

Table 1	
Pomegranate feature	Symbolic meaning <sup>6</sup>
Whole fruit	Fruitfulness of the Word of God in the life of Jesus (Ps. 1:2,3)
Whole fruit	Productiveness; fruit of a life given in sacrifice
Whole fruit	A symbol of victory over sin and death
Purplish colour of skin (blue + red)	God-manifestation in Christ leading to kingship
Cut in two to reveal many seeds	The cutting of the new covenant in the sacrifice of Christ (Gen. 15:10)
Red juice when cut	The blood of the new covenant (Mt. 26:28)
Many white seeds in one fruit, made white by removing the red juice	The redeemed in Christ washed white by the blood of the Lamb (Isa. 53:10; Rev. 7:14)
Bitter separating membrane between groups of seeds	Division in the Brotherhood causes bitterness <sup>7</sup>
Crownlike calyx	Kingship of Jesus

The main aspects of the pomegranate symbolism have now been discussed. These, together with additional suggestions, are set out in Table 1 above.

(To be concluded)

6. Details mostly taken from the *Exodus Expositor*, *op. cit.*, pp. 328-9,382.
7. *Caution! God at Work*, Tim Galbraith, Printland Publishers, Hyderabad, India, 2005, p. 106.

## Watchman

# Watching developments around the world

Shaun Maher

### River Jordan could die by 2011

**T**HE ABOVE headline titled an article on **PhysOrg.com** (a leading Web-based science and technology news site), which was widely covered in the mainstream press. The situation is so bad that officials are about to erect signs at Qasr al-Yahud baptismal site forbidding entry to the water, reports the *Jerusalem Post* (26 Jul. 2010). The site,

which draws around 100,000 pilgrims a year, is thought to be where John the Baptist baptized his disciples, and, indeed, the Lord Jesus. Sewage, and run-off containing organophosphates from intensive agricultural activity, have rendered the water unsafe. The pollution problem has been exacerbated by removal of water upstream for irrigation and drinking supply, reducing the flow of the river and its ability to flush waste out of its course. Such is the gravity of the situation that

in places the Jordan is just a muddy stream.

It is very sad when we see the beauty of God's creation destroyed and laid waste by man's activities, and Israel is not exempt from the ravages of human industry and modern life. The historical significance of the site is neither here nor there, but what is important is that this is symptomatic of mankind's continued destruction of the earth's natural resources for his own ends. When we see



**At its source the River Jordan is fast-flowing and pure.**

these things, which are but the tip of an iceberg, we can begin to understand that, as well as the spiritual, there will be a physical work of restoration for us to do when the Lord Jesus returns. In addition, we can perhaps see that there is a practical reason for the 1,000 years as well as a spiritual; it may be that it will take much of this time to restore the earth to its Edenic prime.

This sorry state of affairs parallels the moral and spiritual pollution that is evident in the nation of Israel today. 'Self-reliant', 'proud', 'prosperous', are all words that we could use to describe the modern State of Israel, and indeed the wider world. We know that ultimately God will lead His people Israel, and indeed all men and women, to a great humbling, and begin the process of cleansing and restoration described in Ezekiel 36.

***“You have polluted the land with your harlotries and your wickedness” (Jer. 3:2)***

### **USS Truman posted opposite Hormuz as Iranian threats spiral**

**S**O reports Debkafile, the on-line intelligence and security news service. In response to growing tension in the region, the US Navy has moved one of its frontline aircraft carriers to the Straits of Hormuz near Dubai. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Navy has recently purchased a fleet of high-speed torpedo and missile cruisers designed to attack and destroy aircraft carriers.

In addition, following the recent skirmishes between Israeli and Lebanese forces on Israel's northern border, Iran has been courting the Lebanese government, offering 'advisors' and military hardware. The unofficial Lebanese army of Hizbullah (which is bankrolled by the Iranian and Syrian governments) has moved 20,000 fighters to forward positions near the Israeli border, announced Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, the secretary-general of Hizbullah, recently. He stated that his missiles and fighters would be ready to assist with the next round of fighting against Israel.

Overarching these events is the announcement in July by Mr Medvedev, the Russian president, that “a nuclear-armed Iran is no violation of international charters”. As well as this diplomatic support and encouragement, the Russians are also providing hardware and technical expertise for the Iranian nuclear-reactor programme.

All this fortifies the view that the alliance of nations described

***“Thus says the Lord God: ‘I am against you O Gog, the Prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal . . . Persia, Ethiopia and Libya . . . Gomer . . . [and] Togarmah . . . In the latter years you will come into the land . . . on the mountains of Israel . . .’” (Ezek. 38:1-7)***



**Sheik Hassan Nasrallah.**

in Ezekiel 38 is forming and growing before our eyes. The cooling of Turkish-Israeli relations following the *Mavi Marmara* aid boat raid earlier this year also reinforces the coalescence of this group of nations, united by their common hatred of Israel.

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### Judge overturns California's gay marriage ban

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A FEDERAL judge in California has ruled that the state's ban on gay marriage is unconstitutional and should be scrapped—this despite a law being passed in 2008 following a state-wide referendum where fifty-two per cent voted against same-sex marriage. Gay rights supporters say it is a victory, but religious groups insist they will appeal. The issue could ultimately be decided by the US Supreme Court and have nationwide implications (BBC News, Aug. 2010).

Those of us living in the Western World are by now familiar

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*“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”*  
*(Isa. 5:20)*

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with the growing influence of an increasingly militant homosexual community. In the more godless nations (such as the UK) we see acceptance of homosexual behaviour as normal. Politicians and Christian religious leaders alike promote the acceptance of homosexuality as a normal lifestyle choice, and are busy embedding this principal in statute. But now, even in countries that we would consider to be ‘conservative’, we see the same process at work; Argentina, Mexico, USA—the list goes on and on. This decline in morality has happened because the world we live in no longer accepts God's Word as authoritative. In nations where the Bible still has a slender foothold (such as the USA) we see a bit more resistance, especially from some of the ordinary folk whose lives are still influenced in some way by God's Word, but there is an irresistible momentum in the governments of these nations, powered by the fuel of humanism that is driving this agenda. Man is considered to be the supreme moral authority; man, not God, will decide what is acceptable in our society. This is borne out by the case in California, where, even when the people vote against such a proposition, the authorities find a way to push it through.

This issue is a powerful indicator reflecting the godlessness of the world. Along with other indicators of moral health, such as adultery and violence, throughout history the acceptance of homosexual behaviour

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*“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12)*

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has accompanied the terminal decline of human societies, ultimately leading to complete breakdown of moral values, and to Divine judgement. Israel (Mal. 2:10-16), Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 13:13; 19) and the Roman Empire (Rom 1:18-32) are examples that come to mind.

The large-scale and widespread decline in moral standards (or rather the acceptance of this behaviour by governments, for these abominable practices have always accompanied human societies) that we see around us in the world is directly attributable to a disregard for the authority of the Bible by human authorities, both religious and political. The end of this can only be intervention by God Almighty, and we hope and pray that He will act soon.