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THE PHILADELPHIA TRUMPET (ISSN 10706348) is published monthly (except bimonthly August-September and November-December issues) by the Philadelphia Church of God, 14400 S. Bryant Ave, Edmond, OK 73034. Periodicals postage paid at Edmond, OK, and additional mailing offices. ©2007 Philadelphia Church of God. All rights reserved. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A. Unless otherwise noted, scriptures are quoted from the King James Version of the Holy Bible. **U.S. Postmaster:** Send address changes to: THE PHILADELPHIA TRUMPET, P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, OK 73083. **How your subscription has been paid:** The *Trumpet* has no subscription price—it is free. This is made possible by the tithes and offerings of the membership of the Philadelphia Church of God and others. Contributions, however, are welcomed and are tax-deductible in the United States, Canada and New Zealand. Those who wish to voluntarily support this worldwide work of God are gladly welcomed as co-workers.

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Gerald Flurry

ISTOCK PHOTO

Jerusalem

City of Hope

AT THE TIME OF CHRIST'S FIRST COMING, JERUSALEM was populated mainly by Jews.

The Jews, like all of humanity, have a history of rejecting God's truth. When Christ walked the Earth, He condemned them for killing the prophets who brought God's message. Christ also prophesied how Jerusalem would be destroyed if they didn't repent.

About 39 years after His prophecy, the Jews were invaded by the Romans. Multiple thousands were slaughtered, others were enslaved, their temple was burned, and the city was left in a heap of rubble.

The Roman general who conquered them said he could never have done so had they not been so *bitterly divided*. There were three main factions fighting each other for control of the city. One faction even burned most of their food. Josephus records how that act led to the worst kind of cannibalism.

The Jews are also extremely divided today. Is history about to repeat itself, but on a much greater scale?

Abraham Lincoln said before the Civil War that a house divided against itself cannot stand. He was quoting the Bible. America was in grave danger of splitting and becoming insignificant on the world scene, making the nation easy for its enemies to conquer.

Anciently, Jerusalem was the capital of all Israel. End-time biblical prophecy speaks of that city as a *symbol*, or *type*, of all Israel—whose modern descendants include, specifically, the Jewish nation and the birthright nations of America and Britain. So, essentially, what we see happening in Jerusalem will also occur in America and Britain (including the Commonwealth peoples of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa). These facts are thoroughly explained in our book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, which we will send you free.

Have you noticed how shamefully divided America and Britain are today? That is a deadly disease in a democracy, especially in such dangerous times.

In a crisis, division can play a major role in a nation's death. That is what happened to Jerusalem in A.D. 70. And since that event is a *type* of what is going to happen in the end time to

Israel, we need to be acutely concerned.

We are headed into the worst crisis ever on this planet. Our nations' unity should be of paramount concern. DIVIDED, WE CANNOT STAND.

About A.D. 135, the Jews again revolted against Rome. This time, the Romans drove them out of the area and would not let them return. So the city became populated mostly by Gentiles. It remained that way throughout the centuries. In 1948, the United Nations gave the Jews the newer part of Jerusalem, established in 1860. This adjoined the ancient city of Jerusalem, which was still mainly populated by Gentiles.

It remains that way today, even though the Jews conquered the *Old City* of Jerusalem in the 1967 war. The Arab population was allowed to remain in that half of Jerusalem.

According to biblical prophecy, one half of Jerusalem is soon to be conquered by the Arabs. Almost any authority on the subject knows that will be rather easy for the Arabs to do.

If you doubt the Bible, consider this: There are several prophecies about the Jews being in Jerusalem in this end time. Those prophecies were written many years before Christ even came to this Earth the first time.

A good example would be the one in Zechariah 14:2: "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."

That prophecy is specifically addressed to the nation of *Judah* (see Zechariah 1:12). It says half of Jerusalem would go into captivity. For that to be fulfilled, the Jews (the modern descendants of biblical Judah) would have to control *all* of Jerusalem. In other words, this scripture includes a prophecy that the Jews would not only control the new half of Jerusalem in this end time, but the old half as well—even though the Jews had no control of that city from A.D. 135 to 1948!

So the Bible prophesied well over 2,000 years ago that the Jews would lose control of Jerusalem—which happened in A.D. 70—and regain control in the end time.

See **JERUSALEM** page 5 ►

There Is Hope for Israel!

Attacks continue, and war is afoot. Many Israelis, angry at their government for failing to protect them, fear for the future of their nation. This is an opportunity for Israelis to face a vital truth. BY JOEL HILLIKER

PLACING YOUR HOPE IN THE wrong thing can be deadly.

Israel's national anthem is "Hatikvah"—"The Hope." Its people possess the gritty combination of determination, courage and guts required of a people living on a small island of Jewry in an ocean of Islam. Outnumbered 60 to 1 by neighbors who largely want them eliminated, they hold their land and cling to life.

Still, that determination is under assault. For Israelis acquainted with reality, genuine hope—hope for leaving a better world to their children—is flickering out. Why? Not only because dangers loom. They always have. What truly ravages the Jews' hope in the shadow of these dangers is *unsteady government*.

Look, for example, at the town of Sderot, whose population of 24,000 has lived under a rain of Kassam rockets for going on seven years. Launched from covert bases in the Gaza Strip, the attacks are calculated to drive Jews out. "We have decided to make Sderot a ghost town," a Hamas spokesman explained—a goal this Palestinian terrorist organization is achieving. Labor flight has decimated the local economy. Realtors can't move property at any price, much less a profit. Nearly one in five residents has checked into the town's mental health facility.

What is most exasperating for the people of Sderot, however, is the timid response from Israeli leaders. Last November, Israel's government and Gaza militants negotiated a cease-fire—and still the rockets kept coming at an average of two per day. "We cease—they fire," locals complained. The government limited

its response for fear of escalating the situation, leaving residents feeling betrayed and abandoned. "If the rockets were falling in the suburbs of Tel Aviv, the army would have found a solution a long time ago," said one citizen (Agence France Presse, January 7). Some angry locals are *suing the government* for not defending them. To this day, Israel still officially abides by the cease-fire—hoping, despite all evidence, that *restraint* will ultimately convince the Palestinians to embrace peace.

This embattled town is a powerful symbol of the state it calls home.

War is clearly afoot. Israeli army statistics show that Palestinians dropped well over a thousand rockets on southern Israeli communities last year. Gaza, which Israel relinquished to Arab control two summers ago, is now a breeding ground for terrorists. The Hamas-controlled Palestinian government refuses to recognize the Jewish state's existence. Agents of the supposedly moderate, mainstream Palestinian Fatah party, helped by Iranian-sponsored Islamic Jihad, are building short-range missiles in the West Bank. The Israeli-Lebanese border once again hums with combat preparations: Hezbollah, the militant group that last July launched and survived a war against Israel, is conducting reconnaissance and rapidly rearming for the next round. Syria has obtained Scud-D missiles capable of striking anywhere in Israel. Jewish officials claim Iran has gained Chinese anti-satellite technology, perhaps through North Korea. Add to this the ongoing possibility of Tehran acquiring nuclear weapons capability that would give teeth to its pledge to annihilate Israel.

But in the face of all these threats, the Israeli government hopes that somehow, miraculously, they simply won't materialize.

"The State of Israel is open to any murmur of peace from our neighbors and across our borders," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said in a December speech. "If our enemies genuinely want peace, they will find us a fair partner, determined to establish relations of peace, friendship and reciprocity."

But those enemies *don't* genuinely want peace. Decades of history have proven that. This misplaced, false hope—the sand upon which Israel builds its feeble security policy—has left *real* hope for most Israelis in tatters.

A "Dangerous" Prime Minister?

"[O]ver the past few weeks most of us have been aghast and enraged at the failure of the government to fulfill its primary responsibility—ensuring the safety and security of the civilian population," Isi Leibler wrote in a January 2 *Jerusalem Post* piece. Polls show that over three in four Israelis give Olmert a failing grade. One Knesset member calls the prime minister "dangerous for Israel."

Why dangerous?

In many Jews' minds, the most fitting symbol of Olmert's leadership was his government's mismanagement of last year's war with Hezbollah—the first-ever defeat for Israel's military. Many view this monumental blow to the nation's status in the region as an *irreversible error*—Israel's enemies, long seeking its end, are now flush with dangerous confidence that this goal is actually at-

tainable. Making the issue even worse for the government is a report the Israeli military issued in February declaring that 4 in 10 Israeli casualties stemmed not from Hezbollah's savvy, but from Israeli operational failures: mostly ill-prepared commanders and officers leading their men into danger unnecessarily.

If that war made Israel look temptingly weak, the prime minister hasn't done much since to undo the damage. Consider a few of his government's more recent actions.

Under pressure from the U.S. and Europe, Olmert broke two years of no contact with the Palestinian Authority in December and exchanged kisses and handshakes with PA President Mahmoud Abbas. At a two-hour meeting at his Jerusalem residence, Olmert made the first of a series of Israeli concessions intended to improve life for Palestinians.

First, he agreed to remove 27 Israeli security roadblocks in the West Bank (out of a few hundred) and released \$100 million in frozen tax revenue to pay PA government employees who hadn't received their full paychecks since March last year. Israel had been withholding the tax money it collects for the PA ever since Hamas took over; this was a means not only of ensuring the funds wouldn't be used for terrorism, but also to try to pressure Hamas to formally recognize Israel's existence. (In truth, Israel still cannot guarantee the money won't reach Hamas.)

But the Olmert government's aid wasn't limited to funding. Within days of the meeting, Egypt delivered a large arms shipment to Fatah forces, including several thousand automatic rifles. Some Israeli officials acknowledged having approved the shipment as a means of strengthening Abbas, whose security personnel have reportedly complained of being outgunned in clashes with Hamas. Infrastructure Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer said, "The weapons are supposed to give Abu Mazen [Abbas] the ability to cope with organizations like Hamas, which are trying to destroy everything that is good. If this helps bolster Abu Mazen, then I support it."

The problem is, the idea that Mahmoud Abbas is a "moderate" and a legitimate peace partner is a *false hope*—a deadly lie.

It is true that, next to Hamas, he looks pretty mild. This past year witnessed a battle for control of Palestinian politics

between the religious "Islam will rule the Middle East" forces of Hamas and the nationalistic "Palestinians deserve a home" ranks of Abbas's Fatah party. In reality, however, while these two sides may disagree on the methods and the fundamental reasons for pursuing their goals, they align on the idea, supported by the vast majority of Palestinians, that life would be a lot easier with Jews out of the way.

Even Ben-Eliezer, in the same interview in which he favored bolstering Abbas, expressed this note of concern: "I only pray these weapons will not enter into the arsenal that is used against us."

False hope—the sand upon which Israel builds its feeble security policy—has left real hope for most Israelis in tatters.

His concern is well-founded.

After the arms transfer, Abdel Al, spokesman for the Palestinian militant collective Popular Resistance Committees, vowed that the rifles *would* be used against Israel. He contended that security personnel—including some of Abbas's Presidential Guard—have sold weapons to Palestinian armed groups in the past and that many of them are actually affiliated with resistance movements. These claims are not difficult to believe in light of what *Abbas himself* said during a January 11 speech in Ramallah, calling on Palestinian factions to end their fighting. "Shooting at your brother is forbidden," he stated. "We should put our internal fighting aside and *raise our rifles only against the Israeli occupation.*"

As the *Philadelphia Daily News* once put it, Abbas "has consistently held the hardline anti-Israel agenda since his years as a student. His doctoral dissertation was a full-blown foray into Holocaust denial and aimed to prove that Zionism and Nazism are branches of the same tree. ... [Abbas] may wear a suit while [his predecessor Yasser] Arafat wore fatigues, but much of their world view is still the same—the destruction of Israel remains on the 'to do' list" (Jan. 8, 2005). Throughout his two years in office, Abbas has repeatedly mocked his "moderate" reputation with provocative words and radical actions. He pledged to fulfill Arafat's goals of securing Palestinian refugees' "right of return" (a move that would destroy Israel as a demographically Jewish entity) and seizing control over eastern Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state. He publicly called Israel the "Zionist enemy."

Rather than cracking down on terrorist activity, he approved government financial aid for the families of multiple thousands of suicide terrorists, and for terrorists who have been wounded or who sit in Israeli prisons—a blood-stained expense that has consumed *more than 10 percent* of the Palestinian Authority's billion-dollar budget. He bolstered his public image by calling terrorists his "brethren," rubbing shoulders with them, and promising not to forcefully disarm their organizations. Since Abbas's election, terrorist groups have only grown more powerful, now flush with political clout, *guaranteeing* a future of violence with Israel!

This is the man of whom Prime Minister Olmert said, after inviting him into his home in December, that he was "not an easy rival but he is a rival that we can talk with to reach an agreement with the Palestinians."

Olmert certainly is eager to reach agreements with his rivals. In February, his government reportedly reached one with Hamas itself, in an effort to retrieve an Israel Defense Forces soldier whom Hamas terrorists abducted last June. The ransom Israel agreed to pay in exchange for Gilad Shalit? *Freedom for 450 Palestinian criminals and terrorists from Israeli jails, with more to come later.* This deal follows in the footsteps of similarly lopsided swaps in the past—going as far back as 1985—that have put terrorists back on the streets to fight another day.

Little wonder that Israelis' hope is fading, and that they are defecting from their prime minister in droves. Describing him as "dangerous for Israel" is no exaggeration.

Whom Can Israelis Trust?

If Israelis boot Olmert out, the man they select to succeed him would be the country's *seventh prime minister in 12 years*. (Imagine if the American president had a two-year term; it is excruciating enough having to survive a divisive, blood-boiling presidential election every four years.) The political chaos that number represents becomes more apparent when one looks at the spectrum of political thinking it embodies—the leftish rule of Rabin and (briefly, after Rabin's assassination) Peres supplanted by the hawkish Benjamin Netanyahu; the catastrophic rule of Barak cut short by resignation; the war general Ariel Sharon, facing the pressure of an *intifada* throughout his reign, swinging over a five-year span from *assassinating* terror-

ist leaders to *gifting territory* to terrorist leaders; and finally the disastrous Olmert administration. Quite a wild political ride to unfold over little more than a decade.

Olmert's main political rival, Netanyahu, now has over *four times* as much public support as Olmert, according to a December Geocartographia poll. Over one in four Israelis, aching for leadership with a backbone, want Netanyahu to return as prime minister.

This is a dangerous moment for the Jewish state. Treading in the valley of the shadow of death, its people have ample cause to fear evil, given current policies. But should they now invest their hope in a conservative prime minister? Could a different man reverse current trends and provide the security Israelis yearn for?

Consider these profound words of the Prophet Jeremiah: "Thus says the Lord: *'Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord'*" (Jeremiah 17:5, New King James Version).

Note that. Surely it is a tragic curse to trust in your *enemies*—especially those with a self-declared and oft-proclaimed mission to crush you from existence. But the truth is, curses will descend upon us for trusting *any man* rather than trusting God! The great and intensifying problems from which Israel suffers today represent the degree to which its people have looked to men—to themselves—for solutions.

Honestly, *any man* who leads the Israelis faces an *impossible task*: to unite his emotionally charged, divided countrymen, to repulse the enemies within Israel's borders and on all sides, to strengthen his nation's hobbled reputation, and to win back the support of the rest of the world. Accomplishing those goals would require statecraft beyond human ability. No military strategy, no diplomatic offensive, and certainly no negotiation or peace contract, can offer Israel the security, protection and blessing it desperately needs!

And yet—there is a way for Israel to gain the peace it craves!

The Unknown Way of Peace

WHY does peace perpetually elude the Middle East? Why cannot the Jews and Arabs get along?

The real issue isn't land, or settlements, or statehood. The fundamental disagreements are not caused by material matters—but *spiritual!*

"What causes wars, and what causes fightings among you?" the Apostle James once asked. "Is it not your passions that

are at war in your members? You desire and do not have; so you kill. And you covet and cannot obtain; so you fight and wage war. ..." (James 4:1-2, Revised Standard Version). There is a fundamental flaw in the *human nature* present within members on BOTH SIDES of this conflict! NEITHER THE JEWS NOR THE ARABS KNOW THE WAY OF PEACE!—though they both presume to know. There is something vital missing from their understanding.

hope! They will remain cursed for trusting in man—but they *can* trust in God!

The ONLY solution to this nightmare is for Israel to turn to God in heartfelt national repentance—looking for *His* solution.

The Bible shows that the Jews' window of opportunity to take this solution is fast closing. If they do not do so quickly, their hopes will soon be violently snuffed out!

But even then, in the longer term, there remains yet a sure hope for Israel.

What Is Israel's Hope?

Biblical prophecy portrays a bleak picture of Israel in our day. You need to request and read our booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy* to understand the gravity of the situation facing Israel today. The Prophet Zechariah foretold the capture—most likely by Arabs, aided by Persia—of half of the Holy City, as a trigger event preceding even worse disasters (Zechariah 14:2). A combination of scriptures (explained in *Jerusalem in Prophecy*) shows that the Jews, barring repentance, will foolishly place their hope in a *European* power to serve as peace-maker to secure their protection against Islamist aggressors. Even today, we can track the increasing attractiveness to Israeli politicians of Europe serving in this kind of role (see page 20). In the end, this decision to once again trust in man will precipitate their destruction.

Jeremiah described desolation in the cities of modern Israel (he used the term *Judah*, which was the biblical tribe of Israel from whom the Jews descended)—buildings turned to rubble, streets emptied of people (e.g. Jeremiah 7:34; 9:11). Like Judah anciently, the modern Jews will be "carried away captive" (Jeremiah 13:19).

This is the immediate future to which Israel's current path is leading! This is the truth of the Bible, whether or not the Jews choose to believe it. God included these prophecies in His Word—and publishes this warning based on these prophecies today—as a means of trying to secure their repentance *before* such corrective catastrophes befall them.

And yet, *EVEN STILL*, the ultimate message of biblical prophecy for the Jews is *filled with hope!*

The appropriate translation of Isaiah 40:9 is as the margin of the King James Version indicates: "O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up

Will there ever be
PEACE
in
Jerusalem?

Your Bible answers that question with absolute authority! It shows precisely when and how peace will come to Jerusalem. Request your free copy of *Jerusalem in Prophecy* to learn the details of this city's soon-coming future.



Ordering information is located on the back cover.

It is simply impossible to resolve this conflict by addressing material concerns. No agreement, no contract, no peace plan will prove acceptable to all factions on each side and bring peaceful agreement and security for all. Any peace agreement must include, in essence, a promise—a guarantee—that Arabs will stop attacking Jews. The problem is, among the majority of Palestinians who want Israel gone, there would always be some willing to sacrifice their lives for that goal. Even if the Palestinian government makes a peace agreement in good faith, it does not possess the determination and will to prevent Arab extremists—and their powerful Persian benefactors—from staging attacks against Jews. Neither do the Jews have the will to completely stamp out the terrorist problem. Humanly speaking, it is an impossible conundrum.

But there is a sure solution—a source in which the Israelis *can* place their

into the high mountain; O thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; *say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!*” This is a commission God has given to His people today—we are in the time when the Jews are about to be introduced to Jesus Christ!

God does not correct without purpose. As with the Jews anciently, this destruction and captivity is intended finally to set the Israelis back on a course of **SERVING THEIR CREATOR**, and reaping the abundant blessings—national, material and spiritual—that He promises to bestow as a reward for that service.

“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel,” Jeremiah records. “They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I *bring back their captivity*: ‘The Lord bless you, O home of justice, and mountain of holiness!’ And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all its cities together, farmers and those going out with flocks. For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul” (Jeremiah 31:23-25, NKJV). This is just one of many beautiful depictions of the bounty the Jews will enjoy during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ after His return to this Earth. Read also Jeremiah 33:10-11, which depict Israel’s once-desolate streets being graced once again with the voice of joy and gladness.

The passage in Jeremiah 31 continues, showing the **ROOT CAUSE** for which God is able to turn their present curses into spectacular blessings: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: ... After those days, saith the Lord, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*; and will be their God, and they shall be my people ... *for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them*, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (verses 31, 33-34). No longer will mankind, enslaved by human nature, wage wars of lust. Instead, they will become spiritually converted, taught to implement *the way of peace*—the way of living in harmony with and obedience to God’s eternal law of love.

At that point, the poignant lyrics of “Hatikvah” will be able to be sung without reservation or irony, having sprung into the full blossom of reality: *Our hope is not yet lost, / The hope of two thousand years, / To be a free nation in our own land, / The land of Zion and Jerusalem.* ■

The same God who inspired that prophecy also says that the Jews are about to lose control of half of that city in the very near future.

Shortly after that, they will lose the other half of Jerusalem (Luke 21:20-24; Revelation 11:1-2). If the other prophecies come to pass, you can be certain that these will too—and extremely soon! (The same fate—captivity—awaits Britain and America if we don’t repent!)

This gets to the heart of why Jerusalem is about to become *the* city of hope on this planet.

The so-called Holy Roman Empire will conquer the nations of Israel. After 3½ years, this empire, along with armies from Asia, will be conquered by Christ in Jerusalem.

Over a hundred prophecies tell us so!

For thousands of years, the prophets and apostles of God have lived with that hope. A large number of them were killed because of that hope! The fact that people hated their message so much shows the kind of sick world in which we live.

The evil priests who tried to kill the Prophet Jeremiah and his message lived in Anathoth. This was where Jeremiah was born. Today it is a little community called Anata, just outside Jerusalem. I have done a television program from there.

Anathoth was a city of God’s own priests. It was assigned to the Levites, a type of God’s ministers today.

Even in the midst of betrayal and adversity, Jeremiah still had great hope. “The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar. For then the king of Babylon’s army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah’s house” (Jeremiah 32:1-2). The end of Judah was dangerously near. The Babylonian armies had already surrounded Jerusalem. Jeremiah was in prison. Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was sitting on the throne of David. This evil king actually imprisoned God’s prophet at this critical juncture. The king hated Jeremiah’s message. There was no way out except God’s way, which the king and people rejected (verses 3-5).

Then Jeremiah was inspired by God to make a strange decision. Just before the whole area fell to Babylon, Jeremiah purchased a plot of land in Anathoth

from his prison cell. This was probably the most spiritually evil city in Judah. The priests led a revolt against God from there.

“Behold the mounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest it. And thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans” (verses 24-25). Why such an act? God is sending an inspiring message through that purchase of real estate. At the very moment Judah was under siege by Babylon, Jeremiah bought a plot of land in Anathoth.

Israel today is about to lose its land just as Judah did. That includes America, Britain and the nation called Israel today. But we know, as Jeremiah knew, that God will also bring His people back to their land after 3½ years of tribulation.

We must see the imminent collapse of Israel, but like God and Jeremiah, we must see the wonderful World Tomorrow. Then Jesus Christ will be ruling the world from David’s throne.

CHRIST’S FUTURE RULE ON THIS EARTH OUGHT TO BE AS REAL AS A PIECE OF REAL ESTATE IN ANATHOTH! We tend to only see the problems on this Earth and not God’s overall plan.

We should be willing to invest our time, money and effort in God’s glorious work today. God’s work will usher in the wonderful World Tomorrow. Doing God’s work is an investment in that incredible future!

Jeremiah was no prophet of doom. He had the greatest vision in the Bible, clearly focused. If we keep this vision in our minds, we shall NEVER be overcome by discouragement!

Jeremiah was not even allowed to take a wife and have a family (Jeremiah 16:1-2). He was willing to make that sacrifice—in fact, ANY sacrifice—for God. He kept his mind filled with the greatest vision in the Bible.

So must we. ■

For more information on Jeremiah’s hope-filled prophecies, request a free copy of *Jeremiah and the Greatest Vision in the Bible.*





The Coming

STO

Dark clouds are converging over America's economy. Here are three scenarios on how they could develop into a serious storm that could hit you. BY ROBERT MORLEY

FISHERMEN AND SAILORS MUST be constantly on the lookout and prepared for changing weather. Smooth sailing can quickly turn into a fight to keep one's head above water. Likewise, today's breadwinners must be prepared for abrupt changes in the economy. Good times can quickly turn into recession; high-flying stock markets can crash; and as history clearly shows, all bubbles eventually pop. Often, fat years are followed by lean years.

As economist James J. Puplava has said, "Economic and financial conditions never remain constant. They are as seasonal as the weather. Forecasts change depending on the patterns that emerge" (Financial Sense Online, March 15, 2001).

Financial meteorologists and prognosticators identify two looming, yet self-induced storm fronts threatening America's economy: deflation and inflation. However, like climatologists trying to predict the weather, many disagree as to which

poses the most immediate danger. Further, some identify a third and even more powerful economic storm brewing.

Although the outcomes of these coming storms are predicted to be very different, their origins are similar.

Mounting Debt Levels

Like a downdraft of dense freezing air, virtually all levels of American society have become weighted down and pressured with debt. Personal, corporate, state and federal debt levels are all at or near record highs.

U.S. consumer credit debt hit an all-time high of \$2.4 trillion last September, soaring 80 percent since 2000. Similarly, the amount of household and mortgage debt as a percentage of disposable income is at its worst level in over a quarter century. For the past two years, Americans on average spent everything they made and then some. During 2006, people spent 1 percent more than they earned. The only other time in history America's savings

rate was in negative territory for a full year was during the Great Depression.

In corporate America, debt has become so endemic that there are now more companies with "junk" credit ratings than with investment-grade ratings, says credit rating agency Standard and Poor's.

State and federal governments are also bursting with debt obligations. For example, New Jersey's total debt has almost doubled over the past six years, from \$15.2 billion to \$29.7 billion. California is heavily indebted; New York, Massachusetts and Hawaii are all in the "danger zone" of debt, according to a Citizens Budget Commission report. Kansas's state debt exploded from \$420 million in 1992 to \$4 billion in 2005.

Then there is America's national debt, which is now a record \$8.7 trillion. When all levels of debt (federal, state, corporate, personal, etc.) are totaled, according to the Federal Reserve Bank, Americans owe over \$43 trillion—and that doesn't include future government promises such as Medicare and Social Security. When *those* numbers are included, the total debt soars past \$60 trillion.

In contrast, the total value of all the goods and services produced in America last year was only \$13.2 trillion. The

cent housing decline would result in at least \$1 trillion in lost home equity. That's definitely a deflationary force—never mind all the lost construction, home supply and financing jobs that would be associated with a housing bust.

Wage pressures are also aggravating deflation. Foreign competition is putting pressure on consumers. Thanks largely to outsourcing, American workers have lost bargaining power at the wage table. In the increasingly globalized economy, corporations have the option to simply move operations to low-cost foreign countries. Consequently, many workers are having problems maintaining their current salaries, let alone bargaining for wage increases. The legislation for a federal minimum wage increase currently being debated by Congress is proof that at least low-wage earners have little bargaining power. As wages lag and the cost of living increases, it gets harder for consumers to make debt payments.

There is coming a time when the consumer will be tapped out, and the debt-fueled consumption binge will end. When it does, consumer confidence will be replaced with fear and eventually panic. This panic will result in increased asset sales and reduced spending as workers attempt to pay off their debts (or save their homes). Evaporating confidence will cause consumers to rethink current and future spending plans. The economy, hit with a lack of demand, will slow, corporate earnings will fall as businesses lower prices to move stock, and layoffs will become prevalent. As more people enter the unemployment line, consumer demand will continue to fall and the deflationary spiral will intensify.

Yet, as America's northern horizon grows dark with a deflationary storm front, rumblings of a high-pressure *inflationary* front approach from the south.

Even though economic theory suggests that massive debt loads are deflationary, increasing numbers of financial weathermen believe the massive debt in America will ultimately be inflationary. Why? Because there is only one way America will be able to pay all its bills—and that is by inflating its way out. That means printing more dollars.

Inflationary Storm Building

As of March 23 last year, when the Federal Reserve stopped publishing its M3 money supply statistic, the figures on how much money is being created are no longer public. Since M3 was the only

number that provided a true picture of how much money was being put into circulation, many analysts criticized the Fed for trying to obscure its actions. You be the judge. During former Chairman Alan Greenspan's tenure, the money supply was expanded at a comparatively low average of 5.85 percent per year. During his last year, the money supply ballooned by 8.9 percent. Since the March 23, 2006, M3 deletion, the U.S. money supply growth rate has shot up to an annualized rate of 12 percent.

The fact that Ben Bernanke is the new Federal Reserve Bank chairman is also helping the inflation argument. Before taking over, "Helicopter" Ben made himself famous by saying he would willingly drop money from helicopters if deflation ever threatened.

Although operating the printing presses in overdrive may ease national debt payments and temporarily stimulate the economy, the longer-term effects can be disastrous. As more dollars are created, each previously created dollar becomes worth less. Eventually, the higher number of dollars filtering through the economy results in price inflation. In other words, although some people have more money to spend, things cost more for everyone. Additionally, since dollars are worth less, your accumulated savings are worth less too. At a 12 percent growth rate, the nation's money supply will double in just over six years. Will your retirement savings double in six years?

The primary reason inflation has not reverberated more severely is the dollar's status as a reserve currency. Today, the majority of global trade is denominated in dollars. This means that as global trade has grown, nations have held on to more dollars as opposed to spending them in the U.S. This has mopped up much of the increased dollar supply. Also, since historically the dollar has been fairly stable, many nations have chosen to put their savings into dollars (by lending money to the U.S. and purchasing government bonds, etc.) as opposed to their own currencies. This too has kept excess dollars out of circulation.

However, the dollar's status as a reserve currency is shaky. The euro is rapidly gaining on the dollar as a unit of global trade. As a result, demand for the greenback is receding. This is evident in the dollar losing a third of its value against the euro since the euro's introduction. Over the same period, the greenback has suffered from double-digit percentage losses



profit made on those goods and services was minuscule by comparison.

This massive ocean of debt threatens to swamp America.

Deflationary Storm Building

Americans are so indebted that a slowing economy could create a nasty deflationary spiral, or so predicts one school of economic analysts. These analysts say that when the debt bubble explodes, deflation (a reduction in the money supply) will ripple through the economy. For workers, this means less money to spend, whether because of job losses, asset depreciation or other trouble. That is why debt is so dangerous. It doesn't matter that you lost your job or that your house has no equity left in it—debtors require payment.

A declining housing market is a looming deflationary force. Market psychology has changed, and people are beginning to anticipate lower future prices. The incentive to make a quick purchase has disappeared. "Bids are drying up. Many potential buyers are simply waiting for lower prices. The word is that 'it pays to wait,'" says economic analyst Richard Russell. Why buy a house today when you can buy it for less next month or maybe much less next year? A 5 per-

against other currencies such as the Canadian dollar and the Australian dollar.

This loss of value has undermined the dollar's reputation as a safe store of wealth. Consequently, many nations have decided they want to hold less of their savings (currency reserves) in dollars. Central banks in Russia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Syria have all announced intentions to dump dollars in exchange for euros. Sweden's Riksbank has done the same, while the Bank of Italy, in what was the most dramatic move to date by a G-7 country to slash exposure to the dollar, dumped one quarter of its currency reserves (mostly U.S. Treasury bonds) in exchange for sterling. However, possibly the greatest threat to the dollar is coming from China's central bank. China has telegraphed its desire to diversify, which would mean dumping at least some of the US\$1 trillion it holds.

As more nations shun the dollar, selling their dollar holdings before their value drops further, and as the federal government continues to print more money to pay debts, a seemingly never-ending supply of dollars will begin washing up on American shores. Prices for oil, food and other commodities will skyrocket—especially foreign imports that Americans now rely so heavily upon. Foreigners seeking to spend their dollars before further depreciation will attempt to purchase American-based corporations and assets, further fueling price increases. The average American will be economically ravaged as his inflation-eroded savings lose purchasing power and as wages fail to keep pace with rising prices.

Yet, even while the deflation/inflation debate rages on, a third, more dangerous storm could be in the making.

Stagflationary Mega-storm

Economic analyst and investment newsletter writer Jim Willie warns that the ultimate result of such massive debt loads combined with excessive money creation could be the development of what he terms a stagflation “mega-storm”—incorporating some of the worst aspects of both deflation and inflation.

“The contrast of greater high pressure against greater low pressure will add to the storm differential. Its power will increase, just like a hurricane. Higher pressure will come from ... monetary inflation Lower pressure will come from the shrinking value of the housing sector, from the diminished credit lines off flat home equity, and from eventual cutbacks

in household spending” (*Hat Trick Letter*, Oct. 6, 2006). Puplava refers to this impending scenario as “the perfect financial storm.” He says the economic pressures at play are so huge, it is conceivable that the world's present economic system, based upon the dollar, may be about to end.

If deflationary and inflationary forces butt heads, the U.S. economy will be whipped back and forth like a wind-torn flag on a flagpole.

If that happens, the resulting economic instability will lead to a vicious cycle of consumer spending cutbacks, a plummeting economy and soaring unemployment. Home prices, along with many other domestic-demand-driven assets, will be sucked into a deflationary spiral, likely stimulating a banking crisis as thousands of bad loans must be written off. Simultaneously, import prices will soar as the federal government continues to inflate and spend money in a vain attempt to stimulate the economy, prop up the banks, and keep paying promised Social Security and Medicare liabilities. The dollar will fall further as boatloads of rapidly depreciating greenbacks flood into America when foreign debt holders try to spend their U.S. dollars before they become worthless.

Where will these events leave the majority of Americans? Without a job, without a home, with little or no money (what little savings Americans do have will be destroyed by inflation), coping with food shortages and skyrocketing food and heating prices. As is the case during economic crashes, the middle class will almost certainly be hurt the worst.

Sound a little too apocalyptic? The fact is, it doesn't matter what we may think: The storm is coming.

Setting aside the billowing thunderclouds of economic evidence, the Bible says this “mega-storm”-type scenario is just around the corner. Further, Scripture warns of a time when economic conditions in America become so bad that people will resort to extreme measures to secure food (Deuteronomy 28:53; Isaiah 9:20; Jeremiah 19:9).

The good news, however, is that God always provides a way out to the individual willing to obey Him and live by His way of life. There are steps you can take in order to be protected and even blessed as future economic storms hit America. To learn how to live God's way of life, request copies of *The Incredible Human Potential* and *Repentance Toward God*, and read the following article, “Storm-Proof Your Financial House.” ■

STORM-PROOF Your Financial House

BY ROBERT MORLEY

HOW DO YOU PROTECT YOURSELF in a bad economy? Among those economists who see financial storm clouds gathering, there is a wide range of opinion, much of it conflicting and contradictory. You may hear endorsements for common stocks, preferred shares, options, warrants, mutual funds, hedge funds, exchange-traded funds (ETFs), government bonds, corporate bonds, junk bonds, savings accounts, CDs, gold, silver, oil, commodities, futures, real-estate, IRAs (RRSPs for our Canadian readers), or even “burying it in the backyard.” With so many options, ensuring your financial future can seem intimidating. No wonder so many people have just given up.

But there is a sound source of advice upon which to base your financial decisions. It contains principles that have allowed men to prosper for thousands of years, even during periods of drought, flood, famine and war, through the rise and fall of empires. Some of the world's most successful businessmen use a copy of the book at home or in the office.

It is the Holy Bible.

Before you cast the Bible aside as outdated, prove for yourself whether the many financial do's and don'ts it supplies aren't sound principles that will work for you. They have worked for such modern executives as JetBlue Airways founder and CEO David Neeleman and ABC News's Hugh Downs. They also worked for America's Founding Fathers. Why? The laws the Bible outlines bring success.



Be Diligent

Remember, “In all labour there is profit ...” (Proverbs 14:23). No matter how smart you are, you will never be a success unless you are diligent. Plain old hard work is often the best way to generate income.

Some people are offered jobs just because of their reputation as hard workers, but most are sought after because they also have become skilled in their field. The word *diligent* can mean skillful; it can refer to an expert or teacher. Becoming an expert or a teacher obviously requires hard work, but the rewards are obvious: “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men” (Proverbs 22:29; also 10:4). Prepare for the highest and most well-paid job you can. Don’t be afraid of putting in extra hours (Exodus 20:9; Proverbs 21:25). A second job may be required for a time, or even night classes. Be creative. Consider all your options. “Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks [or whatever occupation you have], and look well to thy herds. For riches are not for ever ...” (Proverbs 27:23-24).

Poverty comes if you are slothful (Proverbs 24:30-34). Don’t assume poverty is not your fault—although some situations do occur that are beyond our control. Still, take responsibility for yourself and for your family. Don’t freeload, use others, or think you are entitled to something (2 Thessalonians 3:10). *You* are accountable for your financial house (1 Timothy 5:8; Galatians 6:5), not someone else.

Seek Counsel

Seeking counsel and advice may be one of the most underexploited yet vital tools for financial security. Most people seek counsel only when they are in trouble. Had they sought counsel *before acting*, problems could have been avoided before they developed. Remember, Solomon—probably the richest man who ever lived—*first* sought wisdom (counsel from God); only then was financial prosperity given to him (2 Chronicles 1:11-12).

It doesn’t make sense to wait until calamity strikes before asking for advice, especially when the benefits of seeking counsel are so numerous. Seeking counsel boosts the likelihood of accomplishing your dreams and financial goals. “Every purpose is established by counsel ...” (Proverbs 20:18). It will gain you priceless wisdom: “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise ...” (Proverbs 13:20). You will reduce your risk: “[I]n the multitude of counsellors there is safety” (Proverbs 11:14). Of course, when you seek counsel, you should choose advisers who are successful in the areas you are seeking advice in and who are known for their good judgment (Proverbs 13:20).

If you don’t seek counsel, notice the results: “Where no counsel is, the people fall Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction ...” (Proverbs

11:14; 13:18). “Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him” (Proverbs 26:12).

When it comes to investing your hard-earned savings, whether in a business venture or other prospect, it is especially important to seek counsel and knowledge. In our February 2007 issue, we examined the Federal Reserve System and how the U.S. money supply is constantly being expanded (and consequently how the dollar’s value has been eroding). We also mentioned the key role of gold and silver in international finance and monetary history. However, we by no means advocate the buying or hoarding of gold and silver as a magic elixir for financial security. The Bible says there will come a time when men will cast their silver into the streets, and their gold will not deliver them (Ezekiel 7:19). However, for the time being it may be part of a prudent investment plan.

The *Philadelphia Trumpet* is neither pro- nor anti-investing. Our primary purpose is to reveal to you the best LONG-RANGE investment (read on to find out what that is). If you wish to invest in this world’s securities (stocks, bonds, commodities, etc.), do your homework. Consult experts in the field, but do not put full trust in either the “contrarian” investment letters or the established “name” stockbrokers. Seek a multitude of wise counsel, from all financial viewpoints.

Reduce Debt

“The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender” clearly

states the consequences of debt: slavery (Proverbs 22:7). Therefore, make sure that anytime you borrow money, there is a good reason behind your decision. Although there may be legitimate reasons for taking out a loan (purchasing a home or car or paying for college may be good examples), far too often people take on debt casually.

If you are in debt, you must “service” the debt, meaning pay interest on top of the principle. Remember, lenders only lend money because they are making a profit. Their profit is your loss. A good rule of thumb is to not pay interest on anything that loses value. This is especially true for most types of credit card debt. If you pay credit for diners out, toys or frivolous gifts and then end up paying 18 or 20 percent interest over several years for it, you’ve paid far more than the ticket price for something you’ve probably long forgotten about.

Debt is particularly bad during economic downturns, especially periods of deflation. When economies shrink and jobs become scarce, debt is servitude and cash is king. So eliminating debt is imperative to preparing financially for your future. In most cases, it makes sense to pay off the higher-interest-rate debt first, although adjustable-rate debt can be very dangerous too, since it has the potential to ratchet up depending on the interest rate set by the government. And it is generally a bad idea to extract equity from your home or take out a second mortgage, especially to finance unnecessary expenditures. The extra debt could come back to haunt you.

Increase Savings

Don’t spend more than you earn. Simply put, “if your outgo exceeds your income, your upkeep will be your downfall.” Instead, live *beneath* your means. Accumulating a healthy savings is essential to weathering financial storms. Always save at least a little bit, no matter how much or how little you make. Monitor and pare down any unnecessary expenses that prevent you from continually increasing your safety net (Proverbs 21:17).

Although this sounds simple, application can be difficult. It requires developing self-control and learning the difference between needs and wants. If you can survive without it, it is a want. You

may need to be somewhat ruthless with yourself until your finances are in order.

It is true that the Bible prophesies of difficult times ahead. Some people, however, use this as an excuse not to work hard or plan for the future. The Bible condemns such shortsightedness. Re-

Eliminating personal debt is imperative to preparing financially for your future.

gardless of our age, we should plan and save for the future.

We must take care of ourselves and our families (1 Timothy 5:3-8) and provide for the needs of others where able. God expects us to live responsibly so we don’t burden family members, charitable organizations or even unnecessary government sources of welfare. In fact, Proverbs 13:22

says, “A good [man] leaveth an inheritance to his children’s children ...”

Set aside money each paycheck for known future expenses such as vehicle repairs, tuition costs, home renovations, trips and retirement. Also, save for emergencies and the unexpected, such as job loss, health problems, repairs, accidents or disasters. A prudent strategy would be to work toward building an emergency fund to cover all your expenses for six months to a year. The future can be unpredictable, “for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth” (Proverbs 27:1; also James 4:13-17). Proverbs 21:20 says a wise man saves up treasure while “a foolish man spendeth it up.” King Solomon noted the example of the ant. “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which ... [p]rovideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest” (Proverbs 6:6-8).

However, the Bible does not advocate a retirement of idleness and ease. Read the parable in Luke 12:15-21. Protecting the increase God provides, then receiving retirement benefits at the appointed time is proper and a wonderful supplement to income. But beware coveting riches in order to end our days without productive work. An idle mind and purposeless days can do mental and spiritual damage. God expects us to labor all the days of our lives (where and how we are able).

Working and managing our increase is a major means by which God can develop our spiritual character. God always wants us to be the best possible stewards with whatever blessings He gives us (Luke 19:12-27; Matthew 24:45-47). Our primary goal in conducting our financial affairs

wisely should not be physical wealth, but spiritual (Matthew 6:19-21, 33). Start now, and demonstrate to God you are not only meeting today’s financial demands, but also preparing for the future.

Diversify Your Investments

Many economic analysts say diversification—not putting all your eggs in one basket—is critical in protecting your wealth and ensuring financial security. Ecclesiastes 11:1-2 say, “Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.” If you want to purchase stocks, bonds, commodities or other investments, fine. Just understand the risk and refrain from investing if you can’t afford to lose a great portion of it. Spreading the risk among different asset classes can help lower your investment risk.

No Get-Rich-Quick Schemes

When an investment sounds too good to be true, STOP—it *probably is*. The very essence of a get-rich-quick scheme is most often speed and greed. The promoter urges the potential buyer to act quickly before the opportunity is missed and some other investor snaps up the deal and reaps huge financial rewards.

Don’t be fooled. Make the time to fully examine whatever you are investing in (Proverbs 14:15; 22:3). Don’t leap without looking; “everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty” (Proverbs 21:5; New American Standard). Money does not come easily, so don’t be tricked into carelessly throwing it away. Read Psalm 37:7.

Also, make sure to keep your integrity and honesty; follow the law and stay away from unethical businesses and practices (Proverbs 22:16; 28:6; Romans 13:1, 7). “A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent. ... He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him” (Proverbs 28:20, 22). Faithfully stick to the plan of reducing debt and increasing savings little by little until you have enough to meet your needs, emergencies and even some of your wants. Don’t waste hard-earned dollars on gambling, lotteries or schemes.

Also, make sure you finish the course. Oftentimes people quit when just a few more steps would reveal rays of light on the horizon (Proverbs 24:10). Does saving money or reducing debt seem overwhelming? Do not give up. Hebrews 12:1 tells us

run our spiritual race with patience, but smartly, casting off those things that impede our progress. The same principle applies in our financial “race.” Seek God’s guidance. See your employer. See your creditor. Talk your situation over with them. Don’t just sit at home and say, “It’s no use!” Don’t procrastinate. Keep thinking. Keep planning. Keep working.

And start giving.

Give Generously

Believe it or not, giving creates a cycle where financial benefits and other blessings return to you. While giving may seem illogical as a wealth-gaining process and you may feel you have nothing to give, God promises that when you go ahead and sacrifice and serve someone else’s needs in whatever way you can, you will be rewarded (Luke 6:38). Therefore, give generously to others as your means allow. As your hard work and financial planning provides increase, share that blessing with the less fortunate (Acts 20:35; Psalm 41:1).

Consider that there may be a time when you will need help from others (2 Corinthians 8:14). Selfishly hoarding all that you gain can actually lead to poverty and curses (Proverbs 11:24-26; 21:25-26).

Most importantly, give generously back to God. He created all things, and He claims the earth and its fullness as His, including *all* silver and gold (1 Corinthians 10:26; Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 10:14; Haggai 2:8). God can make us poor or rich (1 Samuel 2:7). By giving mankind dominion over and allowing us to use His creation, God has in effect made every man and woman His business partner (Psalm 8:6; Matthew 25:14-30). *Keep* God as your partner by *tithing* on your increase (Leviticus 27:30).

When you give God His portion—one tenth—of your income, He shares in your profits and then reinvests even more in you and your ventures. God loves, blesses and promises to supply the needs of a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7-9). As tithe payers and the wealthiest men of their ages, Abraham, Job, King David and Solomon all found out that you cannot outgive God (Job 1:1-3; Hebrews 7:1-2).

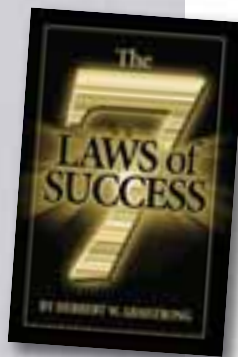
Tithing to the organization through whom God is performing His work is mandatory for anyone who wants to prosper in all areas. Christ confirmed that tithing is a command in Matthew 23:23. (For more information on how to tithe, request a copy of our reprint article “Ending Your Financial Worries.”) If

your stockbroker disobeyed your command, you’d fire him. Likewise, don’t disobey God’s instructions on tithing, or God may decide you should no longer manage His wealth. If you follow God’s directions, increase what you have been given, and use that increase to serve Him and others, He will take care of you and bless you with more. Study Malachi 3:8-10. Verse 10 reads, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” This verse promises



Go BEYOND financial success!

There are laws that not only lead to success in the financial realm, but also lead to success, happiness and fulfillment in all aspects of life. Request this free booklet, *The Seven Laws of Success*, written by the late renowned educator Herbert W. Armstrong, to learn what they are!



what many people discover upon paying tithes—that even if you feel you can’t afford it, God makes certain you can, when you just step out and obey Him.

God wants us to be prosperous both physically and spiritually. Jesus, the Son of God, said that one of the main purposes for His being sent to Earth was that we “might have life” and that we “might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). The Apostle John concurred: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health ...” (3 John 2).

Put the Spiritual First

Even though God provides laws for prosperity, that does not mean He intends for you to be filthy rich. For “[t]here is [he] that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing ...” (Proverbs 13:7). God’s laws on proper financial preparation and management are just one set of laws in a way of life intended to make us *happy*. Obedience to *all* His laws is what brings true blessings and prosperity (Deuteronomy 30:16).

Jesus explained, “[S]eek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and *all these things shall be added unto you*” (Matthew 6:33). This principle, if applied, is an absolute guarantee against starvation and perpetual poverty. Knowledge of this principle is often the only reason that poor people are able to keep their heads up in the face of adversity. Ignorance of this one principle is the very reason that many wealthy individuals, in the unexpected moment of adversity, consider or commit suicide.

If greed, lust of money, or having riches causes us to neglect our relationship with God or to break His laws, God will remove His blessings (Proverbs 1:19; 28:20). It is far better to be physically poor than spiritually poor (Ecclesiastes 4:13). “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36). Put the focus on storing up spiritual treasure, not physical wealth. If you do so, then as Matthew 6:33 says, all else, including financial security, will be added unto you.

Act now to storm-proof your financial house. Look first to God, who provides and protects (Isaiah 41:17), and build upon God’s rock-solid principles of financial—and, far more importantly, *spiritual*—success. Then, as Christ said in Luke 6:48-49, when the storm comes and the waves beat against it, while houses built on sand get washed away, yours will remain intact. ■



The Inspiring Story of BRITAIN'S ROYALS

For most British, the royal family is a celebrity fest of crude antics. Foreigners view it as a relic of a medieval institution. Few grasp the majestic, hope-filled history and future of the throne of England. **BY BRAD MACDONALD**

THE STORY OF THE BRITISH royal family is the most spellbinding of any family on Earth. This 4,000-year chronicle is a gripping history of eternal promises, royal romance, ecstasy and splendor, unprecedented national wealth, political intrigue, heartache and despair, and—most spectacularly—*divine inspiration and intervention*.

The British monarchy captivates the public. When the Prince of Wales married Diana Spencer in 1981, more than 750 million people tuned in to watch the grand and glorious wedding, the most popular program ever broadcast. At the time, the wedding day was made a national holiday across Britain. In London, over 600,000 people crammed into the narrow streets to catch a glimpse of the couple.

Even today, trigger-happy photographers and pesky reporters stalk the roy-

als like hyenas, capturing every word and gesture to satisfy a public with an insatiable thirst for scoop on royal shenanigans. Commonwealth nations such as New Zealand, Australia and Canada—even America, the throbbing heart of celebrity antics—have an inherent curiosity about Britain's royals. No other family on Earth commands as much global attention.

Few people, however, realize the deep significance and importance of the British royal family. It is one of the least understood and most underrated institutions on Earth. The British monarchy is an international enigma, a mystery that stretches into the murky annals of history.

It is imperative to understand the divine and majestic history and, more importantly, the thrilling, hope-filled future of the British monarchy.

Celebrity Fest

Monitoring the maneuverings of the

royal family has long been a pet pastime of the British. For peasants shackled in feudalistic English society during the Middle Ages, peering into the lavish lifestyles of the aristocracy and royalty was a source of entertainment. In that sense, little has changed today. In another sense, however, *everything* has changed.

Historically, the monarchy represented the wealth, international power and national character of Great Britain, and stirred pride and ambition among its people. Particularly in the Victorian Age, the monarchy was an imperial institution that droves of people willingly sacrificed their lives to serve. Duty and honor toward “God, king and country” were paramount qualities of character. Commoners embraced the royals as the face of the nation, ambassadors of the empire.

Today, however, the British generally don't prize their monarchy as the divinely inspired, unyielding institution that history

proves it is. Defiling the reputation and historic role of the monarchy has become a primary goal for revisionist, liberal politicians and anti-royal media outlets, which foist the royal family off as an unimportant, archaic, self-aggrandizing institution. The monarchy has been stripped of much of its regality, shunned as a symbol of Britain's once global influence and national splendor, and reduced to little more than a shallow celebrity fest.

Unsurprisingly, most British today, especially the young, don't know the true history of their monarchy. As riveted by the daily lives of the royals as they are, few comprehend the centrality of the monarchy to the statehood of Britain. The irony is remarkable. Though millions of people pay Britain's royals a lot of attention, how many understand *why* they are so enthralled?

An Unconditional Promise

What makes the royal throne of Britain so special?

It is well known that the monarchy existed long before the British Parliament. Not until the post-military dictatorship days of Oliver Cromwell in the mid-17th century did Parliament gain rights and powers comparable to those of kings and queens. During the generations prior, England was ruled by kings and queens under a *monarchical* government.

Historians generally consider King Egbert, the Anglo-Saxon leader of the house of Wessex during the early ninth century, the first king of England. Most history books are silent on the lineage of English kings before this time.

It is only in the divine setting of the world's oldest history book that we can learn the absolute truth about the royal house of Britain.

The chronicle of the British royal family begins with the ancient patriarch Abraham. Few realize it, but the path of world history, particularly that of Britain and America, was decided by Abraham and the *eternal* promises God made to him. The faith and obedience of one man altered the whole course of world history.

You can read God's original promise to Abraham in Genesis 12. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (verses

2-3). This promise shaped the history of this world, Britain and America in particular, *including the royal throne of Britain*. The riveting details of this history are documented and clearly explained in Herbert W. Armstrong's book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, which we will send you free upon request.

There isn't an institution on Earth that could stir more hope, joy and excitement than Britain's royal family.

In that book, Mr. Armstrong explained this Genesis 12 promise: "Notice the twofold promise: 1) 'I will make of thee A GREAT NATION'—the national, material promise that his flesh-born children should become a great nation—a promise of RACE; 2) '... and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed'—the spiritual promise of GRACE." The history of the throne of King David of Israel, a descendant of Abraham, is intertwined with this foundational promise made to Abraham.

In Genesis 17:6, God specifically promises Abraham that "*kings shall come out of thee*." Notice how God fulfilled this promise through a specific promise He made to King David. Read the account in 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and note the *absolute-ness* of this promise: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, *I will set up thy seed after thee*, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, *and I will establish his kingdom*. He shall build an house for my name, and I will *stablish the throne* of his kingdom *for ever*. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: *But my mercy shall not depart away from him*, as I took it from Saul [King David's predecessor], whom I put away before thee. *And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*"

Notice that God's promise was *unconditional*. God told David that *nothing*—not even disobedience and rebellion—would cause Him to break His covenant. He promised to ensure that David's throne would continue "for ever."

Is this simply a fantastic story concocted by ancient patriarchs? Absolutely not!

To say that the dynasty of King David hasn't continued to this day is to call God Himself a liar!

The United States and Britain in

Prophecy proves in detail that God DIDN'T break His promises with David, and that, in fact, the British royals today are the descendants of David, ancient Israel's greatest king.

The British monarchy today directly fulfills God's promises to King David!

This institution proves the existence of

God, the one who pulled the strings of history to fulfill His promise to King David, and, originally, to Abraham! THIS is the profound, astonishing, breathtaking truth being missed by the

millions of people entangled in the celebrity fest of Britain's royal family today!

But how is it possible that the throne of David continued, in direct descent from its royal patriarch, from 1,000 years before Christ until now, almost 2,000 years after Christ? The answer to that question makes this chronicle even more mesmerizing and intriguing.

How Did God Keep His Promise?

After King David died in the 11th century B.C., his son Solomon became king of Israel. After Solomon's death, the nation divided into two separate nations, which were both subsequently invaded and brought into captivity. But through the wars and national chaos that unfolded, God—holding fast to His promise to Abraham and David—ensured the continuation of David's throne.

Near the turn of the sixth century B.C. God commissioned the Prophet Jeremiah to transplant a daughter of King Zedekiah, a king in the royal line of David, to Ireland via Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea. Soon after their arrival, this daughter married a king of Ireland, an event documented in secular history. As time passed and the descendants of David's family intermarried with Scottish and English royals, the royal lineage of David was established in Great Britain.

This is no fairy tale. The royal family has in fact traced its genealogy back to King David.

In 1981, Mr. Armstrong, founder of the *Plain Truth* and confidant of multiple world leaders, wrote, "... I've been informed that the royal family of two or three generations ago did know that the *British sovereign is in fact a continuation of the dynasty of King David of ancient Israel*" (*Plain Truth*, October/November 1981, emphasis mine throughout). Even as recently as three or four generations ago, members of the British monarchy

knew they were heirs of the dynasty of King David!

Do you grasp this magnificent truth? The existence of the British royal family today declares the power and glory of the God of this universe!

This truth, rejected and forgotten by modern mankind, is what makes the British royal family so INCREDIBLY SPECIAL!

Neglecting History

Britons and the royal family today have neglected the history this institution has with God. This is a fundamental cause of their abiding sickness.

A good measure of blame for the depreciation of the monarchy can be

pinned on the hordes of British that thrive on the shallow antics of the royals, as promoted by the popular press. But blame for the marginalization of the monarchy must also be shared by the royal family itself.

This family, particularly its younger members, is rejecting its divine legacy. Though history and prophecy show that this institution testifies to the glory and perfection of God, today many royals act like irresponsible Hollywood celebrities. Name the behavior—be it a broken marriage, adultery, drunkenness, hard partying, illicit relationships—and at least one member of the monarchy has been guilty of it.

Of course, such actions are then pumped through the megaphone of mass media, besmirching the royal reputation more than they ever would have in the past. Still, the royal family is shunning regal tradition, becoming more morally and politically liberal, and disregarding the importance that history places on the dynasty it is a part of.

To take one example, Prince Charles, who could be king of England very soon, has indicated his willingness to water down the role and responsibilities of the monarchy.

Henry VIII's refusal to bow to Rome led to the establishment of the Church of England. From Henry VIII onward, British monarchs became the "Defender[s] of the Faith." The king protected the Angli-

The Backbone of Britain

HISTORY RECORDS THAT THE MONARCHY HAS BEEN the backbone of Britain, the unfailing institution on which all other elements of national power and character have depended. The monarchy was at the vanguard of Britain's march to unmatched global wealth and influence during the 18th and 19th centuries. British royals revolutionized international politics and law. Much of the world—from America to Australia, India to South Africa—has at one time or another been branded with the mark of the British royal family.

Be it King John and the Magna Carta, Henry VIII and the Act of Supremacy, or William of Orange and the Bill of Rights, the British monarchy has been at the vanguard of Britain's (and the world's) judicial and political evolution. The Magna Carta, a revolutionary legal charter signed and sanctioned by England's King John in 1215 to provide a framework for relations between king and country, has inspired nearly all modern democracies and their constitutions, including America's Declaration of Independence.

Whether they were bold military geniuses saving England from death or fortresses of inspiration for a depressed nation, the royals have played a critical role in every major military conflict Britain has entered. During the Hundred Years' War, King Henry V's displayed military genius and courageous leadership in the decisive battle of Agincourt.

Never has one family been such a steady river of character, honor, bravery and faith in trial. After George VI, England's king during World War II, died in 1952, Winston Churchill saluted his upstanding character and profound leadership. When at the outbreak of war King George was encouraged to flee Hitler's wrath by escaping to Canada, he refused, choosing instead to remain in London. Together with Churchill, he became a bulwark of faith and encouragement to the nation throughout the war. The day after King George VI died, Churchill praised his old friend in a moving remembrance speech. The king's dignified and courageous conduct, said Churchill, "may well be a model and a guide to constitutional sovereigns throughout the world today and also in future generations."

History defies the people today who pass the monarchy as an entertaining fest of celebrity shenanigans.

ROYAL HISTORY Britain's monarchs (left to right)—Queen Victoria, King Henry VIII, Queen Elizabeth I, King George VI



The legacy of Elizabeth I, daughter of Henry VIII, could hardly be more outstanding. The mother of the Elizabethan Age (17th century) of England, she possessed adroit political skills and strong personal character that helped put England on the path to becoming a global economic and political power. She was the last of the influential Tudor dynasty, and by confronting Roman Catholic influence in England, she stoked English nationalism (associated closely with the Protestant movement) and became, as the *Encyclopedia Britannica* labeled her, "the glittering symbol of the nation's destiny."

Elizabeth I was a product of her grandiloquent father, Henry VIII. As the fire that was the Protestant Reformation stormed Europe in the 16th century, Henry VIII unshackled England from Catholicism and secured the place of the Protestant (later called Anglican) Church in England. In 1534, the English Parliament recognized Henry VIII as head of the Church of England—a responsibility still invested in kings and queens today. Beyond his role in securing the future of the Church of England, Henry "gave his nation what it wanted: a visible symbol of its nationhood" (ibid.; emphasis mine throughout).

Of all the feats and splendor of Britain's monarchs, none match the accomplishments of Queen Victoria, Britain's longest-ruling monarch. As queen of Great Britain and Ireland and the empress of India, Victoria sat on the throne at the height of Britain's global achievements. She was queen of more than a nation; she ruled a staggeringly expansive, unspeakably wealthy empire. She spearheaded Britain's transition from a medieval nation to the most modern industrial power on Earth.

People today wince at public displays of patriotism, but

can Church from outside religions and ensured its consistent growth, making the church a defining factor of English patriotism and identity, which fueled Britain's rise to greatness. Today, by contrast, in an atmosphere charged with political correctness and multiculturalism, Prince Charles has said that when he assumes the throne he wants to change the title "Defender of *the* Faith" to one better suited to today's England, "Defender of Faith." He wants his coronation to be an "inter-faith" event, ensuring religions such as Islam have a place there.

The prince is more than merely bucking history. By relegating the state religion of Britain to just another religion, he is marginalizing the institution that was once at the heart of British patriotism, and further paving the way for Muslim and Roman Catholic incursions into Britain. He is contributing to Britain's identity crisis.

In part because Britain's royals generally no longer embrace their heritage and historic significance, the people of Britain and the world are losing sight of the meaning of this institution.

In the Commonwealth nations of Australia and New Zealand, a nti-monarchy political move-

ments are building momentum. These groups seek to dismantle the current constitutional monarchies (with the queen as head of state) governing these nations in order to establish themselves as independent republics. They want to eliminate the very institution that founded and then gave definition and success to their nations!

By shunning its history with God and ruining its reputation and role in its nation's history, the British monarchy is simply contributing to the downfall of Britain. This institution, once the beating heart of its people, has grown weak. A cloud of angst hangs over the island nation today; the monarchy no longer infuses people with the honor, duty and patriotism it once did. The end result is that the British are not only losing their



JUPITER IMAGES (4)

Churchill gloried in Victorian England, a time when, as historian William Manchester wrote, "... Victorians responded quickly to calls of duty, the flag, the race, the white man's burden; the lot" (*The Last Lion*). During the 19th century under Queen Victoria, as Churchill himself wrote in *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, "Sovereign had become the symbol of Empire." Under Victoria, the royal crown became the glue binding the vast and diverse British Empire together.

Queen Victoria's duty, honor and love for the people and for the British Empire stirred the loyalty of Englishmen. "High devotion to her royal task, domestic virtues, evident sincerity of nature, a piercing and sometimes disconcerting truthfulness—all of these qualities of the queen's had long impressed themselves upon the minds of her subjects" (*ibid.*). Even politicians who opposed Victoria and her policies respected "the watchful sense of duty that always moved her." By the time Queen Victoria died, "[A]ll reflecting men and women could appreciate the advance of British power and the progress of the British peoples that had taken place during the age to which she gave her name" (*ibid.*).

As the sun set on Churchill's life and he saw liberal, anti-royalist politics seep into the British government, he found solace in the history of his nation under its greatest monarchs. He prized the place and function of the British monarchy. The depth of his love and devotion to the monarchy was evident in his remembrance speech for King George VI.

"There is no doubt that of all the institutions which have grown up among us over the centuries, or sprung into being in our lifetime, the constitutional monarchy is the *most deeply founded* and *dearly cherished* by the whole association of our peoples." Quite an endorsement from this great statesman, perhaps the greatest we have ever seen.

Do you prize the monarchy today as Winston Churchill did?

The denigration of the royal family of England to little more than fodder for trivial tabloids is a monstrous tragedy.

In his biography on Queen Elizabeth II, titled *The Queen*, historian Ben Pimlott remarked that Elizabeth's coronation in 1953 "provided an opportunity to display a new kind of imperial greatness, by reaffirming the monarchy *as the cord tying* together the Empire and Commonwealth into a group of diplomatically, economically and even militarily associated nations." Since that occasion, Britain and the world have rapidly lost understanding of the true meaning of the royal monarchy.

Such gross memory loss portends tragic events for Britain!

In June 1953, the *National and English Review* cited Herbert Agar saying, "Without the crown there can obviously be no Britain and no Commonwealth. ... Without Britain and the Commonwealth, there can be no tolerable future." This institution has been the heart that pumped life into Britain. History declares loudly that the success or failure of the throne of David, Britain's bedrock institution, largely determines the success or failure of Britain.

BRAD MACDONALD

sense of identity, they have largely lost the moral values that the royal family once exemplified. A century ago, in the time of British greatness, journalist Walter Bagehot wrote, “[W]e have come to regard the crown as the head of our morality.” How times have changed!

Children and teens, unaware of their purpose in life, are running amuck and rebelling against society. Multiculturalism and political correctness have created an environment where patriotism and loyalty to anything “British” is wrong, and in some cases punishable by law. Foreign religions and cultures are crowding out British traditions and culture. British leaders warn about the possibility of terrible tragedies occurring—particularly Islamist terrorist attacks—but have little idea of how to stop them. The entire nation, lost in sin, ignorant of its history and further from God than ever, is bordering on widespread social breakdown.

The solution to this crisis lies in the knowledge of the history and future of the royal family. The reason Britain is morally sick and is suffering is that the people, as well as the monarchy itself, do not deeply understand and value their royal heritage!

“I Will Chasten Him With the Rod of Men”

In 2 Samuel 7, God promised that *nothing* would cause Him to break His promise to King David. But notice, God did say that those in David’s dynasty would be punished for sin. Verse 14 states, “If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men.” This promise stands today: God *promises* to chasten Britain’s royals at the hands of men.

God speaks of this punishment in Hosea 5. “Hear ye this, O priests; and hear-ken, ye house of Israel; and give ye ear, O *house of the king*; for judgment is towards you ...” (verse 1). The “house of the king” here is the royal family of Britain.

“God is deeply concerned,” editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote. “He is going to sentence the royal family and all Israel to the greatest time of suffering ever, unless they ‘listen’ and heed!” (*Hosea and God’s Adulterous Wife*; request this free booklet to read God’s warning to British royalty).

God prophesies that He will punish the royal house of David in this end time for despising its history with Him and leading the nation astray.

Britain is sick and suffering today because it has lost sight of God and because the people, *as well as the monarchy*, have

forgotten and even despised the history of the royal throne of David.

God condemns and punishes Britain for such forgetfulness!

True healing for Britain’s sickness lies in God. God is revealed, as we have seen, in the royal throne of David, possessed by Britain’s royalty today. The world *should* be mesmerized by this institution—not because of its sinful example but for its divinely inspired history and prophecy.

A Glorious Ending

The British monarchy is a direct fulfillment of divine promises made to Abraham and then King David. As such, this institution reveals much about the God of the universe.

It reveals that God is a promise-keeping God. Just as God fulfilled His promise to King David, He will fulfill His promises to you. To learn about God’s promises to those who obey Him, such as eternal life, wealth and happiness, request our *Herbert W. Armstrong College Bible Correspondence Course*.

The British monarchy reveals the compassion and mercy of God. History records the sinful activities of the throne of David. David himself committed some terrible sins, though he repented deeply. Despite these sins and all the hurt they inflicted on God, the great Creator *never* blotted out the royal dynasty of David. He punished the royals at the hands of men, but He never broke His promise!

This history teaches a personal lesson to all of us. No matter the extent of our sins, God’s mercy and compassion will cover them all. After any individual’s true repentance, God willingly pours out forgiveness and mercy on that person.

Lastly—and most importantly—the existence of the royal line of David today actually points to the *coming return of Jesus Christ to rule from that very throne*. The spectacular future of this throne outshines its spectacular past. Notice the prophecy of Christ’s return in Luke 1:31-33: “And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God *shall give unto him the throne of his father David*: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

Grasp the magnitude of this promise! King David was an ancestor of Jesus Christ. These verses prophesy of a time when Jesus Christ will return and sit on the throne of David!

This prophecy also proves the dynasty of David had to continue until the return of Christ!

A prophecy in Isaiah 9 also speaks of Christ ruling from David’s throne. “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called

Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, *upon the throne of David*, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this” (verses 6-7). This is the spectacular future of the throne of David!

Christ will rule the universe with splendor and power from the throne of David—the *very throne British royals inhabit today!*

There isn’t an institution on Earth that could stir more hope, joy and excitement than Britain’s royal family. As a physical institution, it was the bedrock of Britain’s success in its glory days. As a spiritual institution, it is the bedrock of future *universe-wide* success. God places great spiritual value on this institution. How much value do you place on it?

The future of this world; this universe—as *well as your personal life*—is wrapped up in the deep, spiritual meaning of this timeless institution. ■

Cleave to Your Mate

Sage biblical advice for making your marriage stick BY JOEL HILLIKER

THE ENGLISH WORD *CLEAVE* IS quirky. *Webster's* defines it, "to adhere firmly and closely or loyally and unwaveringly." But it also defines it exactly the opposite: "to divide by or as if by a cutting blow."

One of the first biblical commands regarding marriage is found in Genesis 2:24: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall *cleave* unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." A husband and wife must cleave—in the first sense, that is. Because if we don't, then in effect we cleave our marriage in the opposite way.

What does God mean when He tells us to *cleave*? The Hebrew word is *dabaq*, which means to cling or adhere, or to catch by pursuit. Elsewhere in the Bible, it is translated *abide fast, follow close, be joined, pursue hard and stick*.

In the midst of life's hubbub, actively cleaving to your spouse in love doesn't happen accidentally. God, children, work, church, friends, chores, errands, bills, diversions—so many concerns can compete for your attention. How often, at the end of the day, do you crash the moment your head hits the pillow and neglect spending time *cleaving* to your spouse—not just physically, but spiritually, mentally and emotionally?

It doesn't take much neglect to go from cleaving to merely coexisting. "One flesh" is what

God wants in marriage. Oneness in sharing your thoughts, attitudes, emotions, bodies and the physical things in life.

After the work day, outside responsibilities and interests can continue to pull you away from each other if you're not careful. Television or other entertainment

typically shuts down communication and can end up being a crutch that gives an illusion of togetherness but actually cleaves your marriage—the wrong way.

Husbands: Is your heart at home with your wife? Is that where your primary interest lies? The answer to that question can help you determine how well you are cleaving to her. Remaining truly faithful to your wife requires deep mental, emotional and psychological attachment.

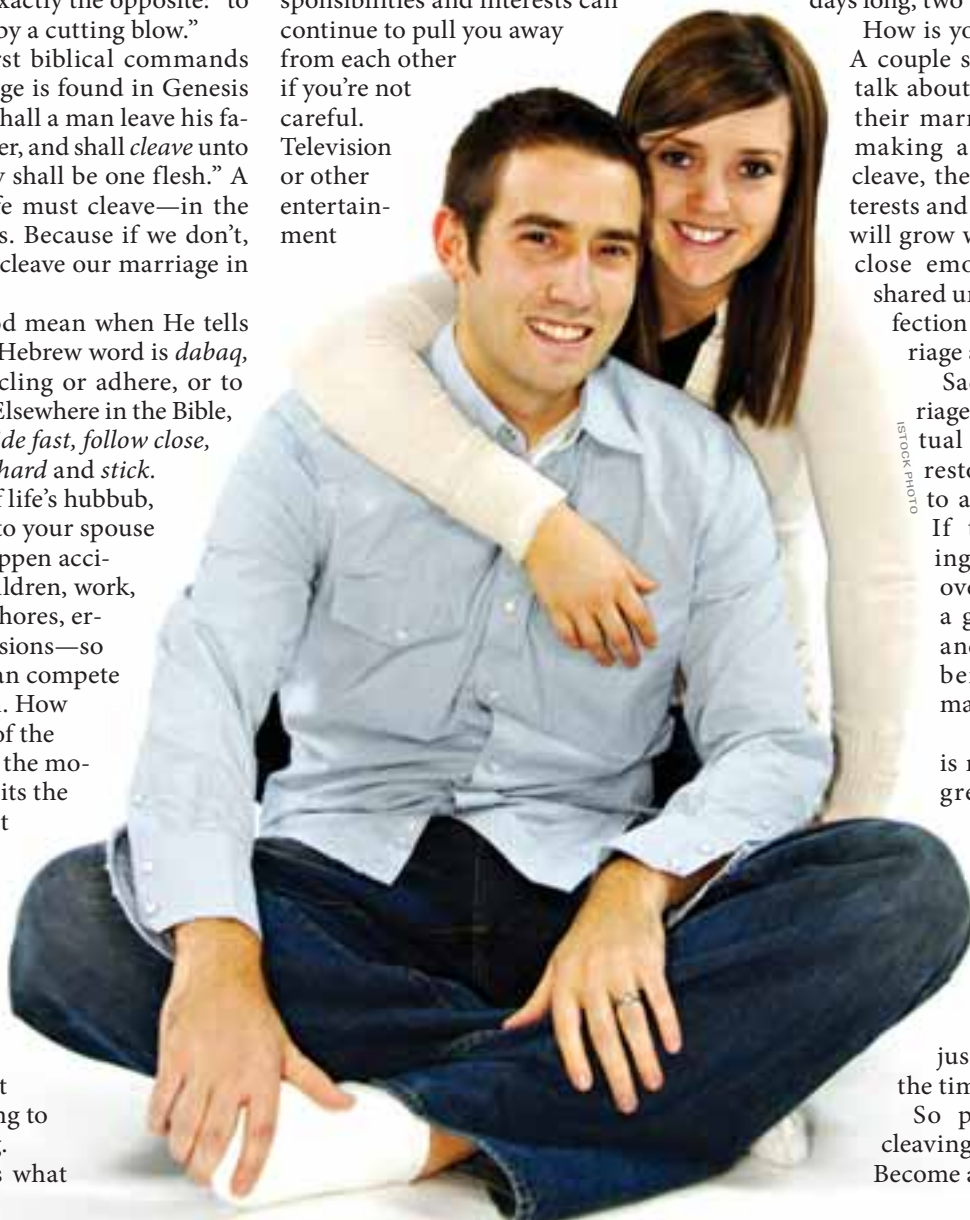
Spend time cleaving. Share your life! Read together, listen to music together, take walks together, talk together, do things together, study the Bible together. Rekindle the flames of romance that drew you together. Court each other! Get a babysitter for your children and go out for a date, and not too infrequently. With planning and effort, you may even be able to take short trips alone—two to three days long, two to three times a year.

How is your communication? A couple should have more to talk about together the longer their marriage lasts. If you're making a vigorous effort to cleave, then your common interests and your ability to relate will grow with time. You'll feel close emotionally, and your shared understanding and affection will make your marriage a joy.

Sadly, for many marriages, a mountain of mutual effort is required to restore the relationship to a truly healthy state. If the idea of cleaving in this way seems overwhelming, that is a good indication you and your mate would benefit from some marital counseling.

A happy marriage is not only one of life's greatest blessings, it does much to help us overcome our selfishness and to learn the great joy of living the *give* way of life. Investing abundantly in your marriage isn't just a nice way to pass the time.

So practice the art of cleaving—in the right sense. Become a cleaver! ■



ISTOCK PHOTO

The CYBERSPACE

Game of Life

People are using the Internet to improve their lives. Well—their fantasy lives, anyway.

BY DENNIS LEAP

WITHOUT QUESTION, THE Internet is a bold witness to the inventive genius of man. It is amazing that what started out as an *all-thumbs* kind of gizmo for the Department of Defense now operates the *Worldwide Web*. The Information Age brainchild has morphed right before our eyes. Silicon Valley experts speak of the new Web as *Web 2.0* as if it were a better release of outdated software. People are more hyped about the Web than ever before.

Why so much buzz? It is all about how people are using the Web. *Time* magazine went so far as to name Web users as person of the year for 2006. Why? Lev Grossman reported, "It's a story about community and collaboration on a scale never seen before." Web 2.0 makes it possible for *massive numbers* of people from all over the globe to provide the content of the Web. Experts tell us that the Web is no longer a library—it's a *conversation*.

Cyber Socializing

Essentially, Web watchers extol the social networking opportunities on the Web. We are led to believe that the social networking sites are empowering people to make great contributions to our world.

One of the pioneer social network sites is MySpace. MySpace defines itself as "an online community that lets you meet your friends' friends." Teenagers use the site to hang out in cyberspace. The service allows members to share personal information such as photos and thoughts with others in a network of up to 1,000 people. MySpace users topped 50 million in May 2006. There are other websites similar to MySpace. *LinkedIn*, for example, caters to business professionals.

YouTube is a more recent social networking site with a

NAME: Doug Squims
HEIGHT: 5'4"
WEIGHT: 253 lbs.
OCCUPATION: Boring job
ONLINE ALTER EGO: Thane Braddock, musclebound defender of the oppressed; babe magnet and party boy

unique twist. Founded in February 2005, YouTube makes it possible for users to post their own video clips on the site. Anybody worldwide can watch the clip and write a review. YouTube's philosophy is "broadcast yourself." Many people use the site like a video journal or diary. YouTube creators state that 70 million people a day access the site. Unexpectedly, it has become a source for news. Since the cell phone industry has made videophones as common as watches, quick-thinking individuals have filmed breaking news events and then posted them on the site. Everyday people have become star photo-journalists *outscooping* the mainstream media.

Some of the greatest praise for Web 2.0 comes from its having opened up the means for any individual to have a voice on anything. In the beginning of the Internet, people marveled when a new webpage came online. Today, everyone can have his or her own webpage called a *web log*, or *blog* for short. A blog is user designed—an electronic statement of the owner. It is a personal diary—without the lock and key. Blogs cover as many different topics and express as many opinions as there are people. While some blogs are maintained by influential journalists and politicians and are read by thousands, most are kept up by everyday people and are read by only family and friends. Although it is difficult to get an accurate count, it is estimated that over 70 million blogs exist.

Mainstream media moguls fear that Web users are gaining control of the flow of information. In many ways, bloggers have rocked the foundation of the established media. The new Web has empowered everyday people to become reporters and political pundits.

Conversation Quality

The Web is a sophisticated, powerfully potent tool placed in the hands of millions and can certainly be used for much good. This magazine and other news sources use the wonderful advancements of the Web. But we must be honest. Web 2.0 is also being used for incredible evil. While the Web's advancement is praiseworthy, we must not fail to beware its incredible dangers. If Web 2.0 is a conversation, don't we have the responsibility to evaluate its quality?

MySpace presents an innocent-enough face. Unfortunately, it is potentially anything but innocent. Major news networks have featured reports on MySpace's user-generated content. Here is what NBC's *Dateline* reported after surfing MySpace:

"[W]e found scenes of binge drinking, apparent drug use, teens posing in underwear, and other members simulating sex, and in some cases even having it" (MSN.com, April 5, 2006). Not great conversation, is it? It is MySpace's policy to not prescreen postings. Should we be shocked that sexual predators have used the site to trap unsuspecting teens?

YouTube also does not prescreen video clips posted to the site. Pornography is not allowed, but this does not necessarily mean porn does not appear. YouTube guarantees that any porn that users flag will be removed. Still, many video clips appear on the site that most people would not consider worthwhile conversation. In fact, there are a lot of weird, way-out-there videos on the site, the subjects of which are not fit to print. YouTube is beginning to draw fire from law enforcement, psychologists and concerned news reporters. Teens are making extreme videos to get their 60 seconds of fame. Recently, teens have been posting video clips with graphic violence; one showed five girls severely beating another girl. Another recent rage on YouTube is known as "fence plowing"—teens running headlong into fences to destroy them while being videotaped. Besides the destruction of property, some teens are getting critically injured.

While Web 2.0 freely gives a voice to every blogger, some voices have nothing useable, sensible or meaningful to say. People rant and rave about trivial things using a lot of foul language. Does this kind of user-generated content deserve praise? Truly, there is little *collaboration* and *community*. Reading through most blogs, they are more about *me* than *we*. Bloggers are free to write anything—including lies. It is clear that some blogs exist only to attack institutions and organizations with the single goal of spreading venomous slander. Even the U.S. president's life was threatened by a teenaged blogger.

Jesus Christ says we should judge the real value of things by their fruits (Matthew 12:33). He condemned idle words, and extolled worthwhile conversation that *truly* builds up community and collaboration (Matthew 12:36-37). He stated, "[O]ut of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (verse 34). This scripture means that a good-hearted person speaks good things, but a person with evil motives speaks evil. This principle can be applied to all aspects of our society.

Taking an honest look at blogs, we have to admit there is a lot of rotten fruit in cyberspace.

Second Life

Web 2.0 may be a conversation, but it is better described as a mirror. It reveals a lot about us—our global society. Of course, we can see good. Regrettably, we also see much evil. Look, for example, at Web 2.0's newest thing: Second Life.

Second Life is considered the first of the future generation of social-networking sites. Technically, this site is known as a massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG)—though in Second Life, there is no specific goal and the game never ends. Statistics show that an average of 20,000 people are logged in at any one time. Simply described, Second Life is a virtual world where gamers travel through 3D environments using digital alter egos called avatars. Anonymity is assured with the assumption of a Second Life alias. Those playing the game interact through their avatar—they chat via text message, go to virtual restaurants, attend virtual concerts, and shop for virtual clothes in elaborate landscapes.

Second Life is the brainchild of Philip Rosedale, founder and CEO of San Francisco's Linden Lab. Rosedale got his inspiration from Neal Stephenson's sci-fi novel *Snow Crash*. The novel describes a future in which people spend much of their time in a "metaverse," or metaphysical universe—Stephenson's idea of the Internet of the future. Rosedale, with the help of members (called *residents*), wants to bring that future to reality today. Second Life's website boasts: "Second Life is a 3D world imagined, created and owned by its residents." This philosophy represents the *ultimate* for those who admire user-generated content on the Web.

Since its launch in 2003, Second Life's popularity has grown rapidly. In February, the number of Second Life residents approached 4 million. This number is projected to reach 9 million by June—more people than live in New York City. The large number of residents may be attributed to curiosity, but for a core group of people, Second life is more than a game.

Second Life is sparking a revival of commercial interest in the Web. The game has a virtual economy. All business is conducted in Lindens, the "in-world" currency. While joining is free, buying land and currency requires an account with monthly fees attached. Residents purchase Lindens at roughly 250 per U.S. dollar (exchange rates can fluctuate). Linden Lab makes its profits from currency exchange fees and sales of virtual land leases.

See **CYBERSPACE** page 27 ▶



REUTERS

WARMING TREND Merkel and Bush build their countries' relations.

EUROPE

Pursuing Free Trade With U.S.

GERMAN CHANCELLOR Angela Merkel, presently the European Union and G-8 president, has big plans for relations between the United States and Europe. In January, meeting with U.S. President George Bush, she discussed a Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement. Merkel proposed ideas that go beyond “removing more trade barriers to creating a transatlantic free-trade zone” (United Press International, January 4).

Merkel is looking to repair damage to the “Atlantic Bridge” caused by differences of European and American opinion, specifically on Iraq. The logic of such a decision is clear: “The U.S. and the EU share—economically at least—more common interests than differences, and merging the economies could help buffer both sides of the Atlantic from the negative effects of globalization” (Spiegel Online, January 4).

As *Süddeutsche Zeitung* reported, Merkel is capitalizing on the “common interests that make the Europeans and the Americans natural partners.”

Still, Merkel’s positive stance toward America as an ally is something rare in European politics, even if the alliance is only economic. A similar idea already failed a few years ago when France derailed it. But Merkel’s

power position lends weight to her ideas. With its economic future looking unstable, America may be eager to hook up with Europe.

The *Trumpet* has for some years foretold of the rekindling of a romance between Germany and the U.S. This is based on a striking prophecy in Ezekiel 23, which describes a “lover” relationship between the two peoples. In the end, America will regret having trusted so implicitly in a foreign nation rather than in God: Ezekiel warns that Germany, after gaining America’s trust and support, will betray America.

Grabbing at Central Asian Energy

THE EUROPEAN UNION hopes to increase significantly its on-site diplomatic muscle in Central Asia by 2008. This will expand its influence in the energy-rich region—vital to a strategy to reduce its reliance on Russian energy imports.

As outlined by an EU strategy paper dated February 2 and submitted to member states by Germany, the EU anticipates opening embassies in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan—the last two of which possess massive natural gas reserves.

The document recommends allocating heavy financial resources to support its “breakthrough” into Central Asia and to bring the four states plus Turkmenistan into the international community. Germany has specifically proposed funding development projects including the construction of a new gas pipeline from Central Asia along the Caspian seabed to Europe.

The document, according to one EU diplomat, was “designed to send a political signal to our partners, to the five states in question and to Russia, China and the U.S. We are saying—look we want to be in there, we want to work there” (EUobserver.com, February 6).

Some experts say the EU’s plans to compete with Russia and China for new pipelines are doomed to fail. Still, this recent initiative highlights Europe’s Achilles’ heel: foreign energy dependence. The Bible foretells that Europe will invade the Middle East with “whirlwind” ferocity in the near future. Energy demand will likely play a large role in instigating the next big Middle East war.



MIDDLE EAST

Europe to Help Israel?

AT LEAST ONE ISRAELI KNESSET MEMBER has lost faith in the United States’ ability to mediate the Arab-Jew conflict and says Europe should take over. Shlomo Breznitz of the Kadima party has proposed a radical plan to break the current deadlock: handing administration of the West Bank and Gaza Strip over to Europe until a Palestinian state can be established.

The plan would require following the plan implemented in the Gaza Strip last summer: dismantling Jewish communities and vacating the Jewish presence from the West Bank. The difference, however, is that rather than immediately turning the area over to Palestinians—which in Gaza has produced a haven for terrorist activity—the

West Bank would move under the control of tens of thousands of European soldiers.

The proposal rules out a role for the U.S. because, says Breznitz, the U.S. “has lost its status as an honest broker in the view of the Palestinians and the Arab states.” This provides strong evidence of a trend the *Trumpet* has long been tracking—a shift in confidence away from the U.S. in favor of Europe.

It also constitutes one of the strongest-ever statements of confidence in Europe’s peacekeeping powers from an Israeli politician.

It will be worth following this idea in the coming months. Based on biblical prophecies regarding a relationship opening up between Israel and Europe, and Israel apparently soliciting Europe’s help

in managing its increasingly unmanageable problems, we expect some version of Breznitz’s proposal to gain traction in Israeli politics.



KNESSET

BREZNITZ

BRITAIN

Muslim Youth More Radical

YOUNG BRITISH MUSLIMS are becoming more radical, according to a recent survey conducted by a British think tank. Policy Exchange found that, of British Muslims ages 16-24, “37 percent would prefer to live under *sharia* [Islamic law] in Britain, 37 percent would like to send their children to Islamic state schools and—most incredibly—36 percent think Muslims converting to another religion should be punished by death” (*Sunday Times*, February 4). A shocking 13 percent of British Muslims in the same bracket said they “admire organizations like al Qaeda, which are prepared to fight the West.” Figures for British Muslims over age 55 are much lower—17 percent, 19 percent, 19 percent and 3 percent respectively.

The think tank accurately pinned the blame for these trends on Britain’s multicultural policies implemented in the 1980s. The report’s leading author said such policies “have emphasized difference at the expense of shared national identity and divided

people along ethnic, religious and cultural lines”—particularly among youth

who have grown up with those policies (*New York Times*, January 30).

At King Fahad Academy, an Islamic school in Acton, textbooks describe Jews as “repugnant” and “apes” and Christians as “pigs,” according to Colin Cook, a recently fired teacher (*Daily Mail*, February 5). When Cook complained to the school



YOUTH MOVEMENT British Muslims march in London.

about its curriculum not complying with British law, he was told, “This is not England. It is Saudi Arabia.”

Cook said that once the majority of the British teachers left in 2005, the school moved toward a pro-Saudi agenda.

Multiculturalism and political correctness in the UK have permitted such activities to escalate. Muslim and non-Muslim leaders alike, together with the media, are fanning the flames of the radicalization of British Muslims.

Crimes Against Jews Soaring

JEWES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM WERE VICTIMS OF A record number of hate crimes last year, says a new report by the Jewish community’s defense organization, the Community Security Trust (CST).

The CST says these crimes have doubled in the last 10 years, and that 2006 saw a 31 percent increase in anti-Semitic incidents over 2005. The 594 incidents included 112 violent assaults, 70 attacks on Jewish property, 365 occurrences of abusive behavior, and 27 threats. Crimes in each category except threats represented at least a 34 percent increase over 2005; attacks on Jewish property were up an astounding 46 percent. Of the incidents, more than one in five occurred during the 34-day war between Israel and Hezbollah.

Such attacks demonstrate a noticeable shift of attitude within a country that has been an ally of Israel. Ironically, however, biblical prophecy tells us that Britain and Israel face a common fate in the time ahead. For more, request our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.

UNITED STATES

L.A. Racial Hate a “Microcosm”

RACE CRIMES ARE increasing in Los Angeles at an alarming rate. Two Latino gang members, apparently looking for any black person to shoot, gunned down 14-year-old Cheryl Green in December 2006 for riding her scooter too close to a street that divides black and Latino rival gangs. The crime spotlighted a rising trend in Latino-versus-black confrontations. Such violence, together with crimes moti-

vated by religious and sexual-orientation discrimination, increased in Los Angeles 34 percent in 2005 over 2004.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson, an African American who hosts the Los Angeles Urban Policy Roundtable, strongly believes the city’s woes are a “microcosm” of what could easily break out within other major American population centers.

Bible prophecy tells us Hutchinson’s “great concern” is valid. To learn about the



SIGNS Members of L.A.’s Eastside Crips flash signs.

horrific racial violence prophesied to explode in American cities soon—and, more importantly, how to avoid being victimized by it—request a free copy of our book *Ezekiel: The End-Time Prophet*.

VENEZUELA

A New Dictator



CHAVEZ

SHOUTS OF “LONG LIVE President Hugo Chavez! Long live socialism!” filled a Caracas plaza January 31. Venezuelan lawmakers had just turned over much of their authority, giving the president the right to rule by decree for 18 months. Chavez can now remake 11 broadly defined areas of society, ranging from the economy to the justice system.

Among the policies Chavez plans to use his new powers to impose is the nationalization of major oil projects in the Orinoco basin, which foreign companies have heavily invested in. Estimates of the amount of oil in the basin run around 1.3 trillion barrels. Analysts believe that 300 billion of those barrels are recoverable with today’s technology, which would give Venezuela the world’s largest oil reserves.

With the U.S. importing more than 10 percent of its oil from there, the nationalization of Venezuela’s oil industry threatens the U.S. energy supply—if one believes Chavez’s anti-American rhetoric and stated desire to sell his oil elsewhere.

The U.S. says it is concerned and is working to ensure democracy’s survival in Venezuela, but its efforts have thus far failed to hold back Chavez.

The Politics of

The search for truth leaves some scientists in the cold. **BY MARK JENKINS**

PLEASE FILL IN THE BLANKS: "IT IS a ____ fact: The Global _____ presents humankind with the most important social, political, and adaptive challenge we have had to deal with for ten thousand years."

The correct words are "cold" and "Cooling." Author Lowell Ponte went on to warn that our decisions regarding the trend of global cooling were of "ultimate importance" and would determine "the survival of ourselves, our children, our species." The year was 1976. *Newsweek* had published similar dire predictions in April of 1975, warning that the global cool down would cause a drastic decline in food production. One solution: Pour soot over the Arctic ice cap.

Today, of course, politicians and the media have declared the debate over. Global *warming* is now the threat to Planet Earth—and it is dire indeed.

Ellen Goodman wrote in the *Boston Globe* that "global warming deniers are now on a par with Holocaust deniers, though one denies the past and the other denies the present and future."

While there are certain scientific realities connected to the global climate change scare, the search for truth is political at best and deceptive at worse. Despite many media claims that scientists have reached consensus on the reality of global warming and its causes and effects, the reality is that scientists are as divided on climate change as ever.

The Report Cometh

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) started the latest round of media frenzy by announcing that man's responsibility for global warming is no longer in question, sparking such headlines as "Scientists Call Global Warming 'Unequivocal.'"

The announcement itself was bold: "February 2 will be remembered as the date when uncertainty was removed as to whether humans had anything to do with climate change on this planet. ... The evidence is on the table," the executive director of the United Nations Environment Program said.

However, that evidence has not yet been made public; the UN did not release a report, only a summary; the report itself will be held until May. The IPCC writes: "Changes (other than grammatical or minor editorial changes) made after acceptance by the Working Group or the Panel shall be those necessary to ensure consistency with the Summary for Policymakers or the Overview Chapter." In other words, write the conclusions in the summary, then fix the data to match.

Politicians and press took the summary at face value, with no meaningful evidence to back it up, as though it were fact. Others, however, including respected scientist and one-time adviser to Margaret Thatcher, Lord Christopher Monckton—provide evidence that should give us pause about accepting the summary without question.

Comparing the current report's findings to those of the UN's *last* report in 2001, Monckton found that the new data overturned several previous conclusions. The 2001 report "overestimated the human influence on the climate since the Industrial Revolution by at least one third" and overshot its predictions on rising sea levels by more than double (Monckton, "IPCC Fourth Assessment Report," February 2007). Monckton also reported that the rise in temperature between 2001 and 2006 was about 3/100ths of a degree—small enough to be "within the range of measurement error" and therefore not "statistically significant" (*ibid.*).

Why the wrong conclusions in the 2001 report? Monckton showed how it "undervalued the sun's effects on historical and contemporary climate, slashed the natural greenhouse effect, overstated the past century's temperature increase, repealed a fundamental law of physics and tripled the man-made greenhouse effect" (*Sunday Telegraph*, Nov. 5, 2006).

The UN is obviously not keen to publicize such faulty assumptions, and it can count on the media to glaze over the facts to headline alarmist pronouncements.

Perhaps most condemning, however, is the fact that scientists who are skeptical of global warming are, as the *Wall Street*

Journal reveals, "routinely vetoed from contributing" to the debate (February 5). The much-publicized item from the summary that it is "very likely" (greater than 90 percent) that man is responsible for global warming may be directly related to that censorship. *Vancouver Sun* reporter Peter McKnight points to an IPCC document saying these likelihoods "may be based on quantitative analysis or an elicitation of expert views." The trouble is, only those experts who already support the idea of global warming were polled, an omission that McKnight rightly calls a "political rather than scientific act."

Consensus

The suggestion that scientists have reached a consensus on global warming is absurd, although it has been repeated often. There is a consensus that Earth's overall temperature rose seven tenths of one degree during the 20th century. It is also true that CO₂ levels rose about 30 percent over this period. Everything else is contested.

For example, more than 60 leading climatologists sent an open letter on April 6, 2006, to Canada's prime minister, Stephen Harper, warning, "'Climate change is real' is a meaningless phrase used repeatedly by activists to convince the public that a climate catastrophe is looming and humanity is the cause. Neither of these fears is justified. ... Global climate changes all the time due to natural causes and the human impact still remains impossible to distinguish from this natural 'noise.'"

Monckton asserted, "[U]sing reasonable data and assumptions, a simple global model shows that temperature will rise by just 0.1 to 1.4 degrees Celsius in the coming century, with a best estimate of 0.6 degrees Celsius, well within the medieval temperature range and only a fifth of the UN's new, central projection" (*Sunday Telegraph*, *op. cit.*).

New Scientist magazine reported in January 2002 that the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, contrary to expectations, is actually growing thicker. As it simply put it, "despite decades of research, Antarctic climate patterns remain poorly understood." Researchers at the University of

Global Warming

Illinois found that Antarctic temperatures have actually been getting cooler for the last 30 years using the novel approach of taking temperature readings rather than using computer models.

Even the idea that CO₂ is responsible for global warming has dubious origins. Canadian climatologist Timothy Ball explained: “The theory of global warming assumes that CO₂ is an atmospheric greenhouse gas and as it increases temperatures rise. It was then theorized that since humans were producing more CO₂ than before, the temperature would inevitably rise. The theory was accepted before testing had started, and effectively became a law. As [Richard] Lindzen [a professor of atmospheric science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology] said many years ago: ‘the consensus was reached before the research had even begun.’ Now, any scientist who dares to question the prevailing wisdom is marginalized and called a skeptic, when in fact they are simply being good scientists” (Canada Free Press, February 5).

Many scientists have pointed to solar activity, rather than human activity, as the cause for global warming. Sami Solanki, a solar physicist, claims the sun has been hotter, for longer, in the last 50 years than at any time in the past 11,400 years. Using his calculations, the sun could account for just about all of the Earth’s warming during the past century.

Lord Monckton has produced a wealth of data and numerous articles for the *Telegraph* providing what the WSJ calls a “voice of sanity.” There is a concerted effort underway, however, to silence such voices. Lindzen reports that “Scientists who dissent from the alarmism have seen their grant funds disappear, their work derided, and themselves libeled as industry stooges, scientific hacks or worse. Consequently, lies about climate change gain credence even when they fly in the face of the science that supposedly is their basis” (*Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2006).

In 1995, Dr. David Deming, assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma College of Geosciences, published in *Science* a review of data showing a one-degree temperature increase in North America.

The article, he later wrote, gave him “significant credibility in the community of scientists working on climate change. . . . So one of them let his guard down. A major person working in the area of climate change and global warming sent me an astonishing e-mail that said, ‘We have to get rid of the Medieval Warm Period’ [a well-documented, widely recognized period during the Middle Ages warmer than any period in the 20th century]” (Tom Bethell, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Science*). The Medieval Warm Period subsequently disappeared from the UN’s 2001 report.

Deming also encountered one example of the media hiding the facts. When he was asked by a National Public Radio reporter if he intended his article to imply that the North American warming trend was due to natural causes (a point he assumed was uncontroversial), Deming said yes. The reporter replied, “Well, then, I guess we have no story. . . . People are only interested if the warming is due to human activities. Goodbye” (ibid.).

The trend continues today. Last November, Britain’s Labor foreign secretary, Margaret Beckett, “compared climate skeptics to advocates of Islamic terror. Neither, she said, should have access to the media” (*Telegraph*, Nov. 12, 2006).

Solutions—But for What?

Adding to the dubiousness of the debate, numerous analysts have pointed out how pointless the reductions in greenhouse gasses demanded by the Kyoto protocol are—unless the goal is to devastate the U.S. economy. This is why the Senate voiced its disapproval of the protocol with a vote of 95-0 even with the Clinton/Gore administration pushing for it.

Canada’s environment minister has warned that his country’s economy would collapse if it worked harder to meet its Kyoto obligations; currently it is 30 percent over par. Russia initially refused to sign Kyoto on economic grounds, but finally acquiesced in 2004 with the promise to reduce its emissions by 0 percent.

Now, the UN has upped the ante. The current draft of the report recommends that 5 percent of gross domestic product worldwide be allocated to protect the climate—a \$2.5 trillion investment. How

effectively would this investment combat climate change? According to Monckton, if everyone complied with the Kyoto protocol, in one century, the global temperature would drop 1/25 of one degree. He also noted that if Britain “stopped using energy altogether, global temperature by 2035 would be six-thousandths of a degree Centigrade less than if we carried on as usual” (ibid.).

The Truth

“No matter if the science is all phony,” Canada’s Minister of the Environment Christine Stewart told reporters in 1998. “There are collateral environmental benefits. . . . Climate change [provides] the greatest chance to bring about justice and equality in the world” (emphasis mine).

Read that again. Such faulty thinking infects much of the debate on global warming—ideology is more important than truth, and politics takes precedence over science. Considering how consistently the UN serves as a sounding board for open hatred of all things Western, capitalist and American, is it so outlandish to ask whether such bias taints the objectivity of the global warming report and affects how it is being used—especially considering how much its prescriptions would damage the U.S. economy?

But there is another level of this debate being overlooked by both sides.

The most important truth of the matter is this: Though humans may be able to effect a miniscule change in the climate, we don’t control the weather and we never have. Almighty God does. The Bible prophesies of weather disasters in the end time, not because of greenhouse gas emissions but because *God uses catastrophe to punish for sin* (e.g. Revelation 6:5-8; 8:4-12). In that sense, man is responsible for catastrophic weather (e.g. 2 Chronicles 6:26). *That* is the cause of our weather crisis—and repentance for those sins is the cure.

God doesn’t promise rain in due season and bountiful land yields for dumping soot on the Arctic ice cap or cutting CO₂ emissions. He does promise those things if we obey His commandments (Leviticus 26:3-4). We must not allow the highly politicized debate on this issue to obscure that critical truth. ■

From the
News Bureau

RON FRASER



Europe's Golden Anniversary

AT THE CLOSE OF WORLD WAR II, the Western Allies maintained that any prospect of Hitler's national socialist dream of global conquest had been banished from European soil, never to raise its head again.

But had it?

On March 25, Europe celebrates a golden anniversary—50 years since the signing of the Treaty of Rome. It may have been apparent to few at the time, but the signing of that treaty in that ancient city on March 25, 1957, laid the groundwork for what is yet to become the singular most dominant force in geopolitics this century, the European Union.

As Rodney Atkinson and Norris McWhirter point out in their book *Treason at Maastricht*, today's EU looks uncannily similar to Hitler's Europe.

It All Began in London

Just four years following Allied victory in Europe, the Treaty of London, signed by 10 Western European nations on May 5, 1949, brought the Council of Europe into existence. The signing of this treaty set a chain reaction in motion, leading ultimately to the monolithic, 27-nation European combine we know today. Yet it was to be the Rome treaty, signed eight years later, that would be traditionally looked upon as having spawned the post-war unification of Europe.

The paradox is that, though the Treaty of London laid the groundwork for what was to later become the European Union, the European Community that the treaty led toward establishing would never come to London for any other of its important meetings, let alone the signing of future treaties that would build the union into what it is today. In fact, for 24 years, uniting Europe would deny Britain entry into its fold. Then, upon its entry, Britain would become the thorn in Europe's flesh.

The eight years following the creation of the Council of Europe were filled with frenetic European diplomacy, led primarily by France, supported by the three Benelux countries (Belgium, the Neth-

erlands and Luxembourg). This diplomacy was aimed at creating a European order that would constrain Germany in such a fashion as to never permit a rep-

What did the Treaty of Rome set in motion 50 years ago? Nothing less than the revival of an ancient empire.

etition of Germany's aggression against a neighboring country such as occurred in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 and the world wars of 1914 and 1939.

On May 9, 1950, French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman presented a declaration to the Council for closer cooperation among European nations. It was based on a simple idea proposed by French political economist Jean Monnet: that only by binding Germany into an agreement where its heavy industry was controlled in a manner so as to limit its potential to rearm could lasting peace be obtained in Europe.

From London to Rome

Monnet's thesis was published on May 9, 1950, and presented by Schuman on that day. What then became known as the Schuman Plan proposed joint control of Western European coal and steel production, the most important materials for the armaments industry.

The German chancellor at the time, Konrad Adenauer, seeing the Schuman Plan as a viable means to hasten Germany's post-war reconstruction, readily agreed to the proposal. This opened the way, less than a year later, on April 18, 1951, for the birth of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

By signing this treaty, six nations—Germany, France, Italy and the Benelux nations—placed control of coal and iron ore under their joint management, so none could individually exploit these resources for the manufacture of weapons of war. There followed six years of continuing diplomacy among these six nations, significantly led by France and

Germany. These efforts created a common market, known as the European Economic Community (EEC). Signed in Rome on March 25, 1957, the EEC Treaty, known as the Treaty of Rome, brought the six ECSC countries into a community whose aim would be to use trade, not war, to weld together a European community.

What was not publicized widely was the ultimate aim of the union's founding fathers to take this trading combine into a final phase that would unite Europe economically, monetarily, industrially, politically and, finally, militarily. In point of fact, their goal in uniting Europe was imperialistic from the beginning. In his 1950 speech, Schuman had declared that "Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan," and that the ECSC was the "first step in the federation of Europe."

That goal was to remain largely hidden for the following 30 years under the mask of common trade interests. However, beneath the surface, certain influences were at play that would emerge, after Germany unified on Oct. 3, 1990, to power this seemingly innocuous trading bloc forward to fulfill the old German dream of European hegemony as a platform for future global dominance.

From Rome to Maastricht

It may be said that the *spiritual* birth of the European Union as a *social* and *political* system took place in Rome at the signing of that treaty 50 years ago. The following year saw the establishment of the bureaucracy that would eventually produce over 80,000 pages of rules and regulations as the expanding, reviving European empire grew into one of the most formidably regulated economies in history. Foremost among the entities that originated with the 1951 and 1957 treaties were EURATOM (to develop atomic energy policies), the Parliamentary Assembly (which later became the European Parliament), the European Court of Justice and the European Investment Bank.

From 1957 to 1970, the EEC concentrated on economic growth. The post-

war period to the early 1960s became known as the *wirtschaftswunder*, the economic miracle by which free West Germany powered its way back from the ashes of World War II to become the leading economy in Western Europe.

As the geopolitical freeze of the Cold War deepened, the contrast between East Germany's lackluster command economy and the markedly glitzy capitalistic West Germany was too much to contain a drift of population from east to west. In 1961, Communist East Germany created the physical divide of the Berlin Wall to lock out east from west at the border between the two in Berlin.

Through the 1960s and '70s, West Germany suffered with the rest of the West in the great social upheavals of that time. Extremist terror groups motivated by Marxist/Leninist initiatives in France, Italy and Germany mounted a struggle against "state imperialism." Yet still, economic growth in the EEC member nations remained comparatively robust, in particular within West Germany, which had become the economic engine of Western Europe.

Having concentrated on economic growth in the period from its creation in 1957 through to 1970, the EEC switched its sights to community enlargement during the '70s and '80s. In the 1970s, the EEC opened its doors to Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom. In 1981 Greece joined, followed by Spain and Portugal in 1986. That same year, EEC members signed the first major amendments to the Treaty of Rome, the Single European Act, ratified on July 1, 1987.

Enlargement—Building the Eastern Leg

The Single European Act was mainly an effort to hasten European integration. It amended the rules governing the operation of the main European institutions and expanded EEC powers, paving the way for a common foreign policy.

The true nature of the beast was finally emerging. Far from remaining true to its roots as a simple trading entity, the ultimate political aspirations of the founders of the EU were beginning to come into view. The EEC was evolving into a *political* power.

In the meantime, Rome had been busy. A Polish pope, John Paul II, had joined forces with the conservative U.S. president, Ronald Reagan, and a similarly conservative British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, and with the combined efforts of four security ser-

vices—the CIA, Britain's MI5, the German BND, and the Vatican's Jesuits—succeeded in splitting the Soviet Union apart using a Polish trade union organization, *Solidarity*, as a front for their covert, anti-Soviet activities.

The collapse of communism across Central and Eastern Europe, beginning in Poland and later symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall on Nov. 9, 1989,



ORIGINS Treaty of Rome is signed, 1957.

resulted in Germany's unification, ending more than 40 years of geographic and political division of that country. By October 1990, East Germany was part of the EU. The old Cold War hiatus began to give way to a new aggressive extension of the EU's borders *eastward*, ultimately clear up to the great Ukraine Plain.

This expansion accelerated when Germany and the Vatican caused the Balkan Wars of the 1990s by recognizing Slovenia and Croatia as sovereign nations separate from greater Yugoslavia.

In the meantime, the EEC, under pressure from Germany, trotted out a series of treaties in quick succession, giving further force and weight to the true political motives of the creators and developers of this rising European empire.

The treaty of European Union, known as the Maastricht Treaty, was signed in Maastricht, Netherlands, on Feb. 7, 1992, by all EEC members. The principle changes to the Treaty of Rome were a name change from EEC to the European Community (EC), and agreement on cooperation in matters of defense, justice and home security. This was the European Union Treaty. Ever since, the old EEC has become known as the European Union, a name that, without the term "economic," has a much more political ring to it.

All of a sudden the innocuous EEC had three pillars underpinning its future integration: economics, politics and now *defense*.

From Maastricht Back to Rome

Less than six years later, the Treaty of

Amsterdam amended the Maastricht Treaty and consolidated the EU and EC treaties. On Feb. 26, 2001, EU leaders signed the Treaty of Nice, which paved the way for further enlargement and created a single document upon which a European constitution could be developed. Finally, on Oct. 29, 2004, the heads of state of each EU member nation met again in Rome. This time, they met to sign a controversial document: the European Constitution.

What had started as a mere agreement on the integration of markets was suddenly transforming into a singular, great political entity, a veritable United States of Europe! This was becoming an empire of nations, with a single constitution that seemingly removed the sovereign rights of its individual member states, subsuming them into a federal body comprised of regions that ignored old national boundaries. And, as was patently obvious, it was once again Germany calling the tune!

On paper, to some observers, it seemed as though the old phoenix of the Roman Empire was arising from the ashes. Certainly the extent of territory it embraced was not only like that of the old Holy Roman Empire, but remarkably like the map of Europe redrawn by Hitler just 60 years ago! Voices of concern began to be raised in some quarters.

Certainly Europe now stood upon its western and its eastern legs. But it was unwieldy. The various parts of this huge, greatly enlarged beast were not operating in complete harmony. It stumbled in its first few tentative steps as it sought to get used to being underpinned by two legs—the secular Western leg and its Eastern Catholic counterpart—that did not always want to go in the same direction. This beast appeared to be top-heavy, weighed down with extraneous regulation. It was bloated with excessive bureaucracy and in great need of trimming its fat. What's more, fraud was admittedly rampant within that very bureaucracy.

Soon, rumbles were heard from Berlin, the refurbished capital of an earlier Reich, now once again revived as Germany's national capital. Those noises supported simplifying decision making and even streamlining EU membership. Lesser economies could be subsumed by the larger in a redrawing of the map of Europe to eliminate national borders and combine once-sovereign nations into broader regions

within a great European fatherland.

This brings us to the current German presidency of the EU, at a most vital turning point in EU history.

From Rome to Berlin

The celebrations will be grand, indeed, in Berlin on Sunday, March 25, when the chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, hosts representatives of member nations and the pope himself for a grand shindig in celebration of “50 years of unity” on the anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. Yet the European Union is anything but unified. Tensions are building that will lead to a separation of the strong from the weak, with the inevitable dominance of the latter by the former.

It remains to be seen if Germany, now in the middle of its six-month presidency of the EU under Merkel’s leadership, can give new force and shape to this cumbersome beast, which comprises 27 separate nations trying to work together for another “50 years of unity.” The deck is stacked against the German chancellor. Her task of drawing these disparate nations together to agree to ratifying the European Constitution seems an impossible one. If she fails, her rising political star may plummet, fracturing her unsteady government coalition. In the meantime, her main coalition partner, Bavarian Prime Minister Edmund Stoiber, leader of the Christian Socialists, is due to step down from political office in September. This could set the scene in Germany, if not Europe as a whole, for a tumultuous political finish to the year.

Though Germany’s economy is being touted as recovering well and is posting positive growth statistics, Chancellor Merkel has yet to muster her coalition’s and, more importantly, the German public’s support in dealing with the nation’s deep systemic economic problems. While she may well ride the train of popularity on foreign affairs, such as with her current diplomacy with the United States, Russia and the EU, domestic problems will ultimately overwhelm her government. That day will come, and with it social upheaval in Germany.

Meanwhile, having basked in the global view under the spotlight of both the Bavarian Pope Benedict’s visit to Munich and the hosting of the World Cup soccer tournament last year, again Germany takes center stage, this time

as EU member nations celebrate their “50 years of unity” in March.

Iron and Clay

As Merkel and all Berlin bask in that limelight on March 25, watch for when the hoopla ceases and reality dawns. Already, significant fractures are visible beneath this facade of European unity. It is indeed a union of iron and clay. There is coming a division within this union, a fracturing into 10 sepa-

Rome, Berlin and Bavaria could again be drawn together for one final great European power play.

rate regions, each with its own titular head, ultimately paying obeisance to Berlin and mother Rome. For, in fact, what you see forming in Europe today was foretold long ago in Bible prophecy. It is none other than the final resurrection of the old Holy Roman Empire, canonized in your Bible in Daniel 2:39-44 and Revelation 17:11-13.

An understanding of these prophecies will lead to the conclusion that Germany has a powerful and, once again, *antagonistic* geopolitical role to play within the emerging global order in the wake of America’s waning power. This is a fact that most foreign-policy gurus seem unable to grasp at this point.

The recovery of the German economy is fragile. It remains export driven. The lower the dollar dives and the higher the euro hikes, the tougher it will be for German exports, the lifeblood of Germany’s economy, to compete. The resulting economic pressure, combined with the resistance of the German populace to any government initiatives to dismantle the welfare state that holds Germany back from real economic health, will combine to put real stress on Chancellor Merkel’s government as the year progresses.

Watch for the future fracturing of this coalition government. Watch for EU “unity” to falter. Watch for both phenomena to coalesce into a grand economic and social crisis in both Germany and greater Europe that will spawn the return of the demagogue and a revival of past European history!

The foundation is already laid.

The time will come when Europe will follow the rising fashion in Russia and Latin America, and the cry will go up for a populist leader. Such a

man will come to office, not necessarily via the electoral process within the European Union, but rather by diplomacy—or *flatteries* (Daniel 11:21). He will lead the countries of Europe out of their divisions into great, though very temporary, imperial strength.

Yes, that old Holy Roman Empire will rise again. That union spawned in the city of seven hills back on March 25, 1957, with the signing of the Treaty of Rome will yet return to its Romish *spiritual* roots! Yet, even as foreshadowed by the siting of the 50th-anniversary celebrations of that event in Berlin—not Rome—the real *political*, economic and *military* clout

of this rising empire will emanate yet once more from Europe’s heartland, *Germany!* And as we have pointed out to our readers, its political *leader* may yet again hail from *Bavaria!*

Watch Rome. Watch Berlin. And watch the chief political personality in *Bavaria*. It’s more than possible that Rome, Berlin and Bavaria will again be drawn together for one final great European power play. But this empire will then be overtaken and subsumed by the much-anticipated intervention from the Highest of Powers in the grand-smash climax at the close of this age of global disorder and the ushering in of an age of peace beyond anything man could imagine!

Viewed through this lens, the celebrations in Berlin on March 25 are but a harbinger of the *greatest news man could ever hear!* “Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Daniel 2:45).

The Prophet Daniel foretold this wondrous future event—an event that will put an end, once and for all, to the tormenting, blood-spilling, perpetually resurrecting old Holy Roman Empire. It’s an event that will soon have all the world’s attention centered on another city, a city which, despite its ancient and continual war-torn history, will yet become the most glorious city of all, *Jerusalem!*

That is the *real event* for which we should all be now watching, with the *greatest* of anticipation! ■

Residents make money by selling goods or services they have created in-world. Using Second Life software tools, residents have created digital houses, clothes and jewelry. Some are earning part of their income in Second Life; others are making their fortunes. Linden Lab estimates that users exchange \$1.2 million each day within the game. One individual claims to have earned \$1 million in income. This is truly amazing considering that, for the most part, people are essentially buying and selling *nothing*. However, governments such as the United States and Australia see *real-life* income tax issues.

Large corporations such as Adidas, American Apparel, Sony, BMG, Dell Computer, IBM and Toyota are making their presence known in Second Life. Even Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, which manages hotel chains like Sheraton, St. Regis and Westin, plans to open a virtual hotel there. Although most corporations are getting involved in order to advertise and test-market their real-world products, some are selling virtual goods like clothes and cars.

Reuters has opened up a virtual news bureau in Second Life. Mark Warner, former governor of Virginia, was the first politician to give an interview in Second Life. Support groups for stroke and cancer patients are established. College instructors are conducting classes in Second Life. Professional librarians are building a virtual library. Weddings and funerals have been conducted in-world. The possibilities seem endless.

Why is this digital fantasy world so attractive to people?

A Better World

To put it simply, people want a better world. In 2006, Rosedale told CBS: "Our goal with Second Life is to make it better than real life in a lot of ways."

We need to think deeply about this. Our world is in crisis. There is sadness and sickness, tragedy and war. We may all want to escape it, but we must face reality. Although we don't like to admit it, human beings are responsible for creating the real world we live in. Isn't it fair to ask: Are we capable of creating a *better* virtual world?

Second Life reveals what most people think a better world would be: one with no laws and no repercussions. In Second Life, there is a thin presence of government. In a sense, Linden Lab governs the 3D world. There are a few simple ground rules banning vandalism, harassment and other antisocial behavior, punish-

able by suspension or loss of registration, which means expulsion. Other than that, *anything* goes. And anything does go.

Wired magazine featured a travel guide to Second Life. "Second Life is a world of endless reinvention where you can change your shape, your sex, even your species as easily as you might slip into a pair of shoes back home," it said (October 2006). Though residents must be over 18, Linden permits nudity, sex and profanity on private land and "mature"-rated areas. Since some game players change their sex or choose animal-like avatars, deviant sexual behavior is in vogue. Prostitution is an active business in Second Life.

Time's Joel Stein wrote that Second Life "functions as a therapist's couch on which you learn about yourself by safely exploring your darkest desires" (Dec. 16, 2006). Honestly, does that sound like a better world? Is it possible to safely explore our darkest desires without serious repercussions?

The Bible's teaching on sin shows us emphatically that any dark desire explored, even in a virtual world, will have disastrous consequences. The Apostle James taught, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14-15). These verses carry critical instruction. Depraved human lusts are not to be toyed with. All human sin begins in the mind. When we entertain a thought long enough, physical action is sure to follow.

Second Lifers can joke about committing harmless adultery or other sex perversions in their virtual world. The truth is, adultery in the virtual world is still adultery. Jesus Christ stated, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:27-28). Those people in Christ's day who were lusting for each other without committing a physical act, Christ still held guilty of that heinous sin. We shall not escape the same judgment. All humans must learn this most important principle if we truly want a better world.

Second Life feeds incredible power to human thought. Are we so naive as to believe that some Second Life residents will not eventually begin to explore their darkest desires in the real world?

New World Coming

Even though our world is a wretched mess, should we just dump it for an electronic daydream? There is a lot of drive, creativity and effort behind Second Life. Some entrepreneurs spend vast amounts of time there. Isn't there something truly tragic about that? Some see this virtual world as the new frontier for commercial venture. Isn't it rather a wasteland of lost manpower that could be devoted to solving the problems of the real world?

Consider the vast amount of time being swallowed up by essentially fruitless activity on the Web today. This reflects the fact that our human nature wants to escape problems and difficulties. But let's be honest:

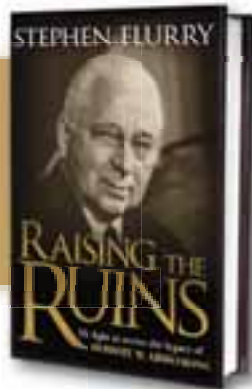
Second Life "functions as a therapist's couch on which you learn about yourself by safely exploring your darkest desires."

—JOEL STEIN, *Time*

Facing problems and solving them makes us stronger. The Apostle Paul taught, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16). Paul's world was one of grave crisis. Instead of getting into foolish lusts, Paul encouraged people to *redeem the time*. This phrase literally means to *increase opportunity*. Although this world is tragically falling apart, individuals do not have to. In fact, we can improve ourselves by not getting caught up in foolish, time-wasting activities. The most overlooked way to improve ourselves is to learn to serve the needs of others. This world provides plenty of opportunity for that.

Sadly, Rosedale's goal for Second Life is doomed to failure. It is not a better world. It is a recreation of our own sick, chaotic world. We do need a better world—but Second Life and the Web will never deliver what we desire most: true freedom, happiness, health, safety and success. Our human nature must be changed first.

The truth is that in the not-too-distant future, a new world filled with community and collaboration is coming. It will be a magnificent world founded on a government that administers a law of outflowing love. Jesus Christ is coming back—for real! He will establish the Kingdom of God on Earth. Human nature will be changed. Every man, woman and child will be given the freedom to grow and develop into an incredibly happy and successful human being. Write for our free publication *The Wonderful World Tomorrow*. It explains thoroughly how our world will be permanently changed into a utopia far exceeding anything a human being can now imagine. ■



In his book *Raising the Ruins*, now available in bookstores, *Trumpet* executive editor Stephen Flurry exposes the reality of what happened to the Worldwide Church of God. Here is the seventh chapter.

STEPHEN FLURRY

Riddled With Error

“[T]hese things that [Mr. Armstrong] had written in that book [*Mystery of the Ages*] were never central—we never used the term ‘central’ to our teaching. They were just his interpretations of Scripture”

— Joseph W. Tkach Jr. *Deposition, September 8, 1998*

DURING MY FATHER’S FIRING ON DEC. 7, 1989, the subject of *Mystery of the Ages* came up. My father strenuously defended its content, arguing that it should not have been discontinued. Joseph Tkach Jr. told him it would be impossible to distribute it, as the book was “riddled with error.” That statement shocked my father. The church membership had been told the book was discontinued because it was expensive and its content could be found in other literature. But on that winter night inside Tkach Jr.’s office, the real reason emerged.

Nine years later, during a deposition, when asked if he had used the phrase “riddled with error” during the firing, Tkach said, “I believe those were my exact words.” According to Tkach, Gerald Flurry felt that “*Mystery of the Ages* should be promoted more than it was being promoted, and I told him that it had too many errors ... to promote it the way he thought it should be”

We have already examined a number of changes that took place in 1986. Tkachism continued dismantling doctrines throughout 1987 and the first half of 1988—when they removed *Mystery of the Ages* from circulation. Based on what Tkach Jr. told my father in 1989, the changes were so numerous and far-reaching that *Mystery of the Ages* could not be used in any form. It was, as he said, “riddled” with error.

■ NAMES AND DATES

As noted in Chapter Six, Tkach’s fellows wasted little time altering the teachings in *The United States and Britain in*

Prophecy. Besides removing all references to ancient Assyria being Germany today, editors also had trouble with the way Mr. Armstrong delineated between Israelites and Jews.

As Mr. Armstrong taught, “It is wrong to call the Jews of today ‘Israel.’ They are not the nation Israel—they are Judah! And wherever Israel is today, remember that Israel as a national name does not mean Jew!” Editors removed these kinds of statements from the 1986 version, presumably to avoid offending Jews. Yet Mr. Armstrong was not trying to offend anyone. He was simply making this key distinction in support of the book’s central point: “Jews are Israelites, just as Californians are Americans. But most Israelites are not Jews, just as most Americans are not Californians. The Jews are the house of Judah only, a part of the Israelites. *But when these people are spoken of as nations, rather than as collective individuals, the term ‘Israel’ never refers to the Jews.* ‘House of Israel’ never means ‘Jews.’ The three tribes at Jerusalem under the Davidic king are called, merely, the house of Judah.”

The italicized sentence, the most critical point in the paragraph, is what editors removed from the 1986 version.

Earlier in the book, when Mr. Armstrong expounded on Genesis 48—where Jacob passed on the birthright blessings to Ephraim and Manasseh—he explained that, in verse 16, it was these two lads who were named Israel, not the descendants of Judah. Later, Mr. Armstrong asked, “Who, then, according to your Bible, is the real Israel (racially and nationally) of today?” Ephraim and Manasseh of course! But these sorts of statements needed to be removed because, according to WCG scholars, they had been a “source of criticism.” *A source of criticism?* This is the central point of the entire book!

They also had a problem with captivity dates for Judah

(604 to 585 B.C., according to Mr. Armstrong) and Israel (721 to 718 B.C.). In the latter case, editors chose 721 alone as the date for Israel's captivity. As for Judah's, they decided to leave the attacks on Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar as "generally ... UNDATED" in the 1986 version of the book.

The significance of these changes has much more to do with prophecy than it does with assigning dates to ancient events.

Of course, Tkach Jr. says they had no idea where changes such as these were leading. But the truth is that these massive edits, starting in 1986, damningly reveal the mindset of the same people who completely rejected the book a short two years later.

■ ONE SMALL BOOKLET, ONE GIANT REVISION

About six months after they made the changes covered above, WCG editors SLASHED MORE THAN TWO THIRDS of the text from the 1986 version of *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*—reducing the 184-page book to a meager 53 pages.

Absent from the 1987 version are the Introduction, the first two chapters and the last fourth of the book. The last four chapters of the book, in fact, are summarized in five pages in the 1987 version. Editors essentially pulled out what prophetic teeth had been left in the 1986 version. And the tiny bit they left in was highly sanitized—making it much less personal for the modern descendants of Israel ("we" and "us" were changed to "they" and "them").

When the Tkaches announced that the book had been downsized, they explained that the larger edition had "become prohibitively costly to mail in vast areas of the English-speaking world." So they made the small version *only* for areas with high postage costs. But—get ready for this—once they finished it, they discovered it was "Mr. Armstrong's style at its best"! It was "so effectively written and to the point" that Mr. Tkach decided to make the small version available for EVERYONE—conveniently making the book version *dispensable*. That's how they explained it to the membership in 1987—that the booklet version was BETTER and that it would save the work postage costs. NOTHING was mentioned about the doctrinal transformation the text had undergone since Mr. Armstrong died.

The following year, in mid-1988, even the 53-pager failed to survive the editor's knife. After a tumultuous two years in print after the death of Mr. Armstrong, editors finally laid to rest *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* permanently, even though members would not find out the real reason for its removal until years later.

Tkach Jr.'s biggest beef with the book is how Mr. Armstrong's teaching supposedly "worked to foster racial prejudice." In *Transformed by Truth*, he wrote, "Within two years of Mr. Armstrong's death, several church leaders began discussing Anglo-Israelism with my dad."

He says *within two years*. In fact, by the time two years had passed, two thirds of the material had already been CHOPPED OUT—and the entire book was buried a few months later. Significant changes to the text, as we have seen, were made *immediately* after Mr. Armstrong died. It was as if the destruction of this truth had been planned all along and that the only obstacle preventing it from happening was Mr. Armstrong being alive.

Indeed, the blueprint for the book's demise had been drawn up a decade earlier. Writing about *The United States*

and Britain in Prophecy during the liberal era of the 1970s, Mr. Armstrong told the church, "[M]y son, assuming an authority never delegated to him, had this most important booklet *cut down to almost nothing*, then PUT OUT OF CIRCULATION ENTIRELY!"

Isn't that incredible? It happened the EXACT same way after Mr. Armstrong died. Yet the Tkaches claimed they had no idea where the massive 1986 edits were leading.

■ JESUS CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

Many commentators analyzing the WCG's transformation out of "Armstrongism" point to March 1987 as the watershed event that began the process of re-evaluating everything. We have already seen how the changes were actually in full swing long before this. That said, however, the early-1987 change regarding Jesus Christ's sacrifice and divine healing was huge.

Mr. Tkach Sr. first introduced the subject in the March 18, 1987, *Pastor General's Report*, sent to the ministers of the church. He explained the change one week later to the entire membership. Tkachism has led people to assume, incorrectly, that the "healing change" meant that it was no longer a sin for WCG members to go to doctors. But Mr. Armstrong NEVER said it was a sin to go to doctors.

In his booklet *The Plain Truth About Healing*, Mr. Armstrong actually said we *need* doctors for a variety of things. He wrote, "The great advances in the medical field enable man to do for his human family many things he could not do 50 years ago, short of actual healing. God does for us (often by miracle) that which we are unable to do. God gave man talents, mind-power (physical) and *abilities that He intended us to use and develop* under His guidance, and always for His glory and toward our development in the holy, righteous character of God."

Earlier in the text, he said "[I]t is true that today most doctors prescribe medicines that are NOT poisons but rather are designed to help nature do its own healing." He asked, "Do we ever need doctors?"

Answer: "Yes we do—but the true people of God do not need them to *compete* with God as our God-healer ..." Mr. Armstrong's teaching on this subject was similar to any other church doctrine: PUT GOD FIRST. And even then, if someone lacked faith in God, he actually *encouraged them* all the more to put their trust in doctors! "If a church member simply lacks the faith to be healed by the living Christ—if he has more faith in medical 'expertise' than in God and God's promises—God's church will not judge or condemn him if he puts himself or his child under medical treatment. If that is the best he has faith in, better let him have what help man can give, rather than no help at all!"

With Tkachism, on the other hand, church members *did* often judge each other—and usually the ones judged most harshly were those who chose *not* to rely on doctors for "healing"! In some cases, ministers even refused to anoint members, despite God's clear command in James 5:14, because the members did not first go to a doctor.

Setting aside Tkachism's misinterpretation of what Mr. Armstrong actually taught on the subject of healing, there were in fact definite changes made in the church's doctrine in March of 1987. The most significant of these had to do with Jesus Christ's sacrifice.

Mr. Armstrong taught that the way we are freed from the

penalty of sin (eternal death) is by Jesus Christ's shed blood. Christ died in our stead. Divine healing is based on the same principle. Prior to His crucifixion, Jesus was beaten and scourged. Numerous scriptures explain the reason for this terrible scourging: It was so we might be healed (Psalm 103:3; Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24).

Nothing underscores the differentiation between the scourging and the crucifixion like the Christian Passover. At this ceremony, as New Testament scriptures explain, Christians are first commanded to eat broken bread, which symbolizes Christ's beaten and broken body. Then we are to drink a tiny glass of wine, which represents Christ's shed blood.

Along these same lines, Mr. Armstrong taught that since God's law is spiritual, transgressing against that law constitutes *spiritual* sin—the penalty for which is eternal death. In like manner, man's physical body functions according to definite *physical* laws. Transgressing against these laws also exacts a penalty—in this case, sickness and disease. In other words, sickness and disease come as a result of *physical* sin.

Jesus Christ died so that the penalty for spiritual sin, eternal death, might be paid and that we might receive the gift of eternal life. He was beaten before He died so that the penalty for physical sin—sickness and disease—might be paid in full so we can be healed. Jesus Himself explained in Luke 5:17-26 that healing is the forgiveness of physical sin.

With Tkachism, there is no such thing as physical sin. There may be a cause for physical sickness, but it is not physical sin. Therefore, Jesus was not beaten for our healing. His broken body has "far more significance," Tkach said. The sacrifice of Jesus should not be separated according to the broken body and the shed blood, he said. Both blend together as one supreme sacrifice. Furthermore, while Mr. Armstrong believed it is always God's will to heal (although it is up to God to determine *when*), Mr. Tkach said healing was not a promise from God, but rather a *blessing*—and that it was not always God's will to grant that blessing.

You can find this kind of reasoning in the Systematic Theology Project, produced by WCG liberals during the 1970s. In attempting to water down God's emphatic promise in James 5:14-15, the STP said, "Although this one statement appears to be written without qualification, the condition 'if it be God's will' was no doubt tacitly understood." Of course, you cannot find a statement like that—"if it be God's will"—anywhere in the Bible regarding God's promise of healing. But liberals in the 1970s believed that condition was tacitly understood. Mr. Tkach agreed and changed the church teaching in 1987, after Mr. Armstrong died.

The new teaching about Christ's sacrifice and physical sin had a profound impact on the church's literature inventory. In his book, Tkach Jr. said, "In 1989 we stopped circulating booklets that taught what we had come to believe was a flawed understanding of divine healing." In truth, that process began immediately after the change was made in March 1987. It began with Mr. Armstrong's booklet *The Plain Truth About Healing*. Upon making the change, Tkach

Sr. explained, "The healing booklet will have to be temporarily withdrawn until edits and revisions reflecting this new understanding Jesus Christ has given to His church can be made. References in our literature to 'physical sin' and Jesus's body being broken for the limited purpose of paying the penalty for 'broken physical laws' will also have to be revised."

Three weeks after Mr. Tkach wrote that, *The Principles of Healthful Living* booklet and the reprint article, "The Plain Truth About Fasting," were removed from stock. They also announced that Lessons 12, 23 and 25 of the correspondence course had been shelved in anticipation of being revised.

In 1988, *What Is Faith?*, *The Plain Truth About Easter* and *The Wonderful World Tomorrow* were all discarded because of "incorrect" explanations on healing and Christ's sacrifice. They were later revised and re-issued, carrying Mr. Armstrong's byline, yet containing new doctrinal teaching that Mr. Armstrong would have rejected.

In *Mystery of the Ages*, on pages 64-68, Mr. Armstrong discussed a dramatic personal example of healing that would either have to be re-worked or removed entirely, based on Tkach's new teaching. The section on page 211, under the subhead, "Jesus Beaten for Our Healing," discusses physical sin and healing as forgiveness of sin. On page 317 is a reference to healing and repenting of sin. Likewise, on page 319, Mr. Armstrong refers to the *laws* of health. All of these references would have to be removed for *Mystery of the Ages* to survive.

The ripple effect of this new teaching was huge.

■ "MESSENGER" BECOMES "THE CHURCH"

Joseph Tkach Jr. would have us believe that when editors chopped all that material about "Elijah" out of the 1986 *Mystery of the Ages* serialization in the *Plain Truth*, there was nothing sinister behind the deletion. It was just an innocent effort to condense the text into the allotted space. They NEVER dreamed that their *teaching* on the subject would ever change. Yet, the following year, the church's personal correspondence department (PCD) produced a form letter on the subject of the Elijah prophecy in Matthew 17. It read, "At the close of this present evil age, the message of 'Elijah' is again to be thundered to disobedient Israel as a witness and to prepare a people for Christ's Second Coming." According to the letter, the WCG was delivering this message. Mr. Armstrong wasn't even mentioned. Yet most members would have been completely unaware of the new teaching, unless they happened to send a question to PCD about Matthew 17.

It wasn't until early 1988 that Tkachism finally got around to explaining the new teaching to a larger audience. Tkach Sr. wrote, "Jesus said that 'Elijah' was to 'restore all things,' or get things ready. John, in his day, prepared those who listened to him ..." And what about the "other man"—the *latter-day* fulfillment of these prophecies? Tkach explained: "Just as Malachi prophesied of John the Baptist [Malachi 4:5-6] and just as the angel Gabriel expounded [in Luke 1:16-17], a people would be prepared for God. From the Ephesian era until now,

Incredibly, this momentous change in doctrine was passed off on the membership as if it were something we had always known and believed.

THE CHURCH OF GOD FULFILLS THAT ROLE OF PREPARING A PEOPLE FOR GOD.” So John the Baptist was the first-century Elijah and “THE CHURCH” is the end-time Elijah! John prepared the way for Christ’s first coming, and *the church* prepares the way for His Second Coming. What began through John the Baptist, Mr. Tkach wrote, has “continued through the ages by the successive eras of the church of God.”

Incredibly, this momentous change in doctrine was passed off on the membership *as if it were something we had always known and believed*. Mr. Tkach introduced the article by saying the church had often focused on the “general principle” of these end-time Elijah prophecies—“that of strengthening family relationships, instead of the vital primary meaning of those verses” In truth, the church had actually focused on the primary, *very specific* meaning of those verses—that they referred to *Herbert Armstrong and the work God did through him in this end time*. But in February 1988, Mr. Tkach not only made the rejection of that teaching formal—he made it sound like Mr. Armstrong taught the same thing.

What an impact this change must have had on the status of *Mystery of the Ages*—at that point still in circulation, though no doubt hanging by a thread. Right at the beginning of Mr. Armstrong’s final book, on page 9, is a section under the subhead, “The Elijah to Come.” In it, he again emphasized the duality of these specific prophecies—the first fulfillment being John the Baptist. Yet, as he so often explained, these prophecies also refer “to a *human messenger* preparing the way before Christ’s now imminent Second Coming, this time in supreme power and glory as Ruler over all nations!” That statement was now at odds with Tkach’s new teaching about *the church* being this “messenger.”

Mystery of the Ages included another reference on page 251 about the “18 basic and essential truths” that were restored to the church through one man.

In chapter 6, we also discussed the significance of what Mr. Armstrong covered from pages 289 to 292 in *Mystery*, where he said “these prophecies have now definitely been fulfilled,” referring to Matthew 24:14, Revelation 3:7-13, Malachi 3:1-5, Malachi 4:5-6 and Matthew 17:11. (You will remember that all these prophecies were omitted from the 1986 serialization of the book.)

And then there is one final section at the end of *Mystery*, subheaded “Elijah to Come in Our Day.” Mr. Armstrong wrote, “John the Baptist was a voice crying out in the physical wilderness of the Jordan River, preparing the way for the first coming of Christ, as a physical human being, to His physical temple at Jerusalem and to the physical people of Judah, announcing the advance good news that the Kingdom of God would in the future be established. But also preparing the way before His Second Coming was a messenger of whom Elijah was a type. A voice crying out in the worldwide spiritual wilderness of religious confusion, preparing the way for the spiritual glorified King of kings and Lord of lords to come in the supreme power and glory of God to His spiritual temple, the church (Ephesians 2:21), to actually establish the Kingdom of God.”

One could hardly describe this as a slow awakening to a new understanding. These men were pushing their program as hard and as fast as possible.

In many ways, changing the prophesied messenger from Mr. Armstrong to the church undermines much, if not all, of the material in *Mystery of the Ages*.

Adding all these changes together, it’s no wonder Joe Tkach Jr., at the end of 1989, told my father that getting any further use out of *Mystery of the Ages* would be impossible.

■ RIDDLED WITH ERROR

Early on in *Mystery*, Mr. Armstrong spoke about the “Babylon of religious confusion,” and how the seven basic mysteries would reveal why the religious world is so confused. In his first chapter, on who and what is God, he explained how the ancient Babylonian mysteries worked their way into Christian dogma. In the fourth chapter, on civilization, Mr. Armstrong explained how our civilization started with Nimrod and how the pagan religions of this world began with his wife Semiramis. Yet, as we have already seen, the identity of Babylon had been watered down by Tkachism even before Mr. Armstrong died.

There is also material in *Mystery* identifying modern-day Assyria—they “settled in central Europe, and the Germans, undoubtedly, are, in part, the descendants of the ancient Assyrians,” Mr. Armstrong wrote.

There are the many other “lesser” changes the WCG made, as we have discussed in the last two chapters. When Tkachism altered the *Elohim* definition in 1986, their new understanding contradicted the definition found in *Mystery* on pages 50, 94 and 135. Their revised 1986 teaching on the human spirit, as it differs from the animal brain, is different from Mr. Armstrong’s explanation on pages 104, 105, 109 and 237 of *Mystery of the Ages*. In February 1987, editors removed all references in the holy day booklet to the Israelites killing the Passover lamb on the evening of the 14th of Nisan. This too contradicted what Mr. Armstrong wrote in *Mystery* on the bottom of page 53.

Add to this the discontinuation of literature. In September 1987, the WCG removed *The Incredible Human Potential* from circulation—offering no explanation for the move, except that “much of the material” existed in other available literature. *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, as we covered at the beginning of this chapter, made it through a significant revision in 1986, but then dramatically shrank in 1987 and finally disappeared in 1988. And *The Wonderful World Tomorrow*—another major book written by

Mr. Armstrong—had a fourth of its content cut in 1987 because of the “considerable savings” it would bring the work.

All these changes, all these massive cuts in literature, happened *before* mid-1988. One could hardly describe this as a slow awakening to a new understanding. These men were pushing their program just as hard and as fast as they possibly could without revealing their full intentions.

It’s no wonder the status of *Mystery of the Ages* had reached a critical crossroads for WCG officials by that time. *Mystery of the Ages*, as of mid-1988, was the church’s best-known, most-requested book. On the other hand, Tkachism believed it was “riddled with error.”

What would the Tkaches do? ■

New Global Battlefield SATELLITE WARFARE

China shatters a satellite—and a lot more. BY TIMOTHY OOSTENDARP



ON JANUARY 11, CHINA DESTROYED one of its old weather satellites by shooting a warhead from a ballistic missile into space. While the world gaped, Chinese officials belatedly declared that they have no intention of escalating tensions with America or any other nation, stating that their satellite-busting technology is dedicated to peaceful pursuits.

It is not every day that a world power blasts a warhead into space to test the “peaceful” application of satellite-destroying technology. The truth is, this test was a bold Chinese statement. “[I]t’s a big fat challenge,” Rob Hewson, editor of London-based *Jane’s Air-Launched Weapons* said—“an overtly military, very provocative event that cannot be spun any other way.”

To this point in history, space has remained unmarred by war and international bickering in any way comparable to what is happening on Earth. For many, space is a symbol of mankind’s aspiration for global peace and prosperity. This is why the International Space Station has enjoyed worldwide cooperation. The International Space Station is a symbol of mankind’s hopes and dreams of exploring space, transcending national aspirations in global collaboration.

However, on January 11, China shattered this vision with a punch of reality.

Men are at war, and space is the newest battleground.

The nation with the most to lose on this battlefield is clearly the United States, which relies heavily on satellite technology for its unmatched military power. Without satellites, American forces simply *could not wage war effectively*. But also, space technology coordinates many daily activities of Americans—from debit machines and finance, to hydro and telephone. Without satellite technology, America would come to a standstill.

The stakes couldn’t be higher. Famed German rocket scientist Wernher von Braun once observed, “I am convinced that he who controls the open space around us is in a position to control the Earth.”

Control of space is what China’s satellite-busting technology is about. Beijing wants to challenge U.S. space supremacy. And it is not alone. Other nations and power blocs are charging forward with their own space programs.

Who will win this battle for space supremacy?

Blinding the U.S. Giant

Racing across the Iraqi desert in the 1991 Gulf War, American-led forces routed Saddam Hussein’s army in record time. It was like watching a hammer smash through a thin sheet of ice: The backbone of the Iraqi Army broke in mere days.

reconnaissance satellites to see what is happening on the battlefield. Satellites allow commanders to coordinate the battlefield and to make precision attacks.

While this level of technological coordination gives the U.S. military an edge—one that its enemies are all too aware of—these enemies and competitors are also aware that satellite technology is an Achilles’ heel for America.

A January 22 *New York Times* article highlighted the fact that China has “extensively studied how the United States has used satellite imagery in the Persian Gulf War, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and in tracking North Korea’s nuclear weapons program Several senior administration officials said such studies had included extensive analysis of how satellite surveillance could be used by the United States in case of crisis over Taiwan.”

Virtually the only thing preventing China from invading Taiwan is America’s protection. China knows that defeating the American military head-on is not an option. So, like other nations, it is looking to a unique strategy to level the playing field: asymmetric warfare. Rather than directly confronting American forces, this strategy envisions knocking out critical capabilities.

Essentially, China knows it will not reach parity with U.S. satellite and mili-

ARTICLE

The speed with which coalition forces defeated Hussein’s army stunned the world. It left some nations, like China, concerned. It has been called “the first space war”: Largely, it was the use of the U.S.’s Global Positioning System (GPS) and other space systems that enabled such a victory. It was an overwhelming victory made possible by American satellite technology.

By integrating space technology into its military program, the U.S. has become astonishingly powerful. But, at the same time, it has also become extraordinarily *dependent* on that technology for its national security. The Pentagon relies on electro-optical, infrared, radar and other types of

tary technology anytime soon. But it also knows it doesn't need to reach parity to tangle with the United States. All it needs to be able to do, using select technology, is disrupt America's satellite war-making abilities. With China having demonstrated such satellite-destroying capability, will the U.S. be as eager to come to Taiwan's defense as it once was?

John Tkacik, a former State Department expert on China, told Agence France Presse, "The prospect of losing a good chunk of our satellite coverage, our satellite network in space in a Taiwan combat scenario really does change the equation for American planners on how we approach the defense of Taiwan should it need it" (January 23).

This is a disturbing new development for America. China has developed technology capable of blinding America from seeing the battlefield, or worse, even preventing it from effectively waging war. This fact calls to mind a disturbing prophecy about the modern-day descendants of ancient Israel, which includes America, failing to respond to a call to war: "They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth to the battle ..." (Ezekiel 7:14). A satellite attack could play a part in the fulfillment of that scenario.

America Faltering

In light of advancements by other countries and U.S. financial constraints, some are growing concerned that the U.S. may be losing ground in space. "We are falling behind, if not losing, on many measures of space superiority," Defense Department contractor Stephen Hill said at a forum in Washington in January.

NASA's space and defense program is underfunded, even underachieving, according to the Associated Press. While the U.S. has plans for a space-based missile-defense program and the Pentagon is working on ground-based lasers and other technology to shoot down satellites, "the Pentagon's budget is severely constrained by Iraq and Afghanistan and a drive to replace outdated planes and ships, making space programs a lower priority ..." (January 23). And in terms of manpower, Washington State Sen. Patty Murray recently pointed out that America's space industry has lost more than 700,000 jobs in the past 15 years.

John Douglass, president and CEO of the Aerospace Industry Association, and other industry analysts feel NASA's space programs and research and development



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WERNHER VON BRAUN
German rocket scientist

are underfunded compared to historic levels. To match historical funding levels as a percentage of America's gross domestic product, NASA's budget would have to be *doubled* from the \$16 billion it is today to between \$30 and \$40 billion (Access Intelligence, Dec. 18, 2006).

"Sooner or later," Douglass recently told an audience of industry professionals and journalists, "this is going to reach a crisis."

The Race for Space

In addition to China, other nations are also making progress in space. In January, the Indian Space Research Organization launched and returned its first satellite in what one commentator termed an emerging space race. Japan also has plans to send an orbiter to the moon.

Russia's space program, after several years of being underfunded, is now once again surging ahead. Russia has anti-satellite capability and is certainly capable of developing technology to challenge U.S. space supremacy. Col. Gen. Vladimir Popovkin, commander of the Space Troops of the Defense Ministry of Russia, recently reported that Russia's oil money is fueling a military space revival. "Space infrastructure is now increasing its role throughout the world in boosting both the military might and social and economic prosperity of the leading world

states," he wrote. "In military matters, space-based systems are the key to information supremacy. They provide more accurate and prompt information about the situation to all troops and weapons systems. Space resources have therefore become a matter of vital interest for the state economically, politically and militarily" (RIA Novosti, Oct. 4, 2006).

Europe's space ambitions are coordinated through the European Space Agency (ESA), a network of 17 countries including France, Germany and Italy. Europe sorely wants to close the space technology gap with the United States. For a long time, Europe's space program lagged far behind; in recent years, ESA has made changes to reverse this course. Eyeing continued American advancements, Europe examined its shortcomings and took up the challenge to try to close the gap, almost doubling its financing. Today, primarily working with Russia, Europe has rapidly escalated its space capabilities. With its Galileo satellite navigational system (in which China has a major financial stake) and close connections to Russian technology and know-how, the European Union looks to become a challenge to U.S. space supremacy.

China's recent advancement will only fuel this developing space race. If one considers human nature and the spirit of competition among nations—along with mankind's history of eventually using every weapon it has devised—the prospect of this space race having deadly consequences appears very high.

But within this bad news, some experts find a glimmer of hope.

The Good News

Noted author, physicist and space enthusiast Stephen Hawking recently stated that mankind needs to look to space if the human race is to survive. In a radio interview with the BBC, he stated that mankind will have to colonize planets in far-flung solar systems. "Sooner or later, disasters such as an asteroid collision or nuclear war could wipe us all out. But once we spread out into space and establish independent colonies, our future should be safe," Hawking said.

Though mankind's intentions to explore space and advance the interests of humanity may be praiseworthy, we simply cannot overcome the spirit of competition that drives nations to wrestle other nations over who should rule it. The fact is, the same problems among peoples would exist wherever humans

lived, simply because of the pervasive influence of human nature.

However, though Hawking's ideas may appear fanciful and idealistic, he is not as far off as some may presume. Though mankind won't step into space in quite the way he describes, mankind will indeed colonize the universe!

Incredibly, according to the Bible, mankind is heir of "all things" (Hebrews 2:7-8), or, as James Moffatt translates it, "the universe"! The Bible details how each human ever born has the potential to be involved in colonizing efforts into the deepest reaches of space.

That will not occur, however, until man learns to rule his own spirit and becomes converted (Isaiah 66:2). But at that point—which is sooner than most would presume—Scripture reveals that mankind will be given a chance to rule space in a spirit of cooperation and love. The spirit of competition that drives so much investment in implements of war today—like satellite-busting weaponry—will no longer plague man and frustrate his ambition to explore space.

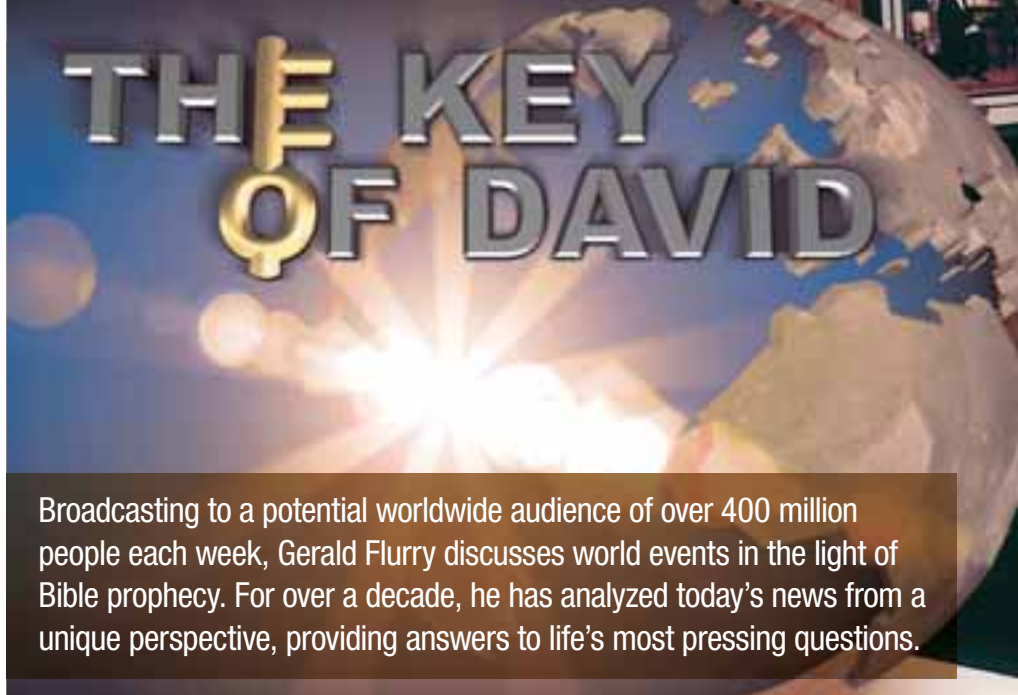
Ultimately, space doesn't belong to a nation or company of nations in this world—it belongs to God. But as our book *The Incredible Human Potential* explains, even now He is working out a plan to give the universe to you forever. He wants you to rule space!

The only question is, do you want to achieve your incredible human potential? ■

YOU can rule space

The Bible says *you* have the potential to rule the universe! Plus, it tells you what you need to do to attain that incredible potential—and what you will be doing once you have attained it. Learn all about God's inspiring plan for man in our free book *The Incredible Human Potential*.





Broadcasting to a potential worldwide audience of over 400 million people each week, Gerald Flurry discusses world events in the light of Bible prophecy. For over a decade, he has analyzed today's news from a unique perspective, providing answers to life's most pressing questions.

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Dish Network Ch. 181 6:00 am ET, Fri
Dish Network DBS WGN Chan. 239 8:00 am ET, Sun
Nationwide cable WGN 8:00 am ET, Sun
Alabama, Birmingham WPXH 5:00 am, Fri
Alabama, Dothan WBDO 8:30, Sun
Alabama, Montgomery WBMV 8:30, Sun
Alaska, Anchorage KWBX 8:30 am, Sun
Alaska, Fairbanks KWFA 8:30 am, Sun
Alaska, Juneau KWJA 8:30 am, Sun
Arizona Cox Channel 7, 10:00 am
Arizona, Yuma KWUB 9:30 am, Sun
Arizona, Phoenix KPPX 5:00 am, Fri
Arkansas, Fayetteville KWFT 8:30, Sun
Arkansas, Fort Smith KWFT 8:30, Sun
Arkansas, Jonesboro KFOS 8:30 am, Sun
Arkansas, Rogers KWFT 8:30, Sun
Arkansas, Springdale KWFT 8:30, Sun
California, Bakersfield KWFB 9:30 am, Sun
California, Chico KIWB 9:30 am, Sun
California, El Centro KWUB 9:30 am, Sun
California, Eureka KWBT 9:30 am, Sun
California, Los Angeles KPXN 6:00 am, Fri
California, Monterey KMWB 9:30 am, Sun
California, Palm Springs KCWB 9:30 am, Sun
California, Redding KIWB 9:30 am, Sun
California, Sacramento KSPX 6:00 am, Fri
California, San Francisco KKPX 6:00 am, Fri
California, Salinas KMWB 9:30 am, Sun
California, Santa Barbara KWCA 9:30 am, Sun
Colorado, Denver KPXC 5:00 am, Fri
Colorado, Grand Junction KWGJ 10:30 am, Sun
Colorado, Montrose KWGJ 10:30 am, Sun
Connecticut, Hartford WHPX 6:00 am, Fri
Delaware, Dover WBD 9:30 am, Sun
Florida, Gainesville WBFL 9:30 am, Sun
Florida, Jacksonville WPXC 6:00 am, Fri
Florida, Miami WPMX 6:00 am, Fri
Florida, Orlando WOPX 6:00 am, Fri
Florida, Panama City WBPC 9:30 am, Sun
Florida, Tallahassee-Thomasville 9:30 am, Sun
Florida, Tampa WXPX 6:00 am, Fri
Florida, West Palm Beach WPXP 6:00 am, Fri
Georgia, Albany WBSK 9:30 am, Sun
Georgia, Augusta WBAU 9:30 am, Sun
Georgia, Brunswick WPXC 6:00 am, Fri

Georgia, Columbus WBG 9:30 am, Sun
Georgia, Macon WBMN 9:30 am, Sun
Georgia, Savannah WBVH 9:30 am, Sun
Hawaii, Hawaii Na Leo Chan. 54 6:30 am, Sun; 8:30 am, Wed
Hawaii, Maui/Lanaii/Molokai/Niihau Akaku Chan. 52 6:30 pm, Sun; 3:30 am, Mon
Hawaii, Kauai Ho' Ike Chan. 52 9:30 am, Tue
Idaho, Boise KWOB 10:30 am, Sun
Idaho, Idaho Falls KWIB 10:30 am, Sun
Idaho, Pocatello KWIB 10:30 am, Sun
Idaho, Twin Falls KWTE 10:30 am, Sun
Illinois, Bloomington WBPE 8:30 am, Sun
Illinois, Chicago WCIU 9:30 am, Sun; WCPX 5:00 am, Fri
Illinois, Peoria WBPE 8:30 am, Sun
Illinois, Rockford WBR 8:30 am, Sun
Indiana, Fort Wayne WBFW 8:30 am, Sun
Indiana, Indianapolis WIPX 6:00 am, Fri
Indiana, Lafayette WBFY 8:30 am, Sun
Indiana, Terra Haute WBI 8:30 am, Sun
Iowa, Cedar Rapids KPXR 5:00 am, Fri
Iowa, Des Moines KFPX 5:00 am, Fri
Iowa, Keokuk WEWB 8:30 am, Sun
Iowa, Kirksville KWOT 8:30 am, Sun
Iowa, Ottumwa KWOT 8:30 am, Sun
Iowa, Mason City KWBR 8:30 am, Sun
Iowa, Rochester KWBR 8:30 am, Sun
Iowa, Sioux City KXWB 8:30 am, Sun
Kansas, Joplin-Pittsburg KSXF 8:30 am, Sun
Kansas, Lincoln KWBL 8:30 am, Sun
Kansas, Topeka WBKS 8:30 am, Sun
Kentucky, Bowling Green WBWG 8:30 am, Sun
Kentucky, Lexington WUPX 6:00 am, Fri
Louisiana, Alexandria KAXN 8:30 am, Sun
Louisiana, El Dorado-Monroe KWMB 8:30 am, Sun
Louisiana, Lafayette KLWB 8:30 am, Sun
Louisiana, Lake Charles WBLC 8:30 am, Sun
Louisiana, New Orleans WPXL 5:00 am, Fri
Maine, Bangor WBAN 9:30 am, Sun
Maine, Presque Isle WBPQ 9:30 am, Sun
Maryland, Salisbury WBD 9:30 am, Sun
Massachusetts, Boston WBPX 6:00 am, Fri
Massachusetts, Holyoke WBQT 9:30 am, Sun
Massachusetts, Springfield WBQT 9:30 am, Sun
Michigan, Alpena WBAE 9:30 am, Sun
Michigan, Cadillac WBVC 9:30 am, Sun
Michigan, Detroit WPXD 6:00 am, Fri; WADL 10:00 am, Sun



North Carolina, Lumber Bridge WFPX 6:00 am, Fri
North Carolina, New Bern WGWB 9:30 am, Sun
North Carolina, Raleigh WRPX 6:00 am, Fri; 9:00 am, Sun
North Carolina, Washington WGWB 9:30 am, Sun
North Carolina, Wilmington WBW 9:30 am, Sun
North Dakota, Bismarck KWMK 10:30 am, Sun
North Dakota, Dickinson KWMK 10:30 am, Sun
North Dakota, Fargo WBFG 8:30 am, Sun
North Dakota, Minot KWMK 10:30 am, Sun
North Dakota, Valley City WBFG 8:30 am, Sun
Ohio, Cleveland WVPX 6:00 am, Fri
Ohio, Lima WBOH 9:30 am, Sun
Ohio, Steubenville WBWO 9:30 am, Sun
Ohio, Zanesville WBZV 9:30 am, Sun
Oklahoma, Ada KSHD 8:30 am, Sun
Oklahoma, Lawton KWB 8:30 am, Sun
Oklahoma, Oklahoma City KOPX 5:00 am, Fri
Oklahoma, Tulsa KTPX 5:00 am, Fri
Oregon, Bend KWBO 9:30 am, Sun
Oregon, Eugene KZWB 9:30 am, Sun
Oregon, Klamath Falls KMFD 9:30 am, Sun
Oregon, Medford KMFD 9:30 am, Sun
Oregon, Portland KPXG 6:00 am, Fri
Pennsylvania, Erie WBEP 9:30 am, Sun
Pennsylvania, Philadelphia WPPX 6:00 am, Fri
Pennsylvania, Wilkes Barre WQPX 6:00 am, Fri
Rhode Island, Providence WPXQ 6:00 am, Fri
South Carolina, Charleston WBLN 9:30 am, Sun
South Carolina, Florence WFVB 9:30 am, Sun
South Carolina, Myrtle Beach WFVB 9:30 am, Sun
South Dakota, Mitchell KWSD 8:30 am, Sun
South Dakota, Rapid City KWBH 10:30 am, Sun
South Dakota, Sioux Falls KWSD 8:30 am, Sun
Tennessee, Jackson WBJK 8:30 am, Sun
Tennessee, Knoxville WPXK 6:00 am, Fri
Tennessee, Memphis WPXX 5:00 am, Fri
Tennessee, Nashville WNPX 5:00 am, Fri
Texas, Abilene KQAW 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Amarillo KDBA 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Beaumont KWBB 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Brownsville KMHB 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Corpus Christi KWDB 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Harlingen KMHB 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Houston KPXB 5:00 am, Fri
Texas, Laredo KTXW 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Longview KWTL 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Lubbock KWBZ 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Midland KWWT 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Odessa KWWT 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Port Arthur KWBB 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, San Angelo KWSA 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, San Antonio KPXL 5:00 am, Fri
Texas, Sherman KSHD 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Sweetwater KQAW 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Tyler KWTL 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Victoria KWVB 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Weslaco KMHB 8:30 am, Sun
Texas, Wichita Falls KWB 8:30 am, Sun
Utah, Salt Lake City KUPX 5:00 am, Fri
Virginia, Charlottesville WBC 9:30 am, Sun
Virginia, Harrisonburg WBHA 9:30 am, Sun
Virginia, Norfolk WPXV 6:00 am, Fri
Virginia, Roanoke WPRX 6:00 am, Fri
Washington D.C. WDCW 8:00 am, Sun; WPXW 6:00 am, Fri
Washington, Kennewick KWYP 9:30 am, Sun
Washington, Pasco KWYP 9:30 am, Sun
Washington, Richland KWYP 9:30 am, Sun
Washington, Seattle KWPX 6:00 am, Fri
Washington, Spokane KGPX 6:00 am, Fri
Washington, Yakima KWYP 9:30 am, Sun
West Virginia, Beckley WBB 9:30 am, Sun

Michigan, Grand Rapids WZPX 5:00 am, Fri
Michigan, Lansing WBL 9:30 am, Sun
Michigan, Marquette WBMK 9:30 am, Sun
Michigan, Traverse City WBVC 9:30 am, Sun
Minnesota, Duluth-Superior KWBD 8:30 am, Sun
Minnesota, Mankato KWYE 8:30 am, Sun
Minnesota, Minneapolis KPXM 5:00 am, Fri
Mississippi, Biloxi WBG 8:30 am, Sun
Mississippi, Columbus WBSP 8:30 am, Sun
Mississippi, Greenville WBWD 8:30 am, Sun
Mississippi, Greenwood WBWD 8:30 am, Sun
Mississippi, Gulfport WBG 8:30 am, Sun
Mississippi, Hattiesburg WBHA 8:30 am, Sun
Mississippi, Laurel WBHA 8:30 am, Sun
Mississippi, Meridian WBMM 8:30 am, Sun
Mississippi, Tupelo WBSP 8:30 am, Sun
Mississippi, West Point WBSP 8:30 am, Sun
Missouri, Columbia KJWB 8:30 am, Sun
Missouri, Jefferson City KJWB 8:30 am, Sun
Missouri, Hannibal WEWB 8:30 am, Sun
Missouri, Quincy WEWB 8:30 am, Sun
Missouri, Kansas City KPXE 5:00 am, Fri
Missouri, St. Joseph WBJO 8:30 am, Sun
Montana, Billings KWMB 10:30 am, Sun
Montana, Bozeman-Butte KWXB 10:30 am, Sun
Montana, Glendive KWZB 10:30 am, Sun
Montana, Great Falls KWGF 10:30 am, Sun
Montana, Helena KWHA 10:30 am, Sun
Montana, Missoula KIDW 10:30 am, Sun
Nebraska, Hastings KWBL 8:30 am, Sun
Nebraska, Kearney KWBL 8:30 am, Sun
Nebraska, North Platte KWPL 8:30 am, Sun
Nevada, Reno KWVB 9:30 am, Sun
New Mexico, KAZQ 6:30 am, Sun; 9:00 pm, Wed
New York, Albany WYPX 6:00 am, Fri
New York, Binghamton WBXI 9:30 am, Sun
New York, Buffalo WPXJ 6:00 am, Fri
New York, Elmira WBE 9:30 am, Sun
New York, New York City WPNX 6:00 am, Fri; WLNY 10:00 am Sun
New York, Syracuse WSPX 6:00 am, Fri
New York, Utica WBU 9:30 am, Sun
New York, Watertown WBWT 9:30 am, Sun
North Carolina, Durham WRPX 6:00 am, Fri; 9:00 am, Sun
North Carolina, Fayetteville WFPX 6:00 am, Fri
North Carolina, Greensboro WGPX 6:00 am, Fri
North Carolina, Greenville WEPX 6:00 am, Fri; WGWB 9:30 am, Sun

West Virginia, Bluefield WBB 9:30 am, Sun
West Virginia, Charleston WLPX 6:00 am, Fri
West Virginia, Clarksburg WVWB 9:30 am, Sun
West Virginia, Oak Hill WBB 9:30 am, Sun
West Virginia, Weston WVWB 9:30 am, Sun
West Virginia, Parkersburg WBPB 9:30 am, Sun
West Virginia, Wheeling WBWO 9:30 am, Sun
Wisconsin, Eau Claire WBCZ 8:30 am, Sun
Wisconsin, La Crosse WBCZ 8:30 am, Sun
Wisconsin, Milwaukee WPXE 5:00 am, Fri
Wisconsin, Rhinelander WBWA 8:30 am, Sun
Wisconsin, Wausau WBWA 8:30 am, Sun
Wyoming, Casper KWWY 10:30 am, Sun
Wyoming, Cheyenne KCHW 10:30 am, Sun
Wyoming, Riverton KWWY 10:30 am, Sun
Wyoming, Scottsbluff KCHW 10:30 am, Sun

CANADA

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Nationwide cable WGN 8:00 am ET, Sun; Vision TV 4:30 pm ET, Sun

LATIN AMERICA

Regional satellite Galaxy 3 Trans. 21 11:30 am ET, Tue/Thu
Colombia WGN 7:00 am, Sun; Buenas Noticias TV 47 11:00 am, Fri
El Salvador WGN 6:00 am, Sun
Guatemala WGN 6:00 am, Sun
Honduras WGN 6:00 am, Sun
Mexico WGN 7:00 am, Sun
Panama WGN 7:00 am, Sun

CARIBBEAN

Regional satellite Galaxy 3 Trans. 21 11:30 am ET, Tue/Thu; Galaxy 5 Trans. 7 8:00 am ET, Sun
Aruba WGN 8:00 am, Sun
Bahamas WGN 8:00 am, Sun
Barbados CBC Chan. 8 1:00 pm, Sun
Belize WGN 7:00 am, Sun
Cuba WGN 8:00 am, Sun
Dominican Republic WGN 8:00 am, Sun
Haiti WGN 7:00 am, Sun
Jamaica WGN 9:00 am, Sun
Puerto Rico WGN 8:00 am, Sun

EUROPE

Malta Smash TV 4:30 pm, Sat; 10:00 pm, Tue

AFRICA

South Africa CSN 6:30 am, Sun

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND

Australia nationwide Network Ten 4:30 am, Sun
Adelaide, South Australia Chan. 31 11:30, Sun
Perth, Western Australia Chan. 31 11:30 am, Sun
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Sexual Health

YOUR ARTICLE (“Sexual Health: What Every High School and College Student Needs to Know,” March) was outstanding. That

article needs to be issued to every college student in the land somehow—before they arrive on campus the first time. Actually, it is needed long before that even—try middle school, unfortunately. ... Excellently done and blunt. ... This sick world needs this wake up call whether they want it or not.

Gary F. Restall—RHODE ISLAND

The Fed Money Machine

THANK YOU FOR THE ARTICLE “WHY THE U.S. Dollar Constantly Loses Value” (February). I’m glad the Federal Reserve has been exposed for what it is: a money machine for the government, among other things. Now when people see a headline that says the Fed is “worried” about inflation, they will know the truth. The Fed is causing virtually all of it.

Ben Weldon—E-MAIL RESPONSE

I AM 72 YEARS OLD, AND I WAS A CHILD during World War II. My father deposited in a bank for my brother and me a very large amount of money. I was told that, at that time, the money my brother and I had would have been enough to buy three large homes. At the end of World War II, we could [only] buy a few loaves of bread. I tell this story to our kids but it does not make an impression on them. I am sure your article will.

Maria Sirotti—CALIFORNIA

Today’s News

[I HAVE] READ MOST OF YOUR RECENT magazines, which have notably featured the depressing and negative news in this world we live in. Unfortunately, you are only stating facts, and it is almost impossible to paint a happier picture. In theory, if you were to match good with evil today, I think the latter would win on points, but I am hoping for a rematch soon and pray and believe that good will overcome evil. When I was a young man, it was often said by the old-

er generation, “Oh, to be young again!” I think only a cynic would say that today.

L. Summerfield—GERMANY

You are right that most of the news in this world is negative. But that is why the *Trumpet* is so important as a news source. We report on how today’s events fit the outline of events God prophesied of in His Word, signs that Jesus Christ gave to demonstrate the imminence of His Second Coming. When He returns, He will confront and solve today’s problems on a global scale. That truly is good news!

TODAY, I READ IN LONDON’S *METRO* newspaper that German Chancellor Angela Merkel wants to re-open the European Constitution. As I was reading the small, easily overlooked article, I thought for a moment, “Déjà vu—I’m reading something again.” ... I had read it ages ago in the *Trumpet* first. ... I’ve been reading the *Trumpet* for about a decade now and have seen many of the things the *Trumpet* and Mr. Armstrong said come (and are coming) to pass. ... The *Trumpet*’s news is news in advance and accurate at that, which can be scary ...

T. Ellison—UNITED KINGDOM

Failure of Democracy

IN YOUR ARTICLE “A TROUBLED DEMOCRACY” (February), Timothy Oostendarp is concerned about Germans becoming disillusioned with democracy. From a Christian perspective this should not surprise us. After all, democracy is not a biblical form of government. The Bible does not say that authority comes from the people, but from God (Romans 13). ... Democracy has led the Western world into a continuing moral decline, as the multitudes desire the freedom to follow their lusts and pleasures. The result: legalization of homosexuality and abortion in most countries. Germans will probably not remain the only people who are disillusioned with democracy.

Thomas Pfefferle—GERMANY

WHEN I HEARD ON THE NEWS OF THE Democrats’ victory in the U.S. elections regarding their gaining more seats than the Republicans, I said that day that President Bush won’t be able to get the things done that he wants to do anymore ... Like Lincoln said, “A house divided cannot stand”—quoting from Christ’s words. ... We are in deep trouble and we all must repent to God. I wish that Presi-

dent Bush, our own Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Tony Blair ... Ehud Olmert ... would collectively rouse the people and call for a fast, as Abraham Lincoln did when he was president, so that collectively we might seek God and repent ... I doubt that they will do so. ...

Mary Young—NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA

Raising the Ruins

THANK YOU FOR WRITING *RAISING THE Ruins* and setting the record straight on the PCG-WCG legal dispute. I bought a copy and found it hard to put down. It is unconscionable that the WCG would try to hide behind copyright law to prevent Herbert Armstrong’s writings from reaching a willing audience. Kudos to PCG for making Mr. Armstrong’s books and booklets widely available and letting readers assess their theological merit. Suppressing information is never in the public interest.

Dr. Tony Rogers—MICHIGAN

WHEN I RECEIVED THE “SPECIAL” ISSUE with Herbert W. Armstrong gracing the cover, it brought back memories of my receiving the *Plain Truth* many years ago. Mr. Armstrong provided clear understanding of both biblical and political issues, bringing the plain truth to all he undertook to explain. As a young child on our farm in the mid-1930s, I remember my grandmother listening intently to his broadcasts—she never left her radio while his program aired. ... Bless you and the Philadelphia Church of God for bringing back Mr. Armstrong to those like myself who have missed him and the message he brought to all. ...

Elizabeth Pappas—BERNARDSTON, MASS.

I AM SO HAPPY YOUR CHURCH IS STILL using Herbert Armstrong’s teachings. I found out by reading Stephen Flurry’s book, *Raising the Ruins*, what happened to Mr. Armstrong’s [church], and found out your church has all his teachings. Deep down in my heart, I totally believe [what he taught] and am glad there is a church that follows his teachings. ...

Ned Taguchi—HONOLULU, HAWAII

Comments?

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Return of the Slave Trade

Global economic cooperation has a dark side. BY ROBERT MORLEY

GLOBALIZATION IS CREDITED WITH MUCH OF THE world's recent scientific and economic advancement. Many Americans and Westerners today live in an entrancing, push-button world of ease, where virtually anything is readily available by just walking down to the local Wal-Mart and handing over a credit card. Much of our essential machinery and many of our toys come from faraway places we've never visited or even heard of.

Certainly, globalization has helped many nations. China and India, for example, are building modern cities and engineering and manufacturing goods at a rate and on a scale unimaginable just a decade ago.

But globalization has a dark side. Behind the neon glow of technological and economic growth, evils spread in the shadows. One example is a problem most Westerners view as a thing of the past—but which, thanks in part to globalization, is enjoying an unhappy renaissance: the slave trade.

Why is it that no matter how hard mankind tries to improve the world, unforeseen negative consequences result? Though global academic and technological advancement have brought unprecedented prosperity to so many, on a global scale, greed and crime have also increased apace. The manner in which globalization has exacerbated the slave trade is a startling case in point.

According to conservative estimates, all told there are an astonishing 27 million slaves in the world today.

That's more than the number of slaves involved in the Atlantic slave trade in the 18th and 19th centuries. The U.S. government estimates that 600,000 to 800,000 people are forced into slavery each year. The *Christian Science Monitor* says the present glut of slaves is greater than ever in human history (Sept. 1, 2004).

Though the majority of these slaves are located in Asia and Africa, the number of them trafficked across international boundaries and into the Western world is growing too. Many of the slaves entering the Western developed world originate in Albania, Belarus, China, Romania, Russia and Thailand.

One of the biggest reasons the slave trade is booming is that it is extremely profitable. Slaves are cheap—by some sources, at the lowest price in 4,000 years—and very lucrative. The United Nations estimates that slave traffickers make about \$10 billion a year—\$10,000 net per slave. And once sold, the slaves are even more profitable for their owners, especially in the sex industry. Enslaved prostitutes, besides earning their owners thousands of dollars while they're working, can be sold, resold or traded like postage stamps or baseball cards.

According to *Foreign Affairs*, the main cause for the growth in the international slave trade is globalization. Unfortunately,

the same developments that have eased the flow of labor, goods and capital among nations across the globe have made the slave trade easier.

As Marian L. Tupy, assistant director of the Project on Global Economic Liberty at the Cato Institute, observed, "unintended negative consequences of human discovery are common."

For example, advances in travel have cut the costs of transport by thousands of dollars. The price of a slave in 1840 adjusted to today's dollars was approximately \$40,000. Much of that price was due to transport-related costs, as the slaves were sailed across the Atlantic. Today, a slave can be purchased in

Africa for \$30 and then smuggled to other parts of the world for little more than the cost of a couple of airline tickets.

"With globalization and cheap transportation, you can move people easier and quicker than guns or drugs," said Joy Zarembka of the Campaign for Migrant Domestic Workers Rights. "And you can use them over and over and over again. You don't just sell them once and call it a day. It's very, very profitable."

This is an aching and terrible paradox: Globalization, with

its associated technological advancement, has created much wealth for some, yet has enabled the enslavement of others. Rapid increases in science, technology, industry, commerce and trade—considered by many to be signs of progress leading toward a more peaceful future among nations—have done nothing to halt, and have rather helped, this horrible crime against humanity.

It seems intrinsic to the human condition—this paradox of degeneration amid progress.

There is a fundamental reason for forced slavery: *human nature*. Economic advancement does not improve character. It does not reduce greed and selfishness. Unless human nature changes, mankind's problems cannot be solved—and the slave trade, to take merely one example among a host of human evils, will continue.


However, the Bible does speak of a time just ahead of us when mankind's problems *will* be solved—and it will be through addressing those problems at their source: rooting out human nature. Under the direction of Jesus Christ at His Second Coming, God's law of love will be taught and enforced—forbidding stealing and lying, requiring employers to respect employees and treat them fairly, eliminating the causes of debt and implementing principles that lead to financial stability and prosperity.

We are living in the final days of modern forced labor and unjust enslavement. To understand more about the world that will end these evils, and how it will come about, read *The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like*. ■



EXPLOITED Slaves in Brazil return from hard labor in the Amazon.

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