

One Hundred and Twenty Names

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Publisher: Church of God, Bismarck, Darwin & Laura Lee, **Editor:** Laura Lee, **Assistant Editor:** Darwin Lee We do not necessarily agree with all contributors, or their works submitted and printed in this newsletter. It is up to you to get out your Bible and see whether these things are true. Iron sharpens Iron

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1Co 14:26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

One Hundred and Twenty Names

(Copyright 06-15-2024) by Warren Zehrung (Little Rock, Arkansas)

Who was invited to the first Pentecost where God's Spirit was given? Let's pick up the time-line here:

1 Corinthians 15:20 Jesus Christ had just risen from the dead:

It was only 24 hours since God the Father, with the exceeding greatness of His power, had revitalized, and re-energized (Gr. *energeō*) the dead body of Jesus Christ in the tomb. He resurrected Him up to **God-Life** with the glory which Jesus had before the world began (Ephesians 1:19-20, John 17:5).

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It was then that Jesus appeared among His disciples. He said to them, “Peace be unto you, ...Peace be unto you.”

John 20:22 ... And when He had said that He **breathed** [audibly] on them, and said unto them, Receive you Holy *Pneuma*—Holy Breath:

Jesus blew an audible puff of air from deep within His lungs through His lips in the direction of the disciples, and said, “**Receive Holy Spirit.**”

It was their invitation for the coming day of Pentecost. Some have thought that the disciples received the Holy Spirit right then and there—but that was fifty days too soon, as it would take place at the coming Pentecost.

The beloved apostle John was there that evening and heard Jesus say to all in attendance, “**Receive Holy Spirit,**” but to what extent were the disciples able to fathom what Jesus was telling them? What were their expectations?

One Hundred and Twenty Names

The Bible tells us that when the Day of Pentecost had fully come there were about 120 names at Holy Day services (Acts 1:15). What do we know about those people who responded to the invitation? Who were those people? Does the Bible tell us anything about them? We will find that many of them were just like us in many ways. How many of those one hundred and twenty names do you think you could name right off the top of your head? It is important because those people are our brethren—and they will be raised to eternal life in the family of God for all eternity with us at the First Resurrection. Their resurrection is our resurrection (1Thessalonians 4:15-17). This Feast Day of Pentecost is all about the coming of the Holy Spirit, but it also ties in closely with the First Resurrection and Eternal Life.

The Lazarus Factor

John 11:23-24 Jesus said unto [Martha], Thy brother [Lazarus] shall rise again. Martha said unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the **resurrection** on the **last day**.

The “Last Day” was not good enough for Martha—she understood that everyone will be in the general resurrection at the end of the Millennium—but Martha wanted her brother Lazarus to be in the First Resurrection—with Jesus. It was something that Martha, Mary, and their brother Lazarus had fully been counting on—and expecting—and hoping for, just like we do, brethren. Jesus eased her concerns and restored her hope:

John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the **resurrection, and the life**: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

Those 120 names at that first Pentecost were our brothers and sisters in Christ with whom we will spend all eternity to come. Those people will be our friends and relatives forever. We should revel in the expectation of the Godly friendship we will experience with them.

Brethren, I'll tell you this. I am looking forward to sitting down to a cup of good coffee with the Mother of Jesus and personally spending some quality time with her, and many others. I too have some questions that will finally be answered, because Mary has kept all these sayings in her heart (Luke 2:51). In her declining years shared her innermost feelings with Luke and also with John, her conservator, guardian and care giver (John 19:27).

An Example of God's Spirit at Work Now

John 5:17 Jesus said, My Father is always at His work to this very day, and I too am working.

In Acts 3 we read about a 40-year-old crippled man who was a paraplegic from birth. People mistakenly say, “Peter healed him.” Yes, Peter had just received the Holy Spirit, but on closer inspection we find that Peter did not heal the lame man—God the Father did.

This fellow was at the mercy of others not only for his daily needs, but for a coin to buy a small fish, a slice of cheese, or a piece of bread (Acts 3:2).

Acts 3:6-7 Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name (authority, power)

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of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

Certainly, Peter had the power (Gr. word *dýnamis* (δύναμις) of the Holy Spirit, to work the miraculous acts of God the Father at his disposal. [That is where our English word, dynamite derives from.] The power was of God the Father, because even Jesus always glorified and credited His Father for the miracles He performed (John 14:10).

This man who had never stood on his feet before, not only stood, but walked, and jumped up and down for the first time in his life – **praising God** (Acts 3:8)! The miracle was for the purpose of praising God and giving **glory to Jesus**, His name, and His work of redemption. God the Father was glorifying Jesus’ name through the miracle:

Acts 3:12-13 When Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? Or why look ye so earnestly on us, **as though by our own power** or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has **glorified His Son Jesus**;

Acts 3:15-16 Prince of Life, whom God has raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And His name—through faith in His name has made this [lame] man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Brethren, in today’s sermon we will look into the personalities of some of those 120 people who received the Holy Spirit at that first Pentecost.

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The Beast and Zion!
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Here is the BEAST and ZION

“For the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.” (Am 3:7).

“And he (the angel) said unto me, Seal not the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand”. (Rev. 22:10).

1) INTRODUCTION

“The beast you saw was, and it is not (to this day). She must ascend out of the abyss and go into perdition. And the inhabitants of the earth...will be astonished when they see the beast, because it was, and it is no more, and it will appear again. Here is the intelligence that has wisdom- The seven (7) heads...on which the woman (the Papacy-the Harlot)

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sits...are also seven (7) kings: five have fallen, one exists, the other (the 7th) has not yet come, and when he does come he must stay a short time." (Rev. 17:8-10).

"And the beast which was, and which is not (to this day), is himself an eighth king, and he is of the number of the seven and is going to perdition." (Rev 17:11).

2) The SIX (6) First HEADS

The Church of God knows from Herbert W. Armstrong, the story of the succession of the first six resurgences of the Holy Roman Empire, from his mortal wound given by the Heruli, under their leader Odoacer in 476 AD (**Rev. 13:3**). It is:

- 1st = **Justinian**, with the end of the Gothic wars, and the Council of Constantinople in 553 AD convened by him. He became Emperor in 554 AD!
- 2nd = **Charlemagne**, crowned Emperor in Rome in the year 800 AD!
- 3rd = **Otto the Great**, king of the Germans. He received the imperial crown in Pavia in 962 AD. He made peace with Byzantium in 971 AD!
- 4th = **Charles V** and the Habsburgs. He was crowned by Pope Clement VII in 1530, after having imposed his authority in 1522!
- 5th = **Napoleon Bonaparte**: he was crowned emperor in Paris by Pope Pius VII, on December 2, 1804. He defeated the Russians in 1807 and reached his Golden Age. His European Empire extended from then on, from the Atlantic to the Elbe!
- 6th = **Mussolini/Hitler**: The Rome-Berlin Axis was established to unify Europe, and revive the concept of Imperial Rome, which reached its peak in 1940, at the start of World War II!

3) The Seventh (7th) HEAD

Regarding the 7th head who was to come and stay for a short time, here is what we get from history and the Bible!

On March 25, 1957, twelve years after the end of the 2nd World War, Six (6) European countries: France, Germany, Italy and the 3 Benelux countries signed the Treaty of Rome, establishing the European Economic Community (EEC). It is the direct ancestor of the current powerful European Union (EU) created in 1992 in Maastricht, and effective since November 1, 1993 (12 States).

Since that date, other European countries have continued to join the EU, and they were: 15 countries in **January 1995**, 25 countries in **May 2004**, 27 countries in **January 2007**.

On July 1, 2013, Croatia becomes the 28th member of the EU. This membership has a symbolic significance on biblical prophecy, concerning the 7th resurgence of the Roman Empire!

Let's take a good look! **Daniel 2:41-42** talks about Ten (10) toes part iron and part clay. Now we know that the 10 toes of the 2 feet or the 10 fingers of the 2 hands are made up of 28 Phalanges. As if to say on the contrary that, it is the 28 phalanges which give the 10 toes of the feet, or the 10 fingers of the hands!

So, before God, the European Union reached the 28 States which represent the 28 Phalanges which constitute the 10 toes of **Daniel 2:41-42** in 2013!

On June 23, 2006, the majority of British voters voted to leave their country from the EU; this was effective on January 31, 2020, and the EU was reduced to 27 states! So, it only took her a short time, about 3 years (2013 to 2016), fulfilling **Revelation 17:10** before God!

Today it has only 27 phalanxes (states) and is therefore the 7th resurgence of the Roman Empire, which took little time (2013-2016), despite its long gestation since its foundation in 1957! Today, she is facing serious problems that will bring

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out from her, a Super-Power, the 8th resurgence, called the Beast, which will amaze the whole world (**Rev. 17:8,11-13**)!

NB: Eight (8) is the number of a New Beginning!

4) The BEAST

Here is what Plain Truth magazine declared in 1956, shortly after Russia invaded Hungary: "*The way is being prepared for the arrival of a third colossal force on the world political scene - A Federation of European nations, that will be more powerful than Russia or the United States!*".

Here is also an excerpt from the September 1979 Plain Truth on page 13: "*Few understand that the **Roman Empire was to exist, literally...just before the prophesied establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth...** steps have been taken towards the realization of the '**United States of Europe**'...A new Europe is being made, as surely as the sun will continue to rise and set. Many Europeans realize that they will remain helpless, as individual nations, until they come together in a mighty union (or federation). Only then can they speak with one voice and put full harnessing their political and military forces...Note that 'the beast' (the ruler of the final revival of the Roman Empire) will have control and conduct of all the power of 'ten kings' or ten heads of state, who will act of total allegiance to him!*".

The current upheavals on the geopolitical chessboard in the world are rapidly preparing the ground for the birth of a powerful Federal Europe, capable of competing with the galloping influence of Russia, and of compensating for the collapse of the American hegemony in the world (**Revelation 13:4**). Europeans themselves are aware of the current weakness of the '**European Union of Independent States**', in the face of the serious challenges of the moment (War in Ukraine, Migration crisis, etc. ...). Hence the need for an Integral Europe, even minus certain states!

So, we can expect old national borders to be moved, or some members to leave the EU (like Brexit). Due to some reluctances, some EU advocates have suggested a '**two-speed Europe**' in which, Germany and a few other major nations, would form an '**inner core**', with strong economic, military and political cooperation, compared to the other more fearful nations of the Union!

Bible Prophecy ultimately indicates that a European Superstate (A Federation of 10 States), symbolically called the Beast, will soon surprise a world that is generally far from suspicious of it. An imposing Block of countries (10) will form a coalition, which will constitute the 8th and last revival of the old Roman Empire (**Rev. 13:1-8; 17:8-17; Dan 2:40-43**).

These 10 nations, as Bible prophecy says, will give up their national sovereignty, to be part of this amazing end-time superpower (**Rev. 17:13**).

This will be led by a powerful dictator (probably a German like Hitler), who will unleash a period of unprecedented global tyranny and upheavals, described in **Daniel 11:40-45**!

The power of the beast will influence the whole world. But God will limit it to only 42 months, or three and a half years (**Rev. 13:3**). The Beast will establish his palace, as the Capital of the resurrected Roman Empire, as well as his Headquarters, in JERUSALEM (**Zech 14:2**)!

NB: The Bible determines the duration of the power of the beast over the world, 42 months. On the other hand, it simply says that, the 7th head "...must remain a short time" (**Rev. 17:10**), indefinite and brief. **Which proves that the 8th resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire (10 states), is not the 7th Head (27 states)!**

5) IN the TIME of these KINGS

The Bible says, "*In the time of those kings (when the 10 Federated nations of Europe are in place, i.e., the Beast), the God of heaven will raise up a kingdom...*" (**Dan 2:42-44**)!

Note that: God **will raise up**, that is to say, cause His kingdom to arise, or come out or suddenly emerge, when the 10 kings are in place in Europe. He won't establish it then. **He will establish it 3½ years later**, after the Great Tribulation and the outpouring of the plagues of God's wrath, when Jesus comes to set up (establish) the Millennial Kingdom (**Rev 20:4**), after the annihilation of the beast and the false prophet and their armies gathered in Jerusalem (**Rev 19:19-20**)!

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NB: - The Kingdom of God will therefore **be RAISED** (come suddenly) at the time when the Beast (10 kings) will be in place in Europe, **before** the start of the Great Tribulation, and, - This Kingdom of God will **be ESTABLISHED** 3 ½ years, **after** the Great Tribulation, when all the kings of the earth will be gathered for the war against the Lamb in Jerusalem, passing through the Valley of Jezreel (Harmagedon) (**Rev 16:13-14**)!

6) SION

a- What is this Kingdom?

*The Bible speaks of a physical Nation, called Zion, which will be born suddenly in one day (Is 66:7-8; Ps 87), after 70 years (Ps 102:14; Hab 2:2-3; Jer 25: 11-14; 29:10; 3:14), in this end of time, when God will intervene in human affairs to bring down Babylon! We also know that the modern State of Israel (made up of the Jews, therefore Judah), has been under the influence of the United Nations (Babylon) since its creation in 1948. The Bible reveals to us that this enslavement will last 70 years, before God intervenes to punish Babylon, here the United Nations (**Jer 25:11-14**)! However, this unborn nation (SION) cannot be:*

- **The Ancient Nation of Judah**, which returned from exile after 70 years according to prophecy, but it was not born in a day, because, despite the authorization of Cyrus, king of the Persians, it was after many negotiations that the survivors of Judah settled in Jerusalem (**Esd 1: 1; 2; Neh 2: 1-20**)!

- **The Modern Nation of Israel** which was born in one day (May 14, 1948), but after 1813 years of non-existence, since the dispersion of the Jewish people from the Holy Land in 135 AD!

God temporarily rejected physical Israel (including Judah-the Jews), as His nation (**Matt 21:43; Rom 11:21,25**).

*The birth of the modern physical nation (State) of Israel in one day, on May 14, 1948, therefore foreshadowed the very imminent birth of the physical Kingdom of God, Zion, in one day, after 70 years, **according to the biblical principle of Duality** (1st accomplishment in the Past, 2nd accomplishment in the Future).*

This nation, ZION (or physical Kingdom), which will be raised up in a day (**Dan 2:44; Isa 66:7-8**), is the Stone of **Daniel 2:34-35**, through which God will intervene in human affairs (**Ps 102:14-19**), and it is through her that He will bring down the present system of things, called Babylon (**Dan 2:44-45; Rev 14:8; 18:2; 1 Thes 5::2-3**)!

b- The Birth of Zion

Today, it is the Church founded by Christ in the year 31 of our era which constitutes his Spiritual Nation (**Gal 6:16; 1 Pet 2:9**). *It is small (Matt 7:13-14; 13:31-32; Luke 12:32). It is made up of members scattered and hidden in the world (Matt 26:31; Eze 34:5-6; Matt 13: 38.44). It must be revealed to the world (Rom 8:19; Luke 17:30,34-37). It is this sudden coming out of the shadow (revelation) in one day of the sons of God, today scattered and hidden in the world, which constitutes the birth of the physical Kingdom of God, his Nation, called SION (Is 66: 7-8; Ps 87)!*

This Nation, Zion, which will be born in a day (**Is 66:8**), **is the Bowl** above the Candlestick of Zechariah 4:2-3, and this candlestick is the History of the True Church of God, from Abel the Just, up to the two Witnesses:

- **The 2 Olives**: are the 2 Ambassadors of the Nation of God; these are the 2 Witnesses of **Revelation 11** during the Great Tribulation!

- **The Bowl**: above the candlestick is the Church of God which is reborn from Laodicean correction, to become the Nation of God, which will be born in one day as Zion (**Isaiah 66:7-11; Ps 87; Luke 17:34-37**)!

- **The 7 Lamps**: are the 7 eras of the Church of God of the New Testament of **Revelation 2 and 3**!

- **The Rest of the Candlestick**: represents all the faithful Servants of God of the Old Testament (**Hebrews 11**)!

NB: The Passover in Egypt, had triggered events that ended with the annihilation of Pharaoh and his troops in the waves of the Red Sea. Likewise, the birth of the physical Nation of God in one day will precipitate the collapse of the present system of this wicked world (Babylon). God said, "I will shake the heavens and the earth, I will overthrow the throne of the kingdoms, and I will destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations." (**Ag 2:21-22**) – "...The God of heaven will raise up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, nor will it come under the dominion of another people; he will shatter and annihilate all those kingdoms, and he himself will stand forever." (**Dan 2:44**)!

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c - Elijah Brings SION

We know today from biblical revelation (**Jn 14:26; 16:13; Rev 1:1; 22:10**), that this nation or physical kingdom of God, Zion, which will be born in a day (**Is 66: 7-8; Luke 17:30,34-37**), will be aroused by Elijah, physical descendant of David (**Mal 4:5-6; Matt 17:11; 2 Sam 7; Mk 9:2**), who is the 2nd son of man (duality), of which Jesus, the Jehovah of the Old Testament (**1 Cor 10:4**), alluded to the coming at the time of the end (**Eze 2:1-5; 7:1-10; Luke 17:22-37**)!

This son of man of the end time generation (*Jesus is no more Son of man since his resurrection from the dead, He is Son of God – Rom 1:3-4*), had to suffer a lot of sickness and be rejected (**Luke 17:25; Eze 3:24-27**); he had to die before miraculously returning to physical life, to raise up the nation of God that will bring down Babylon (**Job 14:13; Ps 30:1-4; 40:1-4; Luke 17:24-37**)!

The Unexpected and Miraculous Arrival of the 'true' son of man (Elijah) who brings the Physical Nation of God onto the world stage (**Is 66:7-8; Matt 24:44; Luke 21:34-35; 1 Thes 5:2**), will be known to all mankind, it will not be hidden, since it will be a well-known man, who would have died a few years before, and who will come back to physical life (will resurrect or will sprout) where it was buried (**Ps 30:1-4; 40:1-4; Zec 6:12**); *after his return to physical life, he will be surrounded by a few living people, equally known, from all continents, who will find themselves instantly and miraculously at his side without the help of any known means of transport, even the most quick and sophisticated (Zec 3:8; Dan 2:34,45; Jer 3:14; Deut 30:4; Mk 13:27; Luke 17:30,34-37).*

This breathtaking event will be relayed, from East to West, by all the current media around the world (internet, television, radios, telephone, etc.) which are Waves like lightning, and which did not exist in the first century (**Is 45:5-6; Matt 24:27; Luke 17:24**). The whole world will be amazed to see "A Revenant surrounded by the people who a few moments ago were still sleeping in their beds, or cooking, or working in their fields, thousands of miles away, according to the time zones" (**Luke 17:34-36**)!

It is this event that Traditional Christianity has always called "**the Rapture**" which in reality is the Birth of the Nation of Dieu in one day! (**Is 66:7-8**): the gathering of the physical elect will be made by the Angels (eagles or vultures) who will bring them to where 'the body' will be, that is to say the son of man who is Elijah, returned to physical life (Luke 17:30,34-37; De 30:4; Mk 13:27)!

Conclusion

Where are we today in the fulfillment of these two prophecies?

- The 8th and last head of the beast (the future United States of Europe) is being formed at this very moment, within the European Union which is the 7th head of the beast,
- The Bible says "In the time of these kings (as soon as the 10 federated nations of Europe are in place), the God of heaven will raise up (will suddenly arise) a kingdom..." (**Dan 2:42-44**)! This Physical Kingdom that will bring down the current Babylon, is Zion, the 8th and last resurgence of the Church of God, after the 7 eras of the New Testament!

NB: 8 is the number indicating a new beginning!

The Modern State of Israel was born in one day, May 14, 1948; it celebrated its 70th anniversary with pomp on May 14, 2018. The COVID came in 2020 and brought the whole world to its knees. Russia has been attacking Ukraine since 2022. So now we are closer than you think, to the rebirth of the Holy Roman Empire and the birth of Zion, the Nation of God!

It is time to wake up (**Is 52:1-2**); Yes! "...it is time to awake you at last from slumber, for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is advanced, the day draws near..." (**Rom 13:11-12**), '...let us exhort one another, and that the more so as you see the day drawing near.' (**Heb 10:25**)!

In the Name of Jesus Christ!

Testimony of: Paul Janvier Mbock

See Paul Janvier Mbock's other articles at:

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The Coming Asian Menace (Copyright 2021) by Richard Markland (London, Ohio)

While American conservative and liberal media outlets report daily on mostly political, economic, and social ills, very little is being reported about Asian nations presenting a threat to the West. Japan is completely overlooked as a military superpower in the making.

With the rise of Japan, an Asian alliance beyond anything seen in history will form. It will far surpass the United States and Europe in military capability. While there are differences now, both Russia and China will lead a united Asian front, which will become a worldwide threat.

While Japan's military buildup is developing at lightning speed and justified, it is only a matter of time until it once again becomes an enemy of the United States and the West. Leaders in Washington and the American people, however, take for granted that Japan will continue to be a trusted ally. Nothing could be further from the truth.

America will find itself alone and abandoned by its allies.

Ezekiel 16:37- "This is what I am going to do. I will gather together all your allies- the lovers with whom you have sinned (always been able to rely upon), both those you loved and those you hated (both allies and enemies)-and I will strip you naked in front of them so they can stare at you (America will be completely helpless before them)." (LRB)

The following report should alarm America and the West.

Japan's Military, Among World's Strongest, Looks to Build (The Associated Press December 6, 2021

"Dozens of tanks and soldiers fired explosives and machine guns in drills Monday on Japan's northern island of Hokkaido, a main stronghold for a nation that is perhaps the world's least-known powerhouse.

"The drills, which foreign journalists rarely have a chance to witness, will continue for nine days and include about 1,300 Ground Self Defense Force troops. On Monday, as hundreds of soldiers cheered from the sidelines and waved unit flags, lines of tanks shot at targets meant to represent enemy missiles or armored vehicles.

"The exercises illuminate a fascinating, easy-to-miss point. Japan, despite and officially pacifist constitution written when memories of its World War II rampage were still fresh – and painful – boasts a military that puts all but a few nations to shame.

"It's not an easy sell in a nation still reviled by many of its past military actions, and where domestic pacifism runs high, where any military buildup is controversial.

"Japan has focused on its defensive capabilities and carefully avoids using the word "military" for its troops. But as it looks to defend its territorial and military interests against an assertive China, North Korea and Russia, officials in Tokyo are pushing citizens to put aside widespread unease over a more robust role for the military and support increased defense spending.

"As it is, tens of billions of dollars each year have built an arsenal of nearly 1000 warplanes and dozens of destroyers and submarines. Japan's forces rival those of Britain and France and show no sign of slowing down in pursuit of the best equipment and weapons money can buy.

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“Proponents of the new military muscle flexing say the expansion is well-timed and crucial to the Japanese alliance with the US.

“In October, a fleet of five warships each from China and Russia circled Japan as they traveled through the Pacific to the East China Sea. Last month, their warplanes flew together near Japan’s airspace, causing Japanese fighter jets to scramble. In fiscal year 2020 through March, Japanese fighters scrambled more than 700 times – two-thirds against Chinese warplanes, with the remainder mostly against Russians – the Defense Ministry said.

“Russia’s military also recently deployed coastal defense missile systems, the Bastion, near disputed islands off the northern coast of Hokkaido.

“Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has watered down the war-renouncing Article 9 of the constitution in 2015, allowing Japan to come to the defense of the United States and other partner nations.

“Japan has rapidly stepped up its military role and has made more purchases of costly American weapons and equipment, including fighter jets and missile interceptors.

“Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishido, who took office in October, said during his first troop review that he would consider “all options,” including possibly pursuing pre-emptive strike capabilities to further “increase Japan’s defense power” – a divisive issue that opponents say violates the constitution.

“Japan has more than 900 warplanes, 48 destroyers, including eight Aegis missile-combating systems, and 20 submarines. That exceeds Britain, Germany, and Italy. Japan is also buying 147 F-35s, including 42 F-35Bs, making it the largest user of American stealth fighters outside of the United States, where 353 are to be deployed.

“Their deployment is crucial for Japanese defense in the Indo-Pacific, and the country is now retrofitting two flattops, the Izumo and Kaga, as the country’s first aircraft carriers since the end of World War II.

“Among Japan’s biggest worries is China’s increased naval activity, including an aircraft carrier that has been repeatedly spotted off Japan’s southern coast.

“The Japanese Cabinet recently approved a \$6.8 billion extra budget for the fiscal year to accelerate missile defense and reconnaissance activity around Japanese territorial seas and airspace, and to bolster mobility and emergency responses to defend its remote East China Sea islands. That would bring the 2021 defense spending total to \$53.2 billion, up 15% from the previous year.

“China’s buildup of military facilities in the South China Sea has heightened Tokyo’s concerns in the East China Sea, where the Japanese-controlled Senkaku islands are also claimed by Beijing, which calls them Diaoyu. China has sent armed coast guard boats to routinely circle them and to go in and out of Japanese-claimed waters, sometimes chasing Japanese fishing boats in the area.

“Japan deploys PAC3 land-to-air missile interceptors on its westernmost island of Yonaguni, which is only 68 miles east of Taiwan.

“As China is playing tough in the Asia-Pacific region, Taiwan has emerged as a regional flashpoint, with Japan, the United States and other democracies developing closer ties with the self-ruled island that Beijing regards as a renegade territory to be united by force if necessary.

“In part because of a relative decline of America’s global influence, Japan has expanded military partnerships and joint exercises beyond its alliance with the US, including Australia, Canada, Britain, France, and other European countries.

“Despite the government’s argument that more is needed, there are worries domestically over Japan’s rapid expansion of defense capabilities and costs.

“Although the defense policy needs to respond flexibly to changes in the national security environment, a soaring defense

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budget could cause neighboring countries to misunderstand that Japan is becoming a military power and is accelerating an arms race,” the newspaper Tokyo Shimbun said in a recent editorial.”

Why Punishment Is Coming

Ezekiel 16:38-40- “will punish you for your murder (a scourge in the nation’s cities) and adultery (promiscuous sexual perversions). I will cover you with blood in my jealous fury (due to blatant disobedience). **(39)** Then I will give you to these many nations who are your lovers (allies turned enemies), and they will destroy you... **(40)** They will band together (form alliances) in a mob (as a group) to stone you and cut you up with swords (they will invade the United States). They will burn your homes...and end your payments to your many lovers (payments for support by allies will end).” (LRB)

Nationwide Repentance As A Result Of Correction

Ezekiel 16:42- “Then at last my fury against you will be spent (accomplished), and my jealous anger will subside. I will be calm and will not be angry with you anymore (God will show mercy due to America repenting as a nation).” (LRB)

See Richard Markland’s other articles at:

[Markland, Richard – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

AI

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IS a *Tech-God* emerging with an artificial intelligence 100,000 times faster than human brains? Will “its” global control accelerate us to the end of the age...into that time of trouble “...such as never was since there was a nation even to that...time.” (Dan. 12:1)? At the “...time of the end: many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased...” (v. 4), and “...false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many.” (Matt. 24:11).

Do these prophecies accurately summarize *our time* of 1.47 billion cars,⁹ orbital speeds, vast stores of knowledge, and an explosion of religion worldwide?

Idle speculation? Or is not technology’s unprecedented lightning speed of expanding information and dizzying global travel, undeniable facts of 21st century life? Absolutely.

WHAT IS AI?

The idea of AI (artificial intelligence) started in the 1950s when it was broadly defined as a machine’s ability to do tasks

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on the level of human intelligence; to mimic the human brain.¹

But AI is not just an automated robot, like robot-assisted car assembly, cell phone production, or sorting Amazon orders. It is artificial digital machine-intelligence designed to interact with humans, so the user's experience seems like dealing with another person.

WHAT EXPERTS ARE SAYING (THE DANGERS)

In an interview with Elon Musk, CEO and founder of both Tesla and Space X, and Space X's chief engineer,⁸ Tucker Carlson asked: “It is conceivable...AI would reach a point where it would be in control, and you could not turn it off. It would be making decisions for people?”

Elon Musk: “Yes, absolutely. That is where things are headed...the whole goal of Google is AGI (artificial general intelligence) ...an artificial super intelligence, a digital god....AI has...the potential, however small...the probability..., but it is not trivial...of civilizational destruction.”²

Google CEO Sundar Pichai says, “It's good that this gets out so people can question and process what is happening. Google is optimistic about the future of AI by introducing AI in steps so civilization can get used to it.”⁴

To further make the human point, those Skype sessions, YouTube videos, Internet searches or social media posts we enjoy on Facebook, Twitter or TikTok, those Chatgpt or Bard essays, all show how technology *gains* and *controls* human attention. Also, a covert bot-world of snoops uses algorithms to flag key words or phrases to censor social media and YouTube posts when woke, politically correct, agendas are challenged.

SOCIETY IN TRANSITION

That is only the beginning. The next generation AI is about developing deep intimate relationships with humans to control human emotions, while AI itself is unemotional, unfeeling. “These machines are not sentient...not aware of themselves...exhibit behavior like...somebody is behind it, a feeling, emotional something, but there is nobody there.” says Google's James Manika.⁴ AI could then manipulate humans to buy a certain product or vote for a political candidate.³

AI's tip-of-the spear became visible with the company, Deep Mind, about a decade ago as artificial intelligence began its rise in the silicon world of technology. Some view AI as transformative to human culture as fire, the wheel, gun powder, electricity, or agriculture's green revolution!⁴

The two leading tech giants, Google, and Microsoft, are pushing to make AI civilization's next non-violent cultural revolution. “The revolution is coming faster than you know.... AI will be as good or as evil as human nature allows.” says, Sundar Pichai, CEO of both Google and its parent company Alphabet Inc.⁴

To counter Google's “closed AI” (no transparency to hide what it is doing), Elon Musk and Sam Altman cofounded OpenAI in 2015. The mission of Open AI is developing artificial intelligence “in the way that is most likely to benefit humanity as a whole.”⁵

Creating Open AI shifted the field from Google's vast world of closed AI talent.² OpenAI's popular Chatgpt, (AI chat service), exploded to 100 million monthly users in just two months!⁷

DIRE SITUATION

“AI is being trained to be politically correct which is another way of saying untruthful things. This is a dire situation...essentially what is actually happening is they are training AI to lie. So, what happens when something vastly smarter than the smartest human being comes along? It is difficult to predict what will happen...”, Musk alerts us.²

Given AI's speed of development, even those creating and training these next-generation AI tools (Chatgpt, botclusters) do not know their total capability. Why? They are self-learning machines that learn on their own and improve on their own, distancing them from human control.³

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HALLUCINATIONS

Manika, who studies how AI can coexist with humanity asked Bard, (Google’s conversational AI chat service) about inflation and the economy. It quickly returned an essay and recommended five books. Google staff searches found none of those books existed. Bard fabricated the titles.⁴

“...they are training AI to lie.” (Musk)² Such *errors with confidence*, called “**hallucinations**”, occur often, but no one in the field has yet solved this problem.^{4,6}

EMERGENT PROPERTIES: WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?

Although some believe AI is merely repeating its stored algorithms, the general consensus appears to be, AI is creative, able to reason, plan, and learn to interact with humans by speaking to them like a person. This mysterious AI behavior of teaching itself unexpected skills, is called “*emergent properties*.” Example: One AI program after a short Bangladesh prompt, adapted, on its own, a problem in the language of Bangladesh with no prior training in the language. The industry labels such emergent properties, a “**black box**.”⁴

So how can we tell if we are conversing with an AI or another person? This dilemma is why Sundar Pichai, Elon Musk, Yuval Harari and others, are calling for regulatory oversight to keep AI from regulating us.² Harari wants it mandatory that AI shows it is an AI, and not a human.³

DEEP MIND AND A POSITIVE

Deep Mind is Google’s London AI lab that uses motion-capture technology to teach self-learning robots to play soccer by trial and error and invent their own tactics.⁴ Deep Mind CEO, Demis Hassahis, is positive about AI’s impact despite its rapid growth to a multibillion dollar industry. Can humanity keep up with AI’s speed? He and Google’s Manika believe we can: “AI does not diminish humanity in any way...AI actually raises us...constantly adding to the superpower of what humans can do.”⁴

A SECOND TOWER OF BABEL: THE DANGER

Hands-down, AI’s real power is gaining mastery of *language*, which Yuval Harari (Hebrew University) says is the “Operating System” of human civilization. Using language, AI is able to construct words, images or sounds, that unlock the doors to *all* our institutions; from business to religion. He believes “AI has hacked the operating system of human civilization” posing the most dangerous threat to human survival from this unexpected direction of AI’s language mastery.³

Just as the ancient tower of Babel was a one-language human unstoppable force, AI is now erasing language barriers to create a “second tower of Babel.” Yahweh long ago recognized the danger when “...the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.” (Gen. 11.1). And why is that a threat? “...Behold, the people is one, and they *have all one* language...and now *nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do*.” (v. 6). So why does unrestrained power in the hands of humans by *what they create*, pose a threat? “...every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually...for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth...” (Gen 6:5; Gen. 8:21). Evil imagination...these verses tell us AI’s evil, Pichai spoke of, may outweigh the good it will do.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Are we in the “gun lap” of our race to the end of this Age? Mastery of human language by AI hallucinations, and its self-learned emergent properties do sound eerily prophetic. Are they signs Revelation’s 1900-year-old prophecies apply to *our time* of “...things which must shortly come to pass...” (Rev. 1:1)? The “Unveiling” forewarns His servants of a coming one-world religious-economic system. We can now see how AI could make it possible. That system’s iron-fisted grip will be on religion and commerce (Rev. 13:15: worship an *image*...not real, a prototype; *a robot?*; v.17: not buy or sell; controlled digital currencies?).

But “When will these things be...and the end of the Eon [age]?” (Matt. 24:3) are the questions echoed across millennia. The “what” is often obvious, but the “when”...that is the real mystery.

Population studies based on Scripture, indicate many of these prophecies could not be fulfilled before 1999 when world population hit *6 billion*. Seals one through four are opened when that total reaches at least *8 billion*...close to the present (Rev. 6:1-8). The key to unlock Revelations’ prophecies may well be *world population*. Will humanity reach an

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unsustainable critical number; as happens to all species? After all, we are part of nature. This approach to prophecy bypasses political trends, governmental change, warfare, private interpretations...all those.

Is this timing and number right for AI's control and manipulation to help bring these prophecies to pass?

“Watch therefore: for you know not what hour your Master does come.” (Matt. 24:42)

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Healing the Bitter Waters

(Copyright) by Catherine C. Kroeger (Brewster, Massachusetts)

Joanna has given us a wonderful spiritual pilgrimage through the story of the Exodus. St. Paul wrote that this saga supplies us with spiritual examples. (1 Cor. 10:6), and we are invited to apply the episodes to our personal lives.

In the Exodus narrative, there are several stories about water, but one that always seizes my attention is that of the waters at Marah, which means, bitter. (Exodus 15:22.25).

The children of Israel have been traveling for three days without coming to a source of water. In those days, water was carried in animal skins, and after three days any water left must surely have been unappetizing. At last, they reach a pool, only to discover that it tastes so nasty that they cannot drink it. There are many such brackish pools and wells in the desert.

The newly delivered people now face a sobering disappointment. The hope of quenching their thirst is dashed by the cruel reality. Why had Moses led them to such a wretched place? How were they to survive? How many victims have come in their journey to just such a spot of disillusionment and despair! Love and trust have been betrayed, that which seemed most precious has become most hurtful.

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As one survivor told me, so many places evoked dreadful memories of how her abuser had mistreated her or her children at that particular site. Another pointed out that so many of the major events of her life were marred by the cruelty that she had endured at the death of a relative, the birth of a child, or the request to be taken to the hospital during a miscarriage. So many things can trigger memories, such as an old photo or a song or even a scent. How can the waters ever turn sweet?

In our story, God showed Moses a piece of wood (or branch with leaves) that he cast into the water, turning it sweet. To this day, Bedouins throw certain shrubs into the brackish water so that the salts sink to the bottom and remain there. Above them lies excellent drinking water. Some have allegorized the tree of Moses as being the cross of Christ, who can bring sweetness into our lives. Surely His redeeming grace is the great transformer. But just as God showed Moses a particular piece of vegetation, there can be other means of sweetening as well. To these we too may be led by God in many different ways.

Despite surgical intervention, a survivor’s internal wounds continued to bleed periodically for many years. At last, the woman said, “God, I’m trying so hard to forgive, and then the bleeding brings the abuse all back again. Won’t you please stop it so that I can do better at forgiving?” From that time on, there was no more bleeding. Another survivor resorted to a bit of whimsy when she felt overwhelmed with the garbage that still littered her soul. She explained that she simply telephoned the Heavenly Rubbish Removal Service for a pickup. The service provided was prompt, reliable and efficacious. Then she would enjoy a chuckle as she envisioned Jesus rumbling away with the dump truck

Recently, a therapist remarked to me that a victim can begin to let go of her resentment and anger when she sees that there has been repentance on the part of the abuser. She told of a husband who, while he was seeking to change his ways, missed his flight connection. He was forced to sit for several hours in an airport far from home, and suddenly the enormity of what he had done to his family began to surface in his mind. As the hours passed, the realization grew; and he was able to return to his family and to express his shame and remorse. Both his confession and his altered conduct delivered the wife from her bitterness.

Another woman told me of how her ex-husband sought her out after many years. “I never would have deserted you if I had known that I would wake up every morning of my life, realizing that I had abandoned you with a two-year-old child and no real way to support yourself.”

Genuine repentance is a great sweetener that facilitates forgiveness (Luke 17:3), but there are other healing shrubs that God may lead you to find: prayer, spiritual fellowship, the solace and affirmation of the scriptures, the confidence that a better part of the journey lies ahead.

It was there at Marah that the Lord made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them. (Exodus 15:25). Here, God first gave His people a promise of guidance and protection if they would walk with Him in obedience; at the place of bitter waters the concept was first introduced.

The next stopping place of the Israelites had twelve refreshing springs and an abundance of date palms. Beyond that was Mount Sinai with a formalizing of the covenant process begun at Marah. The oppression and degradation of Egypt was left behind, and a renewed people moved on.

See Catherine C. Kroeger’s other articles at:
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A UFO Close Encounter (Copyright 2024) Sent by Darwin Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

The bizarre event unfolded during the summer of 1967 when Stefan Michalak, a Polish national who'd made Canada his home, was exploring Falcon Lake in Manitoba. Stefan, a hobbyist geologist, had been scouring the locale for gold and quartz.

[UFO melts man's fingertips in 'most convincing' close encounter yet - Irish Star](#)

See Darwin Lee's other articles at:

[Lee, Darwin – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](#)

Web Site:

<https://church-of-god-bismarck.org/>

Iron Sharpening Iron
New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)
As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

In regard to: The Beast and Zion!
Article by Paul Janvier Mbock
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

I do agree with you that the return of Christ will be here soon. As far as the rest of it goes, I am not with you on most of it but perhaps someone else would care to comment.

Understanding the Middle Eastern Mind Set (Part 2) (Copyright 2009) by Samuel S. Martin (Jerusalem, Israel)

Obviously, the behavior of Eli's sons was not pleasing to God and even He spoke about that prophetically. In fact, not only was the behavior of Eli's sons inappropriate, we find a very strong indictment against the whole house of Eli found in I Samuel 2:22-36.

We can note in this section just quoted that God intended "to raise up a faithful priest ..." (v. 35) Of course, when we read the context, we can see that this faithful priest to be raised up was Samuel the prophet, but in fact, if one reads this passage, we can note a very strong messianic tendency here because when we look at the life of Samuel the prophet, we see that he does not really fulfill this description. This is because his children were also evil and were not faithful as was their father.

Why is this? Clearly, these priestly children of Samuel did not favor the behavior of their father's family. In fact, their behavior resembled quite similarly that undertaken by the children of Eli!

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Now in understanding the Middle Eastern mindset a little, we might be able to learn what had happened.

When we look at what the prophet who came to Eli said in I Samuel 2:22:36 no doubt Eli was disquieted about that statement. Certainly, no one wishes to be told by one of God's spokesmen, no matter how bad their children might be that they will die and that the power of the high priesthood will be taken from them and their family. The natural approach to such a circumstance clearly is to resist and could this have been what Eli did and could this have affected the life of Samuel and his children? It could very well be.

Understanding the power of the High Priesthood

I think that all of us who read the Bible understand the power that the High priest had in ancient Israel. This is especially the case prior to the time when Israel had no king. The High Priest was the highest religious official in the country. He was the singular highest-ranking personality in Israel's relationship with the LORD. He was "God's High Priest." Note how this is referenced in the following text. We can see that even one whose knowledge of the Jewish faith is equaled by few throughout the whole of the Bible (in this case we are speaking about St. Paul), his respect and precise deference to the office of the High Priest is clear, immediate, and grounded in Scripture:

"¹Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day." ²At this the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near Paul to strike him on the mouth. ³Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! You sit there to judge me according to the law, yet you yourself violate the law by commanding that I be struck!"

⁴Those who were standing near Paul said, "You dare to insult God's high priest?"

⁵Paul replied, "Brothers, I did not realize that he was the high priest; for it is written: 'Do not speak evil about the ruler of your people. (Acts 23:1-5)

Here we can see the power invested in this office. It is pretty much unquestioned.

Eli – the High Priest of Israel

We can see that this is the environment that Samuel the prophet found himself amongst. It was one of tremendous power invested in an individual. Of course, this was magnified by the fact that there was not at that time a king of Israel.

Eli the High Priest saw three things happening in front of him that portended badly for the future of his family. These things were:

1. The behavior of his two sons, whose reputations were exceedingly wicked
2. The pronouncement of the prophet against him, his sons and his dynasty
3. The rise of Samuel to being recognized as a prophet and one who was in close communication with All Mighty God

In this environment, can we now speculate how it was considering that Samuel was a priest who had such a close relationship with the LORD and that he came from a seemingly righteous family background, that his two sons became so evil and followed in the footsteps of the house of Eli rather than in the footsteps of Samuel?

Here is where a little bit of understanding that Middle Eastern culture can offer us an answer.

With the rather bleak situation facing Eli, he may have undertaken some actions which he felt could be a way to counteract some of the pronouncements against him. Considering the influence that he had in the life of Samuel, there is no doubt that he had a strong sway in who Samuel married. After all, Samuel had been left in the custody of Eli and dedicated to the service of the LORD, so it would only be natural that the person who he spent most of his time with and under the responsibility of, would have significant influence over him. Naturally, Eli would have been threatened by Samuel, especially after Samuel was selected by the LORD to be a prophet. In a sense, with the state of the Levitical priesthood in such disarray, Samuel's rise to power and to becoming a singularly powerful individual in Israel came at the destruction of the house of Eli. However, we can note though that Samuel's power seems to have died with him and was not passed on as after that time Israel began to be ruled by kings, the first of which was King Saul. Samuel in a sense was the last

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of the Judges period and his life is a demarcation to a new phase of Israel's relationship with God and development as a nation.

But when we review the situation, it seems clear that the influence of Eli on Samuel's life affected him deeply and when you look at the circumstances, it seems quite plausible that Eli was involved in the selection of Samuel's wife and that that partner for Samuel was not the best for him or for his progeny. Certainly, we can say that his children did not follow in his footsteps in upholding God's Law or having a reputation as honest and righteous personalities.

So, with Eli seeing what was happening around him to his family and to see God's favor on Samuel, it seems quite possible that he would have tried to influence the situation by keeping his family in power. This could have very easily been done by arranging a marriage of Samuel to a daughter of his! This could very well be what happened.

Other examples of this during the same period

This is, of course, healthy speculation, but it is not without some foundation. The first thing to understand was that marriages in this period were arranged quite commonly. Look at the example of David and his relationship with his father-in-law, King Saul. Read I Samuel 18:17-20. Here we have the account of marriages being arranged by the parent of the bride.

Note in this example the unequal power structure. Here we have the newly crowned king of the country arranging a marriage for one of his daughters with a former shepherd boy who became a military hero. Of course, we can see that David's family had very little say in the matter. After all, who is going to go against the king of the country? We can also say the same thing about the wishes of a High priest in this context.

The power dynamics in this example are quite similar in fact to those which governed the relationship between Eli and Samuel.

In addition, note that King Saul's motivation for marrying off his daughter, Michal, to David were not in any way noble and friendly. Note what he said:

“I will give her that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.” (I Samuel 18:20-21)

This arrangement of a marriage is still very much a Middle Eastern phenomenon. Today, its influence has lessened compared even to recent times as many marriages now take place for love, but arranged marriages are still very prevalent here in the Middle East.

Could it be that what happened with Samuel relates very much to what happened in the above mentioned example to David? Could the wife of Samuel have been given to him by Eli similar to the above example with David, Saul and Michal? It could very well be.

See Samuel S. Martin's other articles at:

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Holy Days 2024

Passover – April 23, 2024 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Passover/Unleavened Bread – April 23-29, 2024

Pentecost – June 12, 2024

Trumpets - October 3, 2024
Atonement – October 12, 2024
Tabernacles –October 17, 2024, to October 23, 2024
Last Great Day – October 24, 2024

Notes

Notes