

Bible Magazine Fall 2021

From a prophetic fulfilment viewpoint, what an exciting few months it has been! The US's precipitate exit from Afghanistan caused many allies to think again on whether they could rely on America to defend them. This has important implications for the Middle East where many Arab nations are fearful of Iran, especially since their new leader is a known hard-liner. The German elections end in stalemate, weakening Germany's power—and strengthening President Macron's hand. We begin with an exciting development, strengthening our faith in the Hand of God in world affairs.

“The tectonic plates of geopolitics shifting in front of your eyes”

Britain's best-kept secret proved to be an exciting event for Bible watchmen! The *Economist* magazine 19-Sep-21 hailed it like this:

Just occasionally, you can see the tectonic plates of geopolitics shifting in front of your eyes. Suez in 1956, Nixon going to China in 1972 and the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 are among the examples in living memory.

The unveiling last week of a trilateral defence pact between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States is providing another of those rare occasions.

A new acronym was born: AUKUS (pronounced orcus), an amalgamation of the abbreviations of three countries: AU = Australia, UK, and US. It has been set up in complete secrecy over the past few months.

It is said that only ten people were privy to the plans in the UK. It envisages the pooling of the resources of the three countries to act as a bulwark against China's expansionism in the Pacific region. It will involve the sharing of intelligence information and military knowhow.

The initial need for secrecy revolved around the increasing dissatisfaction within Australia to the purchase of twelve diesel-electric powered submarines from France. The order was placed in 2016, at a time when the world had not woken up to China's aggressive push to expand her influence around the world, using her economic influence. China was a valued customer of Australia, importing coal, iron ore and wines. Since Covid, China has disrupted much of this trade and has acted aggressively against Australia's desire to trace the origins of Covid. China strongly denies that she had any involvement in its origins and spread.

In a changed relationship with China, the type of submarines on order would not be very useful. Diesel powered submarines have a limited range. Northern Australia is about 4,000 km. from China. What were now needed were nuclear powered submarines, which have a much greater range and are far harder to detect—an important issue in a war scenario. Prices from France were escalating and construction delays were becoming a major issue. France is a leading military hardware country, but much is produced by nationalised firms which have a poor reputation for reliability and delivery times.

Faced with these delays and increasing unsuitability, Australia came to a decision to scrap the existing order with France and turn to the US and Britain with a new order for nuclear-powered submarines. The US pioneered the construction of these—her first was launched in 1950. Under the 1958 US-UK Mutual Defence Agreement, America shared her knowledge with her ally Britain, who launched her first nuclear powered submarines in 1960. Rolls-Royce developed the nuclear reactor which can run for 25 years without recharging.

‘Like a scene from *le Carré*’: how the nuclear submarine pact was No 10's biggest secret

This was the headline in *The Times* 18-Sep-21, setting out how the deal had been hammered out. Australia's first approach was to Britain.

When the First Sea Lord was invited to a meeting at the Australian high commission in March this year, he had no idea of the magnitude of what was about to unfold. Admiral Sir Tony Radakin — described by colleagues as a “doer” — was asked by Vice-Admiral Michael Noonan, the Australian Chief of Navy, whether the British and Americans could help their ally to build a new fleet of nuclear-powered submarines.

“That was the first contact. It was a big strategic play. He [Radakin] then came back and handed the whole thing over to [Sir Stephen] Lovegrove,” said a security source, referring to the permanent secretary at that time at the Ministry of Defence. The source compared it to a scene out of a John le Carré spy novel.

So began Operation Hookless — as it was codenamed inside No 10 — and the most closely guarded secret inside government in years. Only about ten people in Britain were privy to the details, including the prime minister, the foreign secretary, and the defence secretary. Lovegrove, who was still the Ministry of Defence's



permanent secretary when handed the proposal, left the department to take on the job of national security adviser, making him even better placed to help carve out the deal of his career. John Bew, Johnson's foreign policy adviser and the 15 September mastermind behind the integrated review that talked of a "tilt" towards the Indo-Pacific region, was also allowed into the fold. Those who were present were "read in", meaning they had to sign a paper vowing not to let the secret details of the discussions out of the room.

After the initial meeting in March, the proposal was put to the Americans. "It took quite a long time to go through the American machine — it had to be discussed at the Pentagon, the state department and the energy department," the source said. In the weeks that followed, those in the British circle believed there was a "20 per cent chance of it falling apart".

Boris Johnson enthusiastically embraced the proposal, seeing that there could be far more than just submarines.

"Boris really pushed it. There was a choice about how broad it would be — was it just a technical agreement on a specific subject or is this more broad? **Boris was pushing that it had to be as ambitious as possible.** This was **a strategic move,**" a government source who was involved in the discussions said.

By the time of the G7 summit in Cornwall in June, the plans were well under way. As the French were occupied with the unfolding so-called "sausage war" over the Brexit divorce deal, Johnson, President Biden and Scott Morrison, the Australian prime minister — referred to as "ScoMo" in No 10 — thrashed out the details of a top-secret pact that would later be known as the **AUKUS defence and security alliance.**

"There was a lot of noise at G7 about sausages and the EU and there was a lot of excitement around that, and it seemed odd for us that we were doing serious, serious, business in this meeting," the government source added.

The final details were hammered out and the Agreement was announced on 15 September.

After the announcement of the pact this week, Lovegrove described it as "**the most significant capability collaboration anywhere in the world in the past decades**". Senior figures in government have compared it to the 1958 mutual defence agreement (MDA) between President Eisenhower and Harold Macmillan, the British prime minister, and the beginning of the "special nuclear relationship" that allows the nations to exchange nuclear materials, technology and information, an agreement which continues today.

AUKUS is not merely about submarines. **It is much more significant.** As the Australian prime minister Scott Morrison said, it is "**a partnership where our technology, our scientists, our industry, our defence forces will work together to deliver a safer and more secure region that ultimately benefits all**". This is the heart and strength of this new agreement: international co-operation **to face challenges together.** AUKUS will boost **security, prosperity, the sharing of technology.** We will work together in all domains including space and cyber. **In the UK it will create hundreds of highly skilled jobs,** delivering on our prime minister's policy of levelling up across the country. **The Indo-Pacific is increasingly the engine room of the global economy.**

That best explains the UK's tilt towards the Indo-Pacific. *The Times* 18-Sep-21

The Submarine Row Marks the Dawn of the Franco-British Rivalry

Britain sees herself regaining her maritime power. No longer bound by the EU chains, she desires to use her new-found freedom to spread her wings around the world. The Middle East is a desirable market and so is the Indo-Pacific region, where many of her Commonwealth allies are. As a major trading power, the sea routes are of vital importance, defending freedom of passage through them is part of her lifeblood. That means keeping rivals in check. France is the only main EU country to have similar desires and to have a strong navy.

London's aspiration, in the aftermath of Brexit, to ascend in the Great Power Competition that is rapidly reshaping the global geopolitical order. After all, British prime minister Boris Johnson promoted Britain's departure from the European Union as **an opportunity for the country to strike more global strategic deals unrestrained by the EU.**

To this end, the UK is trying to achieve three goals: **preventing a European power from rising as a challenger to London, preventing Russia from dominating the Eastern Mediterranean, and preventing China from controlling the Indo-Pacific trade routes that are vital for Britain's economic prosperity.** Not surprisingly, those three pillars are intertwined and involve London's power struggle with Paris. *National Interest* 22-Sep-21

France has been doing her hardest to prevent such a scenario, she was one of the main obstacles to a decent Brexit Agreement, undermining Britain at every turn. France has done her best to scupper Britain's financial services to Europe, hoping for rich rewards, which have not materialised.

France's fury when Australia cancelled her order was very palpable. France withdrew her Ambassadors to the States and to Australia, and snubbed Britain by saying she was America's poodle and so he would not bother to withdraw her Ambassador to Britain! A defence meeting with Britain was cancelled; the EU trade Agreement negotiations with Australia were halted. As for Britain wanting to re-negotiate the Northern Ireland Agreement — well forget it!

Britain is hoping that she will be able to win more military hardware business away from France as other countries see the problems that Australia has had with her French contract—and at the way she has reacted to the cancellation. Come to Britain for a more reliable deal is the message that Johnson is hoping will be seen.

The Five Eyes Intelligence Alliance

This is not a new alliance but is one that provided the bedrock for the AUKUS Agreement. Its origins are in World War II, where the Commonwealth countries came to the aid of Britain as she battled against Germany and her allies. The Five Eyes was formed by Australia, Canada, New Zealand the US, and the UK. It has proved to be a remarkable cooperation project as these countries pool their intelligence information.

As *GeoPoliticalFutures* 21-Sep-21 put it:

But far more interesting [than AUKUS] is to watch the evolution of the Five Eyes, the intelligence consortium of the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. The three major powers have already woven an alliance moving well beyond intelligence.

The most important point is that a very real international alliance system centered on the ocean is emerging. NATO is still there, but its mission and capabilities in the event of war are unclear. **This English-speaking alliance moves forward in steps.** We need to read the repudiation of the French contract in this light.

And perhaps France's rage, which goes beyond an undeniably lucrative contract, has something to do with this. "An alliance centered on the ocean"—a Tyre-Tarshish group of countries who are maritime trading powers. Something that France aspires to, but locked into the EU does not have that fleetness of foot compared to these five independent countries who choose to work together—and have worked and fought together for over a century. Britain has now awoken from her slumbers and is back to her old role as so aptly prophesied by Isaiah 2,700 years ago. He revealed God's news that Tyre of old would cease from her base to the north of Israel, and that she would be removed "afar off" (Isa. 23:7) One can trace that step-by-step removal until reaching the shores of Britain in Elizabethan times. She prospered in her new home for many centuries, until the time of her humbling came. For 70 years "as the days of one king" she would be forgotten. At the end of that period, she would reflower and "sing as a harlot".

And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and **shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.**

And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing. Isa. 23:17,18

She would regain her former power, trading with all the world. Why is God allowing this to happen at this time?

As with so many things, it is in preparation for an even greater role for Britain—that of assisting the Lord Jesus when he has been accepted by his people of Israel and sits on the restored throne of David in Jerusalem. A massive work lies ahead as the nations are subdued and accept his rule. Jews from around the world will need transporting back—initially I believe to Sinai—where they will face their judgment. If they accept Jesus as the Messiah, then they will enter their tribal allotment. If not, they will be purged out. Ezekiel 20:33-44 gives the details. There will be a great work of rebuilding in Israel following the splitting of the Mount of Olives and a glorious temple to be constructed for the centre of world-worship. To the south of Jerusalem, a hotel city is to be built to accommodate pilgrims from around the world. (Eze. 48:35) Britain's skills will be fully utilised in these coming days of blessing.

Brexit Britain starts talks on £9Trillion trade pact

Liz Truss has now been promoted to Foreign Secretary. She continues her drive to establish Trade Agreements with many countries. One of the cherries on the tree is the awkwardly named CPTPP. This stands for Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership! This is a collection of countries around



the rim of the Pacific Ocean. Negotiation talks began on September 28. The trade prospects are enormous—this is the area of the world where economies have been booming. The negotiations will take some time, but there is a lot of goodwill among its existing members to have Britain on board, especially as Donald Trump pulled the US out of its initial membership.

Brilliant Truss has skillset to forge strong ties with Israel

Israel welcomed her elevation; she is a great fan of Israel and gets on well with the Israeli Ambassador to Britain.

Anyone who believes in strengthening the relationship between Britain and Israel should be delighted by the appointment of Liz Truss as the new Foreign Secretary.

Her promotion comes just a few weeks after a brilliant visit to Israel to kick start talks on a new bespoke post-Brexit trade deal.

Talk to anyone in Downing Street and you'll hear her described as "one of the government's deliverers", someone who "just gets on with it and gets things done". *Jewish Chronicle* 24-Sep-21

Report on first 100 days of New Israeli government

We looked in the last issue at Israel's new government. Consisting of the biggest number of coalition partners in Israel's modern history, with a wide spread of interests and with only a one-seat majority, its prospects looked grim. Yet it has survived a battle with Hamas, and the Abraham Accords are bringing home profitable fruits. The government has survived without the abrasiveness of Netanyahu. Prime Minister Bennett has established good working relations with many politicians and has given his first UN speech, defending Israel's stand against Iran and thanking the many nations who have boycotted the annual UN Durban Assembly devoted to Israel-bashing. BICOM (Britain Israel Communication & Research Centre) produced an 8-page progress report 27-Sep-21.

Key Points

- In the first 100 days of the Bennett-Lapid government, Israel's foreign policy can be characterised in three ways: **restoring ties with strategic neighbours, a new accommodating approach with traditional allies, and continuity with Gulf partners.**
- The most noticeable change of the new government's international engagement has been toward restoring ties with neighbours, most prominently **the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Jordan.** Working under the (Defence Minister) Gantz Track, the government is setting anew its relationship with the PA through goodwill gestures and mending ties with the Jordanian Kingdom after the hardship Netanyahu-Abdullah II years.
- On Gaza, the government has swiftly returned the flow of goods across the border to the same level as it was before Operation Guardian of the Walls in May (and has gone even further in some measures), and has offered a new initiative under the (Foreign Minister) Lapid Track in the hope of maintaining quiet with Hamas.
- There has been a clear and more accommodating approach with the US and the EU in which the new government is deploying a less combative and more friendly rhetorical stance when it disagrees with traditional allies over vital issues.
- Finally, the new government is continuing top-level efforts **to strengthen the Abraham Accords** and ensure **its expansion in**



the region. In his short time as Foreign Minister, Yair Lapid has visited two of the Abraham Accords countries and signed agreements with them that relate to several sectors.

A reinvigorated Foreign Ministry

The same report enlarged on the successful efforts of the Foreign Minister, Yair Lapid. In a recent [Sep 20] Haaretz article, Lapid argues that the Netanyahu governments **adopted a policy of pessimistic suspicion**, which led Israel to neglect the vital work of **building alliances** based on values and caused its international standing to diminish. Lapid says his task as Foreign Minister is to “create a diplomatic umbrella to protect us on rainy days”. He explains: “Accepting responsibility, being open to ideas, making decisions based on facts (even when they’re unpleasant), clearly understanding how others see us, being willing to accept criticism, avoiding self-pity and observing human rights – these aren’t political burdens but values that we believe in. A foreign policy that’s optimistic, open-minded and ready for dialogue isn’t a price we have to pay, **it’s an asset we’re building in our relationship with the world.**”



Foreign Minister
Yair Lapid

By firmly showing her Arab neighbours that peace brings prosperity, the new government is hoping that the Palestinian people will respond by rejecting their militant leaders.

Palestinian President calls on UN’s Guterres to convene international peace conference

The Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas gave his pre-recorded address to the UN General Assembly, in which he gave Israel one year to withdraw to the 1967 lines—giving up Jerusalem and much of the territory she took from the Jordanians. He called on the UN Secretary-General to convene an international peace conference which he assured they would cooperate with, provided Israel had withdrawn.

The UN interpreter confusingly introduced him as President of Israel! As he is so unpopular with his people there was little interest amongst the Palestinians in his rhetoric. His imprisonment and murder by his security forces of any opposition to his rule makes him very unpopular at home.

Israel thwarts imminent Hamas terrorist attacks

At the end of September, Israeli security forces completed a sweep of Judea and Samaia, rounding up Hamas cells who were plotting an imminent series of terrorist attacks. Once again Israel’s amazing ability to spy on their enemies enabled them to remain one step ahead of their foes. Hamas are reported to have recommenced repairing their underground tunnel system and are restocking on rockets to replenish their supplies used in their May attack on Israel and the many ammunition stores which were destroyed by Israel. Meanwhile they keep their people in poverty. Under her new government, Israel is reaching out to supply aid to these poor people.

The Abraham Accords—one year on

They certainly are having an effect on Israel’s trade. This table published in *Times of Israel* 05-Sep-21 gives a simple overview, measured in US\$ millions. In fact, trade in the first seven months of this year exceeds the total for the whole of last year by 234% according to *Flame* 28-Sep-21. Trade with the UAE alone is expected to be in the billions of \$ within the next few years. The potential is enormous.

Saudi Arabia is considering buying missile defence weapons from Israel, following the US withdrawal of Patriot missile defences recently.



Specifically, the Saudis are considering either the Iron Dome, produced by Rafael, which is better against short range rockets, or the Barak ER, produced by IAI, which is designed to intercept cruise missiles. Israeli defense

sources told Breaking Defense that such a deal would be realistic, as long as both nations received approval of Washington; one source added that Saudi “interest in the Israeli systems has reached a very practical phase.”

Those same sources say that the Saudis have had low-level talks with Israel for several years about such systems, but that the talks began to take on more energy once it became clear America would remove its air defense assets from the Kingdom. *Breaking Defense (US)* 14-Sep-21

Japanese investment Bank with strong Saudi connections opening in Israel

The Japanese SoftBank, considered one of the largest venture capital firms in the world, is opening branches in Israel. It allows the Saudis, who are heavy investors in its funds, to reap the benefits of Israeli technology without upsetting those who are ambivalent about signing up to the Abraham Accords.

One point of interest is the figure that will head the fund’s activity in Israel—Yossi Cohen, who is the former head of the Israeli Mossad, and who is considered very close to Netanyahu. Some analysts even say he could one day replace Netanyahu as leader of the Likud, the largest political party in Israel. Cohen was one of the architects of the normalization agreements, and his frequent travel to the Gulf states, even those that have no ties to Israel, have led to the formation of tight covert ties between Israel and these states.

SoftBank is known for its close contacts with the Saudi royal family, and one can see in the Japanese investment giant a kind of roundabout arm for Saudi investment in Israeli high-tech. We can assume that Cohen’s appointment, who, according to many reports, met with senior Saudis, among them Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, helped to ease concerns, despite a lack of direct contact between Saudi Arabia and Israel. Perhaps this is the Saudi way to circumvent the diplomatic roadblock, to connect with Israeli high-tech and reap some of its rewards. *Al-Monitor* 27-Sep-21

Israel opens Chinese-operated port in Haifa to boost regional trade links

Early September, the newly rebuilt Haifa Port came into operation. This state-of-the-art port can handle vessels holding up to 18,000 containers. It will cut handle costs and times as Israel prepares to see a big increase in her trade, 99% of which is shipped by sea. A new port at Ashdod is also being built which will be run by a Swiss company and hopes to open in a year.



Von Leyen calls for a European army

The European Commission President Ursula von de Leyen called for the establishment of a European Defence force in her State of the Union speech September 15. The EU was shaken by the US rapid withdrawal from Afghanistan and Biden’s lack of interest in defending Europe. The EU feels they can no longer rely on the American-backed NATO to defend them. France has been pushing for the creation of such an army and has found an ally in von Leyen. The row with America and Australia over the cancellation of Australia’s order with France for submarines which led to the setting up of AUKUS, gave further impetus to this desire. Every six months a different member state holds the presidency of the Council of the European Union. On January 1 2022 it is France’s turn.

This is why, under the French Presidency, President Macron and I will convene a Summit on European defence.

It is time for Europe to step up to the next level. *State of Union 2021* von de Leyen 15-Sep-21

Expect rapid developments in this field as we watch the development of the Western Foot of Nebuchadnezzar’s Image. The Russian, Eastern Foot, is already well developed.

The Lord God has recorded the outline of these times millennia ago, that His servants may have their faith strengthen in these last dark days as they see these events rapidly unfolding.

Our Lord is at the door, our call can come at any moment. Take courage, our God is all wise and all powerful; His Will will be done!

