

Newsbytes

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Bible sales soar as world events continue to shake

Jo Elizabeth

Circana Bookscan, the industry's primary data collection resource on book sales, has some joyful news to report to those who love the Bible. As of October 2024, sales of the "Scriptures Bible" are up 22% in the U.S. compared to their figures of the same time last year.

In general, print book sales are decreasing with the rise in digital books, and Circana's overall statistics show a rise of just 1% across the spectrum of all printed books. However, more people are now paying to get a physical copy of the Bible in their hands.

The Bible has always been a bestseller, outstripping the sales of every other book each year. It is the most popular book in the world with an estimated 5 billion copies sold worldwide. However, with adherence to the Christian faith allegedly dropping, according to Pew Research figures, it might seem surprising that Bible sales are moving in the opposite direction.

Jeff Crosby, president of the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association explained, "People are experiencing anxiety themselves, or they're worried for their children and grandchildren."

"It's related to artificial intelligence, election cycles...and all of that feeds a desire for assurance that we're going to be OK," he added.

Whether due to concerns about the economy, international conflicts or political uncertainty, the instability caused by current events may be driving increased interest in the Bible.

In an environment where misinformation, AI, and conflicting narratives are widespread, the Bible's text has remained consistent for millennia, offering a stable reference point for

many.

However, there are other dynamics at work. Many influencers are publicly finding faith in our increasingly secular society, and taking their followers with them.

Actor and comedian, Russell Brand, recently became a Christian and has been publicly exploring the Bible, sharing insights on social media. In one post, he read the passage from 1 Corinthians 13 about love,

“I don't know why I assumed I knew what was in this book without looking at it,” he told his nearly 7 million followers on YouTube alone.

Former Fox News host, Tucker Carlson, invited Brand to “close in prayer” at the end of the first event in his live national tour in Phoenix, Arizona on Sept. 4.

Brand got on his knees and said the Lord's Prayer in front of an audience of thousands. Carlson himself has also been increasingly vocal about his faith in God on his show hosted on [TBS](#), which is now watched by more than his audience on Fox.

Several other public figures have recently found faith and shared their experiences.

Love Island USA contestant, Cely Vazquez, bought her first Bible and posted it on TikTok, saying, “I've had Bibles that my mom gave me, but I felt I needed my own to start my own journey, that it symbolized I was starting a walk with God,” she candidly shared.

“I felt something was missing. It's a combination of where we are in the world, general anxiety and the sense that meaning and comfort can be found in the Bible.”

Another new believer, comedian JP Sears, shared his thoughts about the social phenomenon taking place.

“My hypothesis of why are people accidentally getting more Christian I think at least in our lifetimes I've never seen the presence of evil so obvious,” said Sears. “If you don't resonate with the evil...you'll naturally go in that opposite direction of evil – you'll polarize in the other direction. And what's in the other direction? It's God.”

In our increasingly podcast-driven world, the Bible is being discussed in front of large audiences, and countless comments reveal many are finding faith after a lifetime of atheism.

Jordan Peterson's curiosity and deep respect for the Bible, even without openly sharing his personal beliefs, have inspired many to return to church and faith. His popular Bible lectures have been described by some as a “gateway drug” back to faith in God.

New enthusiasm about the Bible from academics like Peterson and atheist Tom Holland seems to have opened up the possibility of embracing the Bible to many who might

previously have dismissed it.

The Bible has even had an airing on the most popular podcast in the world.

Joe Rogan recently read the entire chapter of Revelation 13 on his show, “The Joe Rogan Experience” which has 18.6 million subscribers, while he considered the possibility that we are seeing biblical prophecy unfold in our days.

The World Is Quickly Becoming A High-Tech Prison... And Its ‘Governor’ Will Soon Take Up His Post

By Dean Dwyer

In the age of technology, we have been conditioned to accept that surveillance is an ordinary (and supposedly necessary) part of everyday life. Undoubtedly, surveillance has contributed to a feeling of safety, particularly in larger cities where the police presence is inadequate to deal with every threat. Therefore, whether you agree with the principle or not, many people are happy to trade personal privacy for personal safety. Despite individual views on the subject, what is largely beyond doubt is the role that surveillance will play during the Tribulation Period, particularly in the hands of the Antichrist and his global governance structure. As the Antichrist will have little time to build any new surveillance apparatus, my interest is in examining existing surveillance capabilities which are likely to form part of the Antichrist’s overall toolkit.

One such mysterious surveillance partnership is simply known as “Five Eyes”, often abbreviated as “FVEY” in intelligence reports. Five Eyes is an intelligence sharing partnership between five countries – Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America. The origins of the partnership can be traced back to the post-World War II period when the Allies sought to lay out their goals for a post-war world. In simple terms, each nation in the partnership carries out “global eavesdropping” and then shares pertinent information with its partners.

One such program used by intelligence agencies is referred to as Echelon. Officially, Echelon does not exist. However, there is ample evidence to confirm its role in global intelligence collection from at least the 1990s. Echelon was primarily used to collect data via supercomputers. It does this by intercepting signals intelligence to flag any messages containing key words listed in the Echelon dictionary. For instance, in a post-9/11 world, Echelon’s dictionary would have been updated to capture words such as “hijack”, “plane”, “Bin Laden”, etc. Transmissions via phone, facsimile and e-mail containing those words were flagged and then reviewed by intelligence analysts to see if there was any credible information available from it.

The use of Echelon raised the ire of the European parliament in the late 1990s and early 2000s when it accused the partnership of passing industrial secrets to the US and Britain. Although the subsequent report from Europe did confirm the existence of Echelon, it had no concrete proof that Five Eyes partners were engaging in commercial

espionage. Still, what it did prove to many who read the report was that global communications were being monitored. In fact, the vice-chairman of the Echelon parliamentary committee said, "People should treat their emails like seaside postcards; that is to say put anything you like on them but don't be surprised if someone else reads them."

But Five Eyes partners don't simply spy on enemy combatants. Reports indicate that the intelligence agencies of Five Eyes partners will routinely spy on each other's citizens in order to circumvent restrictive domestic regulations concerning surveillance of a nation's own people. For example, US intelligence agencies may be legally restricted from spying on US citizens, but there is nothing stopping the Australian Signals Directorate from doing so and then passing along all relevant information.

Of course, many other nations are also very well advanced in the area of surveillance. The Chinese government already possesses perhaps the most agile, invasive, and omnipresent surveillance capabilities in the world. Additionally, China has no reservations about spying on its own citizens. In recent years, the Chinese government launched a surveillance program called "Sharp Eyes", which aims to utilise local governments and its local population in its surveillance efforts. The name was inspired by former leader Mao Zedong who coerced citizens into looking out for neighbours not living up to communist values. Rather than relying on limited government manpower to scope out offenders, he recommended a reliance on people power because "the people have sharp eyes". The goal of the Sharp Eyes program is to have 100% coverage of public spaces and although this may be concerning, surveillance coverage is not the biggest concern for Chinese citizens. The use of predictive policing technology is becoming more popular, with hopes that the technology will eventually be able to sweep a person's bank transaction data, location history and social connections, so that it is able to make a determination as to whether a particular person is a terrorist or criminal threat.

God did not establish civil government so that it could turn on its people, use its people, surveil its people and track its people. Yet so many of us have become conditioned to the supposed need for surveillance that it no longer bothers the average person when these technologies become even more ubiquitous. What these technologies ultimately reveal is that the world is quickly becoming a high-tech prison. Worse, the ultimate "governor" of this prison will soon take up his post. The Bible refers to him as the Antichrist and he will be the most wicked and cruel tyrant the world has ever seen. Church-age believers in Christ will never meet him, nor be under his authority, for we will be raptured home before he is revealed to the world. So that you avoid meeting him as well, be sure that you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour.

Dean Dwyer has served for over 20 years as Pastor and President of Eiser Street Baptist Church in Queensland, Australia.

Very much looking forward to hosting David on Stand Up for the Truth on December 19 as we look back at 2024.

One Thousand Days Of Wars And Rumors Of Wars

David Bowen

“And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.” (Matthew 24:6-8). For those who understand Bible prophecy, those words spoken by Jesus from the Gospel are familiar. The birth pains Jesus speaks of lead up to the Tribulation, and they find their ultimate fulfillment in the Tribulation period.

Sweden Prepares For War

As we reach the 1,000th day of war in Ukraine, things are starting to get concerning for other nations. As the government of Sweden just presented its seventh military package of weapons and supplies to the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine on the Homefront, Sweden started to distribute copies of a 32-page booklet advising its citizens how to prepare for war. The booklet said, “We live in uncertain times. Armed conflicts are currently being waged in our corner of the world. Terrorism, cyber-attacks, and disinformation campaigns are being used to undermine and influence us.”

Officials in Sweden have warned if they are attacked, everyone must do their part to defend Sweden’s independence. Citizens are being told, “You are part of Sweden’s overall emergency preparedness.” Sweden has not gone to war in more than two centuries, but now Swedes have to mentally prepare for war. This 32-page booklet says: “Military threat levels are increasing. We must be prepared for the worst-case scenario, which is an armed attack on Sweden.”

Norway Prepares For War

Sweden is not the only European nation getting ready for war. A Norwegian newspaper recently reported that Norway’s citizens have also received pamphlets warning them of possible war because, in the worst case, acts of war could also affect Norway.

Finland Prepares For War

Finland’s government has released a digital booklet to prepare citizens for its worst possible threat: war. Finland reminded its citizens of their “national defense obligation” and recently launched a new information website. Finland is hosting up to 3,600 soldiers from 28 nations for an exercise called Dynamic Front. All this preparation and these pamphlets encourage citizens to be prepared physically. What is missing in this effort is telling people to be spiritually prepared.

Finland shares a 1,340-kilometre (830-mile) border with Russia, but after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, Finland announced plans to build a 200-kilometre (124-mile) border fence with Russia. This fence is designed to be three meters (10 feet) tall and topped with barbed wire, it is scheduled to be completed by 2026. In response to an influx of migrants, Finland has closed its eight border crossings with Russia. Leaders are saying this influx of immigrants was designed to be a hybrid attack orchestrated by Moscow.

Putin Considering Using Nuclear Weapons

The Daily Mail, a British news source, is reporting that European nations are gearing up for an all-out war as Ukraine launched US-made missiles into Russia, which led to, for the first time, Vladimir Putin officially considering using nuclear weapons. Moscow responded to Ukraine's strike on an ammunition depot in Russia's Bryansk region with those US-supplied ATACMS (Army Tactical Missile System) by calling this a "new phase of the Western war."

According to a 1,000-page document entitled "Operationsplan Deutschland," Germany would reportedly host hundreds of thousands of troops from NATO countries and serve as a logistics hub for sending vast quantities of military equipment, food, and medicine toward the frontline. The German army has already started advising businesses to create crisis plans detailing employee responsibilities and instructed businesses to stockpile diesel generators or install wind turbines to ensure energy independence.

US-Made Missiles

The Daily Mail cited sources saying on the same day that US-made missiles were fired into Russian soil, Putin signed off on an updated version of the Kremlin's nuclear doctrine that broadens the scope for Moscow to turn to its nuclear stockpile. According to the updated document, the new version allows Putin's forces to deploy these weapons if Russia or Belarus is threatened by a non-nuclear nation supported by a nuclear power. What does Russia consider a threat? Threats that could warrant a nuclear response from Russia's leadership include an attack with conventional missiles, drones, or other aircraft. Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov said Ukrainian missile strikes deep inside Russia "would not go unpunished."

Is Russia's bark worse than its bite? Is war breaking out within the borders of other nations a real possibility? If so, how does this tie into the end-time battle Scripture has said will one day be coming? Russia feels the world is beginning to stand against it.

Archer 155-mm Self-Propelled Gun

For example, Sweden recently announced it is considering providing Ukraine with the latest 155-mm Archer self-propelled guns. What does that mean? The Archer 155-mm self-propelled gun is advanced technology. It can deploy from a retreating position to a combat position in just 1 minute and 15 seconds. It can fire 3 rounds and leave the position before the first shell hits the target. British troops have labeled these weapons a battlefield game changer.

No one knows if these modern-day weapons will be used in combat before or after the Tribulation. We know the four horses of Revelation, which are the first four seals, will result in war, famine, and massive death. Is the world stage being set for the pages of Revelation to become reality? Again, time will tell.

However, what we are seeing in Ukraine, Russia, Sweden, Finland, Norway, and now, once again, the rising tensions in Syria, should at the least cause people to consider carefully what Scripture has prophesied about the coming days of Jacob's Trouble. Eventually, the Antichrist will war against the Jews and against Christians. Daniel 11 and Revelation 12 describe that future day in great detail. It's one thing to read the pages of Scripture and know that these events will occur someday. It's another thing to possibly be watching them begin to unfold right in front of us.

Urgency and a Message of Hope

The purpose of sharing what is happening worldwide and the possibility of war breaking out on multiple fronts is NOT to produce fear. Scripture is clear: we are not to operate in fear.

What good then does it do to have this information? I hope this sets in motion a sense of urgency to share the message of hope and the need to get serious about one's study of God's Word and one's relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. We should all look forward to the day when we stand before Him and the beginning of our eternal journey.

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