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The End of an Era for Germany

Why Merkel's departure is a momentous and exciting moment

- Richard Palmer
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German Chancellor Angela Merkel is officially on the way out. Yesterday, she announced that she would step down in December as the leader of Germany's Christian Democratic Union (cdu). She will be gone as Germany's chancellor by 2021—at the latest. So what's on the horizon for Germany?

A whole lot of confusion. *What does this mean for Germany? Who is the next leader? Where is the nation going?*

No senior German politician can answer any of these questions.

Merkel's announcement has thrown Germany into confusion at a time when its political system has stopped working. All of Europe, but especially Germany, is being hit with a political crisis bigger than one man or woman.

Germany and Europe are leaderless and adrift in a dangerous world with mounting crises.

But all this mess sets the stage perfectly for one of the *Trumpet's* biggest, most controversial and most important forecasts.

Ms. Merkel's party, the cdu, will vote for its new leader in December. She will not stand in this election. Ms. Merkel said she wants to remain in position as Germany's chancellor until federal elections in 2021.

This gives two main scenarios for Germany going forward. If an ally of Ms. Merkel becomes cdu leader, Merkel may get her wish to finish her term as chancellor. But think what that will mean for Germany. Every politician will know, for certain, that Merkel is almost out. Why listen to her? Why respect her? Her ability to reward her followers and punish her foes will last only months.

The same will be true on a European level. Merkel has provided some small level of leadership on the euro crisis. But her voice will carry no authority anymore as other leaders will know they just have to wait out the rest of her tenure and they will be dealing with someone new.

"It is not only in Berlin that decision-making is getting fiendishly difficult," [wrote the Telegraph](#). "Brussels has relied on Merkel to give a lead in moments of crisis. Greeks certainly resented the German chancellor's role in setting the terms for the handling of their financial debacle, but it was done With no one really in power in Berlin, Brussels lacks a firm hand to whip in the rest of Europe.

"Impasse looks set to be Angela Merkel's legacy at home and in the EU. She has presided over the fragmentation of the political spectrum inside Germany which raises the specter of ungovernability in Europe's powerhouse. By trying to cling to the chancellorship after December, Merkel will deepen that troubling trend."

That's Ms. Merkel's best-case scenario. The worst case is that a Merkel opponent is voted cdu leader; then Merkel's transition plan is toast. A new cdu leader may be able to have himself voted in by parliament as Germany's new chancellor.

If that fails, he could pull out of the coalition and bring on fresh elections. It's even possible that the chancellery could be won by a different party altogether.

None of this helps Germany much. [Bloomberg](#) published an article yesterday titled "Merkel's Likely Successor: Nobody in Particular." "The growing demands for change, however, are not going to be satisfied with mere personnel moves, even such momentous ones as Merkel's gradual easing out of power," it wrote.

"No successor, be it Merkel's hand-picked cdu secretary general, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, conservative Health Minister Jens Spahn, harsh Merkel critic and former cdu faction head Friedrich Merz, or any of the cdu's successful state minister presidents, 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."

Geopolitical Futures made the same point: "What is clear is that Germany is tired of its political leaders but uncertain of who should replace them. This kind of political uncertainty might not matter in most countries, but in Germany, the beating heart of Europe, it has profound international implications."

"What voters are looking for is new ideas, clear views, a focus on their day-to-day problems rather than inter- and intraparty strife..." wrote [Bloomberg](#). "Germany's immediate future appears to be somewhat like many other European countries—a shifting electoral landscape, unstable governments, attempts at trial and error that lead to deadlock."

Germans want someone different. Meanwhile their political system barely functions. The rise of the Alternative für Deutschland on the extreme right and the Left Party on the extreme left has gummed up the works. Germany's mainstream parties must either work with one of these extreme parties or try to put together some kind of left-right coalition. Left-right coalitions struggle, neither the left nor the right are happy with the results, and the dissatisfying outcomes push voters farther toward the extremes.

Germany and Europe are surrounded by crises. They need a stronger leader to survive. Yet none appears on the horizon, and the political system seems incapable of delivering one. How does the country move forward?

"Germany inevitably [will] emerge as the *leader* of a united Europe," forecast Herbert W. Armstrong in 1954. "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*" Today Europe is still looking for such a leader.

In the *Good News* magazine of May 1953, Mr. Armstrong wrote, "[I]t is probable that none but a German can provide the dynamic, inspired leadership required to organize such a political military federation."

European nations are becoming "distrustful of America and thinking more and more about uniting themselves into a united states of Europe," he wrote in March 1950. To do that though, they needed a "new supreme leader—the successor of Adolf Hitler—to rise up and assert himself and take command."

Even in the final year of his life in 1985, he was writing, "There is yet another leader to arise in Europe!"

How could he make such bold forecasts?

Jesus Christ Himself warned Christians everywhere to watch world events: "Watch therefore," He said, "for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matthew 24:42). He gave this command in a long prophecy about specific news events. In that same passage, He told us to look for "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet." Jesus Christ told us to watch for the prophecies of the book of Daniel to be fulfilled.

Daniel 11:31 describes this abomination. It refers to a specific historical event. A king named Antiochus Epiphanes set up a statue of a pagan god in the temple in Jerusalem. Antiochus reigned around 175 to 164 b.c. Yet roughly 200 years later, Jesus told Christians to watch for this to happen. Daniel prophesied of Antiochus Epiphanes, yet his words must have another fulfillment. His prophecy foretells an event that had not yet happened when Christ walked the Earth. In the time shortly before Christ's return, there would be another "Antiochus" type who would commit another abomination.

Once we understand that these Old Testament prophecies have a future fulfillment, we can see that the Bible is full of forecasts of a modern-day strongman.

Daniel 8:23-24 describe the rise of "a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences." Verse 25 says that he will be defeated after he stands up "against the Prince of princes," revealing the time frame for this fierce king's reign. He will come in the very end time, right before Jesus Christ's Second Coming.

Daniel 11:40-45 contain a closely related end-time prophecy. It speaks of a world power called "the king of the north," which will rise "at the time of the end." Just like the king in Daniel 8, this leader will also "come to his end."

This prophecy tells us where this strongman will rule—a major power in the north (north of where the Bible was recorded, specifically). This man won't arise within Britain or America. These nations are the [modern descendants of ancient Israel](#), and other prophecies show that this king's empire will actually *attack and defeat* these nations. Daniel 11:44 describes this

fierce king going on to attack nations to the “east and ... north” of Jerusalem—geographically referring to Russia and China. So this fierce king comes neither from Anglo-America nor from these Asian nations.

One of the few major world powers that is not America, Britain, Russia or China, is Europe.

Further confirming this analysis, Isaiah 10:5-19 give a similar prophecy, clearly describing the same leader. This passage adds that this leader shall be “the king of Assyria.” This makes the national identity of this king much clearer: *Assyria* refers to the ancestors of modern *Germany*. (For proof, request our reprint article [“The Remarkable Identity of the German People.”](#))

Revelation 13 and 17 also describe a modern power or “beast” that is led by a church. The only place we’ve seen a church-led empire rise, fall and rise again, is in Europe, where the Holy Roman Empire has risen time and again. These scriptures also emphasize this power is led by one strongman.

So the Bible states repeatedly to watch for a strongman in Europe. And the Bible also tells us how he will come to power. Daniel 11:21 says the people shall not give this Antiochus “the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.” The *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary* says that “the nation shall not, by a public act, confer the kingdom on him, but he shall obtain it by artifice, ‘flattering.’” *Barnes’ Notes on the Old and New Testaments* states, “[I]n other words, it should not be conferred on him by any law or act of the nation, or in any regular succession or claim.”

“This man doesn’t come to power the *honorable* way—by being voted into office,” *Trumpet* editor in chief Flurry wrote in [November 2002](#). “He takes it dishonorably! He will work behind the scenes and come to power by *flatteries*—not votes!”

The stage in Germany is now perfectly set for this man. Political paralysis is on the horizon as far as the eye can see, with its current elector system. Not one of those being discussed as Merkel’s successor offers any kind of solution, or is greeted by any kind of enthusiasm. If the nation remains politically paralyzed while troubles multiply at home and Europe burns around it, Germany will desperately need a strong leader and will be willing to heed sophisticated-sounding rationale for “progressing past” or “temporarily suspending” democracy, perhaps, and reverting to the Continent’s ancient go-to method of government: *crown a king*.

This is the exciting part of Ms. Merkel’s resignation. It sets the stage perfectly for this keynote prophecy. This strongman could be here very soon. Based on these prophecies, we even believe we know who he is. No news organization I’ve seen has recently listed him as one of the top contenders to take Merkel’s place as chancellor. He may not be the next person to get that job. But watch former German Defense Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg. You can read much more about why we think he is the man to watch in our free booklet [A Strong German Leader Is Imminent](#).

All the Bible prophecies are consistent. This man is coming.

The Bible also tells us what is coming after he arrives. The prophecies all show that this strongman will wreak destruction on the descendants of ancient Israel, including the United States, Britain and the modern Jewish nation named Israel. Yet the prophecies continue. This terrible bloodshed will occur *just before* the greatest event in human history: Jesus Christ’s return to Earth. As Christ Himself said, speaking of His Second Coming, “[W]hen ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors” (Matthew 24:33).

Daniel 8:25 states that this man will “stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.” Daniel 11:45 says that “he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.” Revelation 19:19 says this man will gather his armies and try to fight Christ, but he will lose and be cast into a burning lake of fire (verse 20).

Daniel 7:22 states that this beast power prevailed “until the Ancient of days came and judgment was given to the saints of

the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”

Verse 27 describes the inspiring future *after* this evil king is defeated: “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” Habakkuk describes the same period, writing that “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14).

This is why this event is so exciting. It’s setting the scene for one of the final dramas of this present evil world. If the strongman spoken of throughout the Bible is around the corner, so is Jesus Christ.

For more on this man, and how you can watch for him, read our free booklet [A Strong German Leader Is Imminent](#). This booklet is the guide you need to German politics. It will help you apply all these scriptures to the modern world, and help you fulfill Christ’s command to “watch and pray always.” ■

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