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MILESTONES 2023

Don
Pearce

MILESTONES TO THE KINGDOM

*A Review of World
Events in 2023 in the
Light of Bible
Prophecy*

Don Pearce

Britain, Israel & the Middle East

Part 1 of four quarterly issues

2023-1 1st of four quarterly parts. Issue date: Mar. 2023

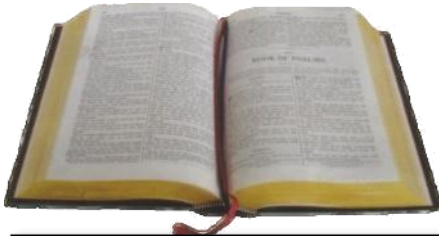
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The correct perspective in these challenging times:

I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying,

My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my pleasure:

Isaiah 46:9-10



In London, FM Cohen signs agreement laying out future of UK-Israel ties

2030 Roadmap plan completed after years of preparation, foreign minister heads to Warsaw to complete pact on returning Israeli youth Holocaust tours

By LAZAR BERMAN

22 March 2023, 1:52 am




with counterpart James Cleverly in London on March 21, 2023



HM Government

Integrated Review Refresh 2023
Responding to a more contested and volatile world




AUKUS





Author's Notes

Background

Milestones has been in print since 1977. As an annual review of the previous year, it enabled an in-depth look at Bible Prophecies, together with a look at the events of the previous 12 months. The booklet consisted of 100 pages, A5 size.

The Problems

Advancing years, escalating printing and posting costs have encouraged me to turn to digital issues of *Milestones*, available without cost and easily distributed around the world.

I underestimated the work involved in producing six issues a year! *Milestones 2020* was the last printed edition. Last year's four editions covered a review of 2021 in the first edition, the subsequent 3 editions covered events of 2022.

I am now planning four issues per year going forward.

In this issue we look at Britain, Israel and the Middle East and the effects of the Abraham Accords. As I originally intended to make this the 5th issue for 2022, we will be reaching back into some events of last year for completeness.

Our aim is to make this publication freely available. There are basic costs involved, with Mailchimp distribution and subscription costs to on-line news channels, which help supply my basic research items. Donations can be made towards this valuable work.

If you wish to sign up to Snippets and the Milestones updates, use this link to subscribe <http://eepurl.com/b6i8sj> to the Mailchimp mailing list. If you only want the Milestones Updates, then email your details to milestonesuk@gmail.com

For the many valuable resources at the Christadelphian Video site, subscribe at www.christadelphianvideo.org

[See further details at bottom of page 5.]

Don Pearce.

31 March 2023

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Note: \$ = US\$. 1US\$=AU\$1.49; CA\$1.35; €0.92; £0.81 @ 31-03-23

NB. Original article spellings and punctuation are retained. I thank Bro Alan Clarke for help with proofreading. Please let me know if you find any mistakes so can update copy!

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Pictures Page 2: clockwise as p31, p17, p28, p30. **Ch. 1:** p7 Book Cover *Publisher*; p8 Vatican logo *Vatican Press Office*; Final un Seating rows *UN Gen Ass.*; p11 EU buildings *Gatestone Inst.*; **Ch. 2:** p15 Turkish Earthquake *Phys.org*. **Ch. 3:** p17 & 2 Map *The Economist*; p19 Ancient Cush *Bible Archaeology Report*; p22 Sudan Map *mapsoftheworld.com*; p22 AA Trade Update *Abraham Accords Institute*; p25 Israel's Gas Fields *Israeli Ministry of Energy*. **Ch. 4:** p28 AUKUS roundel *Wikipedia*; p28 & 2 AUKUS submarine *UK.GOV*; p30 & 2 Int. Review *UK.GOV*; Commonwealth Map ©, p31 & 2 UK-IS Agreement *Times of Israel*.

Milestones Snippets: invaluable free source of world news

This is an approx. 16-page A4 newsletter of interesting articles that I glean off the web and email 3 times a week. Sent in both Word and PDF versions. Articles are indexed. Use signup link at bottom of page 3.

Christadelphian video

The www.christadelphianvideo.org site, has many exhortations, Daily Bible Readings videos, Prophecy Days and Bible School videos of really stimulating material, especially in these difficult times post Covid. Use signup link at bottom of page 2. Although intended as a resource for baptised members, we are happy for interested friends to share this treasure trove. If you have difficulty with the registration process, drop me an email and we will help where we can.

Author's Milestones updates can all be found at

<https://cdvideo.org/milestones-videos> The latest one should be at the top of the list.

To view all the talks at previous Prophecy Days, use these links. N.B. Case sensitive – type as printed.

Rugby Prophecy Day 25-Feb-23. Link to this day: <https://cdvideo.org/rpd2023>

Northern Prophecy Day 19-Oct-22. Link to this: <https://cdvideo.org/npd2022>

Kent Prophecy Day 02-Apr-22. Link to this day: <https://cdvideo.org/kpd2022>

Rugby Prophecy Day 26-Feb-22. Link to this day: <https://cdvideo.org/rpd2022>

Chapter 1: Israel faces opposition from many quarters

Ever since the State of Israel was set up her Arab neighbours were intent on driving her into the Mediterranean Sea. In 1948, 1953, and 1967, Israel, greatly outnumbered by her foes, fought tenacious battles to survive. With God's Blessing this happened, because the time had come for the great regathering of Israel. An initial trickle of returning Jews pioneered the reclamation of this barren country in the late 1800s. The gates were opened to a Jewish Homeland with the British and Commonwealth efforts to drive the Ottoman Empire from the region. The Balfour Declaration declared that Britain looked favourably on the return of the Jews to their homeland. The events of WWII and the Holocaust accelerated this desire to have a home they could call their own.

They were not welcomed by the Arab peoples who had taken up residency there. (There never has been a Palestinian nation which was subsequently uprooted by the returning Jews. They were mainly Arabs from Syria and Egypt that moved to the area, initially under Ottoman rule, and then British rule.)

The Vatican's opposition to Jews returning

There was another power that looked in alarm at the returning Jews—the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches. Herzl visited Pope Pius XIII in 1904, requesting the church's help in gaining a homeland for the Jews. His request was rebuffed. He records in his diary the Pope's reasons for not helping:

"We cannot give approval to this movement. We cannot prevent the Jews from going to Jerusalem—but we could never sanction it. The soil of Jerusalem, if it was not always sacred, has been sanctified by the life of Jesus Christ. As the head of the Church I cannot tell you anything different. The Jews have not recognized our Lord, therefore we cannot recognize the Jewish people."

"...I know, it is not pleasant to see the Turks in possession of our Holy Places. We simply have to put up with that. But to support the Jews in the acquisition of the Holy Places, that we cannot do."

"...If you come to Palestine and settle your people there, we will have churches and priests ready to baptize all of you."

Ever since, the Roman Catholic Church has stood against the Jews' return. The Vatican only came to recognise the existence of the State of Israel in 1993—45 years after its founding!

The Vatican was happy to work with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) under Yasser Arafat, who visited the Pope in the Vatican seven times! The first was in 1982, when Pope John Paul II welcomed Arafat, following the PLO's defeat in Lebanon and their having to relocate to Tunisia.

Meotti's book *The Vatican against Israel, J'ACCUSE* published in 2013 is a valuable source book on the struggle between Israel and the Vatican. The *Amazon* summary of the book reads as follows.

For over a century, and for over 50 years after the Holocaust, the Vatican has been hostile to the creation of a Jewish homeland in the Middle East with its capital as Jerusalem.

For 60 years after the Jewish State gained independence in 1948, the Catholic Church adopted a policy fitting to Israel's Arab-Islamic enemies: total non-recognition of Jewish statehood and

peoplehood. Despite acceptance by every Western nation, Israel was not accorded formal diplomatic recognition by the Vatican before 1993. The Church formally recognized Israel's existence only two decades after Israel's foe, Egypt's Sadat, signed a peace treaty with the Jewish State. Apparently only the Vatican considered the State of Israel undeserving of its recognition. How do we explain this refusal?



Catholicism had long viewed Judaism as a **pariah faith** and the Jews a group destined to wander the earth for their complicity in the death of Jesus. Although the Second Vatican Council partially revoked this anti-Semitic doctrine in 1965, since then the Vatican rapprochement with the Jewish people took place at two levels, which the Vatican separated, **theologically** and **politically**. Each advance on the first plane was **counterbalanced by a deeper regression on the second**, as if the two movements were synchronized. The closer the Vatican seemed to draw toward reconciliation and dialogue with Judaism, **the louder grew the clamor supporting the Arab cause against Israel**.

The *Vatican Against Israel: J'ACCUSE* deciphers, for the first time, the Vatican's criminalization of the State of Israel and its appeasement of anti-Semitic terrorism in the period between 1945 and 2013. This book urgently matters not only to Jews, but also to Christians, since the two religions share moral values and a common scripture. Jesus was Jewish, and for better or worse, Jews and Christians have lived together in Europe and the Middle East for 2000 years. In fact in many parts of the Christian world, Christians have rediscovered their Jewish roots.

With its more than one billion adherents and strategic influence in the Middle East where Israel is under existential threat by Islamic terror groups and an Iranian apocalyptic revolution, **the Vatican has an intrinsic relationship with Israel different from Israel's relationship with any other group**. How the Vatican will relate to Israel and its Jews will affect future relations between Christians and Jews. With Israel still establishing the terms of its existence and the Zionists' current struggle for their own future, the Vatican has the chance to redeem its past mistakes. Will it do so?

The UN, The Vatican, the Palestinian Authority, and the EU

The Vatican and the Palestinian Authority are the only two entities to have “Permanent Observer State” status at the UN General Assemblies.

Another strong force against Israel has been **the EU**. Her 27 member states have their seats, but as an entity she is not recognised by the UN as a **nation** and sits in the UN with a special status of “Observer Status”. The EU is entitled to speak in debates, but not to vote or to sit on the UN Security



Council. The “Holy See” sits in the last seat of the top full row and the “State of Palestine” and the EU sit side by side on the very back row. Each is entitled to have 3 representatives plus 3 support personnel. They have much in common! Sitting on the back rows, it would be most surprising if Vatican representatives and the EU



representatives do not converse and give advice as to how to handle situations to the PA, knowing their common objectives regarding Israel!

The EU undermines Israel and supports the Palestinians

Recently revealed papers have shown the long campaign that the EU has been waging to support the Palestinians against Israel. This is particularly seen in their efforts to promote a reality on the ground for the Palestinians in the so-called West Bank region. Under the Oslo Accords of 1993, the area was divided into three Zones. Zone A was fully under Palestinian control; Area B was under Palestinian administrative control, but Israeli security control; and Area C was fully under Israel control. It is in Area C that Israel has been permitting Israeli settlers to build and cultivate the land. It is also in Area C that the EU has illegally been funding the construction of Palestinian settlements in contravention of the Oslo Accords. The EU’s aim is to build contiguous Palestinian settlements to prevent Israeli access to territory which is under their control. Past Israeli governments have failed to protest at this illegal activity, presumably fearing to upset the EU and the Arab nations.

With the great changes brought about by the signing of the Abraham Accords, there does seem to be a growing feeling that things have gone too far. It is not difficult to perceive a huge outcry if these illegal settlements, each bearing innumerable EU flags, were demolished by the Israeli Government! The Israel people voted in at the end of last year Mr Netanyahu and his so-called right-wing government which is now boosting Israeli building in the Area C. Many settlements had been planned in the past, but which took years before the final permits were issued. The new Israeli government has given approval to held up projects and a host of new ones. Not surprisingly Europe and

America have protested vigorously against this step. It remains to be seen what action will be taken against the EU-sponsored Arab settlements.

The latest article by Bassam Tawil, a Muslim Arab, in the *Gatestone Institute* 09-Mar-23, on this EU's illegal building came with this headline:

The EU's Lethal Obsession with Israel

European Union Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process Sven Koopmans stated on February 17: "The EU wants build stronger ties with Israel, [yet relations sadly remain burdened by the construction of illegal settlements on Palestinian land.](#)"

What Koopmans forgot to mention that it is [the Palestinians who have built literally tens of thousands of illegal structures in the West Bank, especially in Area C, which, according to the Oslo Accords, is under full Israeli security and civilian jurisdiction.](#)

Koopmans also forgot to mention that the EU is helping the Palestinian Authority (PA) with the mass-scale illegal construction, paving the way for the de facto annexation of the territory.

[The EU does not interfere anyplace else on the planet other than Area C -- not for the Kurds, the Assyrians, the Yazidis, the Uyghurs, the Kashmiris, the Tibetans or the Greek Cypriots. The Palestinians continue to be the only group on the EU's list of people with whom to interfere. This inordinate attention appears to stem not so much from love for the Palestinians as from hatred for Israel.](#)

Israel's Ministry of Intelligence, found in a report only recently declassified, that:

["foreign governments gave hundreds of millions of euros to Palestinian projects in Area C in Judea and Samaria....Such funding is contrary to international law and relevant agreements... \[T\]he report describes how the Palestinians use EU funds to build thousands of illegal structures and grab swaths of agricultural land."](#)

The EU, it seems, has funded literally thousands of illegal Palestinian modular buildings in territory that is legally under Israeli jurisdiction. The EU, moreover, has never concealed its policy of supporting the Palestinians in their efforts to grab prohibited land and build illegal structures in Israel's Area C.

Lately, the EU has been concentrating more on agricultural land: one can acquire a much larger area for a much smaller investment.

In 2012, the EU developed, for the first time, a comprehensive policy related to Area C, to be followed by a set of concrete steps and action.

Between 2016 and 2019, the EU provided a total of 33 million euros (\$35 million) to "humanitarian and development assistance to support Palestinians living in Area C."

The EU says it also works with the Palestinian Authority to "develop" Area C. The EU adds that it "supports projects promoting economic development and improving the quality of life of Palestinian communities in Area C in the areas of the private sector, the environment and agriculture."

The EU is openly admitting that it is assisting the Palestinians to break the law by building illegal structures in an area that is officially under full Israeli sovereignty.

By doing so, the EU is encouraging the Palestinians to engage in unilateral actions in violation of the agreements signed between the Palestinians and Israel.

This is the same EU that continues to warn Israel not to take any "unilateral actions," and that continues to criticize Israel for building and expanding "illegal" settlements in the West Bank.

An Israeli non-governmental organization, Regavim, has documented "5535 new illegal structures built in 2022, compared to 3076 structures in the same period in 2021" -- in one year, nearly double.



Countless EU-funded Palestinian modular homes have also been

erected in locations around Jerusalem and the West Bank in the past few years. These structures fly an EU flag and display hundreds of EU signs and stickers.

As of 2022, the EU has built 81,317 illegal structures in Area C, according to Regavim.

"Alongside this mass-scale illegal construction, dispersed over an immense geographic area, additional phenomena are fueling the Palestinian Authority's *de facto* annexation of the territory, massive illegal agricultural projects on Israeli state land, lawfare funded by foreign concerns... and a coordinated campaign of international pressure. These are all elements of a *calculated strategy*, carried out under the auspices of the Palestinian Authority with the stated goal of creating facts on the ground in support of a unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood, dealing a severe blow to Israel's national interests and security."

The EU's commitment to the expansion of illegal Palestinian settlement in Area C persists in full disregard of the Oslo Accords, which the EU purports to uphold.

"The object is to create continuous Palestinian settlement throughout the West Bank and thereby isolate and strangle Israeli communities," wrote Hillel Frisch, professor of Political Science and Middle Eastern History at Bar-Ilan University, in 2019.

"For the first time in the 100-year-old conflict between the Zionist movement (and later the State of Israel) and the Palestinian Arabs, the Palestinians are surpassing the Jews in strategic settlement, over which the Zionist movement had enjoyed a monopoly. The PA is achieving this under the auspices of the EU."

In April 2012, the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Local Government published a strategic action plan entitled "Planning Support for Palestinian Communities in Area C." The EU announced its support for this plan in an official document called "Land Development and Access to Basic Infrastructure in Area C." Frisch pointed out that as early as 2016, the EU had already spent a total of 10.5 million euros [\$11 million] to draw up and implement zoning plans for 90 Palestinian settlements and support land development projects in Area C in conjunction with the Palestinian Authority.

"The PA-EU's prime objective is clear: to create continuous Arab settlement from the south to the north of the West Bank, while

simultaneously thwarting Israeli designs to create continuous neighborhoods from Ma'ale Adumim to Jerusalem (the E-1 plan).

"The PA's achievements have been considerable so far. As new Israeli building dwindles to insignificance in areas east of Jerusalem, the PA, with European help, has succeeded in housing tens of thousands ... in a space no larger than nine square kilometers. This number is more than double the number of inhabitants in Ma'ale Adumim and the other Israeli localities in the area.

The EU and the Palestinians are acting in accordance with a program launched in 2009 by former Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salam Fayyad.

The 2009 "Fayyad Plan" (officially titled "Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State") was -- and remains -- a proposal to create facts on the ground that would end up as a Palestinian state if negotiations do not work out, thereby bypassing the need to negotiate with Israel as agreed to in the Oslo Accords.

The catch is: If the Palestinians believe that they can be handed a state by some external entity, such as the EU, at no cost to themselves, why should they ever bother to negotiate? For years, in fact, they have avoided coming to the negotiating table, presumably in the hope of precisely such a windfall.

According to Naomi Kahn, International Director of Regavim:

"The Europeans pay for the planning. They pay for the engineering. They pay for the legal support. They pay for the infrastructure. They pay for construction, even though they know it's illegal, and they build into the contracts the possible demolition. They also build into the contract legal representation if and when it comes to court because it's illegal."

Fayyad's unilateral plan to create facts on the ground is totally in violation of the Oslo Accords, which state that "neither side shall initiate or take any step that will change the status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip pending the outcome of the permanent status negotiations."

Just as Israel does not meddle in the internal affairs of the EU member states, it is time to put an end to the EU's poisonous intrusion into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Along the way, the EU might also want to consider the real source of its lethal obsession with Israel.

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Chapter 2: Some Scriptures that guide us as to significant events

The year 2023 seems to have opened at an amazing pace! Four events affect Britain, one was the AUKUS announcement as to what was the best way forward in bringing America, Britain, and Australia together to provide Australia with nuclear-powered submarines. The second, the agreement, called the Windsor Framework, as the way forward to solving the Northern Ireland problem, (but it will only make matter worse)! The third is the roadmap that the UK and Israel have put together to deepen relations between the two countries—forming a strategic partnership. The fourth, the announcement that the UK has joined the CPTPP group of Pacific Rim countries in a move that would signal her turning away from Europe and seeking to trade with countries who value free competition rather than the EU's endless regulations.

In Israel, the attacks on Israelis continues, by the Arabs intent on driving Israel out of the Land. At the same time the country is in turmoil over the proposed reforms of the Judiciary system. A matter that has turned the US against Israel with Biden refusing to meet with Netanyahu. A further event that affects Israel is the brokering of a peace deal to bring Saudi Arabia and Iran back to re-establishing diplomatic relations which were severed for the second time seven years ago. The apparent broker of this deal was China, keen to exploit America's weaknesses in the Middle East.

The Chinese leader President Xi has visited Moscow to boost ties and help Russia in her struggle in Ukraine. Russia is increasingly bogged down and is reduced to a policy of total devastation as she advances step by tiny step.

Meanwhile the financial world is being shaken as major banks collapse in America and Europe. The whole world seems to be lurching from one crisis to another. The terrible earthquakes that hit Turkey and Syria are preludes to more troubles to come!

Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. Luke 21:36.

Just as step by step, God's judgments on Israel and the Roman World leading up to AD 70, caused fear in the Roman and Jewish world of their time, history is repeating itself. What we have seen is just the beginning of God's judgements on an evil world that has turned its

back on God and openly flouts His Laws. Things will get far worse, but in God's mercy, just as Israel was spared the last plagues poured on Egypt, so the saints will be



called away to Judgment by the returned Lord Jesus. The world will be oblivious of this event, until after Israel's invasion by Gog, when Christ and His saints come up to save His people from their enemies and upon arrival at the Mount of Olives, cause it to split in half!

A Scriptural Summary of Latter-day Prophecies

What Scriptures guide us as to the significance of the various recent happenings mentioned above? Earthquakes, pestilences, and global troubles are part of God's warnings that man is not in control, He, the Eternal God is. We draw strong parallels with the time of the Exodus. We know the Lord Jesus is coming to save His people from the hand of their enemies. We witness the increasing world hostility to Israel as it accepts unquestioningly Arab propaganda of how terrible Israel is to these "down-trodden" people. It rejects Israel's right to have a country that exists for the benefit of Jews and is governed according to Jewish principles.

Daniel chapter 2 shows to us the final picture.

But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.

Dan. 2:28

We believe that we are in these latter-days of the times of the Gentiles. The chapter depicts an image of differing valued metals, ultimately standing on iron/clay feet. Down through the ages Gentile nations have wanted to control and possess the land of Israel. They still do. Hence after millennia of construction, the Image stands in order to invade, destroy, and possess Israel. For a brief time they succeed, but there is to be a Divine intervention!

Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. vv. 34,35

The Returned Lord Jesus and his chosen saints will come up from Sinai to dramatically fulfil this destruction of the enemy and bring about the salvation of Israel so that Jesus can begin to establish the Kingdom of God in Jerusalem.

The rest of the prophecies revealed to Daniel, fill out details of what was revealed in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of chapter 2, concluding in Chapter 12 with *A time of trouble such as never was.* v1

Ezekiel 38 is also our guide to the present situation in the Middle East. It tells of the nations of Russia and Europe who band together against Israel. Joel 3: 9-11 speaks of these times—a time of world re-armament—in terms of a religious crusade, a “Holy War”, aiming to take Jerusalem under Christian control! How well our times indicate the desire of both the Roman Catholic and the Russian Orthodox Churches to gain control of Jerusalem, to put it outside the control of the Jews.

Ezekiel 38:13 (RV) also reveals a work for *the merchants of Tarshish* and *all her young lions* working with the *Sheba-Dedan* countries. We have historically seen this as a reference to Britain and her Commonwealth allies working in the Middle East and supporting Israel, for they are opposed to Gog's invasion. Isaiah ch 23 also adds detail of this Tarshish power inheriting the mercantile spirit of ancient Tyre and after a period of 70 years of fading power, takes up her role once again as a world-wide trading force. We believe that we are at the start of this new future for Britain.

It is within this brief framework of Scriptures that we see so much dropping into place, reassuring us that our historical interpretation of prophecy doesn't need changing. We have to patiently await the fulfilment of God's timetable. Things do not always proceed smoothly, but like the ebb and flow of the incoming tide, high tide will come—in spite of the many ebbs, the progress of the flow is ever upward!

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Chapter 3: Abraham Accords changing the M.E.

The Abraham Accords, signed initially by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain in September 2020 on the White House lawn, have paved the way for a great transformation in the Middle East.

Since then, Sudan and Morocco have made peace with Israel and on March 7 Mr Netanyahu said that Israel is in talks to expand the Abraham Accords with Indonesia, Nigeria, Mauritania, and Somalia.

The big prize would be Saudi Arabia. But this has taken an interesting twist in that China has succeeded in bringing a reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran.



This has caused consternation in Israel. However, one has seen many past “reconciliations” which have proved to be short-lived.

Saudi officials are not looking to replace the United States with China, said Yasmine Farouk, a non-resident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington research group.

When it comes to defense and security, “Riyadh still thinks in English,” she said. But after years of feeling that the United States has become a less reliable ally, they are expanding their alliances wherever they can. *New York Times* 10-Mar-23

Saudi Arabia Offers Its Price to Normalize Relations With Israel

The day before the story broke about Saudi-Iran reconciliation, the *New York Times* 09-Mar-23, carried this story concerning the terms that Saudi was asking of the US to enable a Peace Agreement to be made.

Saudi Arabia is seeking security guarantees from the United States, help with developing a civilian nuclear program and fewer restrictions on U.S. arms sales as its price for normalizing relations with Israel, people familiar with the exchanges say.

If sealed, the deal could set up a major political realignment of the Middle East.

Riyadh's ambitious request offers President Biden the chance to broker a dramatic agreement that would reshape Israel's relationship with the most powerful Arab state. It could also fulfill his pledge to build on the Trump-era Abraham Accords, which brokered similar diplomatic deals between Israel and other Arab nations, including the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Morocco.

A normalization deal would also fulfill one of the most cherished goals of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, capping what he considers a legacy of increasing Israel's security against its archenemy, Iran. The deal would strengthen regional alliances, analysts say, while downgrading the relative importance of the Palestinian issue.

Officials and experts in the United States and the Middle East were divided on how seriously to take the proposal, given the frosty relations between Mr. Biden and Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's crown prince.

A spokesperson for the National Security Council declined to comment directly on diplomatic discussions but said the Biden administration supports closer ties between Israel and its Middle East neighbors, including Saudi Arabia.

We wait to see how circumstances shape realities on the ground, pushing nations along a pathway known to God, but unknown to their participants. Scripture makes it clear that there will be a time of peace for Israel that will attract the attention of Gog! Eze. 38:10-12.

One of the fascinating stories so far in 2023 has been the situation in Sudan.

Sudan: Expanding the Tent of the Abraham Accords

Sudan is Africa's third largest country and is strategically situated on the Red Sea giving it access through the Suez Canal to Europe and southwards to Asia. Russia has long seen it as a strategic foothold for her Middle East ambitions. Indeed, we know from Ezekiel 38 that one of Gog's companions will be Ethiopia (Heb: Cush). In ancient days,

Cush was situated to the south of Egypt, as shown on this map which outlines modern boundaries in white. It would indicate that modern Sudan covers the territory of Cush, rather than modern Ethiopia.

So, in the short-term we are witnessing a great turnaround in Sudan's attitude to Israel.

Following the British withdrawal from Egypt and Sudan in 1956, Sudan became an independent Islamic Republic, aligned with Iran who used Sudan as

a supply route to arm Hamas and Hezbollah. Arms would be shipped in from Iran and then transported by land via Egypt and Sinai to Hamas. The last military dictator aligned to Iran was Omar al Bashir, who ruled Sudan for 30 years until overthrown in 2019. Sudan then became a secular state, and the current leader, General Abdel Fattah



Remembered for its No! No! No! Resolution at 1967 Arab League Summit held in Khartoum, following the 6-day War. "NO peace with Israel, NO recognition of Israel, NO negotiations with it...."

Now 55 years later!! "YES, YES, YES!"

al-Buhan is firmly aligned to the UAE and Bahrain. He is due to hand over to a civilian government sometime this year. The UAE and Bahrain are working hard to stabilise the country with much needed funds and are encouraging a realignment with Israel and away from Iran.

Israel-Sudan agreement a success for Abraham Accords, setback for Iran

Sudan is already a signatory to the Abraham Accords, to which it committed itself in January 2021. But Khartoum at that time signed up only to the formal, declarative part of the agreement. In return for this commitment, Sudan was removed from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism and received a series of financial inducements.

Unlike the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco, however, it did not go on to then sign a formal bilateral agreement with Israel. *Jerusalem Post* 10-Feb-23

That situation has now changed, following Israeli Foreign Minister, Eli Cohen's visit to Sudan in February 2023.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Eli Cohen today (Thursday, February 2, 2023) made a historic diplomatic visit to Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, with the aim of signing a peace agreement with Sudan later this year. During the visit, which was made with the consent of the United States, the parties finalized the text of the agreement. The signing ceremony is expected to take place in Washington after the transfer of power in Sudan to a civilian government that will be established as part of the ongoing transition process in the country. *Israel Ministry Foreign Affairs* 02-Feb-23

This will be an amazing about turn for this country. In 1967, following the defeat of the Arab Nations in the Six-Day-War of 1967, the Arab League leaders met in Sudan to decide what to do.

"Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, is remembered in Israel as the city where the Arab countries decided on the historic 'Three Nos': no peace with Israel, no negotiations with Israel, and no recognition of Israel.

"We are building a new reality with the Sudanese, in which the 'Three Nos' will become the 'Three Yesses': yes to negotiations between Israel and Sudan, yes to recognition of Israel and yes to peace between the states and between the peoples." *ibid*

There is much that Israel can offer Sudan as well as being a springboard to other African nations.

FM Cohen presented to his hosts an aid program for Sudan, which will focus on projects and capacity building in the fields of humanitarian aid, water purification and public medicine.

FM Cohen: "Today's visit to Sudan lays the foundations for a historic peace agreement with a strategic Arab and Muslim country. The peace agreement between Israel and Sudan will promote regional stability and contribute to the national security of the State of Israel.

"The signing of the peace agreement will serve as an opportunity for the establishment of relations with other countries in Africa as well as the strengthening of existing ties with African countries. The relationship of African countries with Israel is a common interest both for us and for the countries of the continent. Israel has been a significant partner for many years in the development processes in these countries and in dealing with the consequences of climate change and the economic challenges in Africa. *ibid*

Sudan Longer Term

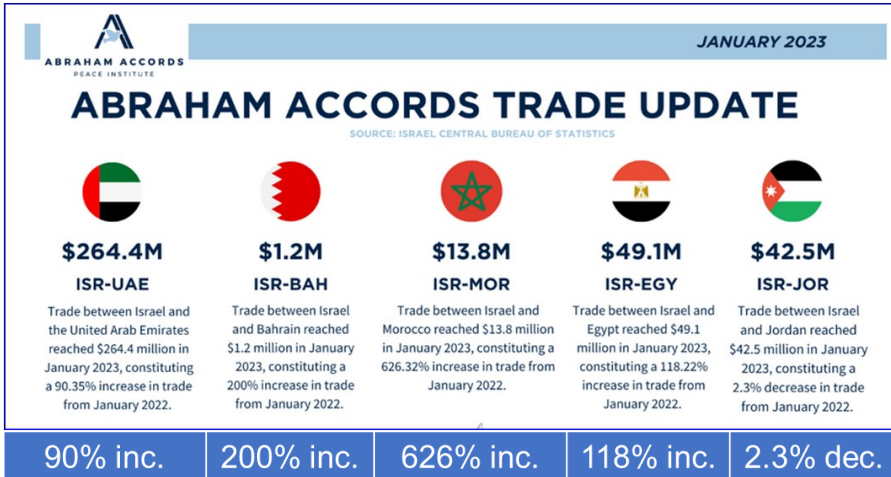
Based on Ezekiel 38:5 listing Cush (AV Ethiopia) as one of Gog's companions, it would appear that, at some stage, Russia succeeds in turning Sudan away from Israel and into her own orbit. Putin is skilled at fermenting internal revolutions to change a country back to pro-Russian leaders, or in Ukraine's case—invading.

Russia has been eyeing Sudan as an ideal base for a military naval base to supplement that in Tartus, Syria. Such a base has been talked about for many years but not materialised. The matter is currently under discussion and has been left for the new civilian government to decide on when it has been set up. Many tribal leaders are reported to be against it according to a VOA broadcast 14-Mar-23 entitled: *Russia Could Face Local Resistance Against Promised Naval Base in Sudan.*

We understand from Scripture that long before Gog invades Israel with his companions, the Lord Jesus will have returned to gather and judge and prepare His household. Any change now in Sudan/Cush will not necessarily mean that long-term they have changed from a Goat nation to a Sheep nation in the language of the third parable in Matthew 25. Unless they repent for their support of Gog's invasion of Israel, they will be excluded from the Kingdom.

Israel prospering from her trade with Arab nations

Israel's trade with the Abraham Accord nations (including Egypt) has zoomed in the past 12 months. Only trade with Jordan has shown a small decrease. This chart compares trade for the twelve months ending end January 2023 with the same period last year. The increases are large, reflecting the changed situation in the Middle East.



Israel-UAE free trade deal takes force as customs agreement inked in Jerusalem

Israel signed a Free-Trade agreement with the UAE last year. It had various parts, and this signing was the last piece relating to a customs pact needed to allow this agreement to come in to force, which is scheduled for April 1, 2023.

UAE-Israel economic ties took an important step forward on Sunday, as the two sides signed the final, and most important, component of a free trade agreement.

The customs pact was signed by Foreign Minister Eli Cohen and UAE Ambassador Mohamed al-Khaja in Jerusalem, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in attendance.

The Israel-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement was signed in Dubai last May, but could not go into force until the two countries signed the customs agreement Sunday.

This puts the meat on the bones," an Emirati diplomat told *The Times of Israel*.

The customs agreement took months to conclude because the sides had to carefully go through every product and decide what would be covered.

According to the UAE, [the agreement lowers or eliminates tariffs on more than 96 percent of tariff lines and 99% value of trade between the two countries.](#)

The free trade agreement covers [regulation, customs, services, government procurement, e-commerce, and the protection of intellectual property rights.](#)

Some 96% of products traded between the countries, including food, agriculture, cosmetics, medical equipment, and medication, will be exempt from customs duty, according to the deal. A number of products will be exempted immediately, while others will gradually be granted an exemption. *Times of Israel* 27-Mar-23

They are looking to boost their annual bilateral trade to \$10bn within the next five years. (*Reuters* 11-Dec-22 & 31-May-22)

"The Economist" ranks Israel fourth best performing economy

In a surprising recognition of Israel's booming economy. *The Economist* 18-Dec-22 ranked Israel as the fourth best performing economy!

The UK weekly said that Israel had enjoyed economic success over the past year, despite the political chaos.

"*The Economist*" has ranked Israel as the [fourth best performing economy in 2022](#). "In the Middle East, Israel enjoyed success over the past year, despite the political chaos," the UK weekly wrote.

The ranking of the 34 OECD countries was based on five macroeconomic indicators: GDP growth, annual inflation, inflation breadth, share prices, and government debt. As "*Globes*" reported last week Israel's debt: GDP ratio has fallen from 68% to 60% this year. Although inflation over the past 12 months has risen to 5.3%, this is about half the level of inflation in much of the Western economies, as "*The Economist*" points out. *globes.co.is* 25-Dec-22

Immigration to Israel hits 23-year high

Largely driven by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Jews living in Ukraine and Russia have been seizing the opportunity to emigrate to Israel.

Over 70,000 people immigrated to Israel in 2022, more than twice as many as the year before and the highest number in over two

decades, according to year-end figures released by the Jewish Agency on Thursday.

The dramatic increase was driven by Moscow's invasion of neighboring Ukraine and its crackdowns at home. According to the organization, of the 70,000 people who immigrated to Israel in the past year, more than three-quarters came from countries involved in the Russia-Ukraine war, with 37,364 arriving from Russia, 14,680 from Ukraine and 1,993 from Belarus.

In addition, some 1,500 people immigrated to Israel from Ethiopia in the past year as part of Operation Tzur Israel, a government-backed program to bring thousands of Ethiopians eligible for citizenship to Israel. *Times of Israel* 22-Dec-22

Lebanon's Maritime Deal with Israel

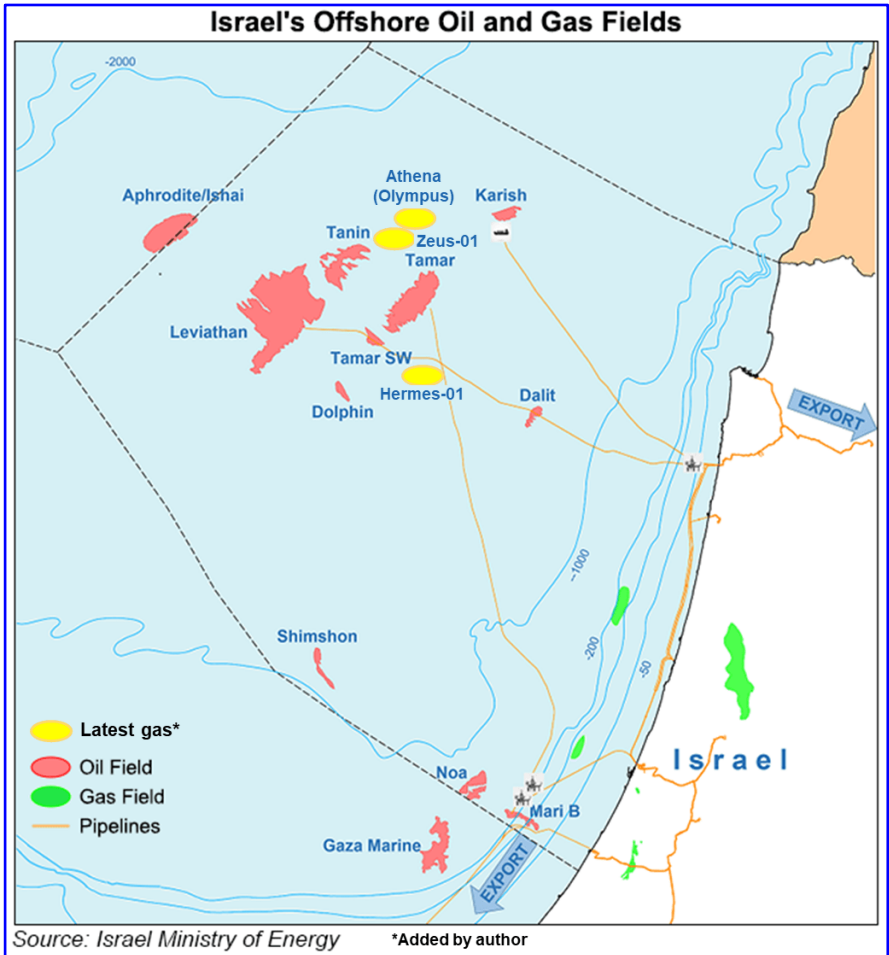
Israel has been increasing her output from new wells off the Israeli coast. The settling of the maritime boundary dispute with Lebanon last year marked an interesting realignment. Technically Israel and Lebanon are still at war. Hezbollah, the terrorist group funded by Iran has a strong hold over Lebanon's affairs. The deal brokered by the US was signed by Israeli PM Lapid and the Lebanese President, Michael Aoun 27 October 2022, a few days before Aoun's six-year term of office came to an end, with no replacement as yet.

Maritime boundaries extend out at right angles to the coastline at the border between two countries. If this is on a curve, then the precise point of the border can greatly affect the area the area allotted. Lebanon had favoured a line which cut through Israel's new Karish field. Israel had the border between the two countries in a slightly different point which meant that Karish was clearly in Israeli waters. This has prevented the full development of this well, with Hezbollah threatening to blow it up and stop further development. This historic agreement has now settled the matter, and Israel lost no time in proceeding to get the gas well finished and connected to the shore.

Oman permits Israeli planes to overfly Oman

A further boost for Israel has been for Oman to lift their ban on Israeli flights overflying their territory. This was lifted on 23 Feb 2023. Saudi Arabia opened their air space to all air carriers including Israel 15 July 2022. Israel planes can now save about two and a half hours on flights to India, not having to skirt round Oman, reducing their costs considerably.

Israel's Blossoming Gas Fields



Israel's main gas sources are from Leviathan and Tamar fields. Leviathan is estimated to hold 620 bcm (billion cubic metres) of recoverable gas—sufficient to supply Israel's own needs over the next 40 years! Tamar is estimated to hold 10.8 bcm of recoverable gas. Karish is now onstream and further work in 2023 will increase output from this well with estimated 39 bcm reserves. The Tamin field, is expected to come on stream this year, with 31 bcm reserves. The newly discovered Hermes well is estimated to hold 15 bcm of gas. In November 2022, Energean announced a successful drilling of Zeus-01 with preliminary estimates of 13 bcm of recoverable natural gas. At the same time, they upgraded the Athena (Olympus) to having

11.75 bcm reserves. They also announced that they would be drilling a further well—Hercules—in the same area.

Leviathan group starts plans for Israeli floating LNG terminal.

Reuters 21-Feb-23 reported that the partners in the Leviathan gas field had approved the spending of nearly \$100 million on expanding production over the next 5-7 years.

Leviathan, a deep-sea field with huge deposits, came online at the end of 2019 and produces 12 billion cubic metres (bcm) of gas per year for sale to Israel, Egypt, and Jordan. The idea is to boost capacity to include sizeable volumes for Europe as it seeks to reduce dependence on Russian energy.

"The development plan will enable a significant increase in production to 21 bcm (billion cubic metres) a year," said Yigal Landau, CEO of Ratio Energies.

NewMed Energy, partner with Ratio and Chevron in Leviathan, said the group will spend \$45 million to plan initial production expansion and a further \$51.5 million on preparations for the floating LNG terminal.

The floating facility is expected to have an annual LNG capacity of about 4.6 million tonnes, or 6.5 bcm, NewMed said.

Israel, Egypt and the European Union last year signed a memorandum of understanding for Israeli gas to be sent to Europe through LNG plants in Egypt.

It will take about three years from a final investment decision before the extra gas begins flowing to Egyptian LNG plants and the local market, said an industry source familiar with the project. The floating LNG component will come online after that.

UK's BP teams up with Abu Dhabi state oil group to buy 50% of Israel's NewMed Energy

NewMed share prices have been boosted by an announcement that the UK's BP group and Abu Dhabi National Oli Co (Adnoc), had come together to bid for 50% of NewMed's shares in a \$2bn deal.

The deal would give BP and Adnoc, the United Arab Emirates state-owned oil company, a foothold in Israel's offshore natural gas fields and its growing energy export markets to pursue projects in eastern Mediterranean.

BP and Adnoc said they plan to form a joint venture for the purpose of the deal, which will be "focused on gas development in

international areas of mutual interest including the East Mediterranean.”

The offer is another sign of the warming ties between the UAE and Israel after the two countries signed a normalization agreement in 2020 as part of the US-backed Abraham Accords.

Israel’s Energy and Infrastructure Minister Israel Katz welcomed the deal offer, which he called “a testament to the potential and attractiveness of Israel’s natural gas industry to the world” and “the strength of relations and trust between Israel and the UAE.” *Times of Israel* 28-Mar-23

Obviously this is not yet a done deal, but all parties seem to be in favour.

New Gas Deal with Europe Turns Israel into A Super Power

The EU has been looking to Israel as a source of LPG gas to help her replace Russia as her gas supplier. At the moment Israel pipes gas to Egypt where it is turned into LPG and shipped to Europe. Israel is keen to boost her gas sales by supplying directly to Europe. The EU had given its backing to the EastMed pipeline, but President Biden withdrew his support in 2022, quoting environmental issues, and the matter has lapsed. However, with new pressure to get Israeli gas to Europe Mr Netanyahu raised the possibility of this pipeline with the Italian Premier, Giorgia Meloni when visiting Italy in early March. It would take several years to build and with the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines last year, could be vulnerable. Mr Netanyahu also raised the possibility of Italy recognising Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. Two weeks later, Mr Netanyahu was in Germany meeting with Chancellor Scholz for a working lunch, to discuss energy cooperation.

A time of Israel’s trespass before God

We know from Ezekiel 38 that Israel is to be a rich nation and dwelling securely, prior to Gog’s invasion or, in the terms of Daniel 2, the Image standing on its iron/clay feet to come against Israel and there be broken in pieces. Month by month we are encouraged to read so many indications that this is a description of Israel today. However, we need to bear in mind that Israel is doing all this while trusting in her own strength. That is why Israel has to be humbled by being defeated by her enemies. God views this time of peace and prosperity as a time of **trespass**! Read what God declares in Eze. 39:21-29. He will deliver His people in their time of testing and repentance. Zec 12:10

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Chapter 4: Britain, Israel, the EU, and the World

There have been interesting developments in the past few months in Britain's relations with the EU, Israel, and Australia. We will start with the latter.

AUKUS project will ensure the UK and its democratic allies rule the waves

Back in September 2021 the three countries of Britain, America, and Australia formed a new alliance named AUKUS. This was an amalgam of the initials for these countries—Australia, United Kingdom, United States. Its aim was to help Australia gain nuclear-powered submarines. Australia was facing an increased threat from a power-hungry China. Back in 2016, Australia had ordered a fleet of conventionally powered submarines from France. With the growing threat from China, Australia realised that these were not going to be suitable. Standard submarines can be detected because of their engine noise and the need to surface every few days. Their range is also limited by reason of needing to refuel. Nuclear-powered submarines are silent and don't need to surface frequently, they can remain underwater for months at a time and never need refuelling. The production of the French submarines were being delayed by disruptions in the French naval yards, as well as facing price escalations.

Early in 2021, the Australian Government began secret talks with their British counterparts over their plans to cancel the French order and look to her two allies, the UK



and the US, to provide nuclear-powered vessels. The talks made good progress and the Americans were then brought into the project. They agreed to set up AUKUS, not just for this project but to cooperate together as all three countries faced threats posed by China.

An initial 18-month consultation period was agreed to find a design that would suit Australia's needs, as both the US and the UK were working independently on their next generation of nuclear-powered submarines.

British-led design chosen for AUKUS submarine project

Britain had plans for their replacement for the current Astute-class submarines. Britain has a highly skilled design team and her designs result in a smaller vessel, requiring less crew, using very advanced technology. The British use horizontally launched missiles; the US favours vertically fired missiles. The UK's concept plans have been modified so that it can launch both types to give maximum versatility. This was the design chosen. It will be a great boost to Barrow-in-Furness, in Cumbria, where Britain's submarines are built in the giant BAE hangers.

The chosen propulsion unit is one designed and manufactured by Rolls Royce in the UK. The sonar and optronics masts (a submarine's "ears" and "eyes") will be supplied by Thales (UK). The US will be supplying the missiles. Both the UK and the US will also train the Australian submariners, hosting them on existing boats. Also the UK and the US will base some of their existing nuclear-powered submarines in Australian ports. In the short-term, Australia will purchase a few US submarines of a type being currently built, to be delivered in the 2030s.

Both Britain and Australia will build vessels, the ones for the UK at Barrow, the ones for Australia in Australian yards, possibly Adelaide. The first vessel is planned to be built in Barrow, and due to come into service at the end of 2030s and the Australian ones in the early 2040s.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus, we do not anticipate that these will enter service—we hope and pray that the Lord will be back and will be reigning from Zion and these items will be a thing of the past. Never-the-less, knowing from Scripture that Britain has a role to play before then of being a strong naval power, working with countries across the whole world, it is encouraging to see that she is emerging as a strong naval power.

With AUKUS, Britain finds new place in the world at last

For Britain, having unmoored from the European Union, drawing closer still to the United States and its allies is suddenly an imperative. AUKUS binds the two nations together, alongside their Australian partner, in a manner perhaps not seen since the Second World War. No wonder officials at the top of both the British government and military see the pact as a major diplomatic coup.
Politico 14-Mar-23

The same day that this deal was announced, the UK government launched its *Integrated Review Refresh 2023*.

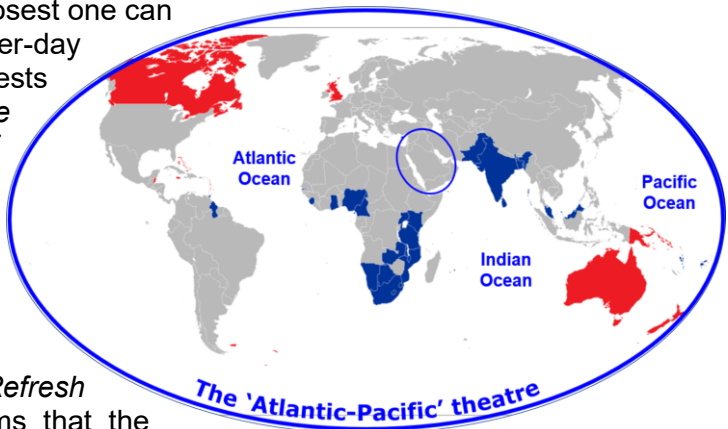
This was a follow-up to the last review in 2021, where the emphasis had been on Britain's focus on "East of Suez". That was thrilling because it encompassed the Middle East and many Commonwealth countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and India.

This 2023 "Refresh" broadened that focus to include the Atlantic. The

new zone of interest is now styled "the Atlantic-Pacific theatre". Which surely is the closest one can

get to the latter-day Tyre's interests covering *all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth*.
 Isa. 23:17

The *Integrated Review Refresh 2023* confirms that the UK will continue to play a leading role in Euro-Atlantic security,



while also consolidating the strategic shift we achieved with the Indo-Pacific tilt. *Gov.UK* 13-Mar-23

UK-Japan Reciprocal Access Agreement

As well as giving Britain closer links to Australia, an earlier agreement made on January 11, 2023, gave her access to bases in Japan. This was a reciprocal agreement, so that Japanese military vessels can utilise British bases. With China being seen as the great enemy, bases in Australia are half a world closer to China and Japan gives her a foothold right off China's coast.

2030 Roadmap for UK-Israel Bilateral Relations

Another publication to make the Bible-believer rejoice!

Published by *Gov.UK* 21-Mar-23 this Agreement was signed in London by Israeli Foreign Minister, Eli Cohen and the UK Foreign Secretary, James Cleverly.

It sets out the UK and Israel's vision of future relationship over the next seven years to 2030. Here is the opening section headed:

Vision

The bilateral relationship has never been stronger. Our two countries complement each other's strengths. As freedom-

loving, innovative and thriving democracies, Israel and the UK are proud of our deep and historic partnership. We are firm friends and natural allies.

In November 2021, the British government and the Israeli government, signed a Memorandum of Understanding [elevating the UK-Israel bilateral relationship to a strategic partnership](#). This represented a signal of intent for both countries to [cohere, deepen and expand cooperation across our mutual priorities for our mutual benefit](#). This roadmap outlines how this strategic partnership will continue to serve our collective interests.

In London, FM Cohen signs agreement laying out future of UK-Israel ties

2030 Roadmap plan completed after years of preparation; foreign minister heads to Warsaw to complete pact on returning Israeli youth Holocaust tours

By LAZAR BERMAN
22 March 2023, 1:52 am



Foreign Minister Eli Cohen, left, meets with his British counterpart James Cleverly in London on March 21, 2023. (Keith Eccles/Keefkoo Entertainment)

Foreign Minister Eli Cohen and British Foreign Secretary James Cleverly signed an agreement in London on Tuesday setting the agenda for bilateral economic, security and technology ties.

Our strategic partnership is underpinned by **extensive security and defence cooperation** that continue to safeguard the UK and Israel's national security. Throughout this roadmap, Israel and the UK will continue to cooperate, both bilaterally and through international fora, **jointly to counter global challenges and threats**. We will cooperate in improving Palestinian livelihoods and Palestinian economic development. We remain united in our shared concern towards Iran's nuclear activities and tackling Iran's destabilising and malign activity in the Middle East, whether engaged in directly or through proxies and terrorist groups.

The UK joins Israel in acknowledging the historic significance of the Abraham Accords, which have the potential to enable profound advancements for **security, co-existence, prosperity and peace for the region and its peoples**. The UK will work with Israel to both **deepen and expand** these developments, and build upon the progress of the historic Negev Summit, in March 2022 to explore opportunities for regional cooperation and development in coordination with the emerging regional architecture in both security and civilian spheres.

Israel and the UK will showcase the best that our combined strengths have to offer. Through the Britain-Israel investment group (BIIG), we will aim to combine UK and Israeli innovation and expertise to solve regional technology and sustainability issues across the Middle East and south-east Asia. The Israeli-British partnership in BIIG will promote and demonstrate **the benefits of cooperation with Israel**.

As two innovation and technology leaders, our strategic partnership will help ensure that we remain at the forefront of the technological revolution. Together, we will continue to push new frontiers of innovation, scientific and academic collaboration. Through new, ambitious science and technology partnerships, including an industrial R&D programme, we are partnering between the best of UK and Israeli expertise to continue innovating for our mutual benefit. Based on this roadmap, we will supercharge science and technology through priority areas of cooperation, and continue innovating and maximising the potential of future technologies for our mutual benefit.

Our nations can do so much more together to create jobs and fuel economic growth. **The UK is a major trade partner of Israel's in Europe, with a £5 billion/NIS 21 billion trading relationship**. We are

committed to deepening our trading relationship through a new, more ambitious free trade agreement that will facilitate increased trade in priority areas such as services and technology.

A truly remarkable document, establishing the close relationship between the two countries, which have had difficult relationships in the past, but seem to be overtaking the United States relationships which are at a low ebb under President Biden. Biden is following the footsteps of Obama, giving weak support to Israel, at a time when faced with great changes in the region. Here is Britain stepping up to her role as the *merchants of Tarshish* power working with Israel, not against her like Europe and Russia, at the time of Gog's invasion.

Netanyahu's Judiciary Reforms

During March, Israel has been convulsed with daily demonstrations against the reforms that Netanyahu is pushing through Knesset. It is a complex subject, but what Netanyahu needs to do is for the Knesset, Israel's parliament, to be able to pass legislation that many in Israel want to see—greater control over Judah and Samaria, particularly in the Area C which was always intended to belong to Israel under the Oslo Accords. We saw in Chapter 1 that the EU has been busy undermining Israel's right to Area C, with the Israeli Government not daring to act. Netanyahu came to power with the vote of Israel to enable reforms to be put in place that would enable Israel to be effective in stabilising the Judea-Samaria region.

Unlike the US and the UK, the Israeli Supreme Court judges are not appointed by the government. It is a totally independent body that elects its own members. It has the power to override the government if it feels it has over-stepped the mark. That is acceptable if the judges have been put there by the government. It acts as a top-level safeguard.

In Israel's case the judges were self-appointed with no government oversight. Packed with left-wing judges, which was fine for a left-leaning government. Netanyahu's is a strongly right-wing government. Many of the reforms that Netanyahu wants are anathema to the left-wing. Hence the many days of protests against the desire to reform the Supreme Court! This has embraced many left-leaning countries around the world who wish to impose their views on Israel and tell the democratically elected government what they should do. Hardly democracy in action! Hence the low ebb in US-Israeli relations. In 1982, a much younger Biden, as a Senator, had observed then Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin during his

Senate Foreign Relations committee testimony. Biden threatened to cut off US aid to Israel. Begin forcefully responded:

“Don’t threaten us with cutting off your aid. It will not work. I am not a Jew with trembling knees. I am a proud Jew with 3,700 years of civilized history. Nobody came to our aid when we were dying in the gas chambers and ovens. Nobody came to our aid when we were striving to create our country. We paid for it. We fought for it. We died for it. **We will stand by our principles. We will defend them.** And, when necessary, we will die for them again, with or without your aid.”

Senator Biden reportedly banged on the table with his fist, and Begin retorted,

“This desk is designed for writing, not for fists. Don’t threaten us with slashing aid. Do you think that because the US lends us money it is entitled to impose on us what we must do? We are grateful for the assistance we have received, but we are not to be threatened. I am a proud Jew. Three thousand years of culture are behind me, and you will not frighten me with threats. Take note: we do not want a single soldier of yours to die for us.”

Ze’ev Jabotinsky, the leader of the Revisionist movement, which **both Begin and Netanyahu emanate from** noted in 1940 that,

“We hold that Zionism is moral and just. **And since it is moral and just, justice must be done, no matter whether Joseph or Simon or Ivan or Achmed agree with it or not.**” *Times of Israel* 30-Mar-23

Netanyahu has called a postponement to the prosed reforms and is encouraging dialogue instead of demonstration. Never-the-less he is pressing ahead with the planning of new Israeli settlements in Area C.

With US elections in the offing, there may well be changes shortly in US relations with Israel. In the meantime, here is Britain stepping back to her role of the friend of Israel, as we have seen.

Joining CPTPP shows Britain is finally seizing the benefits of Brexit

In a further dramatic move Britain is about to show that she is focussing on a trading group whose members comprise of tens of millions of middle-class consumers in a market with a value of £8 trillion. As the UK pivots away from the EU, she is joining the 11 countries that ring the Pacific. Among these countries are major Commonwealth countries, Canada, Australia, New Zealand,

Singapore, and Malaysia. Now with the UK joining, six of the twelve countries are Commonwealth linked!

In its short, five-year run, CPTPP has developed a strong reputation for being one of [the more liberal, flexible trade blocs](#). Even without knowing all the details of what the UK has secured, the basic framework of CPTPP suggests there is a lot to benefit from, especially in the sectors where Britain holds an advantage.

The Indo-Pacific trade bloc was founded in 2018 with eleven members. The countries together make up a \$10 trillion market, of which the UK is expected to become the first non-founding country to gain admittance. [The bloc was created with small and medium-size businesses in mind, in a bid to expand their export markets](#). This means its benefits include what government officials describe as ‘old school’ trade perks: the removal of tariffs and quotas, making it cheaper and easier to export goods. Whatever the UK has negotiated, British businesses can be fairly certain they’re about to get [better access to markets on the other side of the world](#), while British customers will benefit from lower prices when they import products from just over a dozen countries.

But it is in the digital sectors, including financial services and e-commerce, where Britain may really thrive. In a paper published late last year, looking at the benefits and challenges to the UK joining CPTPP, Professor David Collins from City Law School details the more flexible nature of the CPTPP when it comes to financial services.

Not only is CPTPP compatible with UK cross-border trade as it currently exists now, but it is also less restrictive, allowing for member states to adopt discretionary measures to ‘maintain the integrity and stability’ of their systems. [The report estimates that the long-term benefits for the UK’s financial services sector having better access to these eleven countries will exceed £3 billion](#). The report also highlights how CPTPP compliments the UK’s thriving e-commerce industry: [unlike the EU’s rigid and unrelenting commitment to GDPR](#), CPTPP takes a more liberal approach, by keeping more data-sharing decisions within the remit of individual member states. *Spectator* 30-Mar-23

A truly amazing vindication of our historic understanding of Bible Prophecy. In spite of the gloom and doom at home, angelic hands are moving Britain upon a course pre-ordained by God.

Pacific trade deal will mean Britain can never rejoin the EU

The significance of this new membership is huge!

Accession to the partnership would be a huge event for Brexit Britain and would not have been possible inside the European Union. Accession would mean that the UK would not be able to rejoin the EU customs union.

Since the pact requires that the UK has control over its own regulatory system, dynamic alignment of UK regulations with the EU would also not be feasible, except in those areas where EU regulation passes CPTPP muster.

Since the Indo-Pacific deal requires more liberalisation in these areas than the WTO (so-called WTO-plus), the UK would not be able to simply follow EU rules as this would bring it into conflict with its new trade partners.

But there are even more important reasons why this is such an important global event that goes well beyond the narrow economic benefits for the UK.

For the first time, a major G7 country has chosen to accede to a regional grouping not because it is part of that region but rather because the agreement represents the most advanced and deeply liberalising agreement based on mutual recognition, equivalence and adequacy.

Increasingly, countries are viewing the CPTPP as the alternative liberalising framework to the WTO, which maximises regulatory competition. It is also a geo-economic and geo-political grouping which has a major impact on the way global trade agreements work.

The UK has now made a choice about whether it wants a world of regulatory harmonisation or one of regulatory competition. Competition is the most powerful force known to man to create wealth and increase productivity and economic growth.

CPTPP+UK has equivalent economic weight to the (EU-28)-UK. If this accelerates the possibility of the US rejoining the CPTPP – after it pulled out under Donald Trump – then it would become a grouping that spans around half of the global economy. *Daily Telegraph* 30-Mar-23

What exciting times we are living in. Let us take courage, our Master is at the door and things are unfolding before our eyes in amazing ways.

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Bible Magazine and helpful sites

Each issue of the quarterly *Bible Magazine* carries a *Milestones Update*, which looks at different topical areas of fulfilling prophecy. This lively, full-colour magazine is of interest to brethren and sisters and is ideal to give to young people and interested friends.

Contact your local *Bible Magazine* representative for subscription details.

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The *Milestones* web site www.MilestonesUK.org carries details of back issues of *Milestones* and a wide range of books expounding prophecy and a section on books and DVDs against evolution, defending the Creation account. These can be ordered from the website or write/email for booklist. MilestonesUK@gmail.com



For more details on books and DVDs, contact the website or write/email for booklist. MilestonesUK@gmail.com

Prophecy Days

For latest details of forthcoming Prophecy Days go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ChristadelphianEvents/>

To watch the Rugby Prophecy Day 2023: <https://cdvideo.org/rpd2023> *

On www.Christadelphianvideo.org site*—<https://cdvideo.org/PROPHECY> you can watch many Prophecy Day talks from the UK and abroad

For my Milestones video updates:

<https://christadelphianvideo.org/?s=pearce%20don>

Christadelphian video

The www.Christadelphianvideo.org site, has many exhortations, Daily Bible Readings videos, Prophecy Days and Bible School videos of really stimulating material, a valuable post lock-down resource.

There is a resources section for Creation-Evolution matters especially material against Theistic Evolution. Link*: <https://cdvideo.org/TE>

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* These links are case sensitive, type in as printed.

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