is understand the Bible, which tells us to watch world events—not dates.

World events will date the Bible's prophecies and reveal where we are in the overall time frame. A more dictatorial Russian government is on the scene, and you need to know where it is leading. That power will be able to challenge Europe when nobody else can—including the U.S. The EU is going to become the world's number-one superpower. So says Bible prophecy.

The Russian economy is in trouble, and time is running out on its opportunity to cut itself a position of lasting significance. Its conventional military and its nuclear arsenal are both aging quickly. Demographically, birth rates are plunging precipitously. *Vladimir Putin and the Kremlin are running out of time to restore Russia to great-empire status!* "This is Russia's moment," wrote George Friedman. America is squeezing Russia, hoping nature will take its course, and Russian power will wane. But prophecy shows that "the Russians will squeeze back hard before they move off the stage of history" (Stratfor, July 27, 2009).

Don't expect Russia to drop from the headlines. In fact, expect Russia to ramp up its efforts to restore the Soviet empire. Among other activities, this will likely mean the forging of a major agreement with Germany and Europe that will address both European and Russian vulnerability. Expect Russia to continue to be highly active in defending and

enlarging its periphery; Ukraine will likely continue its gravitation toward Moscow. It's highly unlikely we will see NATO expand much further eastward.

Behind these developments is an invisible power, assuring that a master plan is being fulfilled. As Winston Churchill said, "There is a purpose being worked out here below." The nations are blind to where these events are leading. But they should know, because this message has been proclaimed for over 70 years. But even though the nations fail to heed, you can have God's protection wherever you may live on Earth.

"And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown..." (Daniel 11:40-41). The king of the north is a united Europe, and the king of the south is radical Islam led by Iran. (Request our free booklet *The King of the South*.)

Europe will win this war. But that victory will trigger some other events. Europe will then ally itself with the moderate Arabs and attack America, Britain and the nation called Israel. Many Bible prophecies thunder that truth.

Then Russia will ally with China and other Asian nations. They know that they are next on Europe's hit list—the world's new number-one superpower, which likes to attack without warning. Germany has a history of such treachery—and Germany leads the EU. That is the ideal way to win nuclear wars. So Russia and China will gather their armies on the borders of Europe. This move will make Europe intensely nervous! So much so that it will attack Russia and China.

"But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (verses 44-45). This is where the rise of Europe and Russia is leading. It is building now even as you read this.

The "tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him"—united Europe. That means the frightening

news comes from the northeast. Look on any world map and see who is located northeast of Europe—Russia and China, which will soon unite.

Remember, this is an end-time book (Daniel 12:4, 9). We must understand who these nations are today, or Daniel will have prophesied in vain! So God gives us the specific time factor and the direction of where Europe's enemy is located!

As you will see in the chapters to follow, these prophecies get far more detailed. And they are being rapidly fulfilled before our eyes. It's all happening just as Daniel and other prophets prophesied thousands of years ago. Never have we seen so many prophecies fulfilled so fast. How many people are going to believe God?

These events are hurtling toward Jesus Christ's Second Coming! How magnificent! How wonderful!

Will you believe God?

Chapter 3

What the China Miracle Means

RUSSIA KNEW EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS DOING BY TIMING ITS INVASION of Georgia for Aug. 7, 2008. It so happened that the world was engrossed in an apparently far more compelling drama at the time: the imminent start of the spectacular Olympic Games in Beijing.

China used the occasion to announce itself to the world as a power every bit as vibrant and muscular as the athletes it hosted. Unabashedly confident, radiating with national pride, exploding into modernity—China is on fire.

“There are simply no words adequate . . . to describe this phenomenon, especially as seen by the eye at street level,” one of our readers wrote us from Beijing after the Olympics opening ceremony. “Economic growth figures, China’s purchase of U.S. treasury bonds and takeover of British companies—[these] can’t capture in words what is visible to a person in this city. Ordinary people who still regard China as [backward] would be stunned into silence if they laid eyes on Beijing (which . . . is not as large as the main commercial city, Shanghai). In fact, judging by what I see, the day China surpasses the U.S. as the world’s largest economy is much nearer than all the forecasts indicate.”

Critics groused about China’s poor human rights, its authoritarianism, its support for corrupt regimes, its pollution. Correct as they are, their criticisms simply aren’t going to stop this bullet train. This country is barreling into the future—and, in the process, changing the world.

This is a revolution. It is, in fact, a prophecy. A look at the future.

AMERICA PLUS A BILLION

In one sense, it's a question of simple math. China has 1.3 billion people—one out of every five people on Earth. That's America's population plus a billion. Now, multiply any trend—relating to society, economy, technology, food or anything else—by 1.3 billion, and you will see a huge global impact. And the trend in China is definitely toward bigger, faster and more.

China uses over half the world's cement. From having no highways just 20 years ago, today it has 30,000 miles of them. And those roads bear the weight of 25,000 more cars every day—9 million more per year. Soon, China will be not only the world's biggest market for new cars, but also its largest car-maker. It consumes one third of the world's iron and steel.

As of the end of 2008, China had 147 airports. In the coming decade, it plans to build 97 more.

Each year, almost 8 million Chinese move from the country to the city. This urban migration is driving the construction of the equivalent of Chicago plus Detroit—each year. Today, the United States has nine cities of over a million people. China has 160 of them.

China's mushrooming economy is growing at five times the speed of America's, and has passed Germany's as the world's third largest. In a single generation, China has lifted 600 million people out of poverty, half of them into the middle class. Such development is simply jaw-dropping. Historically unprecedented.

Here's why this trend is so earthshaking. It takes a lot of resources to fuel such explosive growth on such an enormous scale. More food, more electricity—more everything. That's a crushing reality when over a billion people suddenly start gaining an appetite for consumption.

The trouble is, some of those resources are already in short supply on our planet.

An ABC News report, *China Inside Out*, quoted one expert saying that for China's mammoth population to enjoy

affluence as great as America's, the necessary resources would demand another planet.

And that is why, with just a pinch of foresight, you can see where this trend is headed.

THE WORLD'S HUNGRY TEENAGER

China is about to pass the U.S. as the world's largest energy consumer. Between 2000 and 2006, China's increase in energy demand exceeded all the electricity it had used to that point in history. Some Chinese factories have to shut down several days per week simply because they don't have enough voltage. The nation is making a valiant effort to keep pace with demand: In 2007 alone, it built new power-generating capacity equivalent to what all of France uses. It commissions a new power station every four days. Besides the 11 nuclear power reactors in operation and the additional 24 it is constructing as of 2009, it plans to build 500 more coal-fired power plants in the next decade. It already consumes about a third of global coal production.

Meanwhile, those 9 million new Chinese cars each year need gasoline. China already imports 160 million tons of oil per year, and this demand is skyrocketing, which puts additional, unwelcome strain on global oil supplies. In 1998, China was a net exporter of oil; by 2013 it had become the number one importer of oil.

China is the world's hungry teenager. In order to fill these colossal cravings, Beijing has launched an extraordinary outreach program into the rest of the world.

FORCING THE ISSUE

China has started by being an invaluable neighbor, making itself the top or number-two trading partner of virtually every nation in Asia. "Seeking strength in numbers, Southeast Asian governments strive not only to tap into China's new wealth, but also to embed Beijing in a thicket of organizations and dialogues in the name of 'community-building' and closer integration," wrote Ellen Frost in *Global Politician*. "Conscious of residual wariness, Chinese leaders go out of their way to

reassure their Asian neighbors that Chinese intentions are entirely peaceful. Unlike Washington, China has projected a sympathetic and listening attitude, offering aid and trade deals without immediately demanding anything in return” (May 14, 2008).

Beijing is also extending itself diplomatically, economically and even militarily into anywhere and everywhere in the world with resources for sale. It has significant economic ties with all but five of Africa’s 53 countries. It has stormed virtually the whole of the Caribbean and Latin America. It has laid inroads throughout the Middle East—the government’s goal is to do \$100 billion in total trade with the region by 2010.

And Beijing exhibits none of the qualms many Western nations do over doing business with corrupt, authoritarian, dictatorial, even genocidal regimes. It doesn’t sermonize—it just floods other nations with cash, workers, infrastructure, weapons and whatever else they need. Usually, it leaves with resources. And in some cases, it leaves behind a political mess.

Look at what is happening here. China’s meteoric growth and aggressive chase for resources are forcing the issue on the rest of the world.

Ethical hang-ups, anemic ambition, bureaucratic sluggishness—these factors are starting to leave other nations out in the cold in the intensifying contest over Earth’s wealth. China has upped the ante. Its success—in what could be viewed, at this stage, as soft imperialism—obliges other nations that want to remain competitive to step up. You can already see it happening.

This is what makes these trends so prophetic.

MILITARY RISE

To add teeth to its aggressive trade policies, China is working diligently to upgrade its military capabilities.

In 2008, China overtook the United Kingdom as the world’s second-largest military spender. Though far behind America’s \$607 billion of military spending, China nearly tripled its military spending over the previous decade to an estimated \$84.9 billion in 2008. The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) is the largest standing army in the world, with 2.25 million troops,

and China has 314 million men fit for military service. The PLA Ground Force contains 1.6 million men. This number can be quickly augmented, according to UK-based research group Sino Defense, by an 800,000-strong reserve force, 600,000 armed police, and *10 million militia men*.

One of the biggest growth areas in China's military is the PLA Navy (PLAN). As China looks further afield for resources, it needs a robust navy to defend its maritime lifelines. April 2009 marked the 60th anniversary of China's navy, and China celebrated by showcasing many ships that had never been displayed before. "By celebrating the PLAN's diamond anniversary, China was doing more than fostering nationalistic pride," wrote Stratfor. "The review showcased China's domestic military-industrial prowess in order to command global recognition of China as a significant naval power" (April 24, 2009). China now has more submarines than any other Asian nation.

Of course, despite its growth, China still lags far behind the U.S. and remains less advanced than Europe militarily. This is why China is looking for unconventional ways to level the playing field.

China sees *cyberwarfare* as an important tool for "undermining the U.S. military's technological edge," according to the U.S. Department of Defense's 2007 annual report to Congress on China's military power.

In its annual report to Congress in November 2008, the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission warned, "Since China's current cyber-operations capability is so advanced, it can engage in forms of cyberwarfare so sophisticated that the United States may be unable to counteract or even detect the efforts." China has penetrated America's defense networks, aircraft, banking system and electricity grid so deeply that it could cause serious damage to the U.S. whenever it wants, according to National Counterintelligence Executive Joel Brenner. China has also been caught trying to infiltrate the German government's computers.

Space warfare is another way China is trying to level the playing field. On Jan. 11, 2007, China took the space race to a new level. By shooting a warhead from a ballistic missile into space, destroying an old Chinese weather satellite, China

exploded more than a satellite; it exploded the myth that China's space program does not threaten America. Christopher Bodeen, writing for the Associated Press, observed, "The test is a shot across the bow of U.S. efforts to remain predominant in space and on the ground, where its military is heavily dependent on networks of satellites . . . [A]ny potential conflicts in space would put much of the industrialized world's economies at risk . . ." (Jan. 23, 2007). High-tech militaries like America's and the EU's are heavily dependent upon satellites. Dr. Ashley Tellis, an expert on China at the Carnegie Endowment, stated that China's space program is aimed at America's "soft ribs" in space, and that China could carry out a "space Pearl Harbor."

A TERRIFYING REALITY

Watch. The rise of the Chinese juggernaut graphically presages a developing—and terrifying—reality: that, more and more, the nations reaping the richest rewards in this rapidly developing resource war will be the more assertive, enterprising nations. The more rapacious nations.

They will also be the more autocratic nations—those governed by tough, politically empowered leaders, those least encumbered by political correctness and bureaucracy. These are the nations that will strike aggressively, ruthlessly, to stake their claims and defend them.

This trend portends more than just a world dominated by more aggressive nations. As soon as you have more than one power acting this way, you have all the makings for intensifying competition—and ultimately, out-and-out war.

Now, align these trends with biblical prophecy. Read Revelation 17 and 18. There you see a detailed, horrifying picture of an emergent empire of unprecedented rapacity. In order to fuel its furnaces and drive its imperialist machinery, it will conquer nations, establishing colonies and protectorates the world over and raping them of their resources. In its opulence it will seduce and deal with the globe's wealthiest corporate moguls, riding their backs and enriching itself at the expense of the rest of the world.

Those biblical prophecies speak of our day today—this time of America's decline, of China's rise, of global economic

instability and wmd proliferation. We are about to see the sudden, violent surfacing of this superpower.

But this empire will not be China! It will not be Asian at all.

In fact, in view of biblical prophecy, we must view China's rise as being a likely provocation for this empire to rise up and strike!

This passage in Revelation—along with dozens of others that provide more vivid details—is speaking of an emerging *European* empire, a resurrection, in fact, of the *Holy Roman Empire!* You can be sure it is watching intently what China is doing today, and, behind closed doors, plotting its retaliation. It simply will not be left behind in the coming resource war.

You need to understand these prophecies—their fulfillment is going to rock the world off its axis. Order a free copy of Herbert W. Armstrong's masterful booklet *Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?* for a riveting study of this vital subject.

The China miracle we are witnessing is prophecy being fulfilled! For not only is it certain to provoke Europe to assume a far more combative posture in securing its much-needed resources, but China itself—along with its newly empowered and belligerent neighbor Russia—has a significant role to play in the events prophesied to unfold shortly. Keep your eye on China. Within a few short years, this nation—the ascendant, proud China that has emerged today—will dazzle the world. Watching its vault into great-power status truly is a look at the future.

Chapter 4

Japan's Place in the Future

FOR THE PAST 50 YEARS, A STRONG RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. and Japan has guaranteed economic and military security in East Asia. But now it seems Japan's leaders are increasingly edging away from that partnership.

Unable to fix its own deflationary economic spiral, might Japan try to revive its economy by taking a more independent approach to security in East Asia? Any separation from the U.S. would require Japan to crank up its defense spending. This could be just what Japan needs to mend its economic sickness.

The problem is, Japanese militarism has a dangerous history. Its most recent resurgence was only halted by nuclear bombing in 1945.

AWAKENING THE SAMURAI

Today, Japan boasts one of the top five military arsenals in the world and the second-largest navy. Despite all its industrial, economic and naval strength, Japan has until quite recently been seen as a benign power, constrained by memories of the nuclear disaster that ended its past imperial exploits. But, as has been the case with so many other nations, the events of Sept. 11, 2001, altered the Japanese mentality.

Just one month after 9/11, then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi adopted anti-terrorism legislation in the Diet that enabled the Japanese military to supply logistical support for America's declared war on terrorism.

Why was Japan able to enter the battle theater so readily? Look beneath the surface and you will find that Japan has not, in *reality*, been the benign power it has projected itself to be since its defeat in World War II.

For decades Japan has *evaded* the strict enforcement of Article 9 of the constitutional law imposed by America after World War II, which states unequivocally that "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. ... [L]and, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, WILL NEVER BE MAINTAINED" (emphasis added throughout). Japan's military began to be resurrected as early as 1950, when a National Police Reserve was established as a replacement for American troops who were sent into the Korean War. The Japanese government transformed this police force into the Self-Defense Forces in 1954, with the full support of the U.S.

As time went on and memories of World War II faded, the force gradually expanded its scope. In 1992 Japan passed the UN Peacekeeping Cooperation Law, which allowed the Self-Defense Forces to take part in certain non-military aspects of UN missions. Japanese soldiers could now be stationed outside Japan's borders.

Events stemming from Sept. 11, 2001, brought about what the *New York Times* called "the most significant transformation in Japan's military since World War II" (July 23, 2007). Japan's military is looking less and less like a "self defense" force. In 2004, Japan sent non-combat troops to Iraq. At the end of 2006, Japan's Defense Agency was upgraded to become a full-fledged ministry, giving it a louder and clearer voice in Japan's cabinet. In 2007 Japan's F-2s flew 1,700 miles without refueling and dropped 500-pound live bombs as part of a training exercise. Now Japan is even looking to use space for military purposes.

With many of the taboos already broken, it would be a small step for Japan to amend its pacifist constitution.

“For many years Japan’s Self-Defense Forces have been laying the groundwork for this new era. Japan has a small army—although it is larger than most people imagine—but more important, *Japan’s military industrial capability is much greater than is generally assumed.*

“Japan has already created some of the *most advanced weapons in the world and knows how to mass-produce them.* Japan’s emergence as a great military power in the future depends more on its *will* than its ability. In order to have a world-class military force in a *few short years*, Japan merely has to decide that it needs one” (George Friedman and Meredith Lebard, *The Coming War With Japan*).

With North Korea’s perennial and increasingly warlike threats to “destroy the world” via its nuclear capability, Japan is taking advantage of this serious regional security problem to strengthen its position in the area as America’s power declines. It would not be surprising to see the U.S. even encourage Japan to gain nuclear capability under the guise of self-defense!

Since World War II, Japan has willingly submitted to having the U.S. bear the load of maintaining its security by U.S. naval and air presence in the greater Asian region. Meanwhile, Japan has steadily built up one of the largest peace-time navies in the world. But perceptions of U.S. overstretch, coupled with North Korea’s development of nuclear weapons capacity, are motivating Japan to build its capacity to more independently secure its waters and air space.

In recent years, Japan has done much to quash the results of past quarrels with Russia and China. It now even engages in war games with Russia. At the same time, Japan has developed a close relationship with Germany in trade, cultural affairs and, more recently, security and defense issues. Ultimately, as the European Union’s motive for global hegemony becomes apparent, Japan will, as Bible prophecy indicates, join in a grand alliance with Russia and China as one of the three leading powers in the greater Asian sphere.

GLOBAL POWER BLOC

Across the China Sea from the land of the rising sun, a dragon awakens. Mythological dragons may be known to fall asleep

at the entrance to their caverns, but they are certainly not known for their weakness. The Chinese dragon has long been, it might seem, slumberously watching as U.S. global dominance wanes. But it seeks to build a global power bloc in the East to replace it.

To create such a bloc, China needs more than just Russia. As Stratfor wrote, “China and Russia, bound together into the tightest alliance, can change the regional balance in Eurasia but cannot affect the global balance...” (April 16, 2001). To be able to truly alter the global balance of power, this alliance needs Japan to add its technological prowess and naval might.

Such an alliance would have seemed all but impossible just a short time ago. But we’re seeing the trend shift in Asia.

The first step came in the form of a proposal in November 2001 to create a free-trade area between China and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Then, at the China/ASEAN summit in November 2002, a framework agreement on comprehensive economic cooperation was signed, with further trade agreements being signed since then. This new Asian bloc was made official in 2010, and with nearly 2 billion consumers having a combined gross domestic product of about \$2 trillion, it is *the world’s largest trade free zone*, in terms of population.

Japan, though it has one of the world’s largest independent economies, continues to be hamstrung by the failure of successive governments to confront the need for painful economic restructuring. As much as it may resist being relegated to a follower role behind China, Tokyo knows that it needs to work toward this pan-Asian future if it is to have anywhere near the influence in the East Asian sphere that the size of its economy and industrial weight demand. It wants to forge a trading bloc that would emerge as a major driving force within the global economy.

All it would take is a major regional crisis to spur the Japanese into action to offer their naval might in particular as a guarantor of security to their neighbors. Japan has this powerful tool to use as a trade-off in negotiations for economic cooperation from the rest of Asia.

The prospect of the continued expansion of the EU into

a combined bloc larger and more powerful than the U.S. and Russia, and the perceived weakening of U.S. global influence, is driving China and its Asian neighbors to position themselves as the next great global power bloc. Both China and Japan will combine in Asian alliances, with the ultimate intention of forcing the U.S. out of the western Pacific. Then, as has been the strategy of the EU, Asian political and economic cooperation will ultimately progress to a military and security alliance.

The West is in decline. Islam is on the rise globally. The European beast power is almost ready to roll. The kings of the east are becoming restless. U.S. influence in and access to the Korean Peninsula, Chinese and Soviet coasts, Asia-Pacific sea lanes, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Micronesia, Polynesia and Papua New Guinea is declining.

FILLING THE POWER VACUUM

Who will fill the power vacuum?

Despite the overwhelming size of China's population and its great economic potential, *Japan* has the most highly developed economy in the region. *Japan* has the (presently underutilized) *industrial capacity* developed to the point that it could easily match the U.S. and the EU in high-tech weapons development and production. *Japan* is the *only* Far East nation possessing a blue-water navy of significance.

Sixty years ago, Japan sought to extend its empire via military might. After six decades of decolonization, development and growth in the Far East, Japan now faces a vastly different and more powerful China and a much more industrialized collective Asian sphere. It must fulfill its goals using very different means from those it used in the 1940s. Any dominance Japan now seeks in the Eastern Hemisphere must be done via ALLIANCES and TREATIES.

This effort *will* result in a *nuclear* alliance!

If Japan decided to do so, it could become an independent nuclear power with a single year. Voices within Japan calling for such action are getting louder.

The *Plain Truth* magazine foretold an alliance between China and Japan years ago. An article in the February 1963 edition said, "There is an utter inevitability of the ultimate

tie-up between Japan and Red China! The *big question* is how long China will remain 'Red' and survive without a tie-up with Japanese capitalism." Today, China is not as "Red" as it once was, and it is ready for a closer union with Japan.

Another article in the April 1968 *Plain Truth* said, "Despite its many national, religious and political differences, Asia will ultimately be welded together into a *common power bloc*. It will ultimately send its military muscle into the Middle East at the return of Jesus Christ. This prophecy is recorded in Revelation 16:12 and 16. Japan will play a vital role in this battle." We will cover that prophecy in detail in the final chapter of this booklet.

Watch for the East Asian alliances to develop economically and militarily. Watch for coming agreements between Japan, South Korea and China to harness the maverick North Korea and muscle the U.S. out of Oriental diplomacy in Korea and Taiwan. Watch for a third great power bloc to emerge in the East, to balance the power of the expanding European Union and the volatile Islamic tide.

The new order of global powers is emerging precisely as depicted in Bible prophecy.

Chapter 5

Asia in Prophecy

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG SAID THAT APPROXIMATELY ONE THIRD of the Bible is devoted to prophecy. The framework of all prophecy, he explained, is found in two prophetic books—the books of Daniel and Revelation. And only in Revelation “do we find events of the various other prophecies correlated in order of time sequence” (*The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last!*).

The book of Revelation details events that lead to the return of Jesus Christ. The events are symbolized by seven seals, seven trumpets and seven vials. These portray a progression of catastrophic plagues God will inflict on mankind.

Mr. Armstrong categorized these prophetic happenings in three major events. “So here we have *three* successive world-shaking events to come—first and, now, *next* to occur in possibly this decade or the next, THE GREAT TRIBULATION. Second, immediately *after* the Tribulation, the heavenly signs in the sun and moon and stars. Third, *following* the supernatural signs in the heavens, the terrible DAY OF THE LORD!” (ibid).

The first four seals in Revelation 6:1-8—false religion, war, famine and pestilence—lead to the fifth seal, the Great Tribulation—the time of Satan’s wrath. Many prophecies describe the Great Tribulation, including Revelation 6:9-11. The Tribulation will last for 2½ years.

Next, in Revelation 6:12-14, we read: “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is

THE SEVEN SEALS



THE FOUR HORSEMEN
OF THE APOCALYPSE

1ST
SEAL

White Horse: False Prophets

Revelation 6:1-2; Matthew 24:3-5

2ND
SEAL

Red Horse: War

Revelation 6:3-4; Matthew 24:6-7

3RD
SEAL

Black Horse: Famine

Revelation 6:5-6; Matthew 24:7

4TH
SEAL

Pale Horse: Pestilence

Revelation 6:7-8; Matthew 24:7-8

5TH
SEAL

The Great Tribulation

Revelation 6:9-11; Matthew 24:9-10, 21

6TH
SEAL

The Heavenly Signs

Revelation 6:12-17; Matthew 24:29; Joel 2:30-31

7TH
SEAL

The Seven Trumpet Plagues

Revelation 8:6



Silence in heaven for half an hour (Revelation 8:1-6)

1ST
TRUMPET

Hail, fire and blood; one third of trees, grass burned

Revelation 8:6-7

2ND
TRUMPET

One third of sea becomes blood

Revelation 8:8-9

3RD
TRUMPET

One third of fresh water made bitter

Revelation 8:10-11

4TH
TRUMPET

One third of light darkened

Revelation 8:12

5TH
TRUMPET

War inspired by Satan

Revelation 8:13; 9:1-12

1ST
WOE

6TH
TRUMPET

Army of 200 million; 1/3 of mankind killed

Revelation 9:13-21

2ND
WOE

7TH
TRUMPET

RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

First resurrection occurs; all seven vials begin within 24 hours.
Rev. 11:15-19; 19:11-21; Matt. 24:30-31; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thes. 4:16; Zech. 14:3-4

3RD
WOE

1ST VIAL	2ND VIAL	3RD VIAL	4TH VIAL	5TH VIAL	6TH VIAL	7TH VIAL
Terrible sores inflicted	Sea turned to blood	Fresh water turned to blood	Scorching by the sun	Darkness and pain	Euphrates dried up	Greatest earthquake ever; hail

Revelation 16:2-21

THE DAY OF THE LORD—
A ONE-YEAR PERIOD OF GOD'S WRATH

shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.” These are the heavenly signs Mr. Armstrong designated as the second of the three successive events.

Finally, we come to the Day of the Lord—the time of *God’s* wrath. This is when God punishes mankind for their rebellion against Him and His government. God will send plagues upon all sinners to bring them to repentance. The inhabitants of Earth who survive the previous disasters will know that they are entering the time of God’s wrath (verses 15-17).

The Day of the Lord lasts for one year. Because it takes place during the last year of a 3½-year period the Bible frequently refers to, some have supposed the Day of the Lord is synonymous with the Great Tribulation—but it is not. The time sequence is this: first the Great Tribulation, then the heavenly signs, and then the Day of the Lord. Those three shattering events fall within a 3½-year period the Bible calls “a time, and times, and half a time” (Revelation 12:14). It is critical we understand this time sequence.

THE DAY OF THE LORD

The opening of the seventh and final seal marks the beginning of the Day of the Lord. “And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets” (Revelation 8:1-2). All seven trumpet blasts occur after the seventh seal is opened, during the Day of the Lord. These trumpets symbolize plagues sent from God as He directly intervenes in the affairs of mankind. God will plead with mankind in the only language we seem to understand—*violence!* This is the result of people refusing to listen to God now and believe the warnings He is sounding through His Church.

The first four trumpet blasts make living conditions on the Earth unbearable as God destroys the environment. They are described in Revelation 8. The fifth trumpet signifies world domination by a European beast power. The Bible also gives the fifth trumpet another name—the **FIRST WOE**.

FIRST WOE

ASIA



THE BEAST POWER STRIKES The revived Roman Empire makes a preemptive strike against its enemies to the north-east, dealing death to millions.

The book of Daniel sets the stage for the first woe. We often quote Daniel 11:40, which speaks of a clash in this end time between the king of the north—that European empire—and the king of the south, a radical Middle Eastern power led by Iran. Daniel 11:40-41 say that at the time of the end, this European beast power will enter into the glorious land (called *Israel* today) and overthrow many nations. This occurs during the Great Tribulation. At the time this prophecy is fulfilled, America is so weak, IT IS NOT EVEN MENTIONED!

The beast power's military success in the Middle East will not go unchecked. Notice how this spectacular prophecy continues: "But TIDINGS OUT OF THE EAST AND OUT OF THE NORTH SHALL TROUBLE HIM..." (verse 44).

Using the modern nation of Israel as our reference point, look north and east on a map.

You will come to Russia and China!

The king of the north, after destroying the king of the south, will be TROUBLED by what is happening to its east and north—that is, IN CHINA AND RUSSIA!

You can already see the fulfillment of this prophecy occurring in embryo today! Europe is DEEPLY TROUBLED by developments in Russia and China. It is plotting what to do about it. This scriptural passage is speaking of the build-up for these two remaining world superpowers to clash.

Daniel's prophecy continues, "therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many." Rather than let the Asiatic armies have the advantage of striking first, the beast will turn its full attention to the north and to the east of Jerusalem and launch a FURIOUS PREEMPTIVE STRIKE!

This attack is the FIRST WOE—the beginning of all-out war to determine who will rule the world.

This first woe is described in Revelation 9:1-11. The language of the book of Revelation is symbolic. In describing this battle, which God showed to him in prophetic vision, John described the events he saw in terminology with which he was familiar. For instance, verses 3 and 7-10 say locusts came upon the Earth with power in their tails like a scorpion. This describes modern military equipment—perhaps thunderous helicopters that fire missiles.

During this first woe, the military beast power is unleashed on the inhabitants of the Earth. For five months, it torments mankind—but it doesn't kill everyone. Its attack is so cruel that its victims actually seek death in order to escape their misery (verse 6).

The invisible force behind this ruthless army is actually SATAN. Verse 11 explains the king over these soldiers is *Abaddon* or *Apollyon*—names of Satan. He is a destroyer and full of wrath as he wreaks havoc on Earth and its inhabitants. But this is only the first woe. More destruction will follow, as God works to bring all men to repentance.

THE SECOND WOE

Continuing in Revelation 9, the sixth trumpet then sounds, which is also called the SECOND WOE (verses 12-13). Four angels

SECOND WOE



COUNTERATTACK A collective Asian army of 200 million soldiers will counterattack, devastating the cities and armies of the beast power.

are released specifically to amass an almost incomprehensibly large, 200-million-man army (verses 15-16).

Most Bible critics argue that it would be impossible to assemble an army this size. Yet consider the numbers. The current population in China is over 1.3 billion. Russia has 142 million. Other Asian nations are prophesied to join this alliance—among them, India, with its 1.1 billion people and fourth-largest army in the world. Japan, the nations of Southeast Asia, and the former Soviet republics are all definite or probable participants in this alliance. There will easily be a total approaching *3 billion people* from which to make up an army of 200 million! Further, consider the fact that they would have just been attacked by the beast power. They would be engaged in the fiercest battle ever fought! Now, to muster an army of 200 million men, these Asiatic masses would likely only have to call upon a small fraction of their combined populations to fight this battle—hardly unrealistic.

Mr. Armstrong wrote, “The second WOE ... is also referred to as an event in the DAY OF THE ETERNAL in Joel 2:4. This refers to a tremendous military power—also to the NORTH—*due north!* ... World events are now *moving rapidly* to make *possible* the creation of a Communist Eurasian army of that unbelievable manpower! Yes, it’s time to *wake up* to what’s taking place today—the true *significance* of the time in which we live, and *where it is leading!*” (*The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last!*).

In Joel 2:11, this Asian army is actually called *God’s army*. The great Creator God will inspire it to wreak havoc on the European beast power. This astonishingly numerous Asian army is going to counterattack against Europe and obliterate it.

This Asian conglomerate will unite to “slay the third part of men” (Revelation 9:15). That has never happened in history. In fact, it would not be possible without the super-weapons of this modern age. This is warfare like this world has never seen.

We now turn to another critical passage of Scripture that describes this massive counterstrike against the beast power.

THE FALL OF BABYLON

Jeremiah 50 adds many details to this story. God warns Babylon in verse 1. Babylon is the name God gives the political-religious system that sprung from the ancient city of Babylon. Historically, Satan has perpetuated that system primarily in Europe as the “Holy” Roman Empire, though Satan’s influence on this world stretches much further than that (see Revelation 12:9). The fall of Babylon described here in Jeremiah 50, however, refers to the destruction of the end-time European union of church and state—the beast power.

In verse 3, God says, “For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.” The beast power will attack first. But the massive Asiatic counterattack will overwhelm the beast power. This is the second woe.

Now verse 9: “For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north

country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain." An "assembly of great nations from the north" could only be Russia and China, along with various other nations which will join this power bloc. The end of the verse illustrates how effective the attack will be—without any munitions spent in vain! The devastating collapse of the Babylonian system, the beast power, is further described in Revelation 18:2-19.

"Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD. Shout against her round about: she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it is the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her" (Jeremiah 50:14-15). God is behind this Asiatic counterattack. These armies spare nothing. The Russians and Chinese both possess nuclear weaponry. When we read about the level of destruction upon Babylon (it will "slay the third part of men"), there can be no doubt that it will be attacked with nuclear weapons! Notice that this attack is provoked because the people of this beast power have sinned against God. God says in verse 15 that this is His vengeance. He instructs that the Asiatic hordes attack Babylon in the same way Babylon attacked others.

God says in Revelation 18:5-6, "For [Babylon's] sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double." God's anger is so full, that He has the Asian armies deal a doubly-destructive attack against the beast power. Reading on through Revelation 18, we see that Babylon is destroyed in the space of one hour! Again, we find the reason for this in Jeremiah: "Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: *for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel*" (Jeremiah 50:29).

Verses 18-20 of Jeremiah 50 speak of the reward measured unto the kings of Babylon and Assyria, or Germany. Further,

they describe the time of restoration of physical Israel to the land God gave it millennia ago. The repentant people, collected from their former captivity under the beast power, will turn to God and His law in their lives. “In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve” (verse 20).

Babylon’s complete destruction is detailed in the remaining verses of Jeremiah 50. Verse 31 reminds us, “Behold, I am against thee, O thou most proud, saith the Lord GOD of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee.” God is personally against the people of Babylon for their treatment of His chosen people. He expresses His anger through the Day of the Lord.

To review: The first attack of the beast power against the Russians and Chinese makes up the first woe. The second woe is the Asiatic counterattack. Read through all of Jeremiah 50 and 51 to better understand the level of destruction God is going to exact through Russia and China. His anger will never be fueled like this again because Babylon will be utterly destroyed—never to rise again! (Jeremiah 51:60-63). “And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary. Thus far are the words of Jeremiah” (Jeremiah 51:64).

MANKIND STILL DOESN'T REPENT

Revelation 9:13-21 describe this second woe within its proper time sequence. Verse 16, as we have seen, says there will be 200 million men in the massive army. Verses 17-19 describe the bloody destruction to occur during this second woe.

Yet, the last two verses of the chapter reveal just how hard-headed and stubborn man can be, even after such severe correction: “And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts” (verses 20-21).

Even after most of the Earth’s population has been

personally afflicted by nuclear war and complete destruction, they still are not willing to turn to God and His law!

THE THIRD WOE

As we keep in mind the time sequence, let us move ahead to Revelation 11:14-15: “The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Two of the three woes are complete. After that, the kingdoms of this world are to become God’s Kingdom. At this stage, Christ will return, and God’s government will again take over the Earth—with God at the head!

This announcement will cause the angels to rejoice (verses 16-17), but the world will not, even after all the destruction. Verse 18 says the nations will be angry and wrathful toward Christ. And, difficult as it may be to believe, what’s left of the beast power and of Asia will actually gather to fight *against* Christ! This battle at the last trumpet blast will determine the final outcome of World War III.

Revelation 15 and 16 describe this third woe in greater detail. Just as the seventh seal was divided into seven trumpet blasts, the final trumpet blast is divided into seven vials of God’s wrath—the last seven plagues (Revelation 15:1, 6). At Christ’s return, God sends seven plagues upon mankind because of their hard-headedness.

In Revelation 16:12, we see that God dries up the Euphrates River to prepare the way for the Asiatic hordes to gather with what remains of the beast power, near Jesus Christ in Jerusalem. God gathers them in a place called *Armageddon* (verse 16), the Greek name for Mount of Megiddo. A spacious, bowl-shaped valley, Megiddo is located about 55 miles northwest of Jerusalem. After Christ returns to Jerusalem, the gathering armies at Armageddon will turn their attention toward their one common enemy—the King of kings.

There is WONDERFULLY GOOD NEWS in the midst of all these horrors. Both of these armies will gather in Armageddon to fight each other, but will end up fighting Christ at His Second Coming!



- Megiddo
- Jerusalem

THIRD WOE

ARMAGEDDON Nations will gather their armies at Megiddo, and then converge in Jerusalem to challenge Christ, who will utterly defeat them.

The “king of fierce countenance”—the leader of the beast power—will try to fight Christ, and will be “broken without hand” (Daniel 8:25). The armies will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them (Revelation 17:12-14). All of these evil forces will be soundly defeated!

THE CONCLUSION OF THAT BATTLE WILL MARK THE BEGINNING OF A NEW, PEACEFUL AGE FOR THE WHOLE EARTH!

But realize what horrifying blackness will occur before the dawn of that day. It will be a time of suffering unlike any in human history. And we are already seeing the beginnings of that blackness!

ARE YOU AWAKE TO WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING IN THIS WORLD?

Think about this: THE SOLDIERS OF EUROPE, RUSSIA AND CHINA TODAY ARE SOME OF THE SAME SOLDIERS THAT WILL MARCH FROM MEGIDDO TO JERUSALEM TO BE DESTROYED BY JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF!

That is how close we are getting to the *end* of this age of man! Are you ready for what is about to occur?

Revelation 19 describes Christ's triumph over the evil forces of man. This victory ushers in the World Tomorrow, when Jesus Christ will rule this Earth with His saints! For 1,000 years, the world will blossom in abundant peace and prosperity!

EZEKIEL'S PROPHECY

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Christ will begin the Millennium by gathering His scattered people—the end-time descendants of Israel. They will gather, like they did anciently, around Jerusalem, in what the Bible calls the “glorious land.” Yet all will not be glorious—at least not at the start. Mankind's rebellious spirit will not disappear at once.

To finish our story, we turn to the Prophet Ezekiel, who describes Israel's gathering in great detail. Ezekiel also tells us about yet another burst of rebellion to spring from north-east of Jerusalem. That's right. With the Millennium only just begun, and Jesus Christ ruling the world from His throne in Jerusalem, the people of Asia will muster their forces for one final attempt to overthrow Christ's rule!

Let us first get the background. Ezekiel's prophecies were written 130 years after the house of Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians (Ezekiel 1:1-2). Yet, God told him, “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me” (Ezekiel 3:17). God's message, through Ezekiel, was for the nations which make up Israel in this end time. The warning could not have been for ancient Israel. These prophecies were written for our time today. These messages were prophecy for the end time, and are directed at the house of Israel (Ezekiel 2:3; 3:1, 4-7).

In chapter 4, Ezekiel pictured war against Jerusalem. This was to be a sign to the house of Israel. Then, in chapter 5, we find a prophecy about the future destruction of the house of Israel. Consider the wording of verse 4: “Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house

of Israel.” That is future tense. This prophecy is soon to be fulfilled.

Ezekiel 7 speaks of the Day of the Lord (verses 17-19). Parallel scriptures can be found in Isaiah 13:6-8 and Zephaniah 1:14-15, 17-18. To better understand these accounts, write for our free booklets *Isaiah's End-Time Vision* and *Zephaniah's Day of the Lord*. Verse 26 of Ezekiel 7 reveals the people searching and crying for a true minister of God after the destruction comes—but it is too late! During the Tribulation and the Day of the Lord, the famine of God's Word, spoken of in Amos 8:11, will be fulfilled.

Chapter 11 of Ezekiel brings a warning from God that He will execute His judgment upon the house of Israel. Then, chapter 12 gives the account of Israel being taken captive (verse 11). “And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries” (verse 15).

Notice what Mr. Armstrong wrote in the April 1981 *Plain Truth*: “The expression ‘They shall know that I am the Lord’ is used repeatedly through the book of Ezekiel—always referring to the time of the Second Coming of Christ, and Israel's final restoration back to her original land. Many prophecies show that the modern nations descended from ancient Israel are to be scattered in this latter-day captivity *when* Christ comes to restore them back to that land.”

As we progress through the book of Ezekiel, we see how God warns His sinning and rebellious people. But they refuse to repent, even after repeated warnings. This did happen anciently. After the Israelites had rejected repeated warnings, God allowed them to be conquered by their enemies, who burned their land. The captives were taken and scattered from their own land.

Ezekiel 13 describes problems with ministers of God's people. These lukewarm ministers bring false messages that they conjure up by themselves (verses 1-10). Our books *Ezekiel—The End-Time Prophet* and *Malachi's Message* more thoroughly explain the meaning of these prophecies. God is speaking against the prophets and priests of Israel who cry “Peace; and there was no peace” (verse 10). This is a common cry today, which is almost always followed by a breach in that peace.

GOD'S FLOCK

In chapters 25-32, Ezekiel digresses to prophesy against several Gentile nations.

Then in chapter 33, Ezekiel and God both plead with Israel to turn back (verse 11). Again, in chapter 34, God has a message for ministers in this end time. Notice: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? ... And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them" (verses 2, 5-6). God blames His unfaithful ministers in this end time because they sought their *own* will, not God's.

Reading through the remainder of chapter 34, we find that, after the Day of the Lord, God will gather His sheep—those enslaved Israelites left alive after the Day of the Lord—and rescue them from captivity. This is when God will remove the spiritual blindness from their eyes and they will seek God's ways. God's Kingdom will be set up to finally establish lasting peace (Isaiah 11:11; Romans 11:25-26; Micah 4:2-3).

Ezekiel 36 pictures the remnant of Israel returning to the land God originally promised them. Yet they do not return to the Promised Land wealthy and prosperous. They return as slaves and captive people. They will be humble. God will finally be able to teach His people. Dozens of prophecies refer to the end-time descendants of Israel being scattered around the world during the Tribulation and the Day of the Lord. But there is a happy end for Israelites. God will gather them to one place, as Ezekiel confirms.

Chapter 37 contains a well-known prophecy, referred to as the valley of dry bones. Verses 1-11 speak of the rebirth and resurrection of the whole house of Israel (Judah and Israel). They are saved from captivity, dispersion and slavery. (This prophecy also pictures a literal fleshly resurrection of those who had long since died, never knowing the truth. They too

will finally have access to God's Spirit and His truth—spiritual knowledge. This resurrection occurs at the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ.)

Beginning in verse 15 of chapter 37, God pictures Israel and Judah as two sticks that will be united together in the land of Israel after Christ's return. God says in verse 21 that He will take the children of Israel from among the heathen and gather them into their own land. He will make them one nation (verse 22). A Spirit-born King David, resurrected with the rest of the saints at Christ's return, will be king over Israel (verse 24). David will rule forever (verse 25). God will make an everlasting covenant of peace with His people—the New Covenant (verse 26).

We now come to the critical 38th chapter of Ezekiel.

PUNISHMENT OF GOG AND MAGOG

“Notice, now, the story flow,” Mr. Armstrong wrote, “the time sequence: The prophet has carried us through the sins of his people, the coming invasion and captivity and dispersion, and the coming of Christ as Deliverer to restore the fortunes of Israel. We have come to the time when both the houses of Israel and Judah shall be reunited into one nation, rescued from captivity and dispersion and regathered again in their land, once again made prosperous, having learned our lesson, now living God's way, under His laws, enjoying His richest blessings, both material and spiritual!” (ibid). So the events of Ezekiel 38 and 39 take place after the return of Jesus Christ. (Jeremiah 50, on the other hand, shows us what Russia and China are prophesied to do *before* Christ's return.)

The battle of Ezekiel 38 and 39 takes place in the land today occupied by the Jewish State of Israel—not in the United States, Britain or Europe as many have falsely assumed. The final battle takes place in the Holy Land, after Jesus Christ has returned!

“Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal” (Ezekiel 38:2-3). Gog and Magog primarily refer to the

Russians and Chinese. The chief prince of Meshech and Tubal is referring to the ruler in Moscow. Ezekiel was told to record an end-time prophecy for Russia and China. God's anger is against them—just as it was against the Babylonians!

Before Christ's return, God uses the Russians and Chinese to punish the beast power. As a result, they too become proud and haughty, therefore needing correction from God.

God sets His face against Gog and Magog due to their rebellion. God even tells these nations to prepare for a coming battle with Him (verse 7). Remember, this is after Christ has returned. Notice that verse 8 says Israel has been "brought back from the sword." In this chapter, we find the people of Israel dwelling in villages "having neither bars nor gates" (verse 11). They are living in peace, totally unprepared for war! Verse 13 shows that these villages, because the Israelites are now obedient, begin to prosper.

Gog and Magog will see how God has blessed His people. They, too, want to live under these conditions, but on their own terms—not God's! The Russians and Chinese think they have found an easy target to spoil: a blessed land that is undefended!

This passage is astounding! It is common to think that after Christ returns, peace and abundance will overflow throughout the Earth immediately. But that is not what the Bible teaches. There will still exist those who haven't submitted to God's law and government. They will learn the "hard way" that God's system is the only one that will yield such blessings in life!

God issues a challenge to the Russians and Chinese in verses 14-16: "Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes." God has a purpose for bringing them to battle against His people.

Mr. Armstrong said the time of this battle is "not before, but AFTER the Second Coming of Christ—after the great

Deliverer has come and rescued our people and restored us to the land of Israel—AFTER Israel and Judah are reunited” (ibid).

It is true that some of the Asiatic hordes will gather at Armageddon and be destroyed during the third woe when Christ returns—but not all. The rest of these forces will descend upon the glorious land a short time after it has been occupied by the regathered Israelites. It will only be a land of villages at this point early on in the Millennium.

WHAT IS RECORDED IN EZEKIEL 38 AND 39 IS THE LAST GREAT REBELLION THIS EARTH WILL EXPERIENCE FOR 1,000 YEARS! (There will be another at the end of the Millennium when Satan is loosed for a little season—Revelation 20:7-9.) Through this battle, God will not only defend and deliver His people once again, but He will make one final statement to all of mankind that He is the Eternal! God will prove to the Israelites, and to Gog and Magog, that He fights and wins our battles for us. The people who live in Israel will have to totally rely upon God to defend and protect them. God will utterly crush this final rebellion against His government.

The tremendous wrath of God will be felt and witnessed throughout all the Earth (Ezekiel 38:18-20). God will have the angry nations of Gog and Magog destroy themselves (verse 21). He once again pleads with mankind in the only language we seem to understand: “And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and *I will be known in the eyes of many nations*, and THEY SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD” (verses 22-23).

Notice the last part of that passage! Through blood, pain and suffering, God *will* get His message across to rebellious mankind that HE IS THE ETERNAL! All nations will finally come to this understanding. All peoples will finally come to know God. What a hope-filled prophecy.

This, in itself, dates the prophecy. It’s at the beginning of the Millennium when there are still skeptics—those who do not accept Christ’s rule; those who do not know God. Christ must eradicate the spirit of rebellion from mankind. When

He does, mankind will, for 1,000 years, finally come to know their Creator.

Chapter 39 provides more detail about the destruction of Gog and Magog. God says that only one sixth of those who come to attack Israel will live through the battle. He gives this warning specifically to those nations, yet they still come to fight this battle. God must again teach them a lesson. "So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel" (Ezekiel 39:7). God will achieve something here which has never occurred in the past. All nations will finally know that He is the Eternal. Yet, consider the cost mankind must pay to learn this lesson. We could learn it much easier if we would simply believe God's Word and submit ourselves to His loving, family government. Why must we learn through pain and suffering?

The number of dead will be incalculable. God will burn and destroy their weapons of war. He will allow Israel to spoil this defeated people. The people of Israel will be called upon to bury the fallen fighters. "And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land" (verse 12).

What a lesson for all of us to learn. God will prove that He is the Eternal and that He, alone, possesses the knowledge of how to achieve lasting peace!

DO YOU BELIEVE?

Jesus said, "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled" (Luke 21:22). God is working out a purpose here below. We have been blessed with an advance warning of events which are yet to occur and which will shape our lives for eternity. God gives us a choice: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19). We have a choice to learn a vital lesson now through the warning God gives in prophecy, or we can learn from the language God has to use to shake this world to its senses: blood and suffering!

God wants us to choose life! He doesn't want to inflict His wrath—but this world is going to force Him to do so. Do we believe this is all going to happen? Will we listen to God's warning message from His true Church? Individually, you can still be protected from the horrors to come.

History shows that God's prophets and ministers have almost always stood alone. But they have stood with God!

Where will you stand?

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