

THE SABBATH SCOOP

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ARE WE PUFFED UP?

*Leaven is used to puff up bread. Can we humans also become “puffed up”?
What are two things the Bible says can puff up us?*

By Gregory Dullum

We have been busy putting out the leaven from our homes over the past few weeks, preparing for the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

One characteristic of leaven is that it puffs up bread dough. We can tell if bread is puffed up. It looks big and important, but when we cut into it, it's not strong. It's weak and full of holes. It's full of hot air. It's easy to see if *bread* is puffed up. It's a little harder to look in a mirror and see if *we* are puffed up.

Puffed Up People?

Can PEOPLE be “puffed up”?

The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, “Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other. ... Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power” (1 Cor. 4:6, 18-19).

Bread isn't the only thing that can be puffed up! We humans can be too!

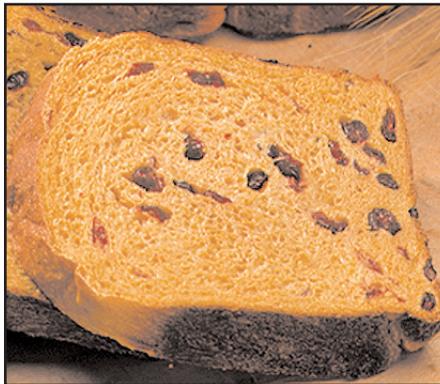
What puffs us up? Two things are identified in Scripture.

1. Pride

One thing that puffs us up is pride—thinking we're better than others.

When we do this, we are judging what's in other people's hearts. *I'm good, you're evil. I'm righteous, you're a sinner. I'm caring, you're heartless.*

A classic example of someone puffed up with pride is the Pharisee in Christ's parable of Pharisee and the Tax Collector.



NAPS photo

When we slice bread that is puffed up, we see that it is full of holes, such as this cranberry bread.

“Jesus told this story to some people who thought they were very good and looked down on everyone else: ‘A Pharisee and a tax collector both went to the Temple to pray. The Pharisee stood alone and prayed, “God, I thank you that I am not like other people who steal, cheat, or take part in adultery, or even like this tax collector. I give up eating twice a week, and I give one-tenth of everything I get!”’

“The tax collector, standing at a distance, would not even look up to heaven. But he beat on his chest because he was so sad. He said, “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” I tell you, when this man went home, he was right with God, but the Pharisee was not. All who make themselves great will be made humble, but all who make themselves humble will be made great’ ” (Luke 18:9-14, *New Century Version*).

Looking Down on Others

It seems to be easier to spot pride in others than it is to see it in ourselves. Jesus gave us *one way* to spot it: if we, like the Pharisee, look down upon others while

praising our own good deeds. Do we ever do this? If so, we may have a problem with pride.

Humble people don't sing their own praises. “Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips” (Prov. 27:2).

Critical of Leadership

Another way to spot pride in us is if we are critical of the leadership Christ has put in charge of his church. This was a problem in the first century church. The apostle Paul wrote, “People should think of us [apostles] as servants of Christ, the ones God has trusted with his secrets. Now in this way those who are trusted with something valuable must show they are worthy of that trust. As for myself, I do not care if I am judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself” (1 Cor. 4:1-5 *NCV*).

Here was an apostle who wouldn't even judge himself. He left it up to God. However, there were people puffed up with pride who falsely accused the apostles of wrongdoing (vv. 8-13). This section of Scripture concludes by saying, “Some of you have become proud” (v. 18). Pride is one of the things that puffs us up.

Following a Man

Pride may cause some to rise up against church leadership and it may cause others to follow a false teacher right out of the church!

Paul warned, “Brothers and sisters, I have used Apollos and myself as examples so you could learn through us the meaning of the saying, ‘Follow only what is written in the Scriptures.’”

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Puffed Up

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Then you will not be more proud of one person than another" (v. 6).

We are to follow what the Bible says and not BLINDLY follow any *man*—including *ourselves*. Paul writes, "Who says you are better than others? What do you have that was not given to you? And if it was not given to you, why do you brag as if you did not receive it as a gift?" (v. 7, *NCV*).

We didn't come to understand the truth of God by OURSELVES. And NO MAN gave us the truth—not our local preacher, not our current church leadership—not even Herbert W. Armstrong. The credit must go to God! None of us has reason to glory (1 Cor. 1:29). We are all here—ministers and members alike—because God called us and opened our minds to understand the truth (vv. 26-31, 2:10-11).

Getting Angry

Another way to spot pride in ourselves is if we get angry easily.

"In his 2010 book, *How Evil Works*, author David Kupelian quotes his friend, Rabbi Daniel Lapin, who writes: "What causes anger? Arrogance. Show me someone who readily loses his temper and showers those around him with angry yells and insults, and I'll show you a very arrogant man. Anger is the emotion you feel when you are not being treated with what you consider to be appropriate respect. When I erupt in obscene fury at a traffic jam that threatens to make me tardy for an appointment, what I am really saying is, 'How dare they! How dare they make me late! Don't they know how important I am?' Were I to be as humble as I should be, almost nothing would make me feel angry" (pp. 204-205).

When we get angry in these situations, we feel our anger is justified. Why do we feel the need to get angry? Because, according to Kupelian, this anger is "feed-

ing our pride, which feels like life itself to us. Yet, whether we recognize it or not, we're just nourishing everything that's wrong with us. ... In fact, the very reason we all have an 'anger problem' is that anger is the necessary food for pride, and pride is the very core of most of our problems in this life" (pp. 205, 207).

Putting Up With Sin

In 1 Corinthians 5, the Corinthians were proud that they were allowing a terrible sin to go on in their congregation.

Paul wrote, "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife! And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you" (1 Cor. 5:1-2). Pride allowed them to *put up with sin* instead of *put out* the sin. Pride puffed them up.

The term "puffed up" appears one other time in the Bible:

Paul told the Colossians, "Let no one defraud you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly PUFFED UP *by his fleshly mind*, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase which is from God" (Col. 2:18-19, emphasis added).

Here we see the problem of pride in one who was "vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." We see a second problem as well—he is NOT holding fast to the Head of the church (Christ), but instead is *coming up with his own ideas*. This leads us to the second thing that, according to Scripture, puffs us up.

2. Knowledge

"Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies [builds up]" (1 Cor. 8:1).

Why does knowledge PUFF UP and love BUILD UP?

Knowledge is power! If you know something someone else doesn't, then you may feel that you're better than that person. You may think of yourself as one step up. *I know something you don't*.

Isn't it true that gossips love to gossip because it gives them a sense of POWER? *I am the first to know this juicy tidbit. You should look up to me because I had this knowledge before you did, hence I am better than you*. It really boils down to a matter of pride, doesn't it?

Acquiring knowledge is a SELFISH thing. It is something we gain *for ourselves*. It

builds up the self. That's not necessarily bad—it's good to improve ourselves! It can prove useless, however, if we acquire knowledge and don't act upon it. What good is it to have our heads full of the truth of God but we're not living by it?

Love, on the other hand, is not selfish. It is outgoing. It builds up others around us. Knowledge by itself has NO ACTION. True love *expresses itself with action*.

Paul wrote about love: "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up" (1 Cor. 13:4). Love is NOT PUFFED UP. Love is the *unleavened lifestyle*. So how should we behave? Continue in 1 Corinthians 13: "[Love] does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (vv. 4-7). This is the RIGHT WAY to live—being kind and patient, always looking for the best in people.

Knowledge vs. Love

Since knowledge PUFFS UP and love BUILDS UP, they are somewhat *opposites*, are they not? Here is one example of how knowledge and love can be opposites. Imagine a juicy tidbit of gossipy knowledge about a politician or a celebrity in a supermarket tabloid. It doesn't matter whether this knowledge is true or not.

Does this knowledge SUFFER LONG? No! The sooner it hits the newsstand, the better.

Is this knowledge KIND? No! It's usually unkind. *Look who is breaking up; look who's gained weight; look whose surgery was botched; look who's cheating on whom*.

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Know Your Bible

By Charles Nenninger

1. Who wrote Ecclesiastes?
2. Who wrote the Acts?
3. Who had a vision of a ladder up to heaven?
4. Who will be the king of Israel under Jesus in the world tomorrow?
5. Who prayed to God and was given 15 more years to live?

(Answers on page 4)

The SABBATH SCOOP

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The Bible compares our Christian lives to a race. How much do we know about our race? What is it called? How long is it? What is the prize for winning? What happens if we lose?

By Gregory Dullum

If we were running in the Boston Marathon, we would know certain things about that race. We would know its NAME—the Boston Marathon. We would know WHAT TYPE of race it is—it's a foot race. We would know WHAT DAY the race is run—Patriot's Day (the third Monday in April). We would know HOW LONG it is—27 miles, 385 yards. We would know WHERE TO START running—in the Boston suburb of Hopkinton—and WHERE THE FINISH LINE IS—in Back Bay.

The Bible says we are running a race. In Heb. 12:1, we read, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."

What race are we running? What kind of race? What is it called? How long is it? When did it begin? When will we finish the race? What is our prize for winning? Can we lose this race?

The Name

Our race is given a name in Psalm 119:30-32: "I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before

me. I cling to Your testimonies; O LORD, do not put me to shame! I WILL RUN IN *the way of Your commandments ...*" The name of our race in which we are running is: "The way of Your commandments."

What does that mean? It means we are striving to live our lives by following God's laws wholeheartedly. "Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes, and I shall keep it to the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; indeed I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it" (vv. 33-35).

Our Course

On what course are we running? Verse 30 tells us, "I have chosen the way of truth." We are not sucked in by the FALSE concept of evolution. We don't accept the conventional wisdom of this society, that teaches FALSE ideas. We do not follow FALSE religious ideas and traditions that are taught in mainstream churches. We are guided by one thing: the TRUTH of the Bible as God reveals it to us through his Spirit (John 16:13).

Not only do we KNOW the truth (in our

head) but we OBEY the truth. We LIVE the truth. Our feet run in the path of truth. In Gal. 5:7, the apostle Paul writes, "You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?" Our course is to *obey the truth*. It is not just to *know* the truth.

Paul warns that it is possible to let other runners cut into our lane, and force us off course. In verse 8, He continues, "This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you." When someone knocks us off course, it's not from God! It's from Satan! Don't let anyone hinder us from obeying the truth.

The Start

When did our race begin? It began when God called us and we became aware of the truth. We learned about the Sabbath and began keeping it. We learned about unclean meats and stopped eating them. We learned about Christmas and Easter and we stopped observing them. We learned about God's feasts and we began observing them instead. The more truth we learned, the

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Our Race

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more we obeyed. The more we obeyed, the more truth God revealed to us.

The Finish

When will our race end? Paul tells us when he was nearing the end of his race: "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and at the time my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:6-7). Paul wrote this from a Roman prison. He was near death.

Our race is complete when we DIE and *can no longer run*.

The Boston Marathon is just over 27 miles. When the marathoners have run that far, they are done and can stop running.

Our race is for LIFE. We can *never* stop running our race, which is called "the way of Your commandments."

How Long Is Our Race?

Unlike the Boston Marathon, our races are of different lengths. God calls us at different times in our lives and we live to be different ages before we die.

In the parable of the workers in the vineyard in Matthew 20, Jesus told how laborers worked for different lengths of time. Some were hired early in the morning. Others were hired at the third, sixth, ninth and 11th hours. All worked until the evening and all received the same wage.

Some of us were called by God and began our race in this century. Some began running in the 1990s, some in the 1980s, some in the 1970s, some in the 1960s and some in the 1950s. Our race is not a 20-yard dash that we can sprint in a few seconds. It is a lifelong marathon that requires patience and endurance.

Can We Lose?

Is it possible for us to lose this race? Yes. There are two ways we can lose.

1. We can run in vain. In Philippians 2, Paul writes, "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed (there is that word again), not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ... holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain" (vv. 12, 16).

It is possible to "RUN IN VAIN!" What does that mean? "In vain" comes from the Greek word *kenos* and means "hollow" or "empty." *Kenos* stresses the absence of QUALITY. In this case, it means running

half-heartedly or running for awhile but then quitting before achieving the reward.

Note that we are NOT *competing against each other* (2 Cor. 10:12). We are to help each other to finish the race. Paul was worried he had run in vain if the Philippians failed to finish the race.

2. We can be disqualified. "And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules" (2 Tim. 2:5). We must follow the rules of this race. What are the rules? We'll find them in the *official* "Rule Book" for "the way of Your commandments"—The Bible. We must obey the instructions in the Bible. We must stay on the course of truth and run in "the way of Your commandments."

What Is the Prize?

Is there a prize if we finish our race?

"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown" (1 Cor. 9:24-25).

We don't have to *beat other runners* and come in first to win our race. We just have to *finish!* We have an *imperishable crown* awaiting us! What is that crown? Rev. 2:10 says it is "the crown of life." That means ETERNAL LIFE! 1 Peter 5:4 calls it the "crown of glory that shall never fade away." 1 Tim. 4:8 calls it the "crown of righteousness."

We know the KIND of race we're running. We know its NAME. We know its LENGTH. We know the STARTING and FINISHING points. We know we can LOSE this race. We know the PRIZE if we win.

How Should We Run?

Knowing what we know about our race, how should we run it? Paul tells us, "Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified" (1 Cor. 9:26-27).

Run with *certainty!* Run with *purpose!* Run with *zeal* and *desire to finish.* Bring our body into subjection to our mind—do not allow our physical cravings and desires to lead us to sin. We must do what we focus upon every year at this time before Passover and Unleavened Bread—we must put sin out of our lives as we put leaven out of our homes.

Remember Heb. 12:1: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."



NAPS photo

Stuart Jardine ran marathons at age 83; he once carried the Olympic torch to the finish line.

The Race

by Gregory Dullum

I started running years ago,
An even pace, and not too slow.
And yet I did not run too fast—
The race was long; I had to last.

To run this race gave me a thrill
That helped me climb up every hill.
To be a part of this great run—
I felt I was a special one.

The downhill sides I liked the most.
No need to push; I let it coast.
I saved my strength for the next climb,
Yet I kept running all the time.

The race wore on, the pack grew thin,
Some started strong but then gave in.
I've friends who fell behind and quit;
They left the race, and now they sit.

I glance behind me now and then—
Reminds me of where I have been.
But I can't dwell on what's behind,
For then I would be running blind.

So on I run, with crown in mind,
For I don't want to fall behind.
There's just one ribbon in this race,
There's no reward for second place.

The path is long and takes its toll
For years have passed and now I'm old.
My body aches; it's wracked with pain
But I won't run this race in vain.

"O stop and rest!" my muscles cry.
And quit this race? Oh no, not I.
I push ahead with all my might
Because I see the end in sight.

Know Your Bible Answers

1) Solomon. 2) Luke. 3) Jacob. 4) David. 5) Hezekiah.

Breaking Through the Wall

What do we do when we “hit the wall” and think we can’t go on?

By Gregory Dullum

The Bible compares our Christian life to running a race (Heb. 12:1). In marathons, runners reach a point where they must “break through the wall.” Marathon runner Dolores Cross explains this in her book, *Breaking Through the Wall: A Marathoner’s Story*.

The “wall” Cross mentions is a certain moment of dread for marathoners that comes when they reach a point with a lot of distance already behind them, but still a lot of distance to go in front of them as well. The impetus to “break through the wall” is the toughest conflict many athletes face.

Many of us are at that point in our Christian lives. We have been in the church for 30, 40, 50 or more years. We are still waiting for Christ’s return, and it is still quite some distance ahead of us! What should we do?

Cross says it’s at this point that some runners stop and give up, but the champions keep on going. They push harder than ever to reach the goal of the finish line.

Cross lives her life by this advice—you just have to keep going. You have to “break through the wall” again and again.

Jesus Christ tells us, “But he who endures to the end shall be saved” (Mat.



NAPS photo

Dolores Cross began running marathons when she was in her 50s. She has broken through many “walls” in her life and in her marathons.

24:13). We must set our will to never give up, and if we need help (and strength) to carry on, let’s ask God for it—He will supply our needs because He wants us to succeed (Philip. 4:13, 19; Isa. 40:28-31).

What Is and Isn’t Leavening?

As we strive to get all leavening out of our homes prior to the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 12:15, 19), which begins at sundown on April 22, it helps to know what we are looking for. Ingredient lists can be confusing!

Leaven is an ingredient incorporated into bread dough which causes the dough to rise through the release of CO₂ through either a chemical process (such as baking powder or baking soda) or through a metabolic process of fermentation (such as yeast).

The following ingredients are leaven: **leaven, leavening** (Some processed foods just say “leaven” or “leavening”), **yeast** (including wild yeast in sourdough starter), **crackermeal** (crumbled crackers mixed with the meat in some cans of ravioli), **baking soda** [also listed as **sodium bicarbonate** (saleratus), **potassium bicarbonate** (potash), **ammonium carbonate** (baker’s ammonium) or **ammonium bicarbonate**

(hart-shorn)], and **baking powder**.

Not leavening are: **autolyzed yeast** and **autolyzed yeast extract** (flavoring), **sodium phosphate** (used in cooked chicken) **corn meal** (corn flour in tamales), **torula yeast** (a dead yeast used for its nutritional value or to add flavor), **potassium carbonate** or **sodium carbonate** (found in dried Ramen noodle soups), **brewer’s yeast** (a dead yeast used for nutritional value), **cream of tartar** (an acid often combined with baking soda), **tartrate powder** (a phosphate or sulfate powder usually added with cream of tartar), **alum** (a metallic double salt usually added with cream of tartar), **sorbitan monosterate** (flavor and texture enhancer), **polysorbate 60** (a preservative), **egg whites** (will cause dough to puff up with hot air but does not release carbon dioxide), and **steam or hot air** (such as in popovers or angel food cake—however, some store-bought angel food cakes have other leavening agents).

Fun Fact

of creation, history, holidays & the Bible



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS. Butterflies need sunlight to regulate their body temperature.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II: Diamond Jubilee 1952-2012 by Michael Paterson, Running Press, 2012, p. 82.

Husband’s the Boss

“All four children were brought up in the care of strict nursery staff and under the equally stern eye of their parents. ...

“The Queen deferred to her husband in the matter of their children’s upbringing. He was head of the family, and she wished him to make decisions that involved their private life. The fact that he could be tough, impatient and demanding was, she felt, necessary. She shared his view, for instance, that Charles was too sensitive, making no attempt to protect him from Philip’s often loud disapproval.”

Eph. 5:22-23, 1 Cor. 11:3

Quotable Quotes

“Our attitude toward things is likely to be more important than the things themselves.”

—A. W. Tozer

Memory Scripture

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discern-er of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

—Heb. 4:12

Puffed Up

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Does this knowledge PARADE ITSELF? Yes, its headlines scream from store check-out counters.

Does this knowledge BEHAVE RUDELY? Yes, the headlines and pictures are blunt and unflattering.

THINKS NO EVIL? Most of this kind of knowledge is evil.

REJOICES IN INIQUITY? Yes, it *thrives* on sin; sin makes the best headlines.

DOES NOT REJOICE IN THE TRUTH. How many of these stories would be published if only TRUTH were published? Many of these stories are fabrications.

Knowledge in itself is not bad. In fact, it's important to have true knowledge. But it is possible to be puffed up because of our knowledge, and that can make us self-righteous, arrogant or gossips.

We need to make sure our knowledge is true, and share it only with love.

Summary

PRIDE and KNOWLEDGE can puff us up. We may see this problem in others but can we see it in ourselves?

We need to get out that two-edged sword called the Bible and cut into ourselves to see if we are rock solid Christians or just full of hot air (Heb. 4:12).

Do we think we're better Christians than others? Do we take PRIDE in the knowledge we have—whether it's *gossip* or the *true knowledge of God*? Or do we humbly follow the Word of God and use the knowledge we have *with love* as we deal with others? Let's go forward with malice toward none, and a sincere love toward all.

As Passover approaches, let's examine ourselves (1 Cor. 11:27-32). Let's look for signs that we may be puffed up and remove that problem from our lives. If we can correctly judge ourselves, we will not be judged by God (v. 31).

Let's not glory in ourselves. We have no reason to take pride in our accomplishments. After all, our glorying should be in Christ! Let's look ahead to what we still need to overcome. Let's identify the spiritual leaven (sin) that remains in our lives, so we won't be puffed up.

"Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, or Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:7-8).



Obama's Energy Policies Weaken United States

"The Obama administration will announce on Friday [Jan. 15] a halt to new coal mining leases on public lands as it considers an overhaul of the program that could lead to increased costs for energy companies and a slowdown in extraction, according to an administration official.

"The move would represent a significant setback for the coal industry, effectively freezing new coal production on federal lands and sending a signal to energy markets that could turn investors away from an already flailing industry.

...

"Last year, Mr. Obama used his executive authority under the Clean Air Act to complete regulations that would limit carbon dioxide emissions from coal-fired power plants, the nation's largest source of planet-warming pollution. ... A halt to new leases would go even further by leaving coal unmined. ...

"A wave of bankruptcies has hit the nation's largest coal companies, most recently on Monday [Jan. 11] with the bankruptcy filing of Arch Coal, the nation's second-largest coal company. United States production of coal and employment in the coal sector have fallen to their lowest levels since the 1980s" ("In Climate Move, Obama to Halt New Coal Mining Leases on Public Lands" by Coral Davenport, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Jan. 14, 2016, pp. 1-2, 4).

U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO), released a statement on Jan. 16, stating, "The Obama administration is once again taking aim at one of our most abundant and lowest cost energy sources, at the expense of Missouri families and small businesses. The administration's regulatory assault on coal-fired energy has put thousands of Americans out of work, and threatens to double utility costs for Missouri families by 2020. The latest action will further undermine economic growth, raise costs on the most vulnerable Americans, and take away resources that would otherwise be used to strengthen our nation."

One of the blessings promised to our

people—the descendants of Joseph—"in the last days" was: "Blessings of the deep that lie beneath" (Gen. 49:1, 22, 25). God promised that we would have ample supplies of coal, oil, iron, etc.

However, if we sinned, God said He would "break the pride of our power" (Lev. 26:18-19). The U.S. has enough energy (coal, oil and natural gas) buried beneath its soil to make it energy independent, but Americans have lost the pride of this power.

We are seeing our country weakened, preparing it for a time of national captivity (vv. 31-35). Captivity must come before Christ returns, for one of his first duties will be to free the captives (Jer. 16:13-15; Isa. 11:16, 14:1-2).

Britain May Leave E.U.

"Britons will vote on June 23 on whether to stay in the European Union or to quit, Prime Minister David Cameron said on Saturday [Feb. 19], announcing the date of the referendum

...

"We are approaching one of the biggest decisions this country will face in our lifetimes," Mr. Cameron said outside his office on Downing Street... "Leaving Europe would threaten our economic and national security" ("Divided Britain to Decide on Whether to Leave the E.U." by Stephen Castle, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Feb. 20, 2016, p. 1).

The British people (as well as the Americans) are descended from Joseph. National captivity is promised, because they have turned their backs on God.

Who will take these two nations captive? God calls "Assyria"—modern-day Germany—the "rod of his anger" (Isa. 10:5). Germany battled the U.S. and Britain in two world wars in the last century. A third world war is coming!

When captivity comes, Britain will not be part of a European Union. That union will be headed by Germany as a resurrected Holy Roman Empire. Other nations that are descended from the Israelite brothers of Joseph (France, Denmark, Holland, Sweden, Scandinavia, etc.) may be part of that European Union, just as Joseph's brothers agreed to sell him into slavery long ago.