**Watch World Events**

**Good News, March 1085**

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 How can you get a better grasp of this fast-paced world of ours?

   What events and trends in the world are of most significance as we approach "the end of the age" — the end of 6,000 years of human misrule, and the dawning of the world tomorrow?  
   Most importantly, for the purposes of this article, which news sources are most beneficial and reliable in the job we all have of watching world events ([Luke 21:36](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Luke%2021.36))? What's the best way to judge the value of a newspaper? And what is the overall approach of the news media in analyzing current events?

**The correct perspective**

   First of all, when studying world events from the viewpoint of Bible prophecy, one must know what to look for. We have not been left without guideposts in this vital area.  
   The 24th chapter of Matthew constitutes one of the most important prophetic passages in the New Testament. This chapter details the signs of Jesus Christ's Second Coming and the end of this age.  
   Hallmarks of the end time, we have been taught, will be religious deception (verses 4-5, 11), "wars and rumors of wars" (verse 6), famines, pestilences, earthquakes (verse 7) and religious persecution and martyrdom for some (verse 9). Through it all, the true Gospel of God will be proclaimed with ever increasing power till — before the end — it will have a powerful impact upon all nations (verse 14).  
   In addition to focusing our attention on the broad outline of Matthew 24, we need to keep a sharp eye on events in Europe, leading up to the final, 10-nation revival of the Roman Empire. The Middle East also merits continuous news monitoring, especially the growth of religious radicalism.  
   Plummeting morals in the Western world, the decay of family life, environmental destruction and the threat of a global economic catastrophe show we are near the end of humanity's profligate ways.  
   We need not go into detail at this point concerning these prophesied end-time conditions. The Plain Truth magazine continually devotes considerable space to these very trends. (If you are not already a reader of The Plain Truth, you may have a free subscription by writing to our address nearest you. See the inside front cover for a list.)

**Identity of America, Britain**

   There is another extremely important area that opens our eyes to what to look for. This key is the national identity of the United States, the British people and the democracies of northwestern Europe. These nations are, in the main, the descendants of the ancient House of Israel — the so-called "lost 10 tribes." (Write for our free book The United States and Britain in Prophecy for more information.)  
   The modern-day self-appointed "shepherds of Israel" ([Ezekiel 34:2](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ezek%2034.2)) do not understand this vital key to prophecy, or they simply dismiss it. They have not "sought what was lost" (verse 4).  
   This understanding is so vital in comprehending world events that without it one is left prophetically rudderless.  
   Equipped with this understanding, we can readily grasp the portent behind one of the single most significant trends in the world over the past two decades — the decline of British and American power and the corresponding rise in the military might of the Soviet Union.  
   This major trend affects nearly everything in the world today, from the changed power relationships in the Middle East to the need for Europe to unite.

**Approach of news media**

   No news analysts, aside from those in the true Church of God, are going to look at the world from the above perspectives of Bible prophecy.  
   But some analysts are definitely better than others in helping us watch world events. Such analysts belong to what has been called the realistic school of international relations.  
   Generally speaking, realists look at the world the way it really is. They are not blinded to political and moral evils in this world. They can plainly see the various power struggles among the nations, the principal one being the East-West conflict centered in Moscow and Washington.  
   They believe that major powers act the way they do because of historical precedence and national character and are not likely to "change their spots" and moderate their policies.  
   Realists understand that in the world — which the Bible reveals is not God's world but lies under the influence of Satan ([Revelation 12:9](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Rev%2012.9), [II Corinthians 4:4](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Cor%204.4)) — lofty, abstract principles such as "social justice" and "human rights" are unattainable, even if all people and nations knew what these concepts really meant. To the realist, the lesser evil is preferable to some human-defined, absolute "good."  
   The second broad approach toward the world and society, taken by many political leaders and the majority of news analysts of the popular press of the Western world, is the idealistic, also called the utopian or liberal, approach.  
   Basically speaking, the idealistic school holds that human nature is inherently good and has infinite malleability. Those holding to this approach believe man has the power to make society better and better according to constantly changing (supposedly improving) human standards.  
   Regarding the moral basis of society, the idealistic or liberal school rests on a shifting ground of no absolutes. The results of this "enlightened" approach, cut off from biblically based or influenced tradition, are all too obvious: the New Morality, living together, feminism, gay rights and the drive to "unisex" society — even the Bible.

**Choosing a newspaper**

   In general, the news media of the Western world hold marked liberal views, in almost reverse proportion to the public at large.  
   Knowing the two broad approaches to current events analysis should help us better select from the news sources available to us.  
   For some Christians, this is rather difficult, especially if they live in more closed societies. In these instances, choices of news sources are limited. Newspapers, radio and television are often either government controlled or heavily supervised to reflect official government positions.  
   In pluralistic Western societies, on the other hand, a wider selection of newspapers, magazines and electronic media is available.  
   In Britain and other countries in Europe, entire newspapers generally reflect a certain philosophy. The Daily Telegraph, for example, an excellent news source for the Church's News Bureau, is conservative in tone, in both presentation of news and commentary. The Guardian, on the other hand, reflects a definite left-of center viewpoint.  
   The Times of London is in the middle of the road, politically. The Times is regarded as the best-written, most informative newspaper in the English language.  
   Throughout Europe, another excellent news source is the International Herald Tribune, an American-style newspaper jointly operated by The New York Times and The Washington Post.  
   For their own experience, people in the United States should scan copies of the Times of London or the Daily Telegraph in their nearest big-city library, if for no other reason than to realize what they are missing on a daily basis in their newspapers. Reading the Times each day is an education.  
   Choosing a newspaper in the United States presents more of a problem. With the exception of the relatively new USA Today (a bit shallow on in-depth analysis of international news), the United States does not have national newspapers as does Britain. Two specialized newspapers, however, enjoy national circulation.  
   The business-oriented Wall Street Journal now has the largest circulation of any American newspaper. Day in and day out, its editorial pages contain some of the most sound-minded analyses of the news.  
   The small-circulation Christian Science Monitor presents perhaps the greatest scope of international news of any daily U.S. newspaper.  
   The highly informative (but editorially liberal) New York Times is steadily expanding its circulation nationwide.  
   Americans who do not regularly read the above sources are limited to local or regional newspapers. And far fewer of them exist now than before the advent of television. Television and nightly television news have all but destroyed the afternoon newspaper in America. Many cities are now one-newspaper towns.  
   When a choice between two or more newspapers is available, the prime consideration in deciding which paper to subscribe to should revolve around the stable of columnists who appear on the newspaper's editorial-opinion pages. Newspapers of the same size will vary little, in general, concerning the hard news of the day. The difference in a newspaper's relative worth will usually show up on the opinion page. In this regard one should note how many syndicated realist columnists appear regularly.  
   Who are some journalists of the realist school? Here are a few notable names in the United States to watch for: William Safire, George F. Will, Evans and Novak, Patrick J. Buchanan, James J. Kilpatrick, Norman Podhoretz, Phyllis Schlafly and Georgie Ann Geyer.  
   One may not always agree with everything these journalists write, but more often than not they present topics worth reading.

**Beneficial magazines**

   It also helps, budget permitting, to read a weekly news magazine in addition to a newspaper.  
   The magazine U.S. News & World Report has always provided the News Bureau with important information every week. U.S. News concentrates on essential facts and figures, with helpful, readily understandable charts and graphs.  
   Regarding Time and Newsweek, personal preference is the key. These magazines are most helpful in covering major stories in depth. The overall slant, of course, remains American and liberal, especially in Time.  
   Unfamiliar to many Americans but respected around the world is Britain's Economist, probably the most comprehensive newsweekly published anywhere, usually containing important news items that escape American eyes.  
   Business Week is another fine publication with a good "International Outlook" section on world affairs and excellent occasional in-depth reports. However, as a business magazine, it ranks below the fortnightly Fortune.  
   A leading journal of opinion today is The New Republic, which is published weekly. It often contains thought-provoking articles on a wide range of political and social affairs topics, representing a fairly broad viewpoint.  
   Another supplemental news source worth mentioning is Commentary, a monthly published by the American Jewish Committee. Commentary is one of the most influential journals in America.  
   The fortnightly National Review, while essentially political in tone, often has articles of broad social significance.  
   A person may not wish to subscribe to any of the magazines mentioned above. But one should at least scan them, as well as the selection of other newspapers and periodicals available at libraries.  
   One might come across other informative English-language newsmagazines, such as Maclean's from Canada, The Bulletin from Australia and Asia week from Hong Kong (which covers the whole gamut of Asian affairs).  
   An excellent source covering events in Europe, especially the Common Market countries, is Europe. It is published every other month by the European Economic Community Commission's office in Washington, D.C. Similar magazines are available in all member countries of the Common Market.  
   Also take a look at World Press Review, a supplemental American news source that reprints news articles and editorials from the international press, representing a wide spectrum of viewpoints.  
   Why not make a trip to the library a monthly or semimonthly habit?  
   Remember that time is precious — we are counseled to "redeem" it ([Ephesians 5:16](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Eph%205.16)). Don't waste time on the scandal tabloids sold in grocery stores, nor on most of the many popular personality magazines (People is probably the best of the generally poor lot).

**Have sound-minded approach**

   One last area needs to be addressed, specifically because it affects a few members of God's Church: This is the fascination with theories that purport to explain world events as a grand conspiracy.  
   There are variants of the conspiracy theory of history, but they nearly all revolve around an elite cabal of bankers, financiers and wealthy capitalists who are said to be manipulating events internationally with the goal of subjugating the United States and Western nations to the control of a totalitarian, one-world government. The conspirators, it is claimed, not only manipulate Western-world leaders like puppets, but secretly control the governments of the Soviet Union and mainland China.  
   Conspiracy theory literature is, in general, very negative, accusatory and often anti-Semitic.  
   There is undeniable evidence of similarity of thinking (internationalist, moderately left of center) on the part of the majority of members of certain organizations often accused of being part of the conspiracy, such as the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission.  
   Yet the fact that such organizations exist and that the viewpoint of most of their members is similar does not itself prove deliberate, calculated conspiratorial intent.  
   Knowing the fruits of the flesh — "contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies" ([Galatians 5:20](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Gal%205.20)) — it is illogical to believe that the alleged conspirators could pursue such a unified, single minded course of action for any length of time.  
   America and Britain are going down not because of the willful machination of unseen manipulators but for a compendium of national sins spelled out in [Isaiah 1:4-6](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Isa%201.4-6): "Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward.... The whole head [government] is sick, and the whole heart [national morale and morality] faints. From the sole of the foot even to the head [meaning the entire society and all its components], there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores."  
   For 51 years, the pages of The Plain Truth have pinpointed humanity's problems as being a direct result of sin and lack of the knowledge of God and His laws ([Hosea 4:1](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Hos%204.1)). The English-speaking world is suffering the national curses of disobedience (Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28).  
   Let's keep a sound-minded approach ([II Timothy 1:7](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Tim%201.7)). And let's never think that we are privy to information important to salvation beyond what God has revealed to His Church through His chosen apostle. In this way, and by using the steps outlined in this article, we'll know better what to look for — and how to look — as prophecy unfolds before our eyes.

**Television as a News Source**

   Television can be an informative supplement to your news diet, providing that the newscasts are selected properly.  
   Unfortunately, however, many people waste hours each day looking at what they think is news, and rarely watch those newscasts and special programs that could really help.  
   This is especially true in the United States, because of the overall dominance of the medium of commercial television.  
   It's a pity that Americans cannot view Britain's high-quality BBC news or similar first-class, noncommercial newscasts in other parts of the world.  
   In the United States, the most worthwhile regularly scheduled commercial newscasts on world and national affairs are the nightly 30-minute (actually 22 minutes of news plus the commercials and station breaks) ABC, CBS and NBC network programs.  
   Also seen in many areas is the so-called fourth network news program known as International Network News or INN. In addition, many viewers can receive the Cable News Network (CNN) whose prime time newscasts are helpful.  
   There are, in addition, supplemental television programs of value, such as Public Television's MacNeil/Lehrer News hour as well as specially scheduled programs. In these cases, let the TV Guide be your guide.  
   Be cautious, however, of the newscasts in your area. They can be time wasters. All too often a local newscast is only entertainment disguised as news!  
   Local newscasts, such as the 5 to 6 o'clock or 6 to 7 o'clock "news hours" are big business in America, generating from a third to a half of a television station's income.  
   The ratings wars between the channels during these time slots are fierce. To stay at the top of the market, a station will do anything to make its local "news" juicier: scandals, exposes — anything to hook the unwary viewer.  
   Worst of all, the on-screen anchorpersons ("news readers" to our British readers) are hired more for their good looks than for their journalistic ability.  
   The local news game is now so competitive that TV news executives, frantic in their search for new talent, resort to high-powered consulting agencies (called "news doctors" in the trade) who maintain thousands of videotapes of prospective "news stars."  
   Are your ratings slumping? Is your present "news star" getting a little gray at the temples? Has he (or she) lost his (or her) sex appeal?  
   Go to the "news doctor" and find a new "pretty face"!  
   Knowing that this is the way TV news functions, concentrate on those newscasts that present world and national affairs and take local television news with a huge dose of salt.  
   To those who feel that television places them on a starvation news diet, one remedy might involve the purchase of a relatively inexpensive portable short wave radio receiver. The top-notch BBC World Service from London can be easily picked up nearly everywhere in the world, together with transmissions from Radio Australia, Radio South Africa and the English-language services of several other nations.