

# INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA

## PRAYER LETTER

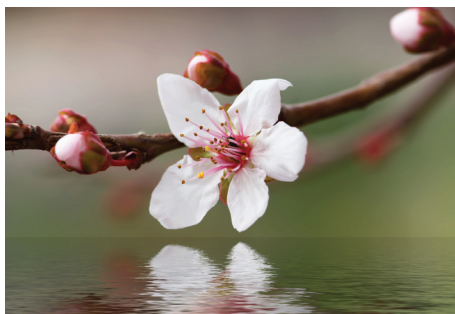
April 2009

Vol. 36, No. 4

### The Budding Almond | The Boiling Pot

Gary Bergel

**A** look into Jeremiah's vision of a budding almond rod and a boiling pot gives us a balanced perspective for today. Jeremiah first saw "the rod of an almond tree." The rod indicated affliction and chastening. God was correcting and adjusting His wayward people because of their idolatry. The branch being almond signified a "hastening." In Hebrew, the almond tree is termed "hasty" tree. It is the first to blossom each spring. The Lord told Jeremiah he had seen well: "I will hasten My word to perform it." (Jer 1:11-14 KJV)



Almond Branch (c) Ellah I Dreamstime.com

Jeremiah also saw "a seething pot" tilted toward the north. The Lord declared He would call families and authorities from the north and set their "thrones" against "the gates of Jerusalem." Such was the orchestration then, so is the end-time orchestration today!

The entire world is experiencing a "hastened" season—quick economic and institutional collapse with warfare, corrective judgments, and realignments. Yet, as this pot boils, God's redemptive prophetic agenda is budding and unfolding quickly: His covenant promises toward Israel are being fulfilled, including the ultimate redemption of the Jewish people; a parallel restoration of Israel and the Church is underway; a proclamation of the gospel to the last of the last unreached people groups is accelerating; a rapid harvest and ingathering of souls is occurring; the bride of Christ is making herself ready for His return.

John Beckett, IFA board chairman, shared that his Web outreach ([www.LifesGreatestQuestion.org](http://www.LifesGreatestQuestion.org)) recorded 20,000 decisions for Christ in January! Many who responded asked for teaching in Farsi, the language of Iran. So, while Israel and the world watch the buildup of a nuclear threat from Iran—the pot boiling in the north—Iranians are coming to know Jesus, *Isa*, as Messiah—the rod

is blossoming and bearing fruit! This is a wonderful illustration of the hinged, simultaneous "almond and pot" unfolding of God's prophetic word and redemptive purposes.

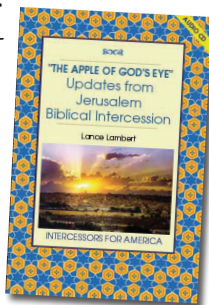
While I see and believe in multi-generational redemption and transformation through Christ, ultimately, there is no permanent political, financial, institutional, or even family

fix this side of eternity. There is only flux, seasons in time and in the life of nations which take all forward unto God's final kingdom fix—Christ's consummating return and eternal reign. (Lk 1:33) This biblical reality, in the midst of chaotic events and gloom, imparts steady vision and hope.

**T**his is why I believe the apostle Peter so strongly admonished believers to fix their eyes in a primary way upon Christ, "the prophetic word confirmed." He exhorted that we "heed [this truth] as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in [our] hearts...." (2 Pet 1:19; Heb 12:2) God's primary prophetic kingdom agenda centers upon Christ and radiates forth from His finished work and majesty.

When angry over lies and evil abounding, when perplexed and troubled, let us pause in prayer and in the Word—for it is there that we experience afresh all the promises of God, His kingdom seeds, that are ours today in and through the merits of Jesus. (2 Cor 1:20, 7:1) These sure promises are the buds on His ever-green almond branch which bloom and bear fruit in our hearts and lives, regardless of the politics and boiling pot we face.

"In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (Jn 16:33) "Do not fear little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Lk 12:32)



#### GOD'S PRIMARY PROPHETIC AGENDA

Gary P. Bergel

These five messages were delivered during a week of prayer in Franklin, NC. They stress the apostle Peter's admonishment that we believers should avoid alarm and remain focused on God's primary prophetic agenda centered in, and unfolding from Christ the Messiah. Five audio CD set. Order IFA Item #CD038, IFA special \$24.95 + \$3.50 shipping. Credit card orders toll-free 1-800-872-7729 or via [www.ifabooks.com](http://www.ifabooks.com).

FIRST FRIDAY  
April 3  
PRAYER FOCUS

#### ALL IN AUTHORITY

Intercede for President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, the Cabinet, White House staff and all in the Administration. Pray for your U.S. Senators, Representative, Governor, and state officials. Offer thanksgiving for the Supreme Court's unanimous vote to uphold public displays of the Ten Commandments and pray for the justices. (See Page 4) (IFA's "Top 130" bookmark and listings are available on Obama/Biden and Current Prayer Guides pages at [www.ifapray.org](http://www.ifapray.org))

#### FOREIGN POLICY

Intercede for Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Middle East Envoy George Mitchell, Ambassador to Israel James Cunningham, and all working on Middle East foreign policy, especially toward Israel and Prime Minister-designate, Benjamin Netanyahu. Intercede that Alejandro Peña-Escusa's warning of "grave danger" to the U.S. from Marxist / Islamic Jihadist plotting in Latin America be heeded and acted upon. (See Page 3) Pray for the preservation of Mexico's government and for the overthrow of the drug lord militias and violence. Intercede as the Lord leads for U.S. foreign policy toward Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, Iraq and the Middle East, Russia, Europe, North Korea, China, Asia, and Africa.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT / CREDIT CRISIS

Use the unemployment rate chart on Page 4 and intercede that the Lord will bless, inspire, create jobs, and prosper business owners and employers in these categories. Intercede that God will lead and guide men and women to sustaining employment at this time. Intercede for mercy, that the Lord will break the credit crisis, and prompt banks and financial lending institutions to grant credit and loans to qualified borrowers.

#### HOLDING HIS NAME HOLY

"You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God." (Ex 20:7) "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." (Mt 6:6) Reflect and repent if you have not regarded the name of the Father or of Jesus Christ with awe, reverence and respect, or if you have held it in contempt and used it in damning or casual cursing. Offer prayers of repentance for how multitudes of celebrities and entertainers mock, degrade, ridicule, and blaspheme the name of God and of Jesus. Pray that the Holy Spirit instruct you and Christians in your area to "hallow" the name of God as Jesus did.

[www.ifapray.org](http://www.ifapray.org)



# Prayer: A Spiritual Electrical System

John Booko, Sr.

As startling as this statement may sound, "Prayer in itself has no power."

The power is not in prayer, but in the power of God. "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." (Matthew 6:13)

Praying is the asking; God does the acting.

Your prayers are like electrical wires. There is absolutely no power in an electrical wire when it is disconnected from the power source and is out of the electrical socket. It is only when you plug that electrical wire into a "live" socket that the wire becomes charged and power comes out of it.

When I write about "prayer power," I mean that your prayer must be connected—plugged into God—before any power can ever be released through your petitions.

God has created our universe so that we have the honor and privilege of addressing Him in the heavenlies through our prayers.

The prayer process is actually a miracle.

God waits for our prayers to come from somewhere, from some place, from someone on this planet called Earth. He waits until a certain prayer is directed towards Him so that He can respond to our needs, petitions, and offerings.

Maybe you will be the next person who will lift up a prayer to Him. If you are, know that when He hears your prayer He will then respond and move on your behalf. God has designed and arranged the spirit world in such a way that it takes you plus God, cooperating together, to make something happen. If I were to write it in a formula, it would look like this:

God + you = a happening  
Without us, He will not.  
Without Him, we cannot.

No house or person is free from the penetration of prayer.

In your heart and mind you can shoot out a prayer, through God, towards somebody. Maybe at work there is somebody giving you a hard time, but shoot them with a prayer. God is waiting for a prayer to be created.

God waits because He wants to be in cooperation with His children. He waits for a prayer request to be made. He will not act upon the situation until someone makes the request. Otherwise, why would He say, "Ask and it will be given you."

God wants us to ask so that we might know and enjoy cooperation with Him. He answers with a yes, a no, or later. It is in that later that you think He has not answered the prayer. But just be patient. In His time He will do the right thing.

Personally, I am the result of my mother's prayers. I was the oldest of five children, running around Chicago. I never stepped foot inside of a church as a teenager. But in the Navy, the Lord got hold of my life because of my mother's prayers. And here I still am today, sharing with you on prayer.

I enjoy prayer. Since it's founding in 1973, I have also had the joy and privilege of serving as a volunteer representative of Intercessors for America.

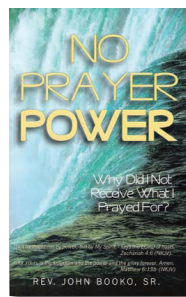
Listen to a sermon on "No Prayer Power" by Rev. John Booko and hear him pray "The Lord's Prayer" in Aramaic. Visit "Current Prayer Guides" at [www.ifapray.org](http://www.ifapray.org).

"John and Burnell Booko demonstrate prayer as lifestyle!" —G. Bergel, IFA

## NO PRAYER POWER

John Booko Sr.

**New Release!** Do you want to know how to fellowship more intimately with God? Do you hunger to have God's power released in your life through your prayers? This book will help to answer some of these questions. Softcover, 148 pages, large print. Order IFA Item #B697 \$15.95 + \$3.50 shipping.



58th Annual Observance

# PRAYER... AMERICA'S HOPE

National Day of Prayer May 7, 2009  
[www.ndpff.org](http://www.ndpff.org)

## OVERCOMING STRONGHOLDS

Beth Moore, Honorary Chair

Often times, the precepts I feel the most urgency to share are those lessons I learned the hard way. Somehow I keep hoping that someone else might learn through my mistakes and not their own. Oh, my friend, have I ever learned things the hard way! I've been educated in the power of God and His Word through the field trips of my own failure, weakness, and past bondage. This book is a result of my unquenchable desire to share one of the most effective approaches to the liberated life in Christ that God has ever taught me:

*praying Scripture to overcome strongholds.*

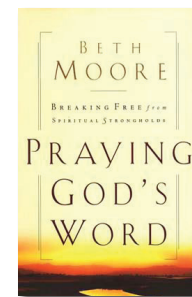
Actually, I didn't discover what a vital part of my liberation this approach has been until long after I had begun practicing it. I suddenly realized it was no accident that I was finally set free from some areas of bondage that had long hindered the abundant effective, Spirit-filled life in me. After the failure of all my formulas, in my desperate search for freedom I cast myself entirely upon God. He faithfully led me to several deliberate practices that He knew would work. Stunningly, in fact. He also knew that He had given me a mouth to testify!

The key to freedom from strongholds is found, in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. Read the words carefully!

"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." (NIV)

## PRAYING GOD'S WORD

Beth Moore



**Recommended!** Beth Moore shares how the truth of Scripture and prayer can help destroy spiritual strongholds in 14 areas such as anger, unforgiveness, idolatry, lust, addiction, etc. Scriptures are arranged in prayer form to use as "weapons" to weaken and dismantle these strongholds. Hardcover, 288 pages. Order IFA Item #B699, \$12.95 + \$3.50 shipping. Credit card orders toll-free 1-800-872-7729 or via IFA eBookstore at [www.ifabooks.com](http://www.ifabooks.com).

# Prodigal Sons

Marvin Olasky



Illustration by Krieg Barrie

**"Part of the evangelical problem is knowing which brother we are."**

As noted New York City pastor Tim Keller points out in *The Prodigal God* (Dutton, 2008), the parable of the prodigal son should have a plural in its name: sons. We all know of the younger brother's libertine living, but the elder brother has a more subtle problem: He is self-righteous and lacks joy.

Part of the evangelical political problem in contemporary America is that much of the press and public sees us as elder brothers. Sometimes we are that way in reaction to younger brothers. Sometimes younger brothers go their way in reaction to us.

In higher education, younger brother colleges are party schools that proffer sex and stimulants. Some Christian colleges try to avoid that by imposing tight rules in elder brother fashion. Those rules may lead to external conformity rather than deep belief. Both younger brother and elder brother colleges divert students from learning more about God.

In journalism, younger brother magazines ranging from Rolling Stone to People sell a continuation of younger brother college life. Elder brother reporters tend to be self-righteous fault-finders—and it's always someone else's fault. Elder brother journalism lacks love, charity, compassion, and a sense that all of us are in this mess together. Christian publications that look only at sin among secularists can also be elder brothers.

In the realm of "social justice," younger brothers want governmental redistribution so that everyone, regardless of conduct, gets part of the national inheritance. Some recipients of Washington's largesse are widows and orphans, but others are younger brothers or sisters who should go home, but do not because government checks allow them to keep destroying themselves. Elder brothers, though, wax sarcastic about wastrels while they overlook the needy. "Social justice" turns into either social universalism or Social Darwinism.

The gay rights debate is another younger vs. elder brother combat zone. While covering Man-

hattan's annual humongous Gay Pride parade, I didn't see any lip-locks except when the marchers observed a dozen souls from a church waving Bibles and screaming at them, "You're going to hell, sodomite" or "You're an abomination in the sight of God." The presence of elder brothers allowed younger brothers to feel self-righteous: ironically, ranting reminders about sin provided the opportunity to forget about sin.

Younger brothers who perceive self-righteousness or joylessness in their elders head toward mockery. On the Comedy Network, Jon Stewart is a snarky younger brother and Stephen Colbert pretends to be an elder as he parodies FOX's tut-tutting Bill O'Reilly. Elder brothers tend

to forget that truth without love is like sodium without chloride: Poison, not salt.

What's rare on television and in life are third brothers who, because they know deeply that the Father loves them, have love for and patience with both elder and younger brothers. Third brothers, knowing they have been forgiven, are not prideful.

A third brother Christian college helps students to see that all people are made in the image of God and all people are sinners. Because of that, beauty shows up where we expect banality, and evil emerges where we anticipate excellence. At a third brother college, students become bilingual and bicultural, able to move in both Christian and secular circles without ignoring the problems of the former or the knowledge generated in the latter, through common grace.

Third brother journalism rises out of the history lecture in chapter seven of the book of Acts: Stephen, with neither an elder brother's pridefulness nor a younger brother's sarcasm, realistically emphasizes the fallenness of his people and the holiness of God. He does not seek life's meaning in the formation of or adherence to a man-made religion that sets up a code of morality.

Third brother politics is also different. The Founders fought for both liberty and virtue: Elder brothers tend to forget the former, younger brothers the latter. Third brothers know that we can never have enough laws to banish sin. They tell the truth, but do not rant at abortionists and gay rights activists. They control their tongues and lungs not because killing babies and killing marriage is right, but because their goal is to change hearts.

Third brothers ask pointed questions, and here are ones for each of us to answer: Am I a younger, elder, or third brother? Can we, through God's grace, leave behind elder- and younger-brotherism?

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## Chavez Rival Warns Washington of Grave Danger

Recent elections in Venezuela made Marxist soldier-turned-President, Hugo Chavez, virtually a dictator for life. Chavez has used oil revenues



Alejandro Peña-Esclusa — "The Alexander Solzhenitsyn of Latin America"

and simmering class resentments to make himself the hub of anti-American sentiment in Latin America. His top political rival in Latin America, Alejandro Peña-Esclusa, visited Washington in early March, warning media, government, academic, and religious leaders that neo-Marxists and Jihadists seek control of Latin America right up to the border of the United States.

Peña warned that the secretive "Sao Paulo Forum" (SPF) established in 1990 by Fidel Castro with "Lula" da Silva (now Brazilian president) has made huge advances, including: 1) the creation of Chavez himself as a major Marxist force and his installation as dictator for life days ago; 2) joining Latin American governments with revolutionary movements, Islamic Jihadist forces and heavily armed drug lords as an anti-

democratic, anti-American alliance; 3) infiltrating non-member governments and the Catholic and evangelical churches and many other institutions.

The existence of the SPF was only recently proved by Peña and Brazilian Professor Olavo de Carvalho, who resides in the U.S. SPF members undermine democracy, economic, religious and political freedom, and the rule of law in every Latin American country. "Liberals and Conservatives are frighteningly naive about this," de Carvalho said. Peña-Esclusa is the most important political leader in Latin America opposing the return of Marxism.

"Hemispheric alliances are moving rapidly toward economic and security catastrophe for the United States," said de Carvalho. Freedom is endangered. Leaders must immediately establish strategic cooperation against this historic danger.

## JUST PRAY NO TO DRUGS APRIL 18-19

Global Anti-drug Abuse Day of Prayer | [www.justprayno.org](http://www.justprayno.org)

## SEEK GOD FOR THE CITY TO APRIL 5

Forty Days to Palm Sunday | [www.waymakers.org](http://www.waymakers.org)

## 40 DAYS FOR LIFE THROUGH APRIL 5

Prayer Outreach in 135 cities | [www.40daysforlife.com](http://www.40daysforlife.com)

## PRO-LIFE INITIATIVES IN THE HOUSE

★ WASHINGTON, DC – A bipartisan group of nearly 200 Representatives, spearheaded by Reps. Jim Jordan (R-OH), Heath Shuler (D-NC), Bart Stupak (D-MI) and Chris Smith (R-NJ), signed on to a letter calling on the House Appropriations Committee to include pro-life “riders” in the omnibus spending bill. These pro-life measures, called “riders,” typically are added to cover issues like taxpayer-funded abortions and abortions for federal prisoners.

A key historic pro-life provision—the Kemp-Kasten Amendment—prevents federal funding from going to organizations that support or participate in a program of coercive abortion or sterilization. Unfortunately, the omnibus spending bill undermines Kemp-Kasten by restoring support for the controversial UN Population Fund. Prayer for passage of pro-life riders and calls to members of Congress are always encouraged. (FFA CHPP 3/2/09)

## PRE-BORN PERSONHOOD EFFORTS BEGUN

★ WASHINGTON, DC – Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-TX) has introduced H.R. 881, the Right to Life Act, on the federal level, propelling the personhood movement forward.

★ DENVER, CO – Personhood USA reports that seven different states have started efforts for the personhood of pre-born children. In addition, five states have introduced bills affirming the personhood rights of pre-born humans from the moment of fertilization including: Maryland / HB 925 Delegate Don Dwyer; North Dakota / H.R. 1572 Rep. Dan Ruby; Montana / SB 406 Sen. Dan McGee (passed, see below!); South Carolina / H. 3526 Rep. Liston Barfield; Alabama / SB 335 Sen. Hank Erwin. Oregon has begun a personhood amendment petition drive, and Mississippi’s personhood amendment petition drive was expected to launch within weeks. For more information visit [www.PersonhoodUSA.com](http://www.PersonhoodUSA.com)

The common thread among all of these efforts is the goal to fill what is becoming known as the “Blackmun Hole” in *Roe v. Wade*. This is where Justice Blackmun implied in the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that if the case were established that the pre-born was a person, the argument for abortion collapses. In *Roe v. Wade*, it is acknowledged that the “fetus” is fully human, but did not grant the rights of “persons” until birth. (CN 2/18/09)

★ HELENA, MT – Montana became the first state to pass a Personhood Amendment in U.S. history on February 26, 2009. Amendment SB 406, introduced by Sen. Dan McGee passed in its third reading by a 26-24 vote.

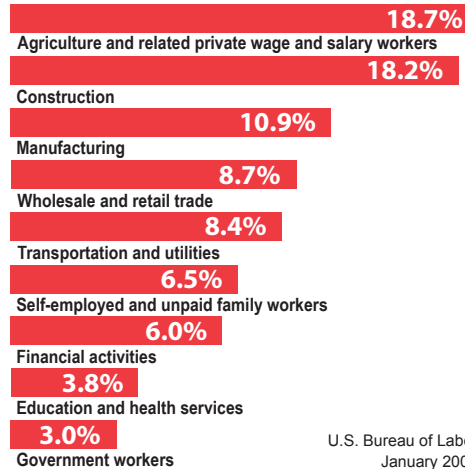
## In America Today...



### LEAK OF MARINE ONE HELICOPTER PLANS TO IRAN DISCOVERED

★ WASHINGTON, DC – Employees of Tiversa, a Cranberry Township Pennsylvania-based company found a file containing entire blueprints, sensitive financial information and avionics package for President Obama’s private Marine One helicopter at a computer IP address in Tehran, Iran. The file was traced back to a defense contractor in Bethesda, MD. The company had a peer-to-peer file-sharing program on one of their systems that also contained the highly sensitive blueprints for Marine One. It is thought someone downloaded the file-sharing program, typically used to exchange music, which allowed individuals in Iran to access the hard drive. Officials said similar “searches for information” are routinely coming out of Pakistan, Yemen, Qatar, China, and other nations. [Let us offer thanksgiving for exposure of this breach of security, and let us continue to pray for all U.S. intelligence agencies and Homeland Security.] (FN MSNBC 3/1/09)

### RATES OF UNEMPLOYMENT



## SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF TEN COMMANDMENTS

★ WASHINGTON, DC – In a landmark 9-0 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the City of Pleasant Grove, Utah does not have to remove a Ten Commandments display from a public park. This paves the way for states, cities, and counties to display the Ten Commandments without fear of expensive and massive lawsuits. The case also affirms the basic position of the Keep the Commandments Coalition in their fight to keep the Ten Commandments in Julia Davis Park in Boise, Idaho. (CN 2/25/09)

## COURT REJECTS TEAM PRAYER APPEAL

WASHINGTON, DC – The Supreme Court refused to review a lower-court decision that banned high school football coach, Marcus Borden of East Brunswick, NJ, from bowing his head or “taking a knee” during prayers led by his players. The Court’s rejection upholds the school district’s policy barring Borden and other staff from joining in student-led prayer. John Whitehead, president of The Rutherford Institute, which represented Borden, said the ruling could have a chilling effect on other coaches who want to show respect while their teams pray. (ONN 3/2/09)

## GAYS CHALLENGE DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT AND “DON’T ASK, DON’T TELL”

BOSTON, MA – Fifteen gay and lesbian residents who were “married” in Massachusetts have filed a lawsuit claiming that the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) signed by President Clinton is unconstitutional and discriminatory and deprives them of benefits enjoyed by heterosexual couples. It is the first serious legal challenge to DOMA. Aides to Rep. Ellen Tauscher (D-CA) also announced that she would introduce legislation to overturn the ban against homosexuals serving openly in the military and to overturn the present “Don’t ask, Don’t tell” policy. (BG 3/3/09 P 3/2/09)

## “CUSS-FREE” MOVEMENT SPREADS

★ LOS ANGELES, CA – The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors was poised to issue a proclamation by Supervisor Michael Antonovich to declare the first week of March “No Cussing Week.” The initiative for this refreshing exercise in restraint and good manners comes from 15-year-old McKay Hatch of South Pasadena, CA, who started the No Cussing Club three years ago and now claims to have more than 20,000 members worldwide. The club’s Web site, [www.nocussing.com](http://www.nocussing.com), urges visitors to take the “No Cussing Challenge” and go cuss-free for a week, a month or even a year, earning the ranks of Apprentice, Journeyman, and Master, respectively. (AP CT 3/2/09)

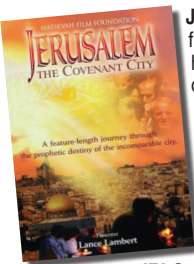
## GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER MAY 31

Unite with millions worldwide. | [www.gdopusa.org](http://www.gdopusa.org)

## NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER MAY 7

Plan and participate in your state. | [www.ndptf.org](http://www.ndptf.org)

★ = An answer or development to an IFA First Friday or On Watch in Washington Alert. Publication index: AP=Associated Press; BG=Boston Globe; CHPP=Capitol Hill Prayer Partners; CN=Christian Newswire; CT=Chicago Tribune; FFA=Focus on the Family Action; FN=Fox News; MSNBC=NBC News; ONN=OneNewsNow.com; P=Politico



**JERUSALEM: THE COVENANT CITY** by Lance Lambert / Hugh Kitson – Why do world leaders wage war for the Temple Mount and rage over “the final status” of Jerusalem? Part 1 of “Jerusalem: The Covenant City” traces the prophetic history of the Holy City. Part 2 explores what the Bible has to say about Jerusalem’s present and future destiny. We discover that as we move into the third millennium of the Christian era, the destiny of the whole world hinges upon the destiny of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel. This 108-minute documentary will bring you a memorable message of challenge and hope. Order IFA Item #DV046, \$15.95 + \$3.50 shipping. **Credit card orders toll-free 1-800-872-7729 or via IFA’s secure eBookstore [www.ifabooks.com](http://www.ifabooks.com).**

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A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.