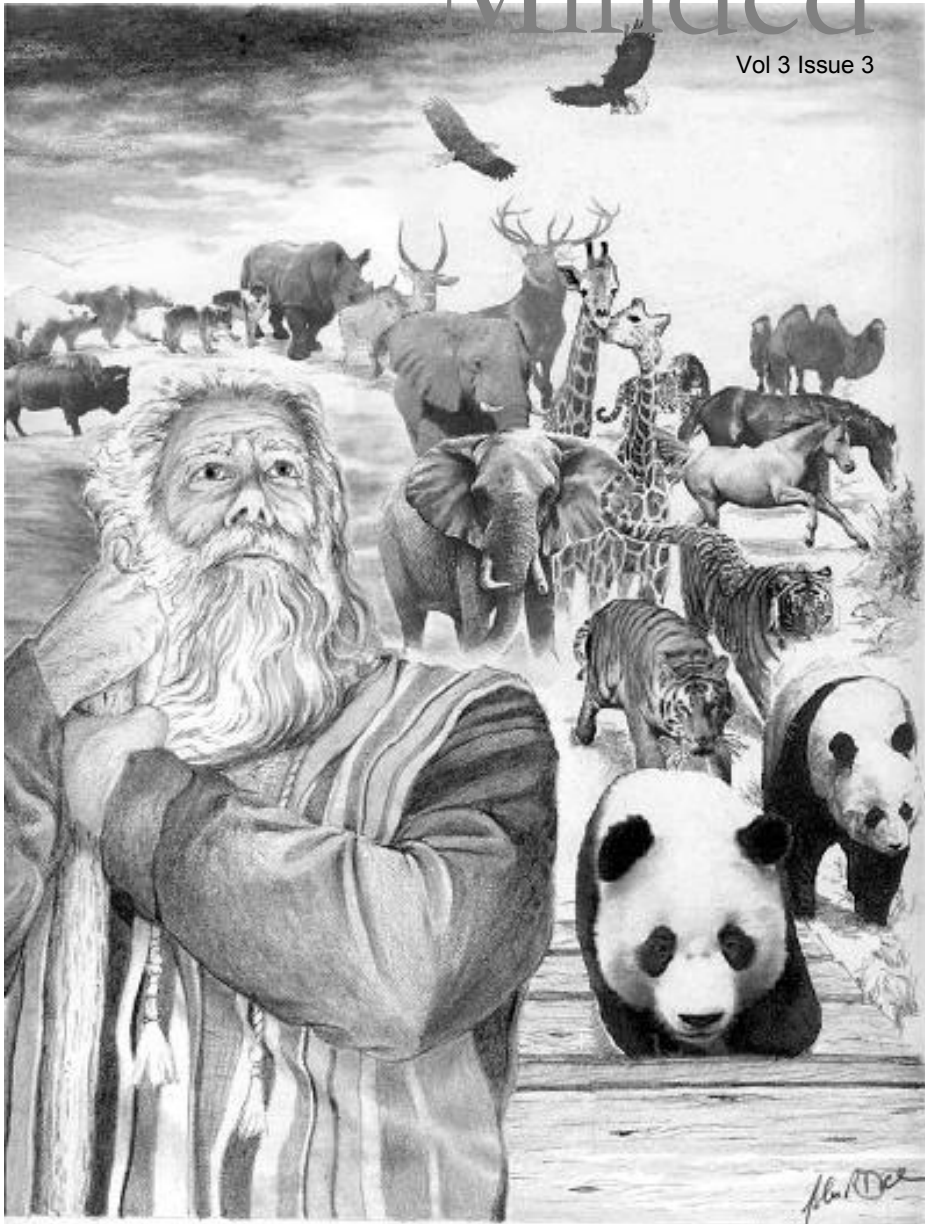


You're of no earthly value unless you're ...

Heavenly Minded

Vol 3 Issue 3



The Visible Path

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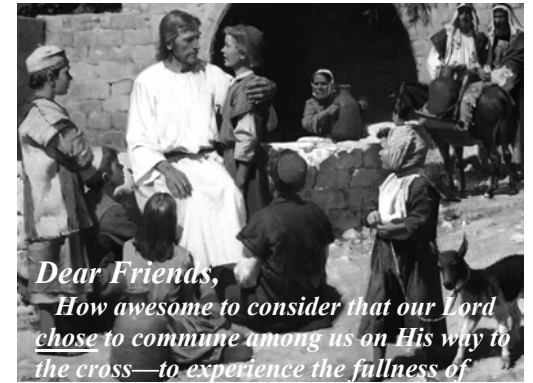
Not a moment with You is ever
in vain...
To disdain the world and seek the
unseen...
is a startling thing...
an icy joy from a living stream.

Yet intent on the visible path
before me
A rabid blindness seizes my gaze
The shallow heartbeat of the
mundane, my portion...
And Your winsome song begins
to fade.

Yet as near to me as my
beating heart
Within me and without
Your Spirit touches everything
And leaves me with no doubt.

The wind is still... the light is gone...
And yet I know they thrive...
Though darkness reigns...
I'll carry on
For Jesus... is alive.

(Inspired by an Elizabeth Elliot devotion)



Dear Friends,

*How awesome to consider that our Lord
chose to commune among us on His way to
the cross—to experience the fullness of*

*our humanity while demonstrating the divine
character of our Father in heaven. He actually,
really, truly loves us!! It's mind boggling!*

*May the Lord help us to not get stuck in liturgy to
the detriment of loving one another in deed and in
truth. The world is cold and carnal – may we be
warm and welcoming.*

*Jesus showed us the way. Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done, Lord, on earth as it is in heaven.*

Love in Christ, John and Darlene

The Bible indicates that the generation which witnesses the rebirth of the nation of Israel will also witness all the events leading up to Christ's 2nd coming. It says that in the last days Jerusalem will be a "cup of trembling" – the focus of attention of the whole world. It predicts a massive war with Russia leading an alliance of nations including Iran, Iraq, Libya, and many others against Israel. It is thought by many Bible scholars that this war will either immediately precede or be immediately subsequent to the rapture of the Church as mentioned in 1 Cor 15, 1 Thes 5 and several other scriptures.

In addition, there is the prediction of a revival of a major world power arising out of the former Roman Empire (the EU) and exerting a strong influence over Israel and in particular, Jerusalem. (Dan. 2) The leader of this coalition, a charismatic man, will be the ultimate false Messiah and lead the world to oppose Christ's return. He will insist upon a one world religion with ultimately himself as god. Punishment for not following this religion will be, as with Islam, death. And no man will be allowed to buy or sell without his "mark" in his hand or forehead. He will also confirm a significant covenant (i.e. treaty) with many (the UN?).

In addition, Daniel the prophet predicted man's knowledge would dramatically increase in this time.

Without a doubt, we are living in exciting and sobering times.

As we consider these things in light of God's eternal Word, we can take heart that all is moving toward His conclusion. Just a few scriptures to review:

Middle East -- Zech 12:2,3, Ez 37

Church -- 2Tim3:1-5, 1Tim4:1,2

Knowledge growth -- Dan 12:4

Final Generation -- Mk 13:28-30

Russia -- Ez 38, 39

One World Religion -- Revelation 13

Heaven's Joy

"Americans are amongst the loneliest people in the world. I'm not talking just about divorce -- we are a very mobile country. Generally speaking you graduate from high school, move away from home for college, and then you move again for your job, and most people will switch jobs 2-3 times. Now, there's nothing inherently evil about this but it contributes to the loneliness in the United States, and you couple this with a high divorce rate in the country and that makes for some very lonely people." -- Eric Snyder

The nuclear and cooperative extended family is an endangered species in the industrialized West. Most communities are composed of neighbors in name only. Meanwhile, multiple aspects of our daily lives are encouraging further and further isolation -- our work, our education, even our entertainment.

A study by the American Council of Life Insurance reported that the most lonely group in America are college students. Next on the list are the divorced, welfare recipients, single moms, rural students, housewives and the elderly.

Charles Swindoll mentioned an ad in a Kansas newspaper. It read, "I will listen to you talk for 30 minutes without comment for \$5.00." Swindoll said, "Sounds like a hoax, doesn't it? But the person was serious. Did anybody call? You bet. It wasn't long before this individual was receiving 10 to 20 calls a day. The pain of loneliness was so sharp that some were willing to try anything for a half hour of companionship"

A true sense of community is essential to a healthy Church. It's been said that as our lungs require

air, so our souls require what only community provides. Consider that we are designed by God (who Himself is a group of three persons living in profound relationship with each other) and in His image.

"Christ works on us in all sorts of ways...But above all He works on us through each other. Men are mirrors or carriers of Christ to other men...Usually it is those who know him that bring him to others." -- CS Lewis

What's heaven like? As we read of it in scripture, we only get glimpses, but they are startling and compelling. Paul wrote humbly, "*I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*" It is written of Jesus, that, "*for the joy set before Him*" He endured the cross. And, we're all aware of the Apostle John's description of the streets of gold and gates of pearl. So what we do know of it is that what is spoken and seen there is mind boggling at the least.

But the part that fascinates more than any other is the aspect of its community. Consider that we are instructed to regard God as our Father, Jesus as our Bridegroom, our Brother, our Friend and the Holy Spirit as our Comforter. We are described as brethren and family, (Eph 3:15) integrated so tightly as to be like parts of the same body or living stones in a temple -- joined together perfectly (Eph 2:21,22; 4:15,16; Col 2:19). With all focus upon our God (Rev 4 and 5), heaven is truly about community. In fact, as you study Revelation, you can't help but be impressed with its sense of togetherness. As God's character fills all, heaven's essence is genuine, loving relationship in every direction. Even while we're here on earth, Christ said,

"Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." (Mat 18:20)

Our Father "*made us alive together with Christ...raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly in Christ.*" (Eph 2:5, 6) Together.

Together. Together. It resounds in scripture, but too often it echoes only faintly in the halls of our existence. For many Christians, the closest thing to a sense of community they get to experience is a weekly hour or so in a prayer breakfast or home fellowship group. Hey, these are indeed great, but they're like the first step in a marathon -- a means and not an end.

Jesus described the **cause of joy in heaven** in Luke 15 with three parables. In the first, there was a lost sheep -- when it was found and united with the flock the owner called his friends and neighbors together to rejoice; in the following parable of a lost coin -- the woman who finally finds it also calls her friends and neighbors together to rejoice; in the story of the lost son -- the outcome is a relationship restored and a grand celebration. Friends, family, neighbors -- the community of heaven. Not only do these parables point clearly to finding what was lost and a consequent reuniting, but in each case there is a celebration with others who cared. And why would they care? Because Jesus was also saying that heaven is a community that is composed of truly integrated lives and truly incredible relationships.

Acts 2:44 says of the early church, "...ALL THAT BELIEVED WERE TOGETHER..." This passage has led sincere believers to adopt at least a couple of different perspectives -- either that their model of communal living was the epitome of how a real church ought to function or that it was a dismal

failure and is irrelevant to our time. I like however, what my former pastor Jon Courson has to say about it...

"If you were around in the 60's and 70's, you might remember the many communal-type ministries which sprang up on the West Coast. Where are they now? Why didn't they work? I suggest they failed in their attempt to duplicate what happened in Acts 2 because there was no inherent reason for them to do so. On the Day of Pentecost, 3,000 folks got saved in one day -- 3,000 people who had come from all over the world to celebrate Pentecost. Following their conversion, they sensed the need to remain in Jerusalem in order that they might be grounded in their new-found faith. But what were they to do? Jump on a 747, fly home, get their stuff, and come back?"

"You see, the early Church didn't arbitrarily say, 'Wow! Here's a groovy idea: Let's live communally!' No, the believers in Jerusalem pooled whatever resources they had for the express purpose of allowing the new believers to remain in Jerusalem rather than having to return to the lands from which they came."

"I suggest to you that we may very well see Christians living communally again -- but it won't happen because someone says, 'Here's a neat idea...' If persecution were to fall upon this country, which it may; if the economy were to collapse, which it might; if things really get tough, which they could -- you'll be amazed how quickly and how beautifully the Church will come together communally. But until then, it's artificial." --Jon Courson

Regardless of method, this side of heaven we are clearly called by Christ to demonstrate to the world the sense of community, of belonging, of acceptance that only God's love can

accomplish (John 13:34,35; 17:20-23). Easy theoretical love is always at a distance, it doesn't touch, it doesn't commune with the object of its affection. This kind of love is the staple of dead religion. Real love naturally integrates the life of one with another and another into a masterful and divine tapestry.

Now, our modern church organizations have become experts at gathering people for a few hours at a time, but as good and necessary as these gatherings are, they only serve a very temporal purpose if they don't nurture the on-going process of linking lives to The Life and thus to one another. The call to each of us is to foster fellowship and to build the body in radically loving ways as a life-style. The Great Commission is NOT just finding the lost but building them into a community representative of God's nature.

"The experience of authentic community is one of the purposes God intends to be fulfilled by the church. The writings of Scripture lead one to conclude that God intends the church, not to be one more bolt on the wheel of activity in our lives, but the very hub at the center of one's life..."
-- Randy Frazee

Some have made sound doctrine of scripture the main point of their ministry and we need that. Some have made godly worship their focus and we need that. Some have emphasized evangelism and missions as their main thing and we need that. But apart from demonstrating to the lost world the beauty of godly community, we fall short -- especially in these last days. In fact, the Bible indicates that it is in these days more than any others that we must be in close community relationship.

Heb 10:25 says -- *"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."* Friends, the Day of the Lord is fast approaching. And in this day of increasing isolation and selfish independence, we need communities of Christian faith based upon sincere discipleship.

Sure, the application can be pretty sticky, kind of a pain. But, that reminds me of a story told by the philosopher Schopenhauer -- 'a group of porcupines were marooned one bitter cold night in the middle of a large frozen field. There was no way to escape the biting wind. They could not burrow into the frozen ground. As they huddled together to keep warm, their sharp quills began to pinch and hurt. The closer they moved together, the more the pain increased. Some of the animals could not bear the pain and drew apart to sleep alone. In the morning they had frozen to death. They didn't survive.'

"Friendship is necessary, like philosophy, like art... It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival." --CS Lewis
May we be stirred to emulate heaven, to understand that as it is fundamental to the joy we'll know there, it is here as well. Certainly, we're going to struggle with it in our human frailty, but we must be, more than ever, making the effort to be bound together in loving community -- not in word, not in theory but in fact. May those of us who feed the flock and/or find the flock also fellowship with the flock. Jesus did. May we all, in following our Lord, help create that heavenly sense of community where ever we go. It's a real part of heaven's joy.

World News

Middle East

Hizbullah Network Spreading Throughout Mideast

World Tribune 1/30/03

The Iranian-based Hizbullah has established a network throughout the Middle East that threatens to destabilize Arab regimes.

A recent report details the Hizbullah network in such countries as Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Israel, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Turkey. The report said several organizations that use the name Hizbullah convene regularly and train together.

'The organizational ties between various 'Hizbullah' groups are uncertain, although many train or meet together, and have some ties to Iranian and Syrian intelligence, and Iranian and/or Syrian sponsored training centers in Lebanon, Syria, and Iran,' the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies said.

Iraq war feared to be 'enviro-Armageddon'

Pentagon preps for possibility Saddam will use oil wells as doomsday weapon
WND 1/30/03

In the ancient land known as the "cradles of civilization," there are new concerns that an environmental Armageddon is about to take place.

Will Saddam Hussein exchange his oil wealth for a fiery inferno as evinced in Kuwait in 1991? Will the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers flow with fuel instead of water?

Both possibilities are being taken seriously by U.S. military planners looking to prevent what could become one of the worst ecological disasters in history -- if and when the conflict with Iraq begins.

"You'd see mass unemployment, starvation and illness," oil-well engineer Les Skinner told London's Daily Telegraph. "It reminds me very much of the Books of Revelation."

As WorldNetDaily reported in December, sources indicate Saddam had already begun mining his wells with explosives in ways that would make it most difficult to extinguish fires and cap the wells.

A senior U.S. military official now echoes that with the British paper.



Al Quaida member Nidal Okal after sentencing

Sharon to tell Likud: Ministers must agree to Palestinian statehood plan

Jerusalem Post 2/5/03

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon plans to tell fellow Likud Party lawmakers today that anyone who wants a cabinet seat must sign on to his support for President Bush's plan for Palestinians to achieve statehood.

Some sources say Sharon may literally demand signatures to this policy as a condition for receiving a cabinet post.

He is expected to formalize the demand, at which he already hinted before the elections, when the party holds a general meeting of all 38

lawmakers elected last week to the 16th Knesset.

The lawmakers are convening for the first time since the January 28 balloting at the Prime Minister's Office this afternoon.

Sharon is expected to tell them that he intends to base the next government's policy of Bush's Middle East peace ideas, which call for Palestinian reform leading to eventual statehood.

Hezbollah to attack Israel during Iraq war

Iranian-backed terrorist army prepares for major conflict

WND 2/10/03

The Iranian-backed terrorist group Hezbollah, establishing a growing army in southern Lebanon, is planning to launch a major conflict with Israel just as the U.S. prepares to hit Iraq, reports the new G2 intelligence bulletin edited by WorldNetDaily's Joseph Farah.

Hezbollah is believed to have more than 4,000 trained soldiers in Lebanon and thousands of agents around the world. The insurgents are trained in the Bekaa Valley and Iran.

"Hezbollah has been equipped with tanks, artillery, anti-aircraft guns and missiles – lots of missiles," it reports. "Israeli officials believe Hezbollah has about 10,000 short-range missiles and rockets that can strike much of Israel."

Israel is already on high alert in anticipation of a strike. Jerusalem not only fears Iraqi President Saddam Hussein will launch missiles armed with chemical or biological warheads at Israel in response to major air strikes or an invasion, but it also is preparing for the possibility of missile attacks from Hezbollah forces in Lebanon coinciding with an Iraq attack.

Moslem Group on Temple Mount Declared "Terrorist Organization"

Arutz Sheva 2/10/03

The government has declared the Islamic "Heritage Committee," which

operates on the Temple Mount, a terrorist organization. The ministers were presented with evidence proving that the group receives funding from Hamas abroad and supports terrorism here. Preachers of the organization incite against the State of Israel and call upon their believers to harm Israelis, and the heads of the group and its workers are past and present terrorists.

Hamas Calls on Muslims to Attack U.S.

MENL 2/12/03
GAZA CITY -- Hamas has issued its most specific warning to attack the United States.

Hamas leader Ahmed Yassin called on Muslims to attack U.S. nationals and Westerners amid any U.S.-led attack on Iraq. In a letter to Muslims, Yassin urged them to attack Western interests the moment the regime of President Saddam Hussein is struck.

"Muslims should threaten Western interests and strike them everywhere," Yassin said in the letter.

Hamas has led pro-Saddam rallies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Authority has allowed the demonstrations, which included the burning of British, Israeli and U.S. flags

Arabs plan to monitor Israel's nuclear activities

World Tribune 2/13/03

CAIRO — The Arab League plans to form a committee of experts to monitor Israel's nuclear activities.

Arab League officials said the panel would be part of the Arab Atomic Energy Agency and monitor Israel's nuclear facilities. They said the stress would be on the nuclear reactor at Dimona, which is not under the inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Arab Atomic Energy Agency chief Mahmoud Nasser Eddin said the proposed committee would monitor air and water samples along Israel's borders with Arab states. Nasser Eddin said the panel would

aim to quickly detect any nuclear leakage from Israel.

Palestinians Head For Europe, Demanding Revival Of Peace Process

CNS 2/17/03
Jerusalem - Israeli and Palestinian teams were heading to London on Monday to meet with members of the so-called Quartet to discuss Palestinian financial reform.

"We have three meetings," said top Palestinian Authority negotiator Saeb Erekat. "The first is with the donor countries' coordinating group." The PA needs the money "very badly" in order to rebuild its infrastructure after the last two years, Erekat said.

[Another] meeting is at the envoy level. Erekat said the Palestinians intend to demand an immediate implementation of the "road map" to peace, including international observers on the ground and a timeline.

The road map, which has not been made public in its final form, was drawn up by the Quartet -- the U.S., European Union, United Nations and Russia.

Saddam 'arrests' defense minister

General effectively prisoner in own home in extraordinary attempt to prevent coup
WND 2/18/03

Fearing a possible coup to his dictatorship in Baghdad, Saddam Hussein has reportedly placed his defense minister, a close relative, under house arrest.

Britain's Guardian newspaper cites reports from opposition newspapers in Iraq, claiming that the head of the Iraqi military, Lt. Gen. Sultan Hashim Ahmad al-Jabburi Tai, was now effectively a prisoner in his home.

Not only is the general a member of Saddam's inner circle, but he's also the father-in-law of Saddam's son Qusay, considered by many to be the heir apparent to power.

"He continues to attend cabinet meetings and appear on Iraqi TV, so that

everything seems normal," said the source, a high-ranking official with connections to Iraq's ruling Ba'ath party. "But in reality his house and family are surrounded by Saddam's personal guards. They are there so he can't flee."

The source also told the paper that several other high-ranking military and government officials had been arrested in the past few days.

IDF commandos kill Hamas military commander in Gaza

Jerusalem Post 2/18/03

The head of the Hamas military wing in the Gaza Strip was shot, seriously wounded and captured by IDF commandos in the Gaza Strip on Monday morning. He later died in the Soroka Hospital in Be'er Sheva.

According to the army Riad Abu-Zeid was caught by troops in the El Bureij refugee camp. The soldiers set up a surprise roadblock and tried to pull Abu Zeid out of his vehicle.

Abu-Zeid pulled out a weapon and was shot in the head by the troops. The Army said their intention had been to capture Abu-Zeid, not kill him.

Iranian-backed forces cross into Iraq

Financial Times 2/18/03

Iranian-backed Iraqi opposition forces have crossed into northern Iraq from Iran with the aim of securing the frontier in the event of war, according to senior Iranian officials.

The forces, numbering up to 5,000 troops, with some heavy equipment, are nominally under the command of Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir al-Hakim, a prominent Iraqi Shia Muslim opposition leader who has been based in Iran since 1980 and lives in Tehran.

Saddam 'will hide once attack starts'

The Times 2/21/03

SADDAM HUSSEIN plans to "disappear" once America attacks Iraq and has told his generals to fight without him, according to an Arabic daily.

The Iraqi leader instructed his military commanders this month that when war broke out they should take their orders from his son Qusay, who alone will know of Saddam's whereabouts, according to the London-based *al-Hayat*.

Sharon: No Palestinian capital in J'lem, return of refugees into Israel

Jerusalem Post 2/21/03

Speaking to visiting US Jewish leaders in Jerusalem Thursday evening, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon rejected two key Palestinian demands - a capital in Jerusalem and return of Palestinian refugees and their descendants to their original homes in Israel.

"I don't think there is any right to anyone to make any compromise when it comes to Jerusalem," he said, adding that allowing millions of Palestinian refugees to return to Israel "means the destruction of Israel as (an) independent, democratic Jewish state."

Secret Saudi Plan

Crown Prince Floats Islamic Occupation Force for Iraq

ABC News 2/20/03

The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia has recently transmitted a secret proposal to the Bush administration, using one of his own sons, Prince Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah as an emissary, rather than officials from the Saudi Embassy in Washington, sources told ABCNEWS.

The Saudis are proposing that after Saddam Hussein's fall, Saudi Arabia should lead a coalition of Islamic nations to occupy Iraq while a transitional Iraqi government is established, with Turkey playing the leading role in the Islamic force.

Senior government officials told ABCNEWS that according to the Crown Prince, an Islamic occupation force would defuse the anti-American hostility that is sweeping the Middle East and putting pressure on moderate Arab

governments that are allied with the United States.



Bravo Company trains in Kuwait

US and UK move against Iraq

BBC 2/25/03

The United States and the UK have submitted a draft resolution to the United Nations saying that Iraq has missed its "final opportunity" to disarm peacefully.

The draft, which states that Iraq has breached the terms of last November's resolution, faces strong opposition in the 15-member Security Council.

France, Germany and Russia have submitted a rival proposal to the Council to intensify weapons inspections in Iraq as an alternative to military action.

The proposal underlines the bitter rift between France and Germany - who are staunchly opposed to war - and the United States, says BBC Berlin correspondent Ray Furlong.

Co-signed by Spain, the text of the US and UK's resolution refers to the warning in Resolution 1441 that Iraq faces "serious consequences" if it does not fully cooperate - a threat which has been interpreted as the use of force.

REPORT: SAUDIS TRANSFER \$500M TO AL QAIDA

MENL 2/25/03

WASHINGTON -- Saudi Arabia is said to have transferred \$500 million to Al Qaida over the past decade.

A report submitted to the United Nations asserts that the Saudi funds represent the most important source of financing for Al Qaida. The study said Riyadh, pressured by leading officials, has failed to stop the flow of money to Al Qaida in wake of the Sept. 11, 2001 suicide attacks on New York and Washington.

"One must question the real ability and willingness of the kingdom to exercise any control over the use of religious money in and outside of the country," the report said.

The 34-page report was written by a French investigator at the request of Colombia, which occupies the presidency of the Security Council. Jean-Charles Brisard, the investigator, has long studied the issue of Saudi financing of Islamic insurgency groups.

Russia/Asia

N Korea threatens US with first strike

Pyongyang asserts right to pre-emptive attack as tensions rise over American build-up

The Guardian 2/6/03

North Korea is entitled to launch a pre-emptive strike against the US rather than wait until the American military have finished with Iraq, the North's foreign ministry told the Guardian yesterday.

Warning that the current nuclear crisis is worse than that in 1994, when the peninsula stood on the brink of oblivion, a ministry spokesman called on Britain to use its influence with Washington to avert war.

"The United States says that after Iraq, we are next", said the deputy director Ri Pyong-gap, "but we have our own countermeasures. Pre-emptive attacks are not the exclusive right of the US."

A breakthrough stills looks distant. The European Union plans to send a high-level delegation to North Korea later this month to mediate, but similar envoys from Russia and South Korea achieved little because the North insists that the issue is a bilateral matter with the US.

N.Korea Says Sure of Winning Nuclear War with U.S.

SEOUL (Reuters) - North Korea said on Monday that victory would be certain for the communist state in any nuclear war with the United States thanks to Pyongyang's "army-first" political system.

"Victory in a nuclear conflict will be ours and the red flag of army-first politics will flutter ever more vigorously," state radio said, reported by South Korea's Yonhap news agency.

"Our victory is certain and the future ever more radiant," it said, touting the dominance of the army in the world's most heavily militarized society.

The million-strong Korean People's Army is the world's fifth-largest, with nearly one in 20 North Koreans in uniform and spending on defense consuming as much as a quarter of the impoverished state's annual budget.

War warnings and claims that the United States is poised to attack North Korea have been almost daily fare in Pyongyang official media, which have ratcheted up the rhetoric since a nuclear crisis flared last year.

N. Korean ship returns home with sodium cyanide from Germany

World Tribune 2/18/03

The North Korean ship that last year delivered Scud missiles to Yemen transferred a large shipment of chemical weapons material from Germany to North Korea recently, U.S. intelligence officials said.

The ship, the Sosan, was monitored as it arrived in North Korea earlier this month carrying a shipment of sodium

cyanide, a precursor chemical used in making nerve gas, said officials familiar with intelligence reports.

The same ship was stopped by U.S. and Spanish naval vessels Dec. 9 as it neared Yemen. It was carrying 15 Scud missiles and warheads. After a brief delay and assurances from the Yemeni government, the ship was allowed to proceed to Yemen with the missile shipment.

After unloading the missiles in Yemen, the Sosa then traveled to Germany, where it took on a cargo of sodium cyanide estimated to weigh several tons. The ship then was tracked as it traveled to North Korea. It arrived at the west coast seaport of Nampo on Thursday, the officials said.

Russian Envoy in Baghdad on Surprise Mission

Reuters 2/23/03

BAGHDAD - Former Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov arrived in Baghdad on an unexpected mission for President Vladimir Putin, a Russian source in Baghdad said on Sunday.

The visit comes amid U.S. and British efforts to secure a new United Nations Security Council resolution expected to pave the way for war against Iraq.

Iraqi and Russian officials said Primakov arrived late on Saturday and had met senior aides to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Primakov, a Middle East expert and a long-time friend of Saddam, did not appear in public in Baghdad and is believed to be staying at one of the presidential palaces. He is expected to leave later Sunday, the Russian source said.

The official gave no information on the nature of the mission.

Primakov served as Russia's prime minister from 1998-99. He traveled to Baghdad twice in 1990 as part of then-Soviet efforts to avert a U.S.-led attack to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. His missions failed.

Russia, which has extensive economic interests in Iraq, favors a peaceful solution to the Iraqi crisis over alleged weapons of mass destruction. Moscow says it sees no need to use force against Iraq and insists on allowing U.N. arms inspectors to continue their search for banned weapons.

Russian delegations have visited Baghdad regularly since the standoff with the United States began last year.

European Union

EU starts 'navy' to stop influx from Africa

The Daily Telegraph 1/29/03

MADRID — The European Union yesterday launched its own "navy" to patrol the southern shores of Europe and head off the flotillas that ship illegal immigrants from North Africa.

The scheme, called Operation Ulysses, involves five European nations, including Britain, which will contribute a customs cutter, *Seeke*. The flotilla is viewed as the first step toward a common EU border guard.

The quasi-military fleet is one of a host of measures being sought by countries such as Spain and Italy, which have complained of bearing the bulk of the costs of policing EU borders.

Eight Leaders Back U.S. on Iraq

CNN 1/30/03

Eight European leaders have declared their solidarity with the U.S. in dealing with Iraq, saying the 9/11 attacks 'showed just how far terrorists -- the enemies of our common values -- are prepared to go.'

In their solidarity statement published in newspapers across Europe on Thursday, the leaders of Britain, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland declared that it was vital to preserve unity and cohesion now 'more than ever before.'

'We know that success in the day-to-day battle against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction demands unwavering

determination and firm international cohesion on the part of all countries for whom freedom is precious,' they said in the statement.

'The attacks of September 11 showed just how far terrorists -- the enemies of our common values -- are prepared to go to destroy them. Those outrages were an attack on all of us. In standing firm in defense of these principles, the governments and people of the U.S. and Europe have amply demonstrated the strength of their convictions. Today more than ever, the transatlantic bond is a guarantee of our freedom.'

EU states to finance first military operation

EU Observer 1/28/03

EUOBSERVER / BRUSSELS - Around 4.7 million euro will be pooled from the EU states budgets this year to finance the first EU military operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The EU intends to start the deployment of this mission in March.

The EU will be able to take over the mission presently led by Nato and known by the name of 'Allied Harmony' for the next six months after the invitation of the FYROM authorities on 17 January 2003. The EU will be leading the mission but using Nato assets after the agreement reached between the EU and Nato in December.

'New Europe' reads riot act to Paris and Berlin

The Guardian 1/31/03

By declaring their joint support of George W Bush eight states of the "New Europe" have read the riot act to the Franco-German couple who have long driven policy in the European Union.

It is the latest example of the shifting centre of gravity in Europe, which would be reinforced if France and Germany were not part of a victorious coalition against Iraq.

Just a week ago, the audacious Franco-German plan for a twin-headed

presidency of the EU was greeted with scorn by speaker after speaker in the Convention on the Future of Europe, all irked by the way Paris and Berlin seemed to imagine they had achieved a fait accompli. It followed a decision by EU finance ministers to castigate Germany for breaching the euro-zone's Stability Pact. They also issued an official "early warning" to France.

Together with the Poles, Czechs and Hungarians, all brimming with optimism, and can-do spirit, these nations form a "New Europe" of sorts, more or less coinciding with the core of pro-American states singled out for praise by Mr Rumsfeld, who dismissed France and Germany as the "Old Europe".

Ten eastern European states to join in war

The Telegraph 2/6/03

Ten more countries across eastern Europe threw their support behind United States policy in Iraq last night, further demolishing Franco-German claims to speak for the continent on the crisis.

Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Macedonia, and Albania pledged to take part in military action to disarm Saddam Hussein if he continues to defy the United Nations.

Known as the Vilnius Group, the 10 states went even further in support of George W Bush than the British-led "Gang of Eight" had done in a joint letter last week.

The statement, prepared by the 10 ambassadors to Washington, said the United States secretary of state, Colin Powell, had produced compelling evidence of Saddam Hussein's efforts to deceive weapons inspectors.

"Our countries understand the dangers posed by tyranny and the special responsibility of democracies to defend our shared values. The trans-Atlantic community must stand together to face the threat posed by the nexus of

terrorism and dictators with weapons of mass destruction."

A diplomat from one of the Baltic states said with undisguised relish: "It's pretty clear now that Europe isn't just France and Germany."

U.S. Military in Europe May Change Government Is Considering Revamping Structure to Reflect New Era
Washington Post 2/10/03

The United States is contemplating radically changing the nature of its military presence in Europe, moving from a "garrison" system of big, heavily staffed Cold War-era bases to a more expeditionary posture in which troops would be deployed to the continent on a rotational basis, said members of the U.S. delegation flying home yesterday from an annual conference on security issues in Munich.

The current thinking about revamping the U.S. military structure in Europe follows the transformation of the politics of NATO through the addition of 10 member nations that are taking notably pro-U.S. stances, effectively reducing the influence of "old Europe" powers such as Germany and France, delegation members noted.

"It doesn't feel like it's the U.S. and U.K. isolated from Europe," Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman (D-Conn.) said in an interview yesterday high over the ice floes of the North Atlantic. "It seems like France and Germany are isolated from the U.S., the U.K., and the rest of Europe."

Allez, Giscard! Europe is not a home for slaves

The Times 2/10/03

The draft Constitution for Europe which was published last Thursday is a shameful document, destructive of democracy, disastrous for Europe, disastrous for Britain and for all the other present and prospective members of the European Union. It has even been

drafted in a disorderly and undemocratic way.

The draft Constitution would establish a United States of Europe. The main differences between this Constitution and that of the United States of America are that the new Europe would take more power to the centre, leave less independence to the individual states, have fewer and weaker constitutional safeguards and would be undemocratic.



Putin agrees with Chirac on Iraq

If ratified, the new Constitution would change the whole legal basis of the European Union. The EU would cease to be a confederation of independent states, each retaining its ultimate sovereignty, and would become a new "legal personality", with common citizenship, a "duty of loyal co-operation", primacy of its laws over member states, areas of "exclusive competence" — that means power — and dominance in areas of "shared competence". It would also have areas of "supporting action" and in case all these powers proved insufficient, "flexibility" to add new powers. It would not have a democratic government.

Israel-Europe tension mounts

EU delivers harsh reproach on IDF's 'excessive use of force'
Ha'aretz 2/23/03

Diplomatic tension between the European Union and Israel has taken a turn for the worse. While the EU sharply protested the Israel Defense Forces' recent moves in the territories, Israel meanwhile has taken affront at the EU's linkage of the looming crisis with Iraq with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sent a letter to all 15 members of the EU at the weekend, warning them of creating any link between the Iraqi situation and the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Such a linkage "could strengthen the danger faced by Israeli citizens and strengthen the instability in the region," as, according to Netanyahu, this could provide Saddam Hussein with an excuse to attack Israel, as he has done in the past.

United States

Bush Approves Nuclear Response

Washington Times 1/31/03

A classified document signed by President Bush specifically allows for the use of nuclear weapons in response to biological or chemical attacks, apparently changing a decades-old U.S. policy of deliberate ambiguity, it was learned by The Washington Times.

"The United States will continue to make clear that it reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force — including potentially nuclear weapons — to the use of [weapons of mass destruction] against the United States, our forces abroad, and friends and allies," the document, National Security Presidential Directive 17, set out on Sept. 14 last year.

The classified document, a copy of which was shown to The Washington Times, is known better by its abbreviation NSPD 17, as well as Homeland Security Presidential Directive 4.

The disclosure of the classified text

follows newspaper reports that the planning for a war with Iraq focuses on using nuclear arms not only to defend U.S. forces but also to "pre-empt" deeply buried Iraqi facilities that could withstand conventional explosives.

For decades, the U.S. government has maintained a deliberately vague nuclear policy, expressed in such language as "all options open" and "not ruling anything in or out." As recently as last weekend, Bush administration officials used similar statements in public, consciously avoiding the word "nuclear."

Iran, Libya, Syria are next?

Defense adviser says U.S. wants regime changes in these countries
WND 2/25/03

After Saddam Hussein is ousted, United States foreign policy plans call for regime change in Iran, Libya and Syria, reports World Tribune.com.

Intensifying concerns of Arab leaders who feel caught between a rock and a hard place over the issue of war against Iraq, a U.S. official told Arab journalists the tactic would differ for each country, but the end result would be the same — democracy throughout the Arab world.

"Change is needed in all those three countries, and a few others besides," Richard Perle told the London-based author and analyst Amir Taheri.

Perle is chairman of the U.S. Defense Advisory Board and is said to be one of the architects in the Bush administration of the proposed regime change in Iraq, according to the newssite.

He added that he felt U.S. intervention may only be necessary in Libya and that reform can come from within in Iran and Syria. He would not elaborate on what U.S. intervention might entail.

"As for Libya, it is a weird case," Perle told Taheri. "For the time being it is out of world reality. But the colonel knows that we have our eyes on him."

Perle asserted Arab leaders would support U.S. policy in the Middle East,

as a dozen countries are behind the U.S. effort against Hussein.

"Not a single Arab state is making the slightest move against our policy on this issue," Perle said. "And at least a dozen are actively cooperating with us in whatever field we require. What interests me is that almost all Arab states are showing a sense of realism and an understanding of their own interests on this issue."

Perle's confidence in Arab support runs contrary to public declarations made by Arab leaders.

After convening an emergency session in Cairo, the Arab League declared aggression against either Iraq or Kuwait a "threat to the national security of all Arab states."

United Nations

Quartet 'ROAD MAP' For Two States Way Out of Israeli-Palestinian Crisis, Says Secretary-General

UN Press Release 2/14/03

At the opening this afternoon of the 2003 session of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Bureau was re-elected, the work programme was adopted, and Committee members heard Secretary-General Kofi Annan urge that the way out of the extremely dangerous situation between the Israelis and Palestinians was the "road map" aimed at a two-State solution.

"Let us not fall into the trap of imagining that it cannot get any worse. It easily can", said the Secretary-General in a statement read out on his behalf by S. Iqbal Riza, Chef de Cabinet. Already, the human cost of the crisis had been appalling. Since September 2000, more than 3,200 people had lost their lives — the great majority of them Palestinians, but also many Israelis. Thousands more on both sides had been wounded, again preponderantly Palestinians.

Deplorably, the majority of the victims had been civilians.

Still, there was a way out, he said. A broad consensus had emerged on the need for a two-State solution. The "road map" drawn up by the Quartet — the United States, European Union, Russian Federation and United Nations — aimed to help realize that vision, set out in Security Council resolution 1397, of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace. The road map was performance-based and hope-driven, with clearly defined phases and realistic time-lines and target dates. Its implementation would end the occupation that began in 1967, establish an independent, viable and democratic Palestine within three years, bringing hope to Palestinians and ensure security for Israelis.

Science/Technology

Sir Isaac Newton Set 2060 For End of the World

Daily Telegraph 2/23/03

Sir Isaac Newton, Britain's greatest scientist, predicted the date of the end of the world - and it is only 57 years away. His theories about Armageddon have been unearthed by academics from little-known handwritten manuscripts in a library in Jerusalem.

The thousands of pages show Newton's attempts to decode the Bible, which he believed contained God's secret laws for the universe.

Newton, who was also a theologian and alchemist, predicted that the Second Coming of Christ would follow plagues and war and would precede a 1,000-year reign by the saints on earth - of which he would be one.

The most definitive date he set for the apocalypse, which he scribbled on a scrap of paper, was 2060.

Newton's fascination with the end of the world, which has been researched by a Canadian academic, Stephen Snobelen, is to be explored in a documentary,

Newton: The Dark Heretic, on BBC2 next Saturday.

'What has been coming out over the past 10 years is what an apocalyptic thinker Newton was,' Malcolm Neaum, the producer, said.

'He spent something like 50 years and wrote 4,500 pages trying to predict when the end of the world was coming. But until now it was not known that he ever wrote down a final figure. He was very reluctant to do so.'

Thousands of Newton's papers, which had lain in a trunk in the house of the Earl of Portsmouth for 250 years, were sold by Sotheby's in the late 1930s.

John Maynard Keynes, the economist, bought many of the texts on alchemy and theology. But much of the material went to an eccentric collector, Abraham Yahuda, and was stored in the Hebrew National Library. It was among these documents that the date was found.

Computer Made from DNA and Enzymes

National Geographic 2/24/03

Israeli scientists have devised a computer that can perform 330 trillion operations per second, more than 100,000 times the speed of the fastest PC. The secret: It runs on DNA.

A year ago, researchers from the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel, unveiled a programmable molecular computing machine composed of enzymes and DNA molecules instead of silicon microchips. Now the team has gone one step further. In the new device, the single DNA molecule that provides the computer with the input data also provides all the necessary fuel.

The design is considered a giant step in DNA computing. The Guinness World Records last week recognized the computer as "the smallest biological computing device" ever constructed. DNA computing is in its infancy, and its implications are only beginning to be explored. But it could transform the future of computers, especially in

pharmaceutical and biomedical applications.

"Autonomous bio-molecular computers may be able to work as 'doctors in a cell,' operating inside living cells and sensing anomalies in the host," said Shapiro. "Consulting their programmed medical knowledge, the computers could respond to anomalies by synthesizing and releasing drugs."

DNA computing research is going so fast that its potential is still emerging. "This is an area of research that leaves the science fiction writers struggling to keep up," said Hawksett from the Guinness World Records.

Religion

Christian mother ordered jailed

Jordanian mom refuses to hand over kids to be raised as Muslims

WND 1/29/03

A court in northern Jordan has ordered a Christian widow to jail for 30 days if she refuses to hand over her two minor children to be raised as Muslims, reports news service [Compass Direct](#).

According to the report, a warrant for Siham Qandah's arrest was issued Jan. 16. On Jan. 20, she was informed by phone that she was to surrender custody of her daughter Rawan, 14, and son Fadi, 12, to their court-appointed Muslim guardian.

Jordan claims that before his death several years ago, Qandah's Christian husband secretly converted to Islam, making his children Muslims under Jordanian law.

According to a close relative, the Qandah children are "living from house to house. ... It would be very dangerous for them to stay at home. And if the police find their mother, they may take her to prison."

American magnates finance new Temple Mount campaign

Ha'aretz 1/31/03

Jingles for "Temple Mount - Heart of the Nation" have been broadcast widely on Israel Radio Reshet Bet and Reshet Gimmel during the past week. Calling for opening up the Temple Mount and strengthening the Jewish presence there, the messages were aired despite the recent prohibition against political or campaign-related broadcasts on state radio.

Financial support for the "Temple Mount - Heart of the Nation" campaign has been provided by a group of several Jewish American magnates. A source close to the unnamed donors explained that "they are pained that the Temple Mount has been closed to Jews for the past two-and-a-half years, and want to deepen the public awareness and the identity of the Jewish people with the site."

Interreligious Cooperation Seen as a Necessity, Not an Option Zenit 2/12/03

A symposium condemned attempts to turn religion into a force of division and violence, and instead encouraged the need for interreligious dialogue. These were among the conclusions reflected in the final declaration of the symposium held in Rome from Jan. 16-18 and organized by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. The symposium on "Spiritual Resources of the Religions for Peace" included 38 participants from 15 countries, who represented Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism.

[The] final document ... expresses the need for dedicated efforts to "examine



The Temple Mount

how, in a world that is increasingly interconnected, we can find new ways to respect our religious differences while forging peaceful bonds based on our common humanity."

"We hold that the scriptures of each religion teach the path of peace, but we acknowledge that our various sacred writings have often been and continue to be used to justify violence, war and exclusion of others."

[The] interreligious meetings seek "to instill a spirit of mutual respect and genuine understanding of one another" while, at the same time, helping people see "religions as a force of good." In the context of contemporary life, "interreligious cooperation is no longer an option but a necessity," the declaration states categorically.

A SURE TICKET FOR TROUBLE...

After so much miraculous intervention on God's part, you have to just shake your head in wonder. Why would he do it?? OK, let's look at the record – ten disastrous plagues destroyed Egypt, a terribly powerful nation at the time; the Red Sea split in two leaving a dry channel through which the fleeing Hebrews escaped the wrath of the pursuing Egyptian army; then the army was destroyed under these same waters as the Hebrews reached the distant coast; for the following 40 years, this wandering hoard of 2 – 6 million people were given water from a rock, bread from heaven, a cloud and pillar of fire for daily directions; their sandals never wore out; the Jordan river miraculously stopped running to allow their crossing into Canaan; the walls of Jericho simply fell down before them...the list goes on and on.

So WHY would he do it?? It wasn't as if he didn't know God had miraculously brought them back to the land of their fathers. And it wasn't as if God hadn't given them clear and specific instructions – Joshua told them, "*Now the city shall be doomed by the LORD to destruction...and you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver and gold vessels of bronze and iron are consecrated to the LORD; they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.*"

But he did it anyway! You know the story – after wiping out Jericho, the armies of Israel were defeated at the

little nothing fortress of Ai. The people were instantly demoralized. What in the world had happened? Was God with them or not??

Joshua, their commander sought the LORD and found out the problem – God said, "*There is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you.*" So he called for the whole host to assemble, then he called out the tribe of Judah; then he called out the family of the Zarahites; then he took the clan of Zabdi and then he took the man Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah. Achan, his knees must have really been knocking!

And he confessed, "*Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel and this is what I have done; When I saw among the spoils (of Jericho) a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.*"

So he was taken, along with all that pertained to him – his family and his goods, and all Israel stoned him; then they burned him and finally heaped a great mound of stones over the ashes. The experience was so powerful that they memorialized the place of his execution calling it the Valley of Achor, the valley of trouble. Achan was his name and that spelled trouble.

For this study, we'll look at the root cause of this trouble, the real consequences in personal application and the repeat coming in prophetic terms.

Root cause – covetousness. God had protected, prospered, prepared the people for this campaign. They were all in line, so to speak, save one man, and his folly threatened the whole nation. He didn't need the spoils of the war; he had a lifetime of experience of God's goodness and faithfulness. He was fully informed as well. But he let his sinful lust drive him to the deed. It's interesting that when confessing, he asserts that the thing that first caught his eye was "a beautiful Babylonian garment" or a robe from Shinar. The prohibited items specified by the Lord initially did not mention garments. Could it be that his attraction for this Babylonian delight led him to greater guilt -- taking the silver and gold? Whatever the case, he coveted them.

The word translated as coveting here in Joshua chapter seven is basically lusting after something. It is the same word used when Eve looked upon the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden and in the Ten C's of Exodus when the Lord forbade coveting your neighbor's blessings. Whew! Talk about root cause! This is the stumbling block for all of humanity.

And the tragedy is that just as Eve was surrounded by God's incredible blessings and goodness in the garden, so was Achan upon entering the promised land, and so are you and I BY FAITH. Oh, we may yet wonder how we're going to make the next mortgage payment or 'just how lonely can a person get?' But we have God's Word on it – all things are ours in Christ. (1 Cor 3:21-23). Paul made it abundantly clear that we are more blessed in heaven than can be described. Whether we enjoy earthly blessings or travail in earthly sufferings, we need not covet for we

have such glorious promises of eternal rewards that they're just not worth comparing (Rom 8:18).

Real Consequences – coveting is intrinsically destructive to the individual soul and the community as a whole. Achan was bombarded, burned and buried. These consequences are the fruit of covetousness. Play with it and you'll be hit by temptations and lies, hurt by the heat of the flesh's insatiable appetite for sin and heaped upon in condemnation and guilt. **Just stop!** Consider the outcome – set your mind on things above.

Ever see a person afflicted with leprosy? Hands and feet decayed and gone; the face not recognizable as human, the senses dead – a sad, sad condition. And it all starts with one diseased nerve. One hidden problem. Such is the spiritual effect of covetousness in the body and the community. Sad to say, it is the foundational principle of today's entertainment and advertising with which we're pummeled day by day – it's mantra -- promote covetousness rather than contentment. Like the host of Israel, you have to deal with it radically.

Return coming – the prophetic illustration is wonderful here. This Valley of Trouble is very symbolic for the Jewish nation. You see, just as in the book of Joshua, the host of Israel had only recently entered the Promised Land so too the modern nation of Israel has only recently re-entered it. Just as Jericho miraculously fell to the ancient host of Jews, so have the modern Israelis have had miraculous success in warfare and it may culminate with their victory over the Ezekiel 38 and 39 predicted invasion of Russia and its allies. But trouble's coming. One man is coming who cannot control his desire (the Antichrist). He will bring a time of false peace and then great trouble to

Israel – the time of "Jacob's trouble" (Jer 30:7). It will be during the last seven years of this age, the 70th week of Daniel's famous prophecy (Dan 9:24-27).

As with Achan, it may begin with a temptation associated with Shinar (i.e. Babylon or modern day Iraq) and lead to some problematic buried treasure (oil??). Like Achan, he will be hung up on silver, gold and pleasant things (Dan 11:38). Regardless,...

Israel will be greatly troubled during this time of judgment. *"The great day of the LORD is near; it is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter; there the mighty men shall cry out. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and alarm against the fortified cities and against the high towers."* (Zeph 1:14-16) and like Achan, *"Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy..."* (Zeph 1:18)

"At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people (the Jews); and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that time..." (Dan 12:1)

But with the peril also comes a promise – *"And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book."* (Dan 12:1) *"I will punish her for the days of the Baals to which she burned incense and she decked herself with her earrings and jewelry and went after her lovers but Me she forgot," says the LORD. "Therefore, behold, I will allure (or open) her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her*

(speak to her heart). I will give her her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope..." (Hos 2:13-15)

"I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD." (Hos 2:19,20)

The Jewish people in rejecting their Messiah have placed their hopes in other things. For two thousand years they have been 'ripped on' as a consequence. Now that God has graciously gathered them, they have re-entered the Promised Land and enjoyed military success. But they look to America and their own wits, their own power to preserve them. They're not yet ready for their true Messiah, they're ready for a false one. And Christ will remain in heaven until it's time – *"For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear them and go away; I will take them away, and no one shall rescue. I (Jesus) will return again to My place (heaven) till they (the Jews) acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me."*

Jesus prophesied of the Jews in the tribulation period, *"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations*

(by the 144,000 sealed Jewish evangelists? See Rev 7) *and then the end will come. Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains (the wilderness?)...for then there will be great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*" (Mat 24)

However, because of God's love for them, it is in this 'valley of trouble' that they will find a 'door of hope'. They will say, "Come, and let us return to the LORD; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days (prophetically, 2,000 years – see 2 Pet 3:8) He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight. Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning (of the third day); He will come to us as the rain (from heaven not the US, UN or the EU) like the latter and former rain to the earth (two times – one fulfilling the Spring or latter rain festivals and one fulfilling

the Fall or former rain festivals. More on that in another study, Lord willing). (Hosea 6:1-3) It could even be that they will literally pass through this valley which is near Jericho on the way to the wilderness.

Are you in such a valley? Do you know someone who is? Has covetousness led to trouble? Whatever trouble you may be in, know this – that in Jesus Christ and Him alone there is a door of hope, the door of salvation. Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep...if anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." (John 10:7-9) (See Rev 3:8 and 4:1 also). Yes, He can turn that place of trouble into a peaceful pasture. In fact, He promises it – "Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down, for My people who have sought Me. (Isa 65:10) This is true.

As with Achan, that 'Babylonian' treasure may be quite attractive, but it's a sure ticket for trouble. As Israel did, remove the 'accursed thing' from your midst – give your sin to God. Only then can you stand before your enemies. And one day soon, we who believe will leave this trouble behind!

What If Oil Is Discovered In Israel? *The Gog-Magog Invasion* By Hal Lindsey 2/5/03

I have studied the remarkable prophecies of Ezekiel chapters 35-39 for over 46 years.

Most of what this Hebrew prophet predicted over 2600 years ago, have come true in our era.

Here are some of the things he predicted would take place against impossible odds:

- The Jews have returned to their ancient homeland after almost 2000 years of merciless dispersion all over the world.
- They would turn the utterly desolate land into one of the most fertile lands on earth.
- They would become and remain a state despite overwhelming odds against them.
- They would re-conquer Jerusalem and hold it.
- A mighty power to the extreme north of Israel, Russia, would build an arsenal of deadly weapons and supply them to all the Muslims of the Middle East.
- Persia or Iran would be the leading Muslim nation that will join the Russian led confederacy.
- Russia remains the Muslim world's number one arms supplier and friend.

Events in our era have fulfilled almost all of Ezekiel's prophecy to the letter. But a few very important parts of this prophecy have not yet been fulfilled. There is a terrible invasion by a Russian led Muslim confederacy predicted for the future.

But it is to be triggered by Israel's enormous wealth and place as a center of world attention.

I have pondered this on many occasions. Though Israel has done very well economically, they do not possess the kind of wealth and world

power that would make them a center of the world.

Yet listen to what Ezekiel predicts about the motivation of this coming invader, "[Have you come] to capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are now inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, who live at the center of the world. Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all its villages, will say to you, 'Have you come to capture spoil? Have you assembled your company to seize plunder, to carry away SILVER and GOLD, to take away cattle and goods, to capture great spoil?'" (Ezekiel 38:12-13 NASB)

Here are some events that could set up enormous wealth and power for Israel in the very near future.

If Saddam Hussein carries through his threat when the US attacks Iraq, he will blow up his oil wells. He will not only destroy the number two proven oil reservoir in the world, he will also pollute the Persian Gulf region.

This will plunge the world economy into a tail spin.

But what if, at this very critical time history, an enormous reservoir of oil is discovered in Israel?

Let me briefly fill you in on a miracle that I believe is in the making. All the details and Scriptures will be the subject of a book soon to be written.

In 1981, a Christian named John Brown heard Rev. James Spillman give a series of messages entitled "The Treasures of the Deep". The messages were about Spillman's deeply held beliefs from the Scripture that God was going to give Israel vast wealth through the discovery of oil in the Last Days.

John Brown was strangely and deeply moved by what he heard. A

Promises of His Appearing

...while we wait for the blessed hope--the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. (Titus 2:13-14)

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also... (John 14: 2-3)

When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; For your redemption draws near. (Luke 21:28). I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. (Luke 21:32)

key verse in Spillman's discovery is about how God would bless Joseph and his two sons in "THE LAST DAYS" (Genesis 49:1-2).

God promised, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a WELL; his branches run over the wall ... [you will be blessed] by the God of your father who will help you, and by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of heaven above and BLESSINGS OF THE DEEP THAT LIES BENEATH ..." (Genesis 49:22, 25 NKJ)

Note that it speaks of blessings that will exceed all his brothers' and overflow to others. And that these blessings will come from "the DEEP THAT LIES BENEATH."

In ancient times, no one dreamed of the kind of wealth that was stored DEEP under the land beneath his feet. The technology for finding oil by drilling wells was first discovered by the Americans.

The first successful well was drilled at Titusville, Pennsylvania on August 27, 1859 – just in time for the industrial revolution whose lifeblood is oil.

The first oil discovered in the Middle East was in Persia in 1908. It was soon learned that the Persian Gulf area contained most of the oil reserves in the world. Oil has given the Muslim people such leverage over the reborn State of Israel that virtually no one but the US will dare support them.

Virtually the whole world fears being cut off from the Muslim oil supply. But prophecy indicates that this would not be able to destroy Israel, nor keep them from great wealth in the last days.

John Brown could not get this message out of his mind. Although he was very successful at working with a tool-making company, he began to be

moved in an irresistible way toward helping Israel find this oil.

Finally, God spoke to John and told him that he was to go to Israel and that He would show him what to do. So in 1983, Brown resigned from his company, took all his savings, which was a little over one million dollars, and went to Israel by faith. He founded a company called "Zion Oil & Gas".

In the twenty years that have followed, there have been many hardships and just-in-time miracles. But to make an exciting story short, John Brown now has licenses for exploration rights to 98,300 acres. These acres are right in the middle of land that was given to the two sons of Joseph.

Recent evaluations of geological studies reveal that deep underneath the very land to which he has licenses; there is the potential of 20 billion barrels of oil and trillions of cubic feet of gas.

Needless to say, this would change the whole strategic balance of the Middle East and the world. Israel would no longer be hostage to the Muslim oil cartel. It would also become incredibly wealthy over night.

Prophetically, I believe oil will be found there on his leases. The first exploration well will be completed by early next year. Another company drilling on the extreme edge of the dome under his leases is making some very encouraging discoveries.

They verify that the area could contain untold wealth. I do know that this is just the right prophetic time for these discoveries to be made.

I cannot believe that God would only bless the Muslims with oil. I can barely wait to see what will happen next. May God bless John Brown and his associates for their vision. And may God fulfill all His promises to His people Israel.

(See entire article at www.hallindseyoracle.com)



Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.