

# This Week's Developments

January 7 - 13, 2024 [view additional slides]

- Britain and US launch airstrikes on Houthi targets
- Russia, Turkey, Iran condemn attack on Yemen Houthis
- Saudi Arabia interested in Israel normalisation deal
- Russia attacks 'arrogant British' after new aid agreed
- ICJ begins case alleging Israeli genocide in Gaza
- Climate crisis: 2023 was hottest year on record
- *Additional & Supporting Articles*

*Map 1*

*Map 2*

*Map 3*

# Britain and US launch airstrikes on Houthi targets

The Times, January 12, 2024



## EVENT

Explosions were heard across Yemen late on Thursday night as British and US forces launched strikes on Houthi targets, after the Iranian-backed group ignored warnings to stop attacking ships in the Red Sea. Rishi Sunak, who had authorised the military action hours earlier and briefed ministers in an emergency cabinet meeting, said the situation could not be allowed to stand. He said the UK had taken “limited, necessary and proportionate action in self-defence”. President Biden said that Australia, Bahrain, Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, New Zealand and South Korea had also provided backing. **Saba**, the Yemeni press agency, reported attacks in the capital, Sanaa. “These strikes are in direct response to unprecedented Houthi attacks against international maritime vessels in the Red Sea ... These attacks have endangered US personnel, civilian mariners, and our partners, jeopardised trade, and threatened freedom of navigation,” President Biden said.

## COMMENT

The war between Israel and Hamas has escalated once again. Now it has spread to a direct conflict between the US/UK and the Houthis based in Yemen. The Houthis have said they are attacking ships in the Red Sea in support of the Palestinians and will only stop when Israel stops its war. The Houthis have been armed with sophisticated missiles and weapons from Iran. In Joel 3 we read of this situation. God speaks of the final conflict over Israel in this chapter. He asks (almost sarcastically) “what have you to do with me O Tyre and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine?” Tyre = Hezbollah and coasts of Palestine = Hamas in Gaza. But then we read in verse 8 that these people will be sold to the Sabeans – a people far off. Their kingdom was called Saba in YEMEN!

## BIBLE QUOTE

Yea, and what have ye to do with me, O Tyre, and Zidon [Hezbollah], and all the coasts of Palestine? [Hamas] will ye render me a recompence? ....I return your recompence upon your own head; And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the **Sabeans [Yemen]**, to a people far off: for the LORD hath spoken it. *(Joel 3:4+6)*

# Russia, Turkey, Iran Condemn Attack on Yemeni Houthis

VOA, January 12, 2024



## EVENT

Thursday's retaliatory attacks by U.S. and British forces on Iranian-backed Houthis inside Yemen have prompted support and condemnation from the international community. **Iran's** foreign ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani "**strongly slammed** the military strikes by the U.S. and Britain," in a statement, calling it "an arbitrary move" that "clearly breached Yemen's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and was against international laws and regulations." NATO ally **Turkey's** President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called the strikes "**a disproportionate use of force**," just as Israel is doing in Gaza, and accused the U.S. and Britain of trying "to turn the Red Sea into a sea of blood." He accused both countries of escalating tensions in the region. **Russia** also **condemned** the attacks, with Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov calling the strikes "illegitimate," and accused the United States and Britain of "trying to adjust the international law system to its actions."

## COMMENT

The strikes a few days ago by the US and UK against the Houthis in Yemen has caused anger and condemnation by three main nations – Russia, Turkey and Iran. All three nations are fully lined up with the Palestinians and see Israel as the aggressor. Iran wants the total destruction of Israel. Turkey (the only Muslim nation in NATO) has turned against Israel and is now siding with Russia. Russia under Putin had fairly good ties with Israel but has now turned against them. Putin is siding with Iran as Iran is helping Putin's war in Ukraine. All three nations are lined up against Israel and therefore condemn the bombing of the Houthis who are also against Israel. Ezekiel 38 tells us that Russia will assemble allies to attack Israel in the future. Iran and Turkey are on that list.

## BIBLE QUOTE

Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: **Persia, ...and the house of Togarmah** of the north quarters, (Ezekiel 38:2-6)

# Saudi Arabia interested in Israel normalisation deal after war

BBC, January 9, 2024



## EVENT

Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the UK says it is interested in normalising relations with Israel after the war in Gaza, but that any deal must lead to the creation of a Palestinian state. Prince Khalid bin Bandar told the BBC a pact was "close" when the kingdom paused US-brokered talks after Hamas's deadly attacks on Israel on 7 October. Saudi Arabia still believed in establishing ties with Israel despite the "deplorable" casualty figures in Gaza, he said, but it would not "come at the cost of the Palestinian people". The ambassador also warned that there was a "failure of humanity" over Gaza, with the international community not doing enough to end the fighting. He also said he would like to see the UK "moderate its position" and "treat Israel the same way it treats everyone else". "The blind spot towards Israel is a real problem because it provides a blind spot to peace," he added.

## COMMENT

One might have thought Saudi Arabia being an Arab nation would hate Israel in a similar way to Iran. However, they don't – certainly the rulers don't. Israel and Saudi Arabia share a common enemy, Iran. The phrase "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" holds true here. It is interesting that the condition of normalising relations with Israel is the creation of a Palestinian State. After the inner ring war is concluded there is a temporary time of peace and security in Israel. It could be some agreement is reached following the destruction of Hamas and Hezbollah. Joel 3 says that the Palestinians will be sold to Sabeans (Yemen). Ezekiel 38 tells us that when Russia, Iran and Turkey invade Israel that Sheba and Dedan (Saudi Arabia and Gulf Arab states) are on the side of Israel. Therefore we DO expect some normalisation of relations between them....

## BIBLE QUOTE

Sheba [Saudi Arabia], and Dedan [other Gulf Arab States eg Bahrain, Kuwait etc], and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil? This is the opposing force to Gog etc (Ezekiel 38:13)

# Russia attacks 'arrogant British' after Sunak visits Ukraine to announce new aid

Sky News, January 12, 2024



## EVENT

Rishi Sunak has made a surprise visit to Kyiv to announce a new package of military aid, security assurances and humanitarian support. The prime minister has signed a UK-Ukraine Agreement on Security Cooperation with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy - committing the UK to provide intelligence sharing, cyber security, medical and military training, and defence industrial cooperation. **The UK will also provide £2.5bn in military aid to Ukraine in 2024-25, an increase of £200m on the previous two years.** About £200m will also be spent on a push to procure and produce thousands of military drones. Responding to Mr Sunak's visit, **former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev warned the UK against any deployments in Ukraine.** Mr Medvedev, now deputy chairman of Russia's Security Council, said: **"I hope that our eternal enemies - the arrogant British - understand that deploying an official military contingent to Ukraine would be a declaration of war against our country."**

## COMMENT

The crisis in the Middle East has turned global attention away from the conflict in Ukraine - but it continues to rage on. Each side needing more and more firepower to desperately try to push the other side back. Daniel 11:40 speaks of the "king of the south" / US/UK "pushing" at Gog - the king mentioned from verse 36-39. The push is a military provocation. The war in Ukraine could be this push. Russia is part of the "outer circle" war that comes AFTER the initial "inner ring war". It is unlikely that Russia would wage a war in Ukraine at the same time as invading Israel. Therefore it is likely the Ukraine war will be fought to some negotiated stalemate. The route down to Israel is simple for Russia. Allied to Turkey there are virtually no barriers to its descent into Israel

## BIBLE QUOTE

And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. **Notice the colon after the "push". It denotes a short time gap. This gap is the peace / security after the inner war...** (Daniel 11:40)



# Hague court begins hearing case alleging Israeli genocide in Gaza

Financial Times, January 9, 2024



## EVENT

The International Court of Justice on Thursday began hearing a politically explosive case brought by South Africa alleging that Israel was committing genocide against the Palestinians in its war in Gaza. South Africa brought the case under the 1948 Genocide Convention, claiming that by killing Palestinians in Gaza, causing them serious bodily and mental harm, and inflicting on them “conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction”, Israel was responsible for a genocide. Israel has furiously denied the allegations, saying that South Africa’s case “lacks both a factual and a legal basis, and constitutes despicable and contemptuous exploitation of the court”, and insisting that it complied with international law and that its forces were targeting only militants. “Israel has made it clear that the residents of the Gaza Strip are not the enemy, and is making every effort to limit harm to the non-involved and to allow humanitarian aid to enter the Gaza Strip,” said the foreign ministry.

## COMMENT

The genocide convention was established after the second world war and the holocaust, during which 6mn Jews were killed by the Nazis and their collaborators. Both South Africa and Israel are signatories, which allows South Africa to bring its case. The convention has previously only been used in cases involving Bosnia and Serbia; Gambia and Myanmar; and Russia’s war in Ukraine. Now this same convention is being used against Israel. **The fact is that Israel itself is fighting genocide.** It is Hamas, Hezbollah, Syria and Iran that are calling for the destruction of Israel. That is the very definition of genocide. Israel are attempting to stop those who want to destroy them from doing so. God will not allow His people to be destroyed....ever.

## BIBLE QUOTE

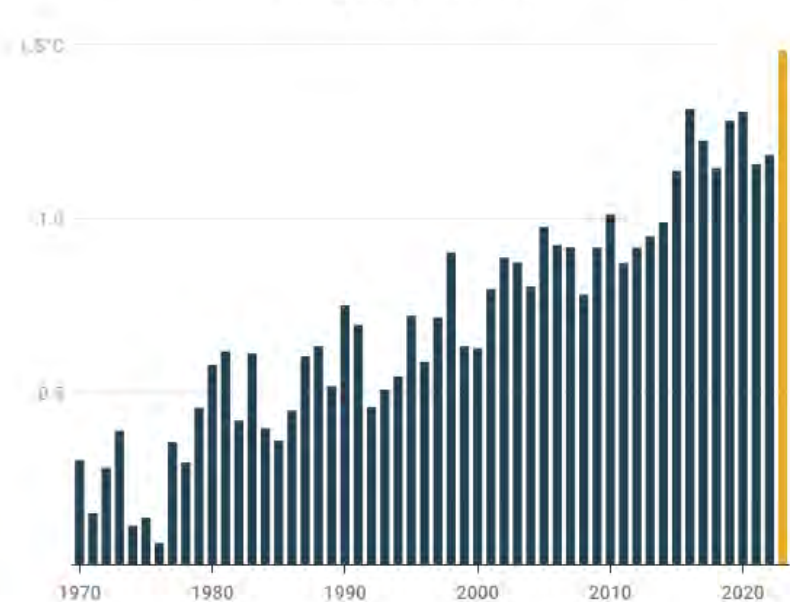
For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: **though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee:** but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished. ... Therefore all **they that devour thee shall be devoured;** and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; (Jeremiah 30:11+16)

# 2023 was hottest year on record

The Times, January 12, 2024

## Breaking new ground

Annual global surface air temperature increase relative to the average for 1850-1900



## EVENT

Earth could hit the symbolic milestone of 1.5C warmer than the Industrial Revolution this year, according to a senior scientist at the World Meteorological Organisation. As six global temperature datasets showed that 2023 was the year warmest on record, Professor Chris Hewitt said this year could be even hotter.. The previous hottest year, 2016, was not ranked as the warmest on record in all the datasets.

## COMMENT

The world is hotting up in more ways than one. It doesn't matter if we look at the geopolitical world, or the spiritual world or the natural world – every indicator is flashing red. The alarms for the world are going off everywhere. There is a direct correlation between increasing spiritual wickedness in the world and increasing sickness in the world. Man's greed and insatiable appetite cares nothing for this wonderful world. Instead we want everything despite the costs for the environment. There is no man made solution for any of the issues the world faces. Mankind will not (cannot) solve its political, spiritual or physical problems in the world. Only one man can. And that is God's only Son Jesus Christ. He solves spiritual problems through his sacrifice and the forgiveness of sins. He solves the political and physical problems by setting up God's kingdom...soon.

## BIBLE QUOTE

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven [God's kingdom]. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Those who follow God NOW will inherit the earth and live in peace... (Matthew 5:3-6)

## ADDITIONAL AND SUPPORTING ARTICLES

**DebkaFile Review** (world events through the bi-focals of Israeli military intelligence)      **TV-7 Israel News**      **Watchman Newscast**

2024-01-13 Turkey's Erdogan slams US, UK for turning red sea into sea of blood - WION - 9.00 min - YouTube

2024-01-13 Taiwan voters rebuff China, ruling party gets third presidential term - Reuters

2024-01-13 Lai Ching-te, Taiwan's new president-elect, will face China's ire - Reuters

2024-01-13 Decoding US-UK bombing in Yemen- Unraveling regional and historical context by Bishara - 5.39 min - YouTube

2024-01-13 Analysis of latest US and UK airstrikes against Houthi rebels - Israel - Hamas war - 3.46 min - YouTube

2024-01-12 Sabaeans - Wikipedia

2024-01-12 Houthi Rebels VOW REVENGE After U.S. & Britain BOMB Iran-Backed Militia Sites - 5.42 - YouTube

2024-01-12 'A very large scale attack'- United States and British forces launch airstrikes in Yemen - 11.37 min - YouTube

2024-01-11 IDF CONFRONTS Hamas in Dense Urban Areas; Brave Canine Heroes in Action - TBN Israel - 12.26 min - YouTube

2024-01-10 2023-AVS-Presentation.pdf

2024-01-06 Chinese scientists display new-generation electronic warfare weapon design to the world - South China Morning Post

2024-01-06 China-U.S. cooperation 'no longer an option ... but an imperative' - Wang Yi - Reuters

2024-01-06 IDF ELIMINATES Islamic Jihad Official; RAIDS Terror Cell in Judea & Samaria - TBN Israel -10.39 min - YouTube

2024-01-05 Turkiye arrests mossad-linked suspects, triggering new low in bilateral ties - The West Asia Post - 4.58 min - YouTube

2024-01-04 The Three Most Wanted Names on Israel's Hamas Hit List - Vantage with Palki Sharma - 4.43 min - YouTube

2024-01-04 Israel-Iran SECRET WAR Heats Up; U.S. & Britain Plan JOINT ATTACK On Houthis - TBN Israel - 8.38 min - YouTube

2024-01-04 GAZA STRIP Security Vacuum Became EXISTENTIAL THREAT to Israel - 6.50 min - YouTube

2024-01-04 BREAKING- IDF CAPTURES Hamas Rocket Factory; STRIKES Hezbollah Outposts - 11.44 min - YouTube

2024-01-03 China unveils electromagnetic weapon design - 3.41 min - YouTube

2024-01-03 Hamas Leader ASSASINATED In Beirut; IDF Conquers Hamas Outpost In Gaza City - 11.41 min - YouTube



# NATO PRESENCE IN EASTERN EUROPE



- Frankish Territory in 481
- Conquests of Clovis 481-511
- Conquests 531-614
- Conquests 714-768
- Conquests of Charlemagne 768-814
- Dependent territories
- Peoples tributary to Charlemagne
- Kingdom of Siagrius in 486
- Visigothic kingdom of Toulouse in 507
- Boundaries of the empire in 814





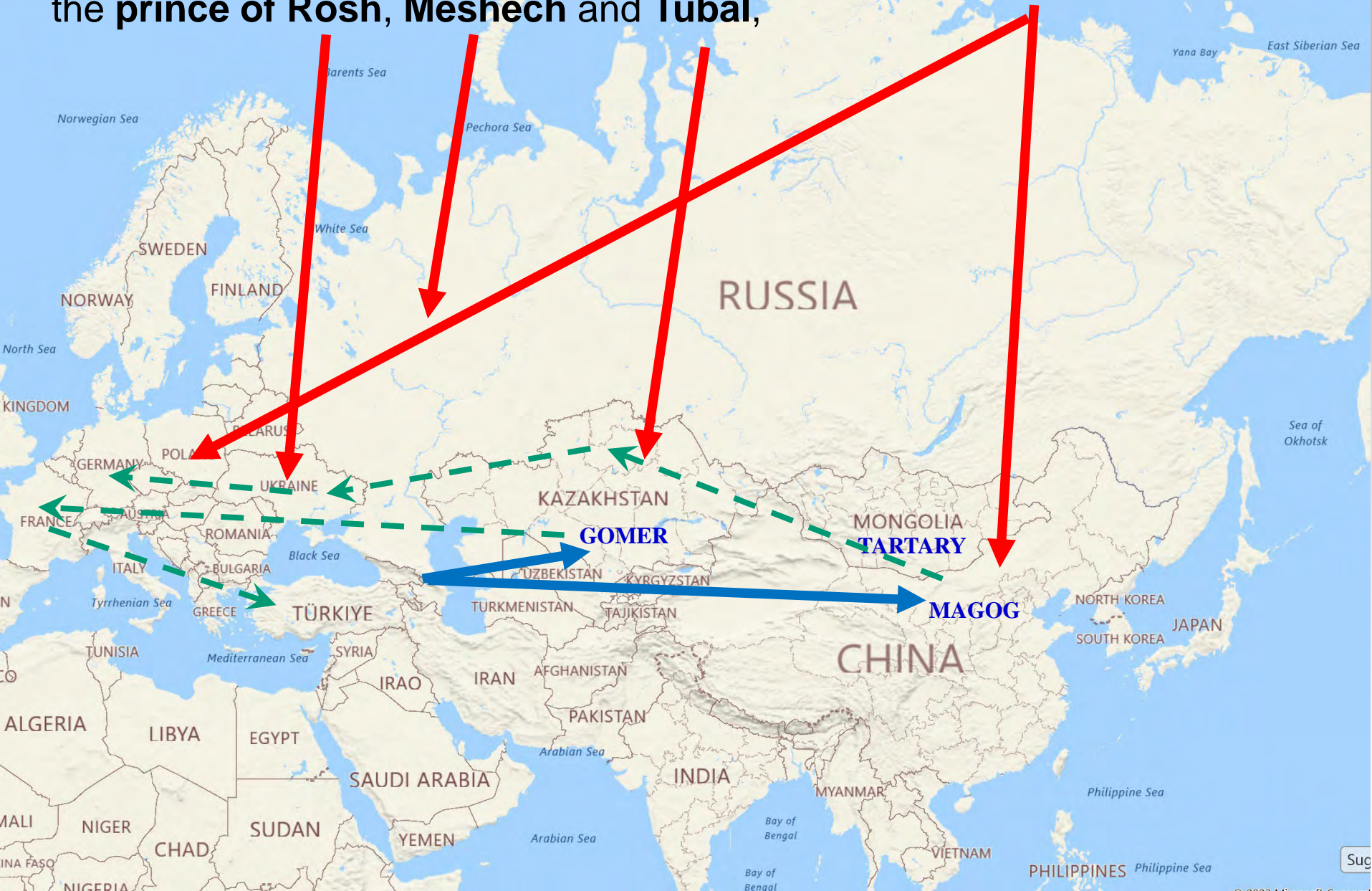
# 2) Gog (Russia) advances on Turkey, Egypt \*



*Legend HandOut*



"Son of man, set your face toward **Gog of the land of Magog,**  
the **prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal,**



"Son of man, set thy face against Gog (head), of the land of Magog (China?), prince  
of Ros (river in Ukraine) Meshech and Tubal (rivers in Russia)"?

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- Taiwan voters rebuff China

- *Additional & Supporting Articles*

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*Map 3*

# Americans Appear More Amenable to Autocracy in 2024

Reuters January 13, 2024



## EVENT

The intellectual architect of Vladimir Putin's world, Alexander Dugin, heralded the [2016] election of Trump as evidence that "the American people themselves have started the revolution against precisely the aspect of the US which we hated." [i.e. democracy] Americans aren't hiding their retreat toward autocracy. In October, the Public Religion Research Institute published damning polling that indicated roughly four-in-10 Americans thought the country was so far afield from normal that it was time for a leader who would break the rules to fix the system. The same think tank also found a surge in support for resorting to political violence; in March 2021, pollsters found 15% of Americans agreed that violence was merited, a number that rose to 23% this year; 33% among Republicans. [In] South Carolina, polling there found 67% of likely Republican primary voters there say that, even if Trump did try to steal the 2020 election, it doesn't matter. In national polling, the verdict was similar. Autocracy can have an appeal. It brushes past the pesky system of legal checks & balances, ethical concerns, and inefficient experts.

## COMMENT

This Current Events class has been following the results of the French revolution - the 3 frog spirits = freedom from repression. But the world is fickle and has a short memory. 80% of the world's population now lives under systems that are considered repressive. On the world stage, freedom is in its 17th year of net decline, with press freedoms facing threats in at least 157 countries. Given these trends, Trump's declaration that he would punish U.S. journalists and former colleagues not favorable to him is not that surprising. Of course, Bible students know that "freedom" is a relative term. Ultimately true freedom will result from, not a Democratic or Autocratic or any other "cratic" of human creation but a Divine Theocracy ruling the earth, headed up by Christ and the saints.

## BIBLE QUOTE

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils [humanistic influences], working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Rev 16:13-14



# Taiwan voters rebuff China

Reuters January 13, 2024



## EVENT

Taiwanese voters swept the DPP presidential candidate Lai Ching-te into power on Saturday, strongly rejecting Chinese pressure to spurn him. Lai's party champions Taiwan's separate identity and rejects China's territorial claims. Lai said he would maintain the status quo in relations across the Taiwan Strait, but that he was "determined to safeguard Taiwan from threats and intimidation from China". In the run-up to the election, China denounced Lai as a dangerous separatist, and called on the people of Taiwan to make the right choice. They have also repeatedly rebuffed Lai's calls for talks. "Our stance on resolving the Taiwan question and realising national reunification remains consistent, and our determination is as firm as rock," it said. Taiwan's election took place at a time of growing geopolitical tensions between Beijing and Washington. The arms race across the Taiwan Strait and Chinese military pressure on the island Beijing claims as its "sacred" territory is unlikely to end.

## COMMENT

China had previously threatened the Taiwanese that this election outcome would be a guarantee for war - one which will almost certainly involve the US and partners. The Taiwan Strait is as strategic for shipping as the Red Sea. The Western Alliance AKA "King of the South" is in danger of potentially getting spread quite thin across the globe. There is the Ukraine / Russia war, the war in North Africa, the conflict in the Middle East between US/Israel and HAMAS/Hezbollah/Houthis and the next potential war arena of the US vs China over the status of Taiwan. Yet as we view these conflicts through the lens of Bible prophecy it can - all of it - actually be truncated to a contest between two powers known and identified as the "King of the North" vs "the King of the South" - also currently globally referenced as "the East" vs "the West".

## BIBLE QUOTE

Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste. Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail. Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind. [wind = ruach; lit "power", "force"; i.e., "an Eastern Force"]

Isa 23:14 Psa 48:6-7