

1: Pope in Bari: 'A Middle East Without Christians Would Not Be the Middle East' - ZENIT - English

"Stretching out hands to God": Origins and Development of Pentecostalism in Africa / _ Brill's MyBook program is exclusively available on BrillOnline Books and Journals.

Introduction to the Middle East Introduction to the Middle East The term "Middle East" is generally recognized today to refer to a region that stretches from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to Afghanistan in the east, a distance of approximately 5, kilometers. The Middle East, as defined above, encompasses four distinct culture areas: Arab, Turkish, Iranian, and the newly evolved Israeli culture. The Arab, Turkish, and Iranian cultures are heirs to great Islamic empires that had their centers in the region and represent three distinct variations within the global Islamic civilization. The most recent and most enduring of these, the Ottoman Empire, ruled over most of the Middle East, as well as parts of eastern Europe, for almost years, until its demise and dismemberment at the end of World War I. Out of its ashes arose the modern state of Turkey, as well as the majority of the contemporary Arab nation-states. From the historical perspective, the Middle East is known as the "cradle of civilizations. These three distinct yet related religions were forged in the context of the Middle East, and all three continue today to find expression in and give meaning to the lives of the people of the region. Archaeologists working in the area have uncovered evidence of the prehistoric domestication of plants and animals and the beginning of settled life as far back back in time as the Neolithic or New Stone Age. From sites scattered along the hilly flanks of the mountain ranges in Iraq, Iran, and Israel, archaeologists are reconstructing the cultural evolution that transformed our human ancestors from nomadic hunters and gatherers into settled villagers who cultivated domesticated varieties of wheat and barley and kept domesticated sheep and goats. This major epoch in human history, which can be dated back to B. The transition from an adaptation based on hunting and gathering to one based on food production and settled community life was the prelude to the next phase in human cultural evolution, the beginning of civilization, which in the Middle East goes back to about B. The culture complex we refer to as "civilization" includes urbanism, a writing system, monumental architecture, long-distance trade, a complex social order, and a centralized state system, often focused on a divine king. This transformation is fully illustrated in the archaeological records of the different civilizations that succeeded each other in the region: Sumer, Egypt, Akkad, Babylon, and Assyria. The history of dynastic Egypt is perhaps the most complete; it has been traced back to B. Despite a series of invasionsâ€”Roman, Arab, Ottoman, and Britishâ€”Egypt has always remained a united country with a very strong sense of its unique identity. Iran, or Persia, as it was formerly known, is a country with a long and illustrious history. The Iranians, who speak an Indo-European language, Farsi, are also heirs to a great civilization and an imperial past. Zoroastrianism is considered by some scholars to be one of the first "ethical" religions and a precursor to early Judaism. The prophet Zoroaster declared the coexistence of Good and Evil in the world and called on humans to uphold the Good by combatting Evil. Although the overwhelming majority of Zoroastrians were converted following the Muslim invasion, a small community of them remains today in Iran.

2: God vs. Gog / U.S. & Russian Relations | Prophecy and Promises

Phrases like 'You'll find God soon, God-willing' are a measure of someone's affection for you and a reasonable response would be shukran (thank you). General Etiquette Tourism has the potential to improve the relationship between the Middle East and the West, but the gradual erosion of traditional life is the flipside of mass tourism.

Transcribed by the Right Reverend Dr. She will stretch out her hands, or, more expressively in the original, she will make her hands run to God. She will shoot them forth to Him in the eagerest ejaculations of passionate supplication, like a captive imploring to be freed. Thus in the text, brethren, the Holy Spirit encourages us to meditate with hope on the blessed consummation which occupies our thoughts at this time. In the year B. And thus Egypt itself, the land of the Pharaohs, was made a highway for the gospel. The great Hebrew lawgiver, Moses, had been saved when an infant in an ark of bulrushes on the Nile. They have been saved from our spiritual enemy, and have been buoyed up on the waters of this world by the same means. It is another noteworthy circumstance in the life of the Hebrew lawgiver that he married an Ethiopian woman. The infant Jesus himself found refuge in Africa. By the help of God, that gallant soldier of the cross stood unmoved and almost alone against all the power and wiles of the evil one. He remained firm, "doing what a good man ought to do, and suffering what a good man may expect to suffer in evil days, Athanasius against the world and the world against Athanasius. But Carthage, although conquered by Rome in the conflicts of the sword, was not inferior to Rome in the nobler conquests of the cross. Africa was the teacher of Italy. Tertullian, the son of an African soldier, and who for his fervour and his courage may be called a Christian Hannibal, was the first great preacher of the gospel in the language of Italy. The light of Christianity burns in his writings with the splendour of an African sun. It shows us what we may hope for, if Africa can be gained to the gospel. Honour be to his memory! At such a time as that, Tertullian confuted the cavils of the Jews, and dispelled the dreams of the Gnostics, and established the true faith concerning the resurrection of the body, the person of Christ, and the doctrine of the blessed Trinity. Kindled at his light, but burning with a milder lustre, shone that other luminary of Carthage and Africa, St Cyprian. Charitable and tolerant toward the weak, he was a steadfast upholder of Christian unity. He knew and taught that the spiritual graces, which flow from Christ our divine Head, are dispensed to His members by means of the regular ministries of religion, and are vouchsafed to all who dwell together in loving communion with the catholic Church. At the same time, it is clear that his principles of Christian unity were not mere speculative theories, but were living springs of Christian practice. The Pestilence which raged at Carthage in his episcopate gave evidence of this. The Christian bishop, in that hour of trial, derived new strength from the Holy Spirit of God, and moved in an orbit of his own, in calm dignity and apostolic charity, amid the horrors of the time. Cyprian de Mortalitate, c. They are trials of our Christian faith, and exercises of our Christian love. They are a holy discipline, training us in a school of sorrow for a crown of glory. Why should we weep for our friends who fall asleep in Christ? They have been released from the prison of this world, and have set out before us on a happy journey to a blessed home. At a short distance from Carthage was the city of Hippo, memorable in the history of the Church of Africa and the world, as the Episcopal see of St Augustine. In him she possessed an expositor of Holy Scripture whose mind was illumined by the Holy Spirit, and whose lips seem to have been touched with holy fire from the altar of God. He occupied the Episcopal See of Hippo for thirty-five years, and in him the Church beheld one of the most beautiful examples of piety, learning, and wisdom, that ever was displayed in the actions and writings of a Christian bishop. To him Christendom is indebted for some of the strongest safeguards against dangerous error, and for some of the securest bulwarks of saving truth. We ourselves in England owe a large debt of gratitude to St Augustine in one respect especially. For this wise and charitable spirit, the Church of England was indebted, under God, to the deference paid by our Reformers to the writings of the great African bishop St Augustine, more perhaps than to those of any other man. She did not rudely tear asunder the links of that sacred chain, although in its transmission through the hands of the Church of Rome it had been sullied and corroded with the rust of manifold human corruptions, but she thanked God for having preserved that chain unbroken; and she endeavoured by His grace to purify and strengthen it, and to restore it

to its original brightness and freshness, as it came forth from the hand of Christ. At the age of seventy-six, St Augustine fell asleep in Christ, in the year of the Christian era. The city in which he lived and taught so long, was at that time beleaguered by Vandal armies who ravaged Africa, and laid it waste with fire and sword. He died of a fever in the third month of the siege. Everything then looked dark and dreary, but he died in faith and hope; and successive ages have enjoyed the blessed fruits, which God has made to flourish and abound from the labours and sufferings of this faithful confessor of Jesus Christ. Though in His righteous indignation, God permitted it to be overrun by the Vandals in the fifth century, and afterwards by the armies of the Arabian impostor and his successors, yet already had rich harvests been gathered in Africa, and safely stowed in the garner of the Lord. They were compassed with human infirmities like ourselves. But God blessed their work. And if they were able to do and suffer as they did, may not we do likewise? Holy martyrs die, but martyrdoms are springs of life. Blessed, for ever blessed be the names of those holy men who suffered in Africa, and who "being dead, yet speak. They beckon to us. We see the bright light of the churches which were planted in ancient times, like beacon-fires of the gospel, along the northern coast of Africa; and they make signals to us to encourage us to persevere in our labours, and to endeavour to continue the telegraphic series, till it stretches through the darkness of Central Africa, till it connects the ancient churches of St Cyprian, St Athanasius, and St Augustine, with the cathedrals of English colonies in Caffraria and Cape Town. Brethren, some persons seem to think that the work which specially calls for our prayers and alms to-day--the mission to Central Africa--has failed. But you are not of that mind. Nay, rather, may we not say with humble hope and trust, that it never had a better prospect of success than now? Even because of checks and hindrances that it has had to encounter. We may derive wisdom from them. Some of us here present may remember the great meeting at Cambridge on behalf of this Mission, on the festival of All Saints, in the year . . . Some of us may recollect the rapturous joy, the ecstatic enthusiasm, and may we not say the sanguine confidence, which were then displayed. In that sermon, he used the following words: Should we not thank God for them, that they are gone before, not only for their sakes, because they have come out of great tribulation, and arrived safe at the haven where they would be, but also for ourselves; because we hope, when the strife is over, and our work on earth is finished, to be admitted to that heavenly society, and to know them also, even as we are known? But where were the united prayers in the Church, in aid of the Mission? Where were the gatherings together for the holy communion? May we not learn something here as to the true strength of Christian missions. It is not in the crowded hall or on the platform, however important these aids may be in their due order and degree, but it is in the blessing of God poured down in gracious abundance on the quiet supplications and cheerful offerings of Christian hearts, joined together in love. Again, it may seem presumptuous, perhaps, to offer any opinion as to the propriety of the spot chosen for the first planting of the Mission. But events are wise teachers. It appeared as if we thought at that time, that by one bold onslaught we could take African heathenism by storm. But Satan is not so conquered in his strongholds. There is such a thing as missionary science. There are strategies and tactics in evangelisation as well as in war. And one of their first principles is, that a small, noble-hearted mission band should not be stimulated by us, who stay at home, to throw itself at once into an isolated position, from which it has no retreat, and from which it cannot readily communicate with its friends and allies for supplies and reinforcements, and for the regular support of its spiritual commissariat. Remember, brethren, the missionary tactics of that great apostolic captain and conqueror, St Paul. He had a basis of his missionary operations at Antioch in Syria, the capital of Gentile Christendom, the city where he himself was ordained to his apostleship; and on that base he fell back, after three successive missionary campaigns in Asia and Greece. He had another base of missionary operations at Jerusalem, which he used in a similar way. Brethren, the Mission to Central Africa has now, thank God, a base for its operations, and an excellent one it is. That base is Zanzibar. Let us not repine that our plans have not succeeded in our way. Even St Paul himself was helped by being hindered. We read, in the Acts of the Apostles, xvi. Witness the successful labours of St Paul and St John there; but the time was not yet come. St Paul was therefore forbidden to preach there, and was sent in another direction, till the season should be ripe for the work in Asia. Again, when he engaged to preach in Bithynia, the Spirit suffered him not, Acts xvi. He must go elsewhere. But Bithynia was afterwards evangelised. So, brethren, it may be with us: We have assayed to preach at once in Central Africa; but the

Spirit has not suffered us, and has sent us to Zanzibar. And if we do our work faithfully and zealously there, we may hope, like St Paul, though prevented for a time, to conquer eventually in that field, which will doubtless one day be gained for Christ, and which is the object of our desires. We may derive encouragement here from considering our own spiritual history. When Gregory the Great sent Augustine from Rome to England, at the end of the sixth century, he commissioned him to place the metropolitanical see at London, and to found twenty-four bishoprics in England. But God willed it otherwise. The metropolitanical see was not founded at London but at Canterbury, and only three bishoprics of the twenty-four were founded in the lifetime of St Augustine, and not long after his death, that part of England which he had evangelised relapsed into heathenism. It was Christianised in great measure by means of native missionaries of the British isles, such as we, brethren, are endeavouring to raise up for Africa. It was Christianised by such missionaries as were trained under St Patrick, who was originally a slave in Ireland, and who became afterwards its apostle; and St Columba, the son of a native prince of Ireland, who founded the famous missionary school in the island of Iona, which sent forth able and zealous preachers, who evangelised Scotland and England, and even some nations of the continent of Europe. May not Zanzibar be to Africa, what Iona was to us? This is no private imagination. Why should not the isle of Zanzibar do a similar work in the east? Only, brethren, let us not be too impatient for results. God is now trying us. He is testing our faith and trust in Him. The leaven of the gospel works slowly. The grain of mustard seed grows insensibly.

3: Global Connections . Religion | PBS

*While short on details, God's word indicates that Ethiopia and its ancient territory will be involved in the fulfillment of end-time Bible prophecy. For additional information on this timely subject, be sure to read or listen to *The Middle East in Prophecy*.*

Further study *The Rise of Civilization* A region of dry grasslands and fertile river plains, the Middle East was the natural home to the first agriculture, and then to the first civilizations. The cradle of farmingâ€¦ The Middle East is a huge area, with many different kinds of climate and landscape. Large parts are covered by desert or grassland; elsewhere there are highlands and mountains covered by forests. Running through all these zones are long rivers, especially the Tigris and Euphrates in Mesopotamia, and the Nile in Egypt. The highlands of the Middle East are the natural habitat of grasses, such as wild wheat and barley, and it was almost inevitable that agriculture based on these crops, which would eventually cover so much of the world, would begin here, around 10,000 years ago. Farming had spread around the Middle East by c. 8000. The melting snows in the high mountains and the spring rains in the hills carry fresh water and silt down into the lowlands, flooding the dry river plains and depositing a rich mud for miles around. This means that the land surrounding the lower reaches of these rivers is potentially very fertile. However, it is too dry for farming most of the year â€” except during the spring and early summer, when there is too much water! Farmers gradually mastered this challenging environment by developing irrigation techniques, beginning around 5000 BCE. This created a wonderfully productive agriculture, led to the rise of the first civilizations in world history, those of the Sumerians in Mesopotamia, and of Ancient Egypt in the Nile Valley. See *TimeMap of the Middle East in BC*

Nomads The communities which settled the broad river plains of Mesopotamia naturally came to devote much of their land to fields of wheat and barley, as this was the most productive use for it. In the highlands and grasslands surrounding these the river plains, however, keeping sheep and goats was a good use of the less fertile terrain. The importance of stock-rearing increased as the expanding populations of crop-growers in the river plains grew, and created an intensifying demand for the animal products which they lacked wool, skin, meat, cheese and so on. As a result, societies grew up on the highlands and plains of the Middle East which specialised in stock-rearing, and took to a more nomadic way of life than before. These nomadic pastoralists were to play a large part in the history of the region. The same was far less true for Egypt, where the Nile Valley is flanked by bone dry desert. Apart from near the banks of the river Nile itself, human habitation is only possible in the oases. The economies of the two great civilizations of the Middle East â€” Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia â€” were built upon irrigation systems needed to make the fertile soils of the Nile and Euphrates-Tigris river plains support large populations. However, being essentially mud, these river plains especially Mesopotamia offer precious little else other than good crops. They contain few minerals for metal and stone, trees for wood, and, away from the rivers, forage for too few sheep or goats for the required quantities of meat, skins, wool and dairy produce. To bring in these things, the ancient Egyptians and Sumerians turned to trade on a scale never seen before in human history. The need for metals For millennia, people had been using copper, a soft metal only useful for making jewellery and other decorations. Sometime around 3000 BCE, the metal smiths of Mesopotamia developed bronze. This was much tougher than copper, and was ideal for armour and weapons, as well as for sculptures and building decorations. It was strong enough for farming tools, but was far too expensive, so farmers continued to make do with stone and wood implements. Why was bronze so expensive? It is an alloy of two other metals, copper and tin. These metals occur naturally in widely separated regions, mostly some distance from Mesopotamia. The Sumerians needed to import both. Bronze began being made in Egypt a little later than in Mesopotamia, and like Mesopotamia, it had no tin or copper of its own. It too needed to bring these metals in from outside. As a result, trade routes radiated out from Mesopotamia and Egypt into neighbouring regions. Trade was carried up the river Euphrates and Tigris into Asia Minor, a mineral-rich region; and across into Syria and Canaan. Trade routes soon linked the two great centres of civilization in the Tigris-Euphrates and Nile valleys. The first great seaports in history emerged on the Syrian coast, at Byblos and Ugarit. To the east, trade routes spread into Iran in the search of

metals and other goods, and connected with trade radiating out from the cities of the Indus Valley civilization. A sea route was also opened up along the Indian Ocean coast between Indus and Mesopotamian ports. To the west, the expanding trade links began to have affect the societies of south-west Europe. The impact of trade These trade routes had a major impact on the societies which they touched, for example leading to the rise of new civilizations in the eastern Mediterranean. Wherever trade went, local markets sprang up and towns and cities grew – often, as in Asia Minor , around settlements of Mesopotamian traders. Literacy, sophisticated art production and other techniques of civilization spread. These markets acting as the nodes of long distance trade stimulated more local trade and crafts, which, by encouraging more intensive production of food and goods, raised the material wealth of these localities. Over the thousand years between and BCE, urban life and the arts of civilization spread over much of the Middle East, and beyond. The first large states The long, narrow lower Nile valley lends itself to the formation of a single state to rule it. At this stage in world history, well-nigh impenetrable barriers guarded this land: The rulers of what modern scholars call the Old Kingdom of Ancient Egypt brought the entire lower Nile valley under their firm control. It was these pharaohs who presided over construction of the earliest and most enduring of man-made Wonders of the World, the Pyramids Mesopotamia is far less amenable to unified control. Its broad plain, with its two great rivers and many branches, are wide open to outside attack or immigration. Protecting the settled farming communities has always been difficult, right up to the present day. Local power centres have therefore tended to be the norm. It was inevitable, then, that the land of Mesopotamia should produce a multiplicity of small city-states; and equally inevitable that any attempts to unite them under one rule would be short-lived Nevertheless, it was the Mesopotamians who produced the first real empires in world history. The first empires The first of these to appear was the large but relatively short-lived empire of Sargon and his successors. It clearly had a major cultural influence on Middle Eastern history. Brief as it was, it led to the imposition of the Akkadian language as the chief language of Mesopotamia. Bronze head of a king, most likely Sargon of Akkad but possibly Naram-Sin. The Amorites By this time, much of the Middle East was being effected by the migration of a nomadic people called the Amorites. We have seen how nomadic peoples, sheep- and goat-herders, sprang up on the fringes of the Tigris-Euphrates plain. Sometime before BCE, they began to move out of these wild wastes into the civilized lands on either side. There is increasing evidence that this expansion of nomadism was linked to the onset of a dry period, which lasted for some years. The area of cereal-growing shrank as marginal lands, with restricted access to water, were abandoned. Conditions may well have become much more suitable for herders than farmers in many places. This dry period seems to have affected the whole of the Middle East, as well as south east Europe. In any event, the Amorites and their close relatives the Canaanites had soon conquered cities and founded kingdoms in Syria, Canaan and Mesopotamia. The most successful of these new states was that centred on Babylon ; under its famous king, Hammurabi reigned c. Code de Hammurabi, roi de Babylone ; face avant, bas-relief. Reproduced under Creative Commons 3. It was probably introduced by Indo-European speaking peoples coming into the region, either from the steppes of central Asia or eastwards from the Balkans, in Europe. Any ruler with a force of chariots at his call had an imediate advantage over any opponent who did not, and this military technology spread rapidly through the Middle East. These Indo-European chieftains set up kingdoms which were to rule large tracts of the region – the Hittites in Asia Minor, the Mitanni in northern Mesopotamia and Syria, and the Kassites in southern Mesopotamia. Non Indo-Europeans also adopted this technology, with for example Assyrian rulers soon had chariots in their army. The Hyksos The civilization of Ancient Egypt, which up to now had flourished in relative isolation, was also deeply affected by these upheavals; in fact it suffered the first major invasion from the north since the founding of the united Old Kingdom of Egypt in BCE. The Hyksos were a nomadic people, quite likely near relatives of the Amorites. They entered Canaan from the eastern deserts at the same time that the Amorites were founding kingdoms in Syria. Whilst in Canaan the Hyksos adopted the chariot, and with this technology invaded Egypt. There, they defeated the old-fashioned and chariotless Egyptian army and established a powerful kingdom around the Nile Delta. In due course, this provoked a national response under capable Egyptian leaders who drove the Hyksos out and established the New Kingdom of Egypt over the entire country. To achieve this, they too adopted the chariot as an important part of their army. See TimeMap

of the Middle East in BCE Great powers The Middle East was by this time dominated by large and powerful states, and the relationships between them as they competed with one another for power and influence. New Kingdom Egypt, under its warlike pharaohs, was a major power in the region throughout this whole period. To its north, first the Mitanni and then the Hittites challenged Egypt for control of Syria and Canaan. These powers in turn were faced with a strong and ambitious Assyria, centred in northern Mesopotamia, while southern Mesopotamia was under the Kassite dynasty, ruling from their capital, Babylon. Another people to mention were the Minoans of Crete, where Knossos was undoubtedly the centre of a wealthy and powerful state. For the first time in world history, a group of major powers were involved in a long-lasting system of alliances, in which sophisticated diplomacy regulated the relationships between them. A glimpse of this can be seen in a cache of diplomatic correspondence between Egypt and other leading Middle Eastern states of the time, known as the Amarna letters. Found in the Egyptian desert, these letters were written in Babylonian cuneiform. They were clearly written by highly educated civil servants working in a government bureau devoted to foreign affairs. Diplomacy and war This alliance system was underpinned by marriage agreements and exchanges of gifts, and the territories between the leading powers were partitioned into spheres of influence. When these alliances were not able to contain the aggression of one power or another, war broke out, on a scale not seen before. The first battles of which any details are known occur in this period. The leading armies now all contained large contingents of chariots. These were expensive to maintain and repair, and the crews who manned them required long training to manoeuvre them in battle. Armies were therefore more professional than before, more expensive, and required more elaborate organization. The states which maintained them, therefore, had to develop more effective tax raising capabilities than before, and larger and more complex bureaucracies. It ended in catastrophe for almost all the states concerned. A double blow fell on them. The Hittites were overwhelmed by them, their empire completely vanishing. The Egyptians, already weakened by internal struggles, only narrowly escaped complete defeat. Meanwhile, another group of nomadic tribes called the Aramaeans, who had replaced the Amorites in the deserts and grasslands between Mesopotamia and Syria sometime in the middle of the 2nd millennium BCE, now expanded violently outwards, capturing cities in northern Syria and attacking deep into Mesopotamia.

4: African Mythology - the gods and spirits of Africa

And keep a look out for that perfect jacket or bag hand-made by the artisan leather workers. Posted in Africa and the Middle East, long stretches of seldom.

Visit Website The Persians were the first people to establish regular routes of communication between three continents—Africa, Asia and Europe. Persian Culture The ancient Persians of the Achaemenid Empire created art in many forms, including metalwork, rock carvings, weaving and architecture. As the Persian Empire expanded to encompass other artistic centers of early civilization, a new style was formed with influences from these sources. Early Persian art included large, carved rock reliefs cut into cliffs, such as those found at Naqsh-e Rostam, an ancient cemetery filled with the tombs of Achaemenid kings. The elaborate rock murals depict equestrian scenes and battle victories. Ancient Persians were also known for their metalwork. In the s, smugglers discovered gold and silver artifacts among ruins near the Oxus River in present-day Tajikistan. The artifacts included a small golden chariot, coins, and bracelets decorated in a griffon motif. The griffon is a mythical creature with the wings and head of an eagle and the body of a lion, and a symbol of the Persian capital of Persepolis. British diplomats and members of the military serving in Pakistan brought roughly of these gold and silver pieces—known as the Oxus Treasure—to London where they are now housed at the British Museum. The history of carpet weaving in Persia dates back to the nomadic tribes. The ancient Greeks prized the artistry of these hand-woven rugs—famous for their elaborate design and bright colors. The Achaemenian palaces of Persepolis were built upon massive terraces. They were decorated with ornamental facades that included the long rock relief carvings for which the ancient Persians were famous. Persian Religion Many people think of Persia as synonymous with Islam , though Islam only became the dominant religion in the Persian Empire after the Arab conquests of the seventh century. The first Persian Empire was shaped by a different religion: Zoroaster, who likely lived sometime between and B. The Achaemenian kings were devout Zoroastrians. By most accounts, Cyrus the Great was a tolerant ruler who allowed his subjects to speak their own languages and practice their own religions. Hebrew scriptures praise Cyrus the Great for freeing the Jewish people of Babylon from captivity and allowing them to return to Jerusalem. This period of time is sometimes called the Pax Persica or Persian Peace. The Achaemenid dynasty finally fell to the invading armies of Alexander the Great of Macedon in B. Subsequent rulers sought to restore the Persian Empire to its Achaemenian boundaries, though the empire never quite regained the enormous size it had achieved under Cyrus the Great.

5: History of the Middle East - TimeMaps

]] THE MORIANS' LAND STRETCHING OUT HER HANDS UNTO GOD. A Sermon on behalf of the Central African Mission, preached on All Saints' Eve, in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Windsor, by CHR.

Prophecy can be sped up or slowed down but as we draw closer to the end of the age the prophecies of the Scripture must come to pass. Two nations that play a significant role in these prophecies are Russia and the United States of America. In the writings of the prophet Ezekiel in chapter 38 we find the identity of both countries. Ready to bring forth the war detailed in this prophecy. Each nation must be moved into position by the hand of God. The Father will allow certain events and the appointments of certain leaders to bring these things to pass. In the opening verses of chapter 38 we see Gog a leader of areas known as Magog, Meshech, and Tubal some translations add Rosh. When studying ancient geography you find that these areas are today known as Russia. Throughout history geographical locations have changed their names, it is a practice that is quite common. This puts the leader of that territory in a bad position. If God is against you then you obviously are carrying out behavior that is against God. This makes you antichrist and a perfect example of that spirit. Vladimir Putin is operating under the spirit of antichrist. Even with his seemingly pro church references, he is from a period of time where the USSR adhered to strict atheistic values. You must remember that Satan is the father of all lies do not be deceived. At the time of this prophecy being fulfilled, we find Russia in a precarious position. There have been many instances in current times when famines have plagued Russia. In recent years they have had many crop failures and used their economy to rebuild their military instead of agriculture. There is soon coming a time that Russia will not know where to turn. They will find themselves in such a poor economic condition that they will not be able to purchase the staples that sustain life for its people. At this time Russia will take an evil thought. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely. Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder? Israel is now a breadbasket in the Middle East. The Scripture refers to this as being brought back from the sword. Since that time the desert filled swamps have become fruitful and produce once again like the Garden of Eden. Russia will not be alone when they take action to attack Israel. We find that they will have allies in verse five and six. Today we see all these nations in alliance with Russia. We also see Russian assisting these nations in the affairs of the Middle East. Russia has now become a guardian of sorts for these nations and has brought their military onto their foreign soil. In doing so we see the fulfillment of this Prophecy being continued Ezk. This military movement is part of that. I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. Egypt seized control of the Suez Canal from the French and British. They retaliated by encouraging Israel to take action against Egypt for the raids Egyptian commandos were making on Israel. As Israel retaliated the French and the British inserted themselves in the conflict in order to protect the canal. However, all of the French and British actions were against the Egyptians. The Russians at that time were supplying finances for a dam Egypt was building on the Nile. Egypt started using the finances for the war. Russia stepped in with an ultimatum. Put an end to this conflict or Russia will come down with full force, nuclear if necessary. As the United States saw the conflict growing into a new world war they use their influence to achieve peace. Once again fulfilling an assignment from God that the United States picked up in The peacemaker, this is a position that they continue to hold today Mat. However, the hook was set, Russia had been drawn into the Middle East. They have been there ever since. With the recent Syrian conflict they have moved their military troops into Syria and Iran. This puts them into a better position to collect intelligence about Israel and placement for a swift advance upon Israel. There are nations that God has declared would stand with Israel at this time. We see the nations of Sheba and Dedan along with the merchants of Tarshish and all their young lions coming to the defense of Israel. Sheba and Dedan are Arab nations that will be at peace with Israel at this time. Currently Israel has peace treaties, brought about through wars, with

Egypt and Saudi Arabia. There may also be others before this prophecy comes to pass. We also see the merchants of Tarshish an ancient city that was located on the western side of the Mediterranean Sea, which is currently in the country of Spain. These merchants have a long history going back to the time of Solomon. However, after the Roman empires arose a group called the Colonial Powers. Both the Romans and the Colonial Powers used this part of Spain as a port city for trade because of its key position. The Colonial Powers later formed into what we know today as the European Union. God has often used animals to portray nations in Scripture. Of these key powers only one had and still has an animal as its emblem. That nation is England and the animal is the lion. Everywhere this vast empire grew the gospel would go with it. As the lion nation many young loins were birthed from England. When you study lions you find out that a group of them are called a pride. It is not the eldest lion that leads the pride, but the strong young lion that leads the pride. This would be the United States of America. In recent years the USA has not seemed to be very strong with there lead from behind attitude. However, that seem as if it will change with the new president. With the dismantling of the Soviet Union in it seemed that relationships we get better. Today that has changed under the leadership of Vladimir Putin. However their agricultural situation has not changed much. This left it open for the influence of Russia and Vladimir Putin. It has allowed Magog to be lead out of the north parts by God back into the Middle East with its military this time. President Trump seems to want his administration to have a clean start concerning international affairs. This could cause major problems for Russia because President Trump is a man of action that will not be pushed around easily. That being said even more sanctions then that are currently in place maybe levied. This can cause Russia great financial distress giving them the thought of overtaking Israel for their goods since they are already so strategically placed in the Middle East. According to these Scriptures Russia and the United States will be on opposing sides at the time of the Ezekiel 38 war the side of Christ or antichrist. The United States support for Israel under Pres. Trump will be greater than it has been for some time. They came to declare Israel nation after years of non-existence. President Trump has stated he would like to have the US embassy moved to Jerusalem. Believing this would be a blessing to Israel backing up their claim to the city. This could cause quite a stir and bring more Bible Prophecy to come to pass. That is another assignment the United States has picked up from God. God sets up leaders and takes leaders down. He controls the times and the seasons. They all serve their purpose and that purpose is to climax the ages. We are living in exciting times, the End Times. It is the Spirit of Christ against the spirit of antichrist. You must chose which spirit you will operate in, I strongly suggest Christ! Your focus must be on Jesus, it is His guidance that leads us through these perilous times. Bible Prophecy is one way He shows us our way. Time is short and now more than ever we need to tell people about the love Jesus has for them. It is time for harvest because the age of the Church is almost over. Rejoice for He has called you to be a carrier of the good news! That news is God is good, He loves you and Jesus is coming soon!

6: Psalm Envoys will arrive from Egypt; Cush will stretch out her hands to God.

Silon means those territories stretching from West Africa to Iraq that came under Arab rule after the 7th century. There is a bewildering variety of peoples, each with a long and complex history.

In such cases they are bred in Northern Arabia. Pulpit Commentary Verse Locusts generally come with a wind; and, indeed, cannot fly far without one. An east wind would in this case have brought them from northern Arabia, which is a tract where they are often bred in large numbers. Denon, the French traveller, notes that an enormous cloud of locusts which invaded Egypt during his stay, came from the east. The rest of the day on which Moses and Aaron had had their interview with the Pharaoh. Matthew Henry Commentary An army might more easily have been resisted than this host of insects. Who then is able to stand before the great God? They covered the face of the earth, and ate up the fruit of it. Herbs grow for the service of man; yet when God pleases, insects shall plunder him, and eat the bread out of his mouth. Let our labour be, not for the habitation and meat thus exposed, but for those which endure to eternal life. Pharaoh employs Moses and Aaron to pray for him. They show thereby that they have no true love to God, nor any delight in communion with him. Pharaoh desires only that this death might be taken away, not this sin. He wishes to get rid of the plague of locusts, not the plague of a hard heart, which was more dangerous. An east wind brought the locusts, a west wind carries them off. The wind bloweth where it listeth, as to us; but not so as it respects God. It was also an argument for their repentance; for by this it appeared that God is ready to forgive, and swift to show mercy. If he does this upon the outward tokens of humiliation, what will he do if we are sincere! Oh that this goodness of God might lead us to repentance! Pharaoh returned to his resolution again, not to let the people go. Those who have often baffled their convictions, are justly given up to the lusts of their hearts.

7: "Occupied territories" of the Middle East and Africa" 24/6 Magazine

Middle East and North Africa; Inter-American; he stretches out the heavens like a tent "Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.

Vatican Media Pope in Bari: I thank you from my heart, dear brothers, for coming here so generously and willingly. I am also profoundly grateful to all our hosts in this city of acceptance and encounter. The Mother of God sustains us as we journey together. Here lie the relics of Saint Nicholas, the Oriental Bishop whose veneration crosses seas and bridges boundaries between Churches. May Nicholas, the wonder-worker, intercede to heal the wounds that so many people bear within them. Here, as we contemplate the horizon and the sea, we feel drawn to live this day with minds and hearts turned towards the Middle East, the crossroads of civilizations and the cradle of the great monotheistic religions. From there, the light of faith spread throughout the world. There ever-fresh streams of spirituality and monasticism have their source. There ancient and unique rites are preserved, together with an inestimable patrimony of sacred art and theology. There the heritage of our great Fathers in the faith lives on. This tradition is a treasure to be preserved to the utmost of our ability, for in the Middle East our very souls are rooted. Yet this region so full of light, especially in recent years, has been covered by dark clouds of war, violence and destruction, instances of occupation and varieties of fundamentalism, forced migration and neglect. All this has taken place amid the complicit silence of many. The Middle East has become a land of people who leave their own lands behind. There is also the danger that the presence of our brothers and sisters in the faith will disappear, disfiguring the very face of the region. Today, as one, we want to kindle a flame of hope. May the lamps we will place be so many signs of a light that continues to shine forth in the dark. Christians are the light of the world cf. For when we lift up our hands to heaven in prayer, and we stretch out our hands to our brothers and sisters without seeking our own advantage, then the fire of the Spirit, the Spirit of unity and of peace, is kindled and leaps into flame. Let us pray as one, begging the Lord of heaven for that peace which the powerful of our world have not yet been able to find. From the waters of the Nile to the Jordan Valley and beyond, through the Orontes to the Tigris and the Euphrates, may the plea of the Psalm resound: For all our suffering brothers and sisters, and for our friends of every people and creed, let us say again and again: Peace be upon you! With the Psalmist, let us offer this prayer in a special way for Jerusalem, the holy city beloved of God and wounded by men, for which the Lord continues to weep: Let there be peace! Indifference kills, and we desire to lift up our voices in opposition to this murderous indifference. We want to give a voice to those who have none, to those who can only wipe away their tears. For the Middle East today is weeping, suffering and silent as others trample upon those lands in search of power or riches.

8: Los Angeles Times - We are currently unavailable in your region

He films with the Taliban in the Middle East, faces down a Muslim king in Africa, and more. In this film, Will discovers the very heart of a God who relentlessly pursues his children, and is worth giving up everything for.

Christianity was born from within the Jewish tradition, and Islam developed from both Christianity and Judaism. While there have been differences among these religions, there was a rich cultural interchange between Jews, Christians, and Muslims that took place in Islamic Spain and other places over centuries. A brief history of Judaism Judaism is the oldest surviving monotheistic religion, arising in the eastern Mediterranean in the second millennium B. Abraham is traditionally considered to be the first Jew and to have made a covenant with God. Because Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize Abraham as their first prophet, they are also called the Abrahamic religions. Most Jews then lived in Diaspora , as minorities in their communities, until the founding of the state of Israel in When Jews from all over the world came to settle in modern Israel, they found that various subcultures had developed in different areas with distinctive histories, languages, religious practices, customs, and cuisine. Jewish cultural groups Homeless Jews arrive in search of a new life, Haifa, Palestine, July 21, Yiddish, a fusion of German and Hebrew, was the spoken language of the Ashkenazi. In Europe, Jews had tended to be segregated -- voluntarily or not -- from the Christian population. From the late 19th and through first half of the 20th century, many Ashkenazi Jews came to Palestine to escape the persecution and discrimination they faced because of their religion. They once spoke Ladino, a mixture of Hebrew and Spanish. Mizrahi and Sephardic Jewish communities tended to be integrated into their respective societies. Judaism in Israel and America There is great difference of opinion among Israeli Jews over the role Jewish religious law should play in the state. Until recently, Orthodox Judaism was the only form of the religion formally and legally recognized in Israel. Although less conservative branches of Judaism now have partial recognition, Orthodoxy remains dominant politically and legally. About half call themselves secular ; about 15 to 20 percent see themselves as Orthodox or ultra-Orthodox; and the rest describe themselves as traditionally observant, but not as strict as the Orthodox. In the United States, debate over the necessity of observing Jewish law has led to the development of three major movements. Orthodox Jews believe that Jewish law is unchanging and mandatory. Reform and Reconstructionist Jews believe that these laws are merely guidelines that individuals can choose to follow or not. In addition, there are many Jews in the United States who are secular or atheist. For them, their Judaism is a culture rather than a religion. Jewish law is embodied in the Torah also known as the Pentateuch and the Talmud collected commentary on the Torah completed in the fifth-century C. Judaism is more concerned with actions than dogma. In other words, observance of rules regulating human behavior has been of more concern than debates over beliefs in the Jewish tradition. According to Orthodox Judaism, Jewish law, or halakhah, includes commandments given by God in the Torah, as well as rules and practices elaborated by scholars and custom. Jewish law covers matters such as prayer and ritual, diet, rules regulating personal status marriage, divorce, birth, death, inheritance, etc. Therefore, they do not subscribe to the idea that Jesus was the Messiah and the son of God, nor do they believe in the teachings of Islam. Until the emperor Constantine converted to Christianity in C. The development of Christian groups derived from major and minor splits. In the 16th century, Martin Luther, upset at the corruption of the Catholic papacy, spearheaded a reformation movement that led to the development of Protestantism. Christian missionaries proselytize all over the world, and there are large populations of Christians on every continent on Earth, although the forms of Christianity practiced vary. The tradition of asceticism denial of physical pleasures in order to come closer to God developed first in the Middle East, and the monastic tradition has its roots there. These groups have different liturgical languages, rituals, and customs, and different leaders who direct their faith. The Coptic Church, the dominant form of Christianity in Egypt, arose from a doctrinal split in the Church at the Council of Chalcedon in The establishment of Lebanon as an independent state is announced on the steps of a Maronite church, Lebanon, The Maronite Patriarch, based in Lebanon, guides his followers in the teachings of Maroun and other saints. Maronites are still one of the most powerful political communities in Lebanon. There are also Christian

communities of different sects living today in Syria 10 percent of the population , Jordan 6 percent , the West Bank 8 percent , and Iraq 3 percent , with smaller percentages in other Middle Eastern countries. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, many Christians from what is now Syria and Lebanon then the Ottoman Empire emigrated to the United States and other countries. Although Christians are a minority in the Middle East today, more than 75 percent of Americans of Arab descent are Christian. What Christians believe Christianity developed out of the monotheistic tradition of Judaism; Jesus, its founder, was a member of the Jewish community in Roman Palestine. Its holy scriptures are the Old Testament the Jewish Torah with additions , and the New Testament written by the followers of Jesus after his death and containing the life story of Jesus and other early Christian writings. After Jesus was crucified and executed by the Romans, he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. This event is celebrated at Easter, while the birth of Jesus is celebrated at Christmas. Christians believe in an afterlife where those who have lived a good life will reside in heaven with God, and those who have lived an unrepentant life of sin will be punished in hell. Instead, they believe that the ritualistic Jewish law was abrogated in favor of a universal gospel for all of humanity and the Christian teaching, "Love thy neighbor as thyself. There, Jewish communities were often subject to discrimination and violence at the hands of Christians. Christians do not accept Muhammad as a prophet. While many Christians in the Middle East converted to Islam during and after the seventh century, the Church hierarchy in Rome and Constantinople considered Islam to be both a political and theological threat. The Crusades were an unsuccessful attempt to reverse the Islamic conquest of the eastern Mediterranean and the holy places of all three monotheistic religions. A brief history of Islam Pilgrims surround Kaaba, the holiest temple in Islam, at the center of the ancient shrine of Mecca. It developed from both the Judeo-Christian tradition and the cultural values of the nomadic Bedouin tribes of Arabia. Islam expanded into areas controlled by the Byzantine Empire largely Greek-speaking and Orthodox Christian, but with a diverse population and the Sassanian Empire officially Zoroastrian and Persian-speaking, but also diverse. As Islam expanded, the new Islamic societies adapted and synthesized many of the customs they encountered. As a result, Muslims in different areas of the world created for themselves a wide array of cultural traditions. Many elements of Islamic society became integral parts of medieval and Renaissance European culture, like the notion of chivalry, and certain forms of music the lute, the arabesque and poetry. On the eastern end of the Islamic world, many Indonesians converted to Islam between the 15th and 17th centuries. Preexisting animist beliefs were often incorporated into the local practice of Islam. Within Islam, there are many different communities. Adherents of Islam may be more or less observant, conservative or liberal. Whirling dervishes playing musical instruments and dancing, Istanbul, photograph c. The 13th-century poet Jalaluddin Rumi is a well-known Sufi figure whose work has become popular in the United States today. Whirling dervishes are dancers who are entranced in their experience of Sufism. What Muslims believe Muslims believe that Allah the Arabic word for God sent his revelation, the Quran , to the prophet Muhammad in the seventh century C. The Quran contains verses surahs in Arabic that tell Muslims to worship one god, and explains how they should treat others properly. Observant Muslims practice five principles pillars of Islam: Many Muslims also observe dietary rules, in origin similar to those of Judaism, that forbid certain foods like pork , outlaw alcohol, and dictate how animals should be slaughtered for food. The Muslim calendar is lunar, and shifts in relation to the solar calendar. Muslim years are labeled as A. Muslims believe in a Day of Judgment, when righteous souls will go to heaven and wrongdoers will go to hell. Muslims see Islam as the final, complete, and correct revelation in the monotheistic tradition of the three faiths. Many non-Muslims mistakenly believe that Muhammad is the equivalent of Jesus in the Islamic tradition; in fact, it is the Quran that stands in the same central position in Islam as Jesus does in Christianity. Muhammad himself is not divine, but a prophet chosen by God to deliver his message and an example of piety to emulate. Jews and Christians are specifically protected in the Quran as Peoples of the Book, reinforcing their spiritual connection to Islam by virtue of having been given revelations from God. The Islamic legal tradition has upheld the rights of Jews and Christians to maintain their beliefs and practices within their communities in Islamic lands, and this policy of tolerance has generally been upheld.

STRETCHING OUT HANDS TO GOD: AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST pdf

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