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Germany and the Vatican at the Crossroads

Both are going through crisis—and both are about to experience some huge changes.

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It's the [end of an era](#). German Chancellor Angela Merkel announced last month that she would step down from the leadership of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in December. When Ms. Merkel made her announcement, I was reminded of the memorable introduction to an article that Brad Macdonald [wrote in 2016](#):

Since the end of World War II, more than 70 years ago, Germany has had only *nine* chancellors. That's an average of eight years per chancellorship. America, in that time, has had 12 presidents [now 13], six years per presidency; Britain 15 prime ministers, five years per prime ministership; and Italy 45 prime ministerships, averaging 1.5 years each.

Behind these facts is a fundamental truth: Postwar Germany, perhaps more than any other modern nation, is accustomed to political stability and order.

So what happens if this stable, dependable political system breaks down?

Today, that question is being answered. Germany's political system is in shambles, and no one seems to know how to fix it.

For the last three years, the German government has been trying to deal with the political fallout of the migrant crisis that began in 2015. Just over a year ago, German mainstream parties took a battering in the federal elections as voters turned to fringe groups. An agonizing, months-long struggle produced only a barely functioning coalition government. Predictably, many German voters are dissatisfied with the current government, and in recent elections in the provinces of Bavaria and Hesse, more turned to far-right-wing and far-left-wing parties. Now the German government is facing yet another crisis.

Germans are fed up with uncertainty. They want *action*. But at the moment, there is no one they can vote for who will take those actions.

That is going to change. Bible prophecy reveals it.

Merkel wants to remain chancellor until the next federal elections, scheduled for 2021. But many sources doubt that she will get her wish. The October 30 *New York Times* front page noted that "few observers believe she could hang on until the end of her term, speculating that new elections could be held as early as next year." Merkel's announcement "underscored the new fragility of German politics and the great uncertainty for a Europe without Ms. Merkel at the helm."

Merkel has been the dominant figure in German politics for more than a decade. She has been chancellor for 13 years and the head of her party for 18 years. But now Germany is facing a world without Angela Merkel. At the moment, there is no clear successor for "Mutti."

Bloomberg wrote about this dilemma in [Merkel's Likely Successor: Nobody in Particular](#):

No successor ... will have an easy time winning a broader popular mandate than Merkel when the traditional parties of the

center-right and center-left are in institutional decline. The public knows what they can offer and finds it irritatingly boring. ...

What voters are looking for is new ideas, clear views, a focus on their day-to-day problems rather than inter- and intraparty strife.

Germany is at a significant crossroads. So what's next?

More importantly, *who* is next? Who will step forward and fill the void that Merkel leaves behind?

George Friedman, founder and chairman of Geopolitical Futures, wrote after her announcement: "This kind of political uncertainty might not matter in most countries, but in Germany, the beating heart of Europe, it has profound international implications" (emphasis added).

Germany is the *beating heart of Europe*. When Germany struggles, Europe struggles. What Germany needs right now is someone to take the reins of government who can transcend mere politics, provide strong leadership, and get things done. The political climate in Germany right now is ripe for this strong leader to arise.

History and Bible prophecy explain why we should closely watch Germany's political instability as it enters yet another government crisis. Germany is prophesied to lead a coming European alliance—a seventh resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire. This resurrection is in its beginning stages right now.

Notice this prophecy in Revelation 17:10: "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."

The Apostle John was carried forward in this vision to the time of the sixth head—the sixth resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire. (Read our free book [The Holy Roman Empire in Prophecy](#) for an explanation.) As my father, *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry, has explained, the prophecy is worded this way because it would be revealed at the time that "one is." God revealed this prophecy to His servant *during* the sixth resurrection, and that man warned of *another* resurrection to come. That man was Herbert W. Armstrong. My father wrote in [Prophecy Again](#):

This revelation is about the period when Mr. Armstrong, God's end-time Elijah, was doing this work of God. ... During World War II, we saw the Hitler-Mussolini axis, but then it disappeared from the scene. It "was not"! And yet, God says, "it is"! The Axis powers lost the war, but as Mr. Armstrong preached time and again, they just went underground—into "the bottomless pit" (verse 8). They're still there—they're just underground.

Today, the same old Holy Roman Empire is emerging out of the pit once again. This seventh resurrection is now beginning to take shape.

The European Union today is an oversized group of 28 nations, but it is about to downsize to 10 nations or groups of nations. Verse 12 says: "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast."

That is referring to a "United States of Europe" composed of 10 kings who are of one mind (verse 13). Those 10 kings or heads of state are led by one strong leader: a fearsome leader prophesied in Daniel 8.

With Merkel leaving her post as the head of the EU next month, you can see how quickly this prophecy could be fulfilled. Germany wants a strongman, and it is about to get one.

There is another dimension to this rising European power that we must consider: It has a strong *religious element*.

The first few verses of Revelation 17 reveal that this European beast power is ridden by a woman. The Bible uses a woman to symbolize a church. Verses 1-3 show that this refers to a great false church that mixes religion with politics. She presides over many nations that speak many different languages (verse 15). This prophecy shows a church-state union: a European empire of 10 kings led by one strong leader, directed and "ridden" by a hugely powerful religion. That religion is experiencing a resurgence in Europe right now as European leaders promote Europe's Catholic heritage. My father wrote about this [at length in the October 2018 Trumpet](#).

At the same time that Europe is leaderless, the Vatican is also at a crossroads. The Catholic Church is embroiled in one of the greatest scandals it has ever faced: allegations of widespread sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests, and the attempts by high-profile church leaders to cover it up. The priests responsible for the abuse were almost never punished and remained in their positions, free to abuse more innocent children. Some are calling this the worst crisis for the church since the Protestant Reformation.

Pope Francis's reaction to the revelations has been less than satisfactory for many Catholics. Instead of condemning the abuse, the abusers and the cover-up, the pope blamed the scandals on the devil trying to discredit the church. There is evidence that Pope Francis may have known or even participated in some of the cover-up.

Germany is filled with turmoil and uncertainty. So is the Vatican. What does this mean for Europe in the near future?

Herbert W. Armstrong predicted that a united Europe would arise out of crisis under the leadership of a strong German

leader. He wrote in the November-December 1954 *Plain Truth*: “Germany inevitably [will] emerge as the *leader* of a united Europe. It will require some *spiritual* binding force to inspire this *confidence*—to remove these *fears*—and that spiritual binding force *must* arise from inside Europe! *All Europe* is actually *ready*—just waiting for the *confidence-inspiring leader*”

That seventh resurrection is rising *right now*. It’s just waiting for that strong, confidence-inspiring German leader to unite Europe into a single power. As Mr. Armstrong wrote, it will require a *spiritual* binding force to inspire that confidence.

My father wrote in the October 2018 *Trumpet*:

Bible prophecy makes clear: Soon, Europeans will get exactly what they are asking for, another Charlemagne-type leader. This man will come to power and set himself up as a strongman over all Europe. He will effectively hijack the European Union! ...

Regardless of who the strongman is, it is clear that we are seeing a revival of the Holy Roman Empire in Europe in a way that has not been promoted before. ...

When this man comes to power, it will affect every human on this Earth in the most horrible ways—unless God protects you! But God only protects those who repent.

We are facing the worst crisis in mankind’s history. In the past, when Europe has been led by a strongman, allied with the Vatican, it has plunged the Continent and even the world into war. But there is also *great hope* in these prophecies. Notice the conclusion of my father’s article:

We cannot predict or set dates; only God the Father knows the day or the hour (Matthew 24:36). But God warns us that we had better know when it is at the door! (verse 33). We must be watching and praying.

The great hope of all of this is that just beyond that time of tribulation is the greatest, most inspiring event to ever take place: “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful” (Revelation 17:14).

God is going to smash that final resurrection. There will be peace, happiness and joy throughout the whole universe! He is going to plant the heavens and establish His throne forever!

If you want to understand more about this subject, you can read my father’s article [The Holy Roman Empire Goes Public—Big Time!](#)” ■