

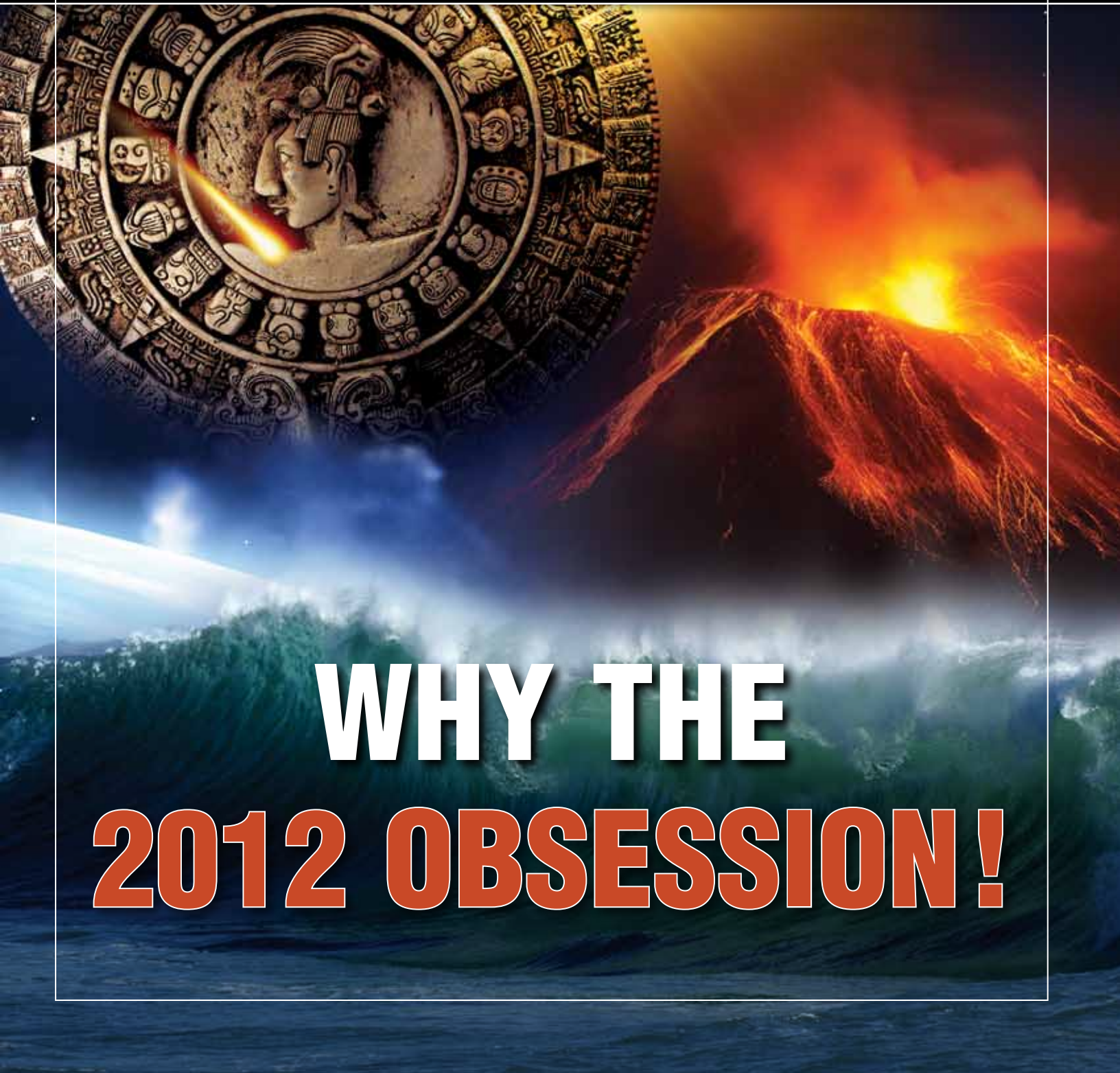
JUNE 2012

THE

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# REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING



# WHY THE 2012 OBSESSION!

# THE REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

VOL. X | NO. 5 | JUNE 2012

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REALTRUTH.ORG



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PHOTO: ODD ANDERSEN/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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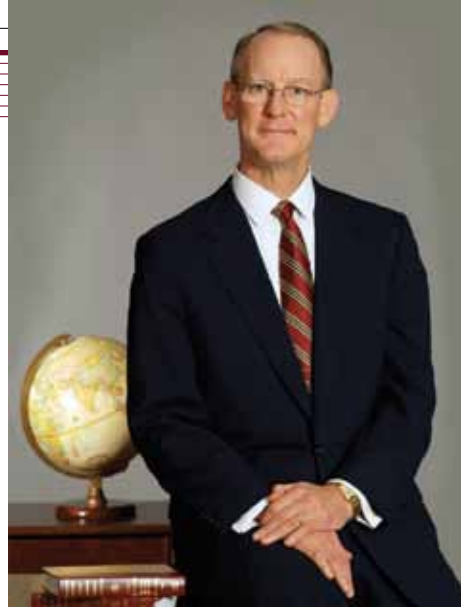
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## PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack



# *A World Held Captive*

**P**ICTURE THE WORLD around you. Advances in science and technology have *never* been greater. Vast knowledge has brought awesome progress—while immorality and human degeneration have never been worse.

The world has reached the 21st century. My grandparents were born in the 19th century. Within that time—about 125 years—the world has changed beyond recognition. Mankind now stands on the threshold of annihilation by weapons of mass destruction, with the frightening specter of terrorism spanning the globe.

*Why* is this world in such terrible condition?—and what is the TRUTH of God’s ultimate Plan for mankind? You can know. This Personal brings answers!

World conditions grow more ominous as the news of each day seems worse than the last. Events are spiraling toward a great crisis at the close of this age. But how did there come to be such appalling evils and awful suffering on a worldwide scale? Why have world leaders failed to improve the countries they govern and the world at large? What is wrong? Why has progress in knowledge, science and technology not delivered man from his problems? Why does civilization stand on the brink of catastrophe—even extinction!—without some kind of intervention and rescue?

Many know *something* is wrong—but do not know *what*. This includes the supposed experts. Few understand there *is* a supreme purpose God is working out.

Fewer still know *what* this purpose is—and they do not understand the forces at work that have controlled civilization since man first appeared on Earth.

### **An Unseen Kidnapper**

Most assume things are as they are because mankind has evolved to its present state. This thinking permeates modern education. But it is a false—entirely WRONG—premise! Evolution is a fiction created by men who have been led to this theory by the one who seeks to blind all inhabitants of Earth to God’s awesome Plan.

Those who hold to the evolutionary theory are prevented—in fact, *blocked*—from seeing *why* conditions on Earth are as they are. Many statesmen, leaders and thinkers feel trapped by these conditions, the flow of world events, and being unable to do anything about them. Indeed, they *are* trapped. But why?

This is *not* God’s world! It is *cut off* from Him and held hostage by an unseen SUPER KIDNAPPER—who has convinced his captives he is a benefactor. All humanity has been deceived into believing the soothing words of this great CAPTOR, thinking themselves better off under his care and leadership. I speak of Satan the devil and his hijacking—6,000 years ago—of Adam and Eve and all mankind ever after! But the world has remained a *willing* captive ever since.

Everyone understands kidnapping. This crime often involves executives of large companies, whose release is obtained through paying a *ransom*. Hijackers work in the same way, except their crime usually involves seizing a plane, ship, train or bus full of victims.

Most hostages are captive until someone either performs a daring rescue or ransom is paid. Earth is now in a state of captivity, requiring supernatural deliverance—rescue—through ransom payment.

Here is modern man's predicament: Imagine picking up a 20-chapter book and trying to understand it by starting with the last chapter. You would be lost, completely unable to understand the meaning of persons and events described. In the same way, none can understand events *in today's world* because they do not have proper background of what happened in the previous chapters of mankind's existence. It is the very *first* chapter of the story of humanity that is key to all "19 chapters" that follow.

### **Not God's World**

You may have supposed the governments of modern nations reflect God's Way. This is almost everyone's assumption. Yet, again, this is *not* God's world. This is why Jesus foretold the coming of God's world-ruling SUPERGOVERNMENT to replace the confused, ineffective and inefficient governments of men. These governments are powerless to solve the world's *biggest* problems.

How did the world come to be the way it is? For instance, why can't governments get along—avoid war—find peace—reach agreement? Why such constant instability, scandal and division among leaders and seemingly endless revolutions and military coups? Why no shortage of demagogues, dictators and revolutionaries, who always promise to make things better, yet bring continual worsening of problems and conditions?

Most theologians, religionists and ministers blindly assume this world reflects God's guidance—His way. They then conclude that if "all Christians would work together, in love and unity, to make this world safer and a better place, they could bring peace, happiness and prosperity to all nations." This is a completely wrong view. Nowhere did Jesus say, "Go into all the world and strive to make it better by becoming part of it." He did say, "Go you into all the world, and *preach the gospel...*" (Mark 16:15). Christ did not come to make *this* world better. He came to announce the coming of a better world, under *His* government!

Blind, deceived men think they can bring world peace through human effort. Ironically, this quest often involves supposed "Christian" nations striving to achieve peace through war. These see certain evil forces at work and feel compelled to "do something." They assume Jesus would be an "activist," seeking to "make the world a better place."

Be honest! Haven't you heard churches urge people to "get involved" or "take a stand" to improve some local, national or world problem?

### **Who Controls the World?**

Satan the devil is called the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4), the "prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), and the "prince of the *power of the air*" (Eph. 2:2). The apostle John wrote that he "deceives the whole world" (Rev. 12:9).

Satan rebelled against God's government *prior* to the re-creation of Earth (Gen. 1:1-3) and the creation of Adam and Eve. He led one-third of all angels into rebellion (II Pet. 2:4; Rev. 12:4). Isaiah 14:12-14 reveals he ruled the earth, and Ezekiel 28:15 shows he was a created being—a perfect archangel. He remains Earth's ruler until Christ's Second Coming. Christ qualified to replace him at His First Coming.

The devil was lying in wait for Adam and Eve. They were created on the sixth day, Friday, rested on the Sabbath, Saturday, and were seduced by Satan probably the next day, Sunday—at *two days old*. No two-day-old child knows how to discern right from wrong. This couple thought they were grown-up enough to make their own decisions. As with most children, they did not listen to their Parent, God. They believed Satan's lie that they would not "surely die." In so doing, they rejected the rule of God's government in their lives.

If Adam had obeyed God's instruction, he could have qualified to replace Satan and restore God's government to Earth. He chose *captivity* instead.

In this historic Genesis account, Satan lied to Eve, who led Adam into sin with her. The devil's deceit captured these adult children into belief that they no longer needed to listen to their Parent. Thrust from the garden, they were forced to fend for themselves. Let's read: "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the *Tree of Life*, and eat, and live forever: therefore the LORD God *sent him forth from the garden...* *He drove out the man*; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the *WAY* of the *Tree of Life*" (Gen. 3:22-24). The way of receiving and living by God's Spirit was no longer accessible to men.

### **Mankind Cut Off from God**

Mankind rejected God's perfect law and rule—His *government* over all creation—as guides in their lives and were made captive to Satan and his way of *sin*. Because of sin, they no longer had access to God's blessings, guidance, protection and gift of His Holy Spirit, which would have come by eating of the Tree of Life. This decision carried grave implications for all human beings who came

*Please see PERSONAL, page 20*



# LATIN AMERICA'S Emerging Trade Empire

Why is the region experiencing such surprising success in the global market?

BY NESTOR A. TORO

**I**N THE REALM of world trade, Latin America seems to be returning to its 15th-century roots.

During that time, explorers such as Christopher Columbus, Hernando Cortez, and Pedro Alvares Cabral stretched Spanish and Portuguese empires into Latin America in search of better sea routes for their nations' gold and spice trades. By the 16th century, the New World provided immense wealth for the Spanish Empire. For example, *Encyclopedia Americana* states that for 25 years Madrid received \$13 million annually in gold from Peru alone.

By strengthening 21st century political ties and employing tariff reductions with both China and the West, the nations of Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean are set to become a formidable trade bloc.

*The Washington Post* stated that Latin America has an impressive combined GDP of \$5 trillion and is one of the "richest markets in the world." It mentioned "the emergence of Silicon Valley-like startup cultures that have a homegrown flavor and ethos. Startups are being launched in Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico to create the same Internet niches as companies in the United States and Europe."

A study by Visa and AmericaEconomia shows e-commerce in the region reached \$43 billion during 2010, doubling 2009's total, and continued economic growth is expected for 2012.

Latin America's portfolio of untapped resources is impressive.

Venezuela alone holds at least 18 percent of the world's oil reserves. The Amazon basin is known to possess as much as 20 percent of the world's freshwater supply. According to the Inter-American Institute for the Cooperation on Agriculture, "Latin America is one of the few regions of the world where agriculture production can expand since it holds 42% of that potential globally," *Mercopress* reported.

The UN's Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean pairs the region's booming economy with China's as "the current global growth poles." The Asian giant appears on track to beat the European Union as Latin America's second-largest trade partner, after the United States. But the report also states that the trend "could moderate if bilateral trade is energized following the partnership agreements between the European Union and Central America, the Caribbean, the Andean Community and, potentially, MERCOSUR [South America's leading trade bloc]."

Researchers wonder why Sino-Latin American commerce relations have not taken off further, adding, "It is striking that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean should attribute so much importance (however justified) to negotiations with the European Union..."

Europe, not China, appears to be the new door to Latin America's 21st-century global trade.

"The bloc remains one of the globe's most affluent regions and a formidable actor in the enforcement of world trade rules and business regulation," *Financial Times* stated.

But the Latin American global-trade machine is just beginning to sputter to

life. Once in high gear, it will play a prominent role on the world stage.

## Commodities Exporter

In a letter to *The Economist*, the ambassador for Brazil in London, Roberto Jaguaribe, wrote, "Latin American countries have long been big exporters of commodities, the largest markets for which are outside the region. Trade among Latin American countries, by the way, reached an historic record of \$160 billion...in 2011."

Indeed, large areas of Latin America boast merchandise coveted by markets of the developed world. Latin countries are vital extraction and processing hubs for essential goods and raw materials such as crude oil, grain, iron ore, soybeans, rubber and cotton.

How good is business? The International Monetary Fund (IMF) summarized the outlook: "...external conditions will remain stimulative for much of Latin America: The double tailwinds of easy external finance and high commodity prices are likely to persist for a while, though not forever... this environment creates opportunities for Latin America—opportunities to build on the resilience and flexibility that has served it so well during the global crisis of 2008-09."

In the midst of a troubled economy for the rest of the world, the report highlighted that the financially integrated economies of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay, experienced strong growth, currency appreciation, and primary fiscal surpluses leading to public debt reduction.

The IMF continued, "Latin America has been at the forefront of financial and capital account liberalization, especially between 1985 and 2000, and today

stands, with Eastern Europe, as one of the emerging market regions with the fewest barriers to financial flows.”

Latin America has weathered turbulent times remarkably well. And there is much room for growth.

### **Business Partners**

A brief look at some of the integrated Latin American nations shows they have been building stronger ties with Europe.

**Mexico:** The world’s top silver exporter was the first Latin American nation to establish a free trade agreement with the EU.

**Peru:** The nation is the world’s second-largest silver exporter, third-largest producer of copper, fourth producer of tin, and one of the largest producers of gold and lead, among others.

On June 12, German Chancellor Angela Merkel advocated the “rapid implementation of an EU free trade deal with Colombia and Peru, saying it was a good way to foster growth during the eurozone crisis,” *Agence-France Presse* reported. “Speaking after meeting Peruvian President Ollanta Humala, Merkel said: ‘Particularly in a situation where some European countries are having economic difficulties, a free-trade agreement with Colombia and Peru is a good sign to promote growth.

“‘Therefore we want it to come into force quickly,’ the chancellor added.”

**Brazil:** One of the world’s major iron ore producers, it is also the European Union’s top Latin American trading partner.

*The Latin Business Chronicle* provided a vivid description of a recent EU-Brazil transaction: “When German automaker Audi wanted to make a splash among wealthy Brazilians recently, it invited 12 Brazilian CEOs to fly first class to Istanbul, Turkey. Audi treated them like sultans, put them at the legendary Ciragan palace and incidentally, let them experience its new A8 model. It ended up selling four of this new luxury model to its guests. This is an example—somewhat extreme—of how much European companies are ready to invest to gain market shares in Brazil...Last year trade between the

two areas jumped 34.3 percent to 63.6 billion euros (US\$85 billion).”

**Colombia:** In May, the nation activated a long-awaited free trade agreement with the U.S. Along with Peru, the country will soon implement an EU free trade pact that is expected to further boost its GDP.

“Once infamous for its illicit drug trade and internal strife, Colombia’s efforts to address these issues have paid dividends,” *The Globe and Mail* stated. “Since 2002, when the military crackdown on the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) began, foreign direct investment (FDI) in Colombia has surged. Between 2005 and 2010, FDI in mining grew at an average rate of five per cent annually...Indeed, the last 10 years has seen Colombia’s potential to become a major gold-producing nation reawaken and build on a history of gold production that stretches back to the 1500s. In fact, until 1937, Colombia was the largest gold producer in the Americas. Already, Colombia has risen to become the 19th largest gold producer in the world and 5th in South America.”

**Uruguay:** While mostly an agricultural exporter, Montevideo houses the headquarters of Mercosur, the continent’s leading trading bloc. Yet ongoing talks for a trade agreement between the EU and Mercosur have been hindered by Argentina’s move to re-nationalize the oil company YPF, which had been previously purchased by the Spanish firm, Repsol.

In May, though, Spain’s Foreign Affairs minister “said that Madrid supports negotiations for a free trade agreement between Mercosur and the European Union on a ‘region to region’ basis, back stepping from his proposal last April to exclude Argentina following the seizure of YPF from Repsol” (*MercoPress*).

**Chile:** This major copper producer went from a third-world country to having the strongest sovereign bond rating on the continent in less than 30 years. One of its main moves to get there was astute: reducing tariffs and signing an incredible number of free trade agreements—as many as 59—including

pacts with the United States, European Union, China, India and South Korea.

Years after Chile’s then-President Ricardo Lagos began trade talks with the U.S. at an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, he wrote about the important role Europe played in his country’s success: “When I arrived at Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, in November 2000, I had one thing on my mind: trade...I decided to begin in Europe, understanding that making our case to the United States would be easier if we already had the European Union...on board” (*The Southern Tiger: Chile’s Fight for a Democratic and Prosperous Future*).

Europe is definitely on board. It is the main foreign investor in Latin America, and recipient of about 15 percent of its exports. The European External Action Service (the diplomatic arm of the EU) calls the two regions “natural allies linked by strong historical, cultural and economic ties.”

### **Ancient Merchants**

While modern Latin American nations seem to be emulating European settlers from the 1500s and 1600s, the explorers in that Discovery Age also had an extraordinary historical precedent to follow. Centuries before, the Iberian peninsula (modern day Portugal and Spain) had already established a reputation for intrepid sea exploration and abundant commerce. The ancient city of Tartessus (also spelled Tartessos) was renowned for entrepreneurship.

*Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that Tartessus was a unique kingdom that flourished between 800 and 550 BC, and identifies it as an “ancient region and town of the Guadalquivir River valley in southwestern Spain, probably identical with the Tarshish mentioned in the Bible...The exact site of the town is not known, but archaeological evidence suggests it may have been near present-day Sevilla (Seville).”

A *National Geographic* special on the mythical city of Atlantis also makes reference to this ancient seafaring city. Believing it to be the genesis of the Atlantis legend, the show’s producer told *The Jerusalem Post* that “it is gen-

erally acknowledged that the Biblical Tarshish is what the historians call Tartessos, which was in southern Spain. In the Tanach [Hebrew Bible], Tarshish is a great city with a huge navy, with silver and gold. Jonah sails towards Tarshish. Solomon has naval expeditions with Tarshish. Tarshish disappears from the Biblical record. Tartessos disappears from the historical record.”

The people of Tarshish were such skilled merchants that they likely spawned the myth of Atlantis! Legends aside, however, the city is nearly universally thought to be an epicenter of sea trade, and is considered to have been situated in the region of modern-day Spain and Portugal.

Scholars and Bible historians generally agree on the location of this ancient seaport. According to British geographer and cartographer Aaron Arrowsmith, Tartessos was a territory established by adventurous traders who settled in the Iberian peninsula after moving from the ancient city of *Tarsus* in Asia Minor (modern Turkey). These people were considered the “chief merchants in the early ages of the world; and the ships which they built for some of their distant voyages are thought to have been of a larger and stronger make than the vessels ordinarily used in navigation: hence ships appear to be denoted, in the Scriptures, by the appellation ‘Ships of Tarshish,’ and not from their having been at the city of Tarshish itself” (*A Compendium of Ancient and Modern Geography*).

### History Repeats Itself

An often overlooked facet of human history, especially in the case of Latin America and its connection to Europe, is that nations are merely families grown large.

In the Bible, Genesis 10:1-4 states that Tarshish was a son of Javan, and great-grandson of Noah. Many inhabitants of Spain and Portugal are among the descendants of Tarshish. Through empire expansion, these men and women also settled in the modern Latin American world.

Families have tended to stick together throughout the centuries. Is

it any wonder then that modern Latin America is again rising as a trade bloc? Is it really a surprise that this region of the world seems more interested in further strengthening ties with Europe rather than Asia?

History almost inevitably repeats itself. In this light, the precedent for Latin America tied to a unified Europe is ironclad.

Historian John Huxtable Elliott wrote: “One of the greatest empires in world history is known to us as the ‘Spanish Empire’, but this is not the name by which it was known to the Spaniards themselves. In the sixteen and seventeenth centuries there was only one true empire in the western world—the Holy Roman Empire... The sixteenth-century Castilians saw themselves as a chosen, and therefore a superior, people, entrusted with a divine mission which looked towards universal empire as its goal. This mission was seen as a higher one than of the Romans because it was set into the context on Catholic Christianity” (*Spain and Its World, 1500-1700: Selected Essays*).

Given its shared bloodlines, religious ties, and historical record, why are Europe and Latin America not even *closer* trade partners?

### Coming Solution

Of course, there is an elephant in the room. The eurozone is in shambles and nearing a breaking point. Ireland needs a second bailout, Spain’s credit rating continues to be downgraded, and Europeans fear a run on the banks in Greece, among other problems. Understandably, people are frustrated and confused about the future of the continent.

Yet economic crisis in Europe has always meant one thing: change is coming—and FAST. This always arrives in the form of a centralized government, often tied to unified religion, seizing power.

Such change first took place with Constantine in the Roman Empire and Justinian. Then under the Holy Roman Empire came Charlemagne (also called the “Father of Europe”),

Otto the Great, Charles V, Napoleon and so on.

Each time, Europe gave power to one man to protect their lifestyles, and return them to the sort of prosperity seen under Constantine’s watch, especially if there was a threat of economic hardship.

Edward Gibbon’s *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* describes the continent at that time, when the capital of Constantinople “enjoyed, within their spacious enclosure, every production which could supply the wants or gratify the luxury of its numerous inhabitants. The sea-coasts of Thrace and Bithynia...still exhibit a rich prospect of vineyards, of gardens, and of plentiful harvests; and the Propontis has ever been renowned for an inexhaustible store of the most exquisite fish, that are taken in their stated seasons, without skill, and almost without labor.”

This sort of prosperity is what Europeans continue to seek today.

While it may sound impossible, it is clear that modern Europe is again moving toward the same type of fiscal integration. *EUobserver* reported, “European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso has said member states must agree to a big common budget, a future banking union and—ultimately—political union in order to save the EU.”

The *Financial Times* quoted Russia’s EU ambassador Vladimir Chizhov, saying, “some people compare the EU with a crocodile. Not because of its teeth, but because of its inability to move backwards.”

“As for the eurozone’s future, the crisis has intensified calls for closer integration.”

Consider just a few headlines at the time of this writing, which all detail the continent’s desire for unity: “German finance minister: bank union only after more EU *integration*” (*Reuters*), “Italy’s debt worries add urgency to Merkel’s dream of *integration*” (*Telegraph*), “Spain’s embattled leader calls for greater European fiscal, banking *integration* to defend euro” (*The Associated Press*).



Clearly, this needs to occur for Europe to move ahead.

But what is necessary to allow the lifestyles like those seen under Constantine?

Supplies, and lots of them. Many of the modern descendants of Tarshish—who are also linked to the Holy Roman Empire—are rising in prominence and ready to supply the much needed raw materials Europeans will need to maintain their standard of living.

### “Mart of nations”

The Bible not only explains the *historical* roots of Tarshish (as well as many other nations), but it also details *future* events for those peoples through the use of prophecy—which can be likened to history written in advance.

The same holds true for Europe. While each of the successive resurrections of the Holy Roman Empire hearkens back to the original one, in the Bible, the Holy Roman Empire is also likened to Babylon. This clue reveals what is to come for the EU *and* Latin America.

Revelation 18:16 describes a “great city”—revealed to be Babylon in verse 2—“that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!”

When Europe unites once again, the result will be economic security and lives of comfort and abundance. Revelation 17:12-13 show that “ten kings,” or political authorities, will give power to one man.

Note how Europe is described in the rest of chapter 18:

Verse 3: “...the *merchants* of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.” The entire world—including Latin America—will benefit from this economic powerhouse.

Verses 12-13: “The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood [cedar], and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and

wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots...”

Under the coming ruler, everyone tied to this European system will live “deliciously” (vs. 7), which is better translated “luxuriously.”

Details in Revelation 18 reveal why Europe will give power to one man: he will bring material riches. The coming unification will bring peace, stability—luxury! The masses will be on board with this new socio-political-military system. In fact, conditions in Europe, and likely Latin America, will be better than at any point in its history.

The Bible indicates that “ships of Tarshish” supply “all riches” to a soon-coming world economic power.

Notice: “Tarshish [was] your [Europe’s] merchant because of your many LUXURY goods. They gave you *silver, iron, tin, and lead* for your goods” (Ezek. 27:12, *New King James Version*). The rest of the passage describes how the people of modern “Tarshish,” along with other merchants from various regions of the world, trade with this system. This system is also referred to elsewhere as the “mart of nations” (Isa. 23:3).

Ezekiel continues, “The ships of Tarshish did sing of you in your market: and you were replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas... When your wares went forth out of the seas, you filled many people; you did enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of your riches and of your merchandise” (27:25, 33).

Yet there is a problem. Each of the resurrections of the Holy Roman Empire failed.

Despite its best efforts, Europe—and any man chosen to rule over it—will never bring the true LASTING peace and abundant living so many desire.

And in the case of this time, the empire will meet a catastrophic end! Notice: “[The people] cried when they saw the smoke of her [Europe] burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea

by reason of her costliness! For in one hour is she made desolate” (Rev. 18:18-19). (To learn more about this topic, visit [rcg.org/prophesy](http://rcg.org/prophesy).)

### Global Shift

Yet the story does not end there for Latin America’s modern ships of Tarshish.

Throughout the Bible *another* governmental system is pictured in detail. In fact, it is mentioned so often that Jesus Christ’s main message is named after it: the “gospel of the kingdom of God.” This can also be termed, the gospel of the GOVERNMENT of God. This ruling system will finally bring the peace and abundance that humanity desires.

Soon after Europe’s prophesied rise and fall, this coming supergovernment will be established over the entire world. The book of Daniel states: “And in the days of these kings”—the 10 European “kings” mentioned in Revelation 17—“shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people... and it shall stand forever” (Dan. 2:44).

Where does Latin America fit into all of this?

Isaiah brings the answer: “Surely the isles shall wait for Me [God], and *the ships of Tarshish first*, to bring...their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD your God, and to the Holy One of Israel...” (60:9).

Yes, Latin America will be first in line to transport riches to the capital city of this coming kingdom!

Eventually, *all* nations on Earth will begin to learn and apply God’s ways including how to do business correctly. His global supergovernment will bring ultimate peace and be established “with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:7).

The Bible contains a wealth of information of how life on Earth will be during this time. Read David C. Pack’s *Tomorrow’s Wonderful World – An Inside View!* at [rcg.org/tww](http://rcg.org/tww) to learn more. □



# The **Wrong** ASSUMPTION

Modern science assumes evolution is the key to man's existence.  
Where does this leave DNA?

BY BRADFORD G. SCHLEIFER

**W**HEN YOU woke up this morning, you made a series of assumptions. Many of them were done unconsciously. When you reached for your alarm clock, you assumed it would be there. While getting ready for your day, you assumed many things as part of your morning routine. You did not plan for anything out of the ordinary—such as no electricity, or even something as extreme as your roof caving in.

The same can be said about *many* aspects of life. Anytime one does not plan for every pos-

sible result, he is making some type of assumption. Obviously, one cannot plan for *every* possible course of *every* possible action. Therefore, people naturally make assumptions.

So basic are assumptions in human thinking that various fields of science use them when creating a theory or hypothesis.

One example is in the field of archeology. The foundation of studying ancient civilizations is based on certain assumptions, be it about culture, intelligence or technological advancements. These assumptions are usually based on facts that have already been collected through archeological digs.

But the underlying premise that something was created by man is assumed. Through the obvious planning and design of a broken arrowhead, piece of pottery, or writing tablet, a conclusion is reached.

In a similar way, if you are walking along a beach and find a soft drink bottle, you would not make a wrong assumption. You would not deduce that because the glass bottle is in sand, and since glass is nothing more than compressed sand, that the bottle gradually formed due to pressures and environmental changes.

Obviously, you realize that the bottle was made in a factory and once contained a beverage.

You may not have realized it, but you unconsciously ran a series of

hypothetical scientific experiments, involving geometry, linguistics, chemical analysis, and probability.

This process may have happened as follows: (1) you picked up the bottle and noticed the shape and texture of the bottle—geometry; (2) when examining it, you recognized the writing as English—linguistics; (3) the sweet smell and perhaps any residue in the bottle indicated the beverage that was once inside—chemical analysis; (4) finally, you realized that all three of the above traits happening naturally was impossible, meaning that this bottle *was* what it was: a *manufactured* soft drink bottle.

Of course, you do not carry out this series of experiments each time you pick up a similar item. Based on previous experience—and proof—you assume the result. In such a case, you are making a correct—provable—assumption because you are basing it on existing, proven facts.

But without existing facts, there is no foundation on which to base your assumption. Such an assumption is not provable and is nothing more than a *guess*.

This same process appears in basic rules of logic. You cannot fabricate something and then base a conclusion on that illusory foundation. Anyone can understand that doing such is silly. These rules of logic are applied to nearly every discipline of science except one—biology!

Instead of looking at the facts and applying simple rules of logic, many convoluted and confusing “theories” are created. But when one wipes away all the *wrong* assumptions, the real data is both fascinating and inspiring.

While amazing facts and details are found throughout the universe, perhaps the most amazing is inside you—the cell. In fact, there are approximately 100 trillion cells in your body and inside *each* of those cells is enough information to fill the largest libraries in the world. An obvious and telltale signature identifies their origin even more conclusively than the previously mentioned glass bottle. And it is hidden in the blueprint of the cell—DNA.

### Baseless Assumptions

To properly frame the subject of DNA, you must first understand the false assumptions upon which biological science is based. These assumptions form the foundation of evolution. While the purpose of this article is not to disprove evolution, examining just two of these assumptions does disprove it and shows why modern science completely misses the reason behind the complex design that appears in every living cell.

Evolution basically states that two “unknown or undetermined” events happened billions of years ago, beginning the process of organic evolution. The first of these processes is commonly called the big bang theory. This event supposedly was the force that created the known material universe.

When modern society discovered radiation, man was able to determine that all matter is deteriorating. Once understood, this proves that there must have been a point in time at which matter did not exist—otherwise, the deterioration process would have already been completed.

To explain this, scientists devised the big bang theory, which basically states that a major explosion of plasma-type gasses formed the beginnings of the universe. From that initial explosion, this early universe expanded into what it is known to be today.

Secondly, evolutionists theorize that at some point in this expanding universe of nonorganic matter, an environment formed that allowed a “soupy goop” to make the transition from inorganic, nonliving matter into organic, living matter.

While modern science can give no explanation as to *why* this transition would happen—or is even possible—it is supposed that all living cells evolved from this organic goop.

The first major obstacle for evolutionists is the scientific law of biogenesis, as stated in *Biology: A Search for Order in Complexity*: “Historically the point of view that life comes only

from life has been so well established through the facts revealed by experiment that it is called the Law of Biogenesis.”

A footnote in the same textbook reads, “Some scientists call this a superlaw, or a law about laws. Regardless of terminology, biogenesis has the highest rank in these levels of generalization.”

While evolutionists freely admit that this law forms the basis of modern biology, many conveniently disregard this fact when applied to evolution. But if, even for a moment, an assumption is made that some “unknown spontaneous event” caused the first essential ingredients of living matter—amino acids—there still remains another colossal hurdle to overcome.

### Complexity from Chaos

When first discovered in the 1920s, cells were thought to be simple “homogeneous globules of plasma,” meaning that a simple chemical process could be applied to their creation and replication. But times have certainly changed!

With more powerful technology, man has been able to look deep into cells and their fundamental building blocks.

Cells can be likened to microscopic factory-cities. There are waste removal highways, power factories, amazingly selective “force fields,” allowing certain items to flow in and out of a cell, and many more independent, yet highly cooperative, machines. This whole process is controlled by the nucleus of a cell, which has been described as a complex supercomputer.

Remember, despite all the complex cellular processes, evolutionary theory states that ALL things happened because of chance and necessity. But this initial cosmic goop did not form directly into a working cell. First, amino acids had to have linked together to become more complex structures—proteins.

This also presents a problem. By their very nature, amino acids have



to be specifically arranged to form functioning proteins. Could this have happened by chance?

If you randomly type keys on a computer, there is a chance that throughout the sequence, you may type a *word*. But what are the odds that you will type a proper *sentence*? Or what about a *poem* or a *novel*?

Because of the extremely specific layout needed to form proteins, no “typing” errors could have been made. This means that hundreds of amino acids would have had to randomly—yet simultaneously—come together in a perfect configuration to form a working protein.

There is yet another degree of complexity required for protein formation. Not only do these amino acids have to come together as described above, they must bond in “an extraordinarily complex and irregular three-dimensional shape—a twisting, turning, tangled chain of amino acids” (*First Things*). It has been estimated that the odds of forming just *one* protein naturally is approximately 1 in 10,125—not to mention the *numerous* proteins required for a living cell.

If you take into account that most proteins are made up of *more* than 100 amino acids, you begin to see why evolutionary researchers often downplay chance, asserting that some “unknown” natural method gave rise to their formation. Yet, *chance* is exactly what hundreds of millions of students are conditioned to accept as fact.

One can see that creating a novel or poem by chance is impossible. Why then does the scientific community at large fail to understand that something exceedingly more complex could also not form by happenstance?

Can you believe that *anyone* would consider this? Yet this is only the beginning of the wrong assumptions science has afforded in the quest to maintain evolution.

A fascinating point to notice in protein formation is the specificity required for them to function. Even at this very early stage, “informational content” is present. Because random

when directly examining the cellular “building.”

### Cellular Machine Code

The cell is the most advanced engineering marvel ever discovered. Humanity has never created anything that functions nearly as efficiently. In fact, aspects of a cell are even mimicked when designing certain systems used today.

Each part of a cell contains highly specified, three-dimensional structures. The formation of these proteins is the direct impetus behind their function. Certain amino acid configurations form each “mini-machine,” which regulates various parts of a cell.

The most complex of these proteins are found in the nucleus—the super-computer—of a cell. The nucleus controls how the mini-machines work together and when new machines need to be manufactured. It also contains the complete blueprint for *every* machine in that cell.

Within the cells of each human being, the nuclei contain the blueprint for each specific cell and *every* other cell in the body. It is truly a super-blueprint!

This blueprint is contained in deoxyribonucleic acid—most often called DNA. Because of the way DNA is encoded, the amount of information it contains is phenomenal! And it has to be—even the simplest forms of life are highly complex.

Take, for instance, *E. coli* bacteria. This “simple” bacterium has over one trillion bits of information stored in its DNA.

If you counted every letter in every book in the world’s largest library (10

## How DNA Works

### Human cell nucleus

Contains 46 chromosomes

### Chromosome

When unraveled, it consists of double-stranded DNA

### DNA

Held together by four chemicals called bases

**A:** Adenine      **T:** Thymine  
**C:** Cytosine      **G:** Guanine

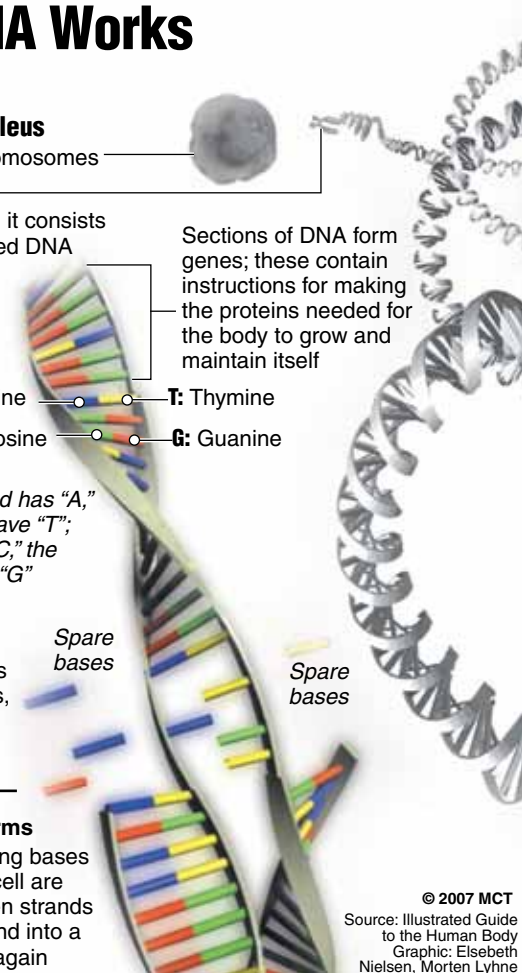
Where one strand has “A,” the other must have “T”; where one has “C,” the other must have “G”

### Cell splits

When a cell splits to make two cells, strands of DNA come apart

### Double helix forms

Spare, free-floating bases formed within a cell are added to the open strands to turn each strand into a full double helix again



organization does not form proteins, there is an existing structure—a blueprint—that must be followed to create them.

In all historical forms of science, information content implies a creator of that information. Even in these simple proteins, this blueprint begs the question: who or what created the informational blueprint for these proteins?

The signature on that blueprint becomes obvious—not when looking at the building blocks—but

Please see **ASSUMPTION**, page 17



PHOTO: THINKSTOCK

# Fatherless

## *The Nuclear Family Meltdown*

The family unit is under assault as never before—with fathers at the center of the battle.

BY KEVIN D. DENEE AND H. CHRIS LOMAS

**W**HO ARE YOU? What made you the way you are? What do you look like? What do you value in life? What are your hopes, dreams and goals? A plethora of other “deep” or “probing” questions could be asked about your person—but in almost every case, you could not turn to a single event that forms the answer. This is because your life experience from the day you were conceived has helped shape the person you are today.

From a scientific perspective, many answers to the above questions would begin with your brain. According to the University of Maine, the brain starts working from the beginning of life: “Brain cells are ‘raw’ materials—much like lumber is a raw material in building a house, and a child’s experiences and interactions help build the structure, put in the wiring, and paint the walls. Heredity (nature) determines the basic number of ‘neurons’ (brain nerve cells) children are born with, and their initial arrangement.

“At birth, a baby’s brain contains 100 billion neurons, roughly as many nerve cells as there are stars in the Milky Way, and almost all the neurons the brain will ever have. The brain starts forming prenatally, about three weeks after conception. Before birth, the brain produces trillions more neurons and ‘synapses’ (connections between the brain cells) than it needs. During the first years of life, the brain undergoes a series of extraordinary changes.”

From a young age, you were like a sponge, soaking up your environment—sounds, shapes, lights, faces, voices, languages, music, emotions, etc. As you grew, more complex things impacted your world, ultimately developing who you are today—parents, other caregivers, siblings, friends, education, physical environment, etc.

Now ask: which individuals were most responsible for your develop-

mental years of life? For most readers, the answer is a father and mother.

For millennia, this has been the cycle of the family unit: A man and woman come together in marriage. They have children. They care for their children and teach them how to live. The children grow up, take what they have learned, and live their own lives, usually becoming parents. And thus, the cycle continues.

That cycle is quickly falling apart. The social experiments of the 20th and 21st centuries—which have attempted to redefine the roles of parent and child—have caused the family to come under assault. One of the most profound changes that has resulted is that families are increasingly becoming fatherless.

### The Facts

Over the last 50 years, more and more children have been growing up without their fathers. The role of a father should, simply from a mathematical perspective, be one that contributes 50 percent to the development of any child. But millions of children in the United States, and the world at large, will put their heads on a pillow tonight in a home without one.

Notice these statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau:

■ “Between 1991 and 2009, children living with only their mother increased from 21 percent to 24 percent.”

■ “Of the 74.6 million children younger than 18 in 2011...27 percent lived with one parent...”

■ Over 17 million children live without a father.

Think about the last point. Seventeen million children are growing up without a father figure—without the teaching, guiding, experience-building, correcting and nurturing that a father can bring. When you see 20 children, realize that five are not living with their father.

In the 1950s, the term “nuclear family” was coined. This essentially described a family of a father, mother and children. This was to distinguish from an “extended family,” which

could include grandparents, or others. By the 1960s, 80 percent of America’s children lived with two married parents—today under 70 percent do.

Clearly, the nuclear family is facing a meltdown. Where will it end? What impact will this have on millions of minds—generation after generation?

### Ancient Instruction

We live in a time when children’s minds are turned away from their fathers. Again, millions of children do not see or live with their fathers. Then there are those who still live under the same roof, but with fathers who are emotionally distant because of work schedules, or the child is distant because he or she is always watching television and playing video games.

In the end, fathers are absent from their children physically and, in even more cases, mentally and emotionally.

Regarding fathers, their children, and the relationship they should have, consider just a few proverbs from the world’s number-one bestselling book, the Bible:

■ “Hear, you children, the *instruction of a father*, and attend to know understanding” (Prov. 4:1).

■ “A *wise son* hears his father’s instruction: but a scorner hears not rebuke” (13:1).

■ “A *fool* despises his father’s instruction: but he that regards reproof is prudent” (15:5).

■ “A *foolish son* is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him” (17:25).

■ “He that *wastes his father*, and chases away his mother, is a son that *causes shame*, and *brings reproach*” (19:26).

■ “My son, *keep your father’s commandment*, and forsake not the law of your mother: bind them continually upon your heart, and tie them about your neck. When you go, it shall lead you; when you sleep, it shall keep you; and when you awake, it shall talk with you” (6:20-22).

These proverbs are expressed to children regarding the need to listen

to the instruction and teaching of their father. If they do not take heed, they are simply foolish, and will bring shame and reproach to the family. In the end, a child who does not adhere to wisdom lives an unhappy life. But sons and daughters cannot apply these scriptures if the father *is not at home*—or is not fulfilling his duty when he is!

### Marriage: God-ordained

Millennia ago, the Creator of life ordained the marriage institution between a man and a woman. The purpose of marriage was always to bring great happiness and peace, and create a wonderful environment in which children could grow up in a correct way. It is a God-ordained structure that is to be followed. Both husbands and wives have distinct roles and duties—all of which are very important!

Look at the father’s role. Often those who are present in the home do not know how to properly rear their children. In addition, the father’s role in a family is ridiculed and lambasted endlessly.

Think of television advertisements or sitcoms where both a husband and wife are present. The father is almost always portrayed as a bumbling buffoon who needs his wife to make every decision for the well-being of the family. Ultimately, both husbands and wives have followed this way of thinking in their own marriages.

Many husbands and fathers today stand in stark contrast to how the Creator of man defined their duty: “For the husband is the *head* of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, *love your wives*, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it” (Eph. 5:23-25).

Around the globe, fathers are not taking charge—they are not leading their families as they should. The end result is that children do not have two

Please see **FATHERLESS**, page 18





# WHY THE 2012

## What is driving society's fascination with December 21, 2012, and other end-time prophecies?

BY SAMUEL C. BAXTER

**H**ERE WE GO AGAIN. The world is now slated to end December 21, 2012 (or December 23, depending on who is counting). As this time approaches, hysteria among some will inevitably crescendo to a thundering climax—with one of these days supposedly marking an “end date” on the now-infamous long count calendar of the ancient Maya.

These dates come on the heels of a number of other popular doomsday prophecies that have since failed.

Philadelphia's Penn Museum summed up the calendar theory in a special Maya-themed edition of its *Expedition* magazine: “Now, by the best reckoning available to us, December 23, 2012 CE will see the end of the next 13th Bak'tun cycle, 5,125 years after the one completed in 3114 BCE. Many people believe that this anniversary is of huge cosmic

significance and, indeed, that it will mean either the dawn of a new age of enlightenment, or a catastrophic collapse of the world as we know it, or even the end of time itself.”

*Best reckoning available.* Note those words.

Every reputable news article, scientist's report, or television special on the 2012 phenomenon is laced with similar qualifying phrases. Each tells their audience about what “may,” “might” or “could” happen. They have to state that only *some* of Maya descent believe doomsday is approaching—and that *some* archaeologists believe a cataclysmic event is set to occur. Realize that “some” likely means a tiny minority. When journalists and TV presenters have





# 2012 OBSESSION!

concrete numbers proving their point, they use them.

In actuality, no one knows what will happen at the end of this year. Every idea is mere speculation—with the ancient Maya's calendar and legends offering no definitive proof of what will occur.

Still, the theories are legion. Many are convinced this date will mean cataclysmic disasters the likes of supervolcanoes erupting, geography-altering earthquakes, and city-destroying tsunamis—purportedly brought on by a sudden shift of Earth's magnetic poles, a surge in solar storms, or alignment of the earth, sun and "galactic center" of the Milky Way Galaxy.

Another camp feels the date will mark an age of spiritual awakening

where mankind will learn to live in harmony with nature.

Yet apocalyptic notions do not end with prophetic ideas, and there are those who believe global warming will cause substantial changes to Earth's climate. This may come through a sudden increase in extreme weather or a catastrophic rise in ocean levels. In America, a Yale University poll found that 62 percent of citizens reported seeing "unusual weather" within the last year, and 69 percent believe "global warming is affecting the weather in the United States."

Another segment of the population has stockpiled guns, ammunition and food supplies in case of complete government collapse or nuclear war.

End-of-the-world fever is in the air. An Ipsos poll revealed that among

global citizens, one in 10 believes the world will end in 2012. One in seven believes the world will end in his lifetime.

Think. If you see seven people on the street, one of them feels the world will end in the coming years.

Time and again, millions are more than willing to give themselves over to these theories—some seemingly credible, others utterly bizarre or strange.

For now, December 2012 is the flavor of the week. As the clock ticks down, expect a surge in compulsory news media coverage, wild "world's end" parties, and tragic reports of those who commit suicide out of fear of what may come to pass.

Yet after so many failed doomsday end dates, why is society willing to consider December 2012?



## Fact Check

The notion of Earth's demise makes for big business, with numerous movies capitalizing on the trend. Since the 2009 disaster feature, simply called "2012," there has been a surge in doomsday-themed titles, with a recent trio of films dealing with everything from mystery planets and asteroids smashing into Earth to a depleted ozone layer causing human extinction. In addition, there have been numerous post-apocalyptic thrillers involving zombie hordes, disease pandemics, and teenagers forced to fight to the death in a gladiator-style arena.

Hollywood shells out cash for these features because it *knows* there is an audience. Likewise, major cable networks regularly pump out specials on 2012 phenomena. If ratings were bad, these shows would have faded from view.

Many authors have also jumped on the bandwagon, hoping for a cut of the profits from the Maya craze. Still others write about the purported end date in an effort to debunk sloppy science or expose the faulty logic of these ideas.

For example, NASA issued a fact check of the science behind the 2012 theory. Notably, the organization called the idea that galactic alignment will affect Earth "bizarre," saying that it pays "very little attention to facts."

Add to this that a contingent of Mayanist researchers believe there are 20 Bak'tuns in the present era—not 13—which means that the long count calendar will not "end" just before 2013. There is also disagreement among scholars regarding how to definitively correlate Maya dates to the modern Gregorian calendar.

In reality, not one of the theories holds up to even modest scrutiny. Yet the ideas themselves—and the people that bring them—are telling:

*There will be gigantic solar storms in 2012. The worst ever!* False. Sun storms are cyclical, and while the next one is scheduled to occur between 2012-2014, NASA predicts it will be an average peak.

*A massive planet named Nibiru will suddenly appear and smash into Earth!* Wrong. This idea started with a woman in Wisconsin who said she received word of the secret planet during telepathic contact with aliens she calls Zetas.

*The magnetic poles are suddenly going to shift!* Wrong again. While there is some geological evidence of pole shifts throughout Earth's history, these all took place during a period of over a million years—never all at once through one gigantic event.

Many also look to the work of drug activist Terrence McKenna, who studied the use of hallucinatory plants in societies that used them in their religious ceremonies. During an extended period of using psychedelic mushrooms, he came up with a convoluted mathematical formula to map important events throughout human history. He called this the "time wave" theory, and it supposedly pointed to an important occurrence in November 2012. When he found out about December 21, 2012, he conveniently "tweaked" his formula to correlate with a different day.

### Credible Authority?

The only source that *seems* to lend an air of authority to December 2012 predictions is the Classic-era Maya (AD 200-600) themselves. Compared to other ancient cultures, they do have an impressive resume. This civilization, which stretched from southern Mexico through Central America, accurately charted the movement of stars and planets across the night sky for many years into the future. Its people were innovative architects, building pyramids with mathematical precision. They were also the only fully literate Native American culture.

Yet there is another side to the Maya often overlooked in the context of these prophecies—namely how they derived their religious knowledge. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* explains, "The profoundly original feature of Maya religious thought, in comparison with that of other pre-Columbian civilizations, is the extraordinary refinement of mathematical and astronomi-

cal knowledge, inextricably mixed with mythological concepts."

Their interest in astronomy—really *astrology*—was used as a way to stay in contact with the spirit world. Stone etchings throughout Mesoamerica show Maya kings, who also served as priests, adorned in elaborate feathered headdresses and bejeweled cloaks. Clutched to many of their chests are ceremonial two-headed serpent bars that were used to make them "one with the universe."

What is disconcerting is *how* they contacted the "spirit realm." Horrific scenes of royalty calling on their dead relatives and pantheon of gods are all preserved in Maya paintings and carved into stone.

One panel shows a queen, who has pierced her tongue with a stingray spine, proceeding to pull a rope embedded with thorns *through the hole*. Blood is dripping down the rope into a bowl that contains paper that will be burned to gain access to spirits. Her husband, who is standing over her, has a preserved human skull in his ceremonial headdress.

Other carvings depict men cutting their ears and piercing other appendages to receive the "vision serpent." Many murals show captured rival warriors being sacrificed. In addition, evidence points to the use of hallucinogenic drugs and alcohol to assist in the blood-letting rituals, presumably to dull the pain and induce altered states.

Blood-letting. Human sacrifice. Drug use. All of this to appease gods or gain "divine" knowledge.

Of course, the Maya were not alone in this. Many ancient cultures engaged in similar practices.

Place such actions in the 21st century. Imagine that a preeminent astronomer—one with multiple doctorates and a popular television show about the universe—suddenly reveals on his personal blog that he has definitive proof the world will end January 15, 2013. He claims, "It is written in the stars."

Additional posts contain descriptions of how he reached this conclusion. He tells of how he used a stingray spine and pierced his tongue, then pulled a



thorny rope through the opening. He also punctured his earlobes, allowing blood to freely flow. On top of this, he details his use of hallucinogenic drugs to see the future.

Also, the scientist reveals that he kidnapped his male neighbor and murdered him to strengthen his prophetic visions.

At the moment *anyone* received word of such activity, they would inevitably call the police and the man would be jailed! Due to the source, no thinking person would seriously consider his proposed end date.

Yet this does not stop some from believing such prophecies—from the Maya or any other culture that practiced such rituals—which originated from a similar source...

### Hard Times

The same *Expedition* issue mentioned earlier further deflates any December doomsday idea: “Although the Maya certainly did have apocalyptic ideas, especially of a world destroyed by a heaven-sent flood, these are not linked to the Long Count calendar and cannot be used to support an ‘end of time’ in 2012. In sum, this date has far more relevance for us than it appears to have had for the ancient Maya—one of many examples of popular mysticism that actually springs from the present rather than the past.”

Consider the present global mood. Everything from a cascading series of disasters to some sort of global spiritual reawakening plays right into public sentiment. News outlets churn out continuous reports of weather upsets, economic woes, riots, oppressive governments, humanity running out of natural resources, class divisions, injustice, rampant crime, clashing ideologies, and so on.

A major reason so many give end-time ideas credence is the overwhelm-

ing feeling that *something is terribly wrong*.

Penn Museum’s magazine also stated, “Hard times beg for change. Much like the ’60s, the first decade of the new millennium has been a stressful one, marked by terrible events and trends too depressing and familiar to enumerate. It is enough to drive even the most rational segment of the

shall be the sign of Your coming, *and of the end of the world?*” (24:3).

Christ’s response, which is also recorded in the parallel accounts of Mark 13 and Luke 21, includes talk of great earthquakes across the globe and “fearful sights and great signs” in the sky such as the sun and the moon being darkened and stars falling to Earth.

These events are further described in the book of Revelation, particularly chapter 6. The text includes imagery such as “a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood” (6:12)—“the stars of heaven fell unto the earth” (vs. 13)—and “every mountain and island were moved out of their places” (vs. 14).

Sound familiar?

Since the completion of the New Testament around AD 100, ministers and lay members of traditional Christianity have attempted to explain these passages and pinpoint when they would come to



“In reality, not one of the theories holds up to even modest scrutiny.”

citizenry to bizarre, alternative outlooks. This includes a deep desire to recapture an imagined distant past that knew the essence of true wisdom. And so we romance the Maya. Still there is nothing new under the sun...all the elements of the logic informing the impending contemporary doomsday scheduled for December 21, 2012, have long been in place. Time’s end is in our American blood.”

### Record of Failure

“Time’s end” is not just in America’s blood. It is also infused into the thinking of all Western nations.

This fixation on doomsday inevitably springs from its Judeo-Christian roots, and can be traced back to the question posed by Jesus Christ’s disciples in the New Testament book of Matthew. They asked what seems to be on everyone’s mind today: “...what

pass. The results have been paltry and vague.

Case in point: look at the hysteria that surrounded the proposed May 21, 2011 end date. Radio evangelist Harold Camping arrived at this day through a random selection of Bible numbers he deemed important. He then multiplied them together. When his figure was too small, he *doubled* it in a strange misapplication of the Bible phrase “time is short.”

More recently, another man claimed Christ would return on May 27, 2012. This prophecy failed, as did an earlier prediction from him for 2008.

About 25 years ago, Edgar Whisenant’s book *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Occur in 1988* sold millions of copies. Hal Lindsey also hinted at a 1988 doomsday marking the modern state of Israel’s 40th year. Church Universal and Triumphant’s

Elizabeth Clare Prophet similarly called for Armageddon preparations in the late 1980s.

Every few years of the 20th century meant another proposed date for the world's end.

The same was true of the 19th century. After their "Great Disappointment" in the 1840s, the Millerites suffered a series of failed doomsday prophecies. In 1806, the "Prophet Hen of Leeds," later revealed to be a hoax, was rumored to lay eggs imprinted with the words "Christ is coming."

The pattern was the same in the 1700s, 1600s, 1500s, and so on.

Trailing backward through this historical record of futile predictions can be disillusioning. And this trend does not only apply to Christians. Over millennia, an equal number of doomsday ideas came from other religions and secular sources. Those failed just as miserably.

### Absolute Proof

Despite an unbroken record of botched predictions, the desire to know what the future holds remains stronger than ever. People desperately want to understand what the coming years will bring—and will even look to kooky sources for answers.

Yet, if prophecies inevitably fail, knowing for certain what the future holds seems implausible.

Ask yourself: "What would it take for me to be *absolutely sure* about a prophecy?"

Clearly, anyone attempting to tell you the future would have to bring a logical, well-thought out case proving his point. You would almost certainly require solid historical evidence proving that such a person has successfully predicted past events.

Unknown to most, this sort of proof does exist. The God of the Bible does not leave any teaching up to "blind faith." Instead, He insists that every man prove such things for himself.

While the Bible is often dismissed as antiquated Hebrew literature, and any prophecies are largely overlooked even by those who profess to believe it is "God's Word," the events it foretells

hold a greater purpose than future-telling—they also serve to validate the Book's authority.

In the Old Testament book of Isaiah, God says, "I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of My mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass...I have even from the beginning declared it to you; before it came to pass I showed it you..." (48:3-5).

Isaiah 46:11 states, "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

Read these verses as a challenge. When God declares He will do something, He says it *will* happen. If just one event does not come to pass as He declared, then the Bible should be thrown out!

Conversely, it should be believed if all its prophecies come to pass. (To prove these things for yourself, read *Does God Exist?* at [rcg.org/dge](http://rcg.org/dge) and *Bible Authority...Can It Be Proven?* at [rcg.org/bacibp](http://rcg.org/bacibp).)

In the book *The Bible's Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out, Real Truth* Editor-in-Chief David C. Pack explains the basics of how to study prophecy in God's Word: "The

apostle Peter wrote this about how God intends that prophecy illuminate the understanding of those who study it: 'We have also a more *sure word of prophecy*; whereunto you *do well* that you *take heed*, as unto a light that shines in a dark place...' (II Pet. 1:19). This verse reveals God's purpose—His 'sure word of prophecy,' bringing 'light' to 'dark places'—so people will 'take heed.' *You* must be willing to heed what is written.

"Now continue: 'Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation' (vs. 20). This is most crucial to understand. No single verse—or even any two or three passages—is sufficient to bring full, correct prophetic understanding on big events.

"Grasp this. *All* of the verses on every aspect of prophecy must be carefully *assembled* first. Second, building the truth begins with the most clear and obvious passages. These are two of the greatest rules of Bible study when exploring *any* of this Book's topics. Sadly, these rules, and the rest of the twelve rules of Bible study, are not followed by, or even known to, almost any who read God's Word. Prophecy 'experts' are no exception.

**You can know what is ahead...**

THE BIBLE'S GREATEST PROPHECIES UNLOCKED  
A Voice Cries Out  
DAVID C. PACK

[rcg.org/prophecy](http://rcg.org/prophecy)



“Continue again in II Peter 1: ‘For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit’ (vs. 21). In short, prophecy comes from *God*, through His servants, as He inspires them to record *His* words.”

Any prophetic ideas “by the will of man” will always FAIL. For a comprehensive look at end-time prophecy, read the rest of *The Bible’s Greatest Prophecies Unlocked!* at [rcg.org/prophecy](http://rcg.org/prophecy).

### Your Future...

A final element driving Maya mania and intense interest in Bible prophecy comes down to the personal level: each person alive wants to know where he is headed, and his place in the universe.

But the theories proposed are not very heartening. The 2012 future involves either total destruction of the earth, or some sort of amorphous, feel-good spiritual awakening. Bible-related theories generally include believers joining God in heaven while all of the rest of humanity suffers the events found in Revelation.

These options are hardly appealing. In addition, they disregard the biggest—

most exciting—prophecy found in the Bible, which pertains directly to your future!

Throughout history, there has remained a sense that the purpose of mankind is much grander than the here and now. This is never so evident as when gazing at a star-filled sky on a clear night, away from city lights.

In the Old Testament, Israel’s King David captured this feeling in the book of Psalms: “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; what is man, that You are mindful of him?” (8:3-4).

This question’s answer is the single most exciting prophecy found within the Bible. It reveals God’s purpose for mankind. Countless theories abound about “why we are here,” yet none carry any weight when compared to what God states.

The New Testament book of Hebrews quotes David and then begins to answer his question: “What is man, that You are mindful of him?...You [God] crowned him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of Your hands: You have put *all things*

*in subjection under his feet*. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now *we see not yet* all things put under him” (2:6-8).

At first these verses may seem to contradict each other. God put “all things in subjection under” man, but “we see not yet all things put under him.” Put another way, God absolutely WILL put all things under the rulership of man, but He has not done so yet.

When God says “all things,” He really means *all things*. The Moffatt translation of the Bible renders the Greek word for “all things” as “the universe.”

God intends for ALL of mankind to *rule over the entire universe*. Can you imagine a more exciting future?

While this differs greatly from common teachings of traditional Christianity, there it is in your Bible!

Other details about mankind’s incredible future are found throughout God’s Word, and they are both astounding and encouraging. There is a greater purpose for your life than you could *ever* imagine.

To learn more, read *The Awesome Potential of Man* at [rcg.org/tapom](http://rcg.org/tapom). □

## ASSUMPTION

*Continued from page 9*

million books), you would approach one trillion “bits of information.” Yes, it requires THAT much information for even a single bacterium to exist.

Imagine how much more information is needed to control and reproduce the approximately 100 trillion cells in your body. Yet all this information is stored in a microscopic structure called DNA.

How does so much fit in such a little space? The answer is found in the encoding of DNA. Its structure and encoding method are nearly as fascinating as the amount of information it contains.

### Double Helix

Most likely you have seen pictures of a double helix. It is this incredibly efficient spiral structure that

allows DNA to encode so much. Understanding this structure deepens the question of how such information came to be present.

As displayed in the illustration, DNA looks like a spiral ladder. A close-up of the individual rungs shows the amazing complexity of this microscopic marvel. On either side of the DNA ladder are the individual sugars and phosphates. They are linked together with a chemical bond and form both sides of the ladder.

The phosphates are then bonded to nucleotides (chemical bases that are designated by A, T, G and C, which are located in the center of the DNA spiral). These structures create either side of the ladder and are attached using hydrogen bonds.

There are no bonds directly linking individual nucleotides—or “rungs”—together. Yet this is where the genetic information is encoded!

No natural explanation exists for *how* information could form on this chemically unconnected axis—but there is a *reason* for it. Chemical bonds are common in nature. A salt crystal is one such example. Any crystalline structure is made up of a series of *repeating* chemically bonded elements. That is the key!

Chemical bonds create patterns. As can be seen on either side of the DNA ladder, the sugars and phosphates are repeated. If the nucleotides in the spine of the DNA molecule were connected via any sort of bond, they would be limited in the amount and complexity of the information it could contain.

Like crystals, the pattern encoded into DNA would repeat. Every time guanine (G) appeared, there would be adenine (A) following it. But the lack of any chemical bond means that any of the four bases can attach to any location on the spine. All are accepted and none is preferred!



Not only does chemical bonding explain why crystals and related substances form the way they do, it also makes the information encoded in DNA all that more amazing. There is NO natural way to explain how such highly detailed and complex information “appeared.”

Finding the source of DNA coding is the “holy grail” of evolutionary science. Yet the answer is plain.

### Information Inference

Some assert that necessity—response to environmental demands—caused DNA to grow more and more complex. This assumption happens largely because *order* is confused with *information*.

Scientists properly connect the complexity within DNA to having an order. But this is usually where “origin of life” studies confuse the distinction between these two characteristics.

There is no argument in science about the fact that organic systems show order. Anyone can look around and see it in nature. Such things as the rotation of planets causing seasons, animal migrations, etc., are a study in complex order.

But just because something evidences *order* does not automatically imply that it came up with the underlying *information* needed to form it.

For *order* to become *information*, there has to be a highly improbable, irregular, yet highly specified series of sequences. As seen, this is exactly what is required to build even the simplest proteins right up to super-complex cellular structures.

A commonly used analogy to compare the difference between order and information is as follows:

Compare the two sequences “ABABABAB ABA ABABABAB” and “the price of rice in China.” Both are a highly ordered and complex series of characters. Yet there is an obvious difference between the two sequences.

The second is very specific. Informational researchers often refer to this as “specified complexity.” Sequences that show specified complexity always imply that someone or something constructed the sequence of characters to convey specific information.

Similarly, DNA cannot generate its own information. Therefore, the only

logical conclusion is that it must have been made by an intelligent force—a Creator.

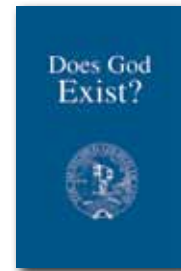
This conclusion can be drawn not just because natural systems cannot explain the origin of biological information, but also because of the signature and hallmarks that biological systems, such as DNA, contain.

Design is based on the principle of CAUSE and EFFECT. This also applies to the origin of life. It must have a cause!

Given the proper facts, human beings are logically able to deduce a cause—a source—behind the things around them. This is why, as the original example showed, one can understand that the glass bottle was designed and created by the hands of men.

You have seen some of the facts hidden in the 100 trillion cells in

your body. To better grasp that you—and the entire universe—were designed and created by the hands of God, read *Does God Exist?* at [rcg.org/dge](http://rcg.org/dge). □



## FATHERLESS

Continued from page 11

parents—the GOD-ORDAINED team—to guide them, to develop their minds, to teach them, to correct them, and to love them.

### Your Responsibility

Fathers, you were asked at the beginning of this article, “Who are you?”

The answer to this question lies in the actions you take in addition to the choices your parents made. You must ask, who will your children become? You have the potential to create human beings who will succeed, make the right decisions, have their own happy families—and in the end, reach their ultimate potential.

You have brought children into the world, and properly rearing them is your responsibility. All the physi-

PHOTO: THINKSTOCK



“Both husbands and wives have distinct roles and duties—all of which are very important!”

# The Importance of Fatherhood

The U.S.-based National Fatherhood Initiative reported that a father's involvement in a child's life affects every aspect of mental, social, psychological and physical development.

Consider the following statistics:

■ "Fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school."

■ "...obese children are more likely to live in father-absent homes than are non-obese children."

■ Children who grow up in fatherless homes are five times more likely to be poor.

■ Youths in households without an active father figure had "significantly higher odds of incarceration" than those in two-parent families.

■ Teenage girls in the United States and New Zealand who grow up without fathers are "twice as likely to be involved in early sexual activity and seven times more likely to get pregnant as an adolescent."

■ "Researchers at Columbia University found that children living in [a] two-parent household with a poor relationship with their father are 68% more likely to smoke, drink, or use drugs compared to all teens in two-parent households."

■ In a study of "crime statistics of 39 countries, it was found that single parenthood ratios were strongly correlated with violent crimes." □



cal possessions you gain in your life, the riches and the material things, are not permanent. But your children will live on, and they, in turn, will also have children, who will have children, and so on. The parenting decisions you make now will affect generations to come.

In his book, *Train Your Children God's Way* (available for free at [reg.org/tuyc](http://reg.org/tuyc)), David C. Pack details the importance of the special bonds fathers develop with their families.

"Fathers, strive to always *be* a hero to your son(s). Be sure that he can always look up to your example. Remember at all times that what your son is seeing in you is largely what he will become in adulthood. It has been shown that positive father role

models produce sons who are both generally more sound in thinking and better at overall problem-solving. An example of strength and maturity displayed by you will reappear later in your sons."

"Be sure to set a masculine example for your sons. They are watching more closely than you realize! Remember, Solomon wrote, 'The glory of young men is their strength' (Prov. 20:29). Reflecting a masculine example includes demonstrating a certain amount of strength that your son will want to emulate."

Likewise, Mr. Pack writes concerning daughters, "It has been said that girls tend to marry men who are most like their fathers. This makes being a good father more crucial than

meets the eye. It is not unusual for abused girls to marry abusive men. The daughters of warm, kind, patient, wise and loving fathers generally look for the same qualities in prospective mates. And this would naturally be the kind of man fathers want their daughters to look up to. (Of course, this is also true for their sons, in reverse.) Not only do girls who have not had a close relationship with a father potentially have great difficulty in marriage, they also struggle with being comfortable in relationships with—and even being in the presence of—all men throughout the course of their lives."

The choice is yours. Will you contribute to the nuclear family meltdown—or will you counter it in your home? □

## **PERSONAL**

Continued from page 2

after them. They could not access this Tree, thus causing humanity's captivity to continue for 6,000 years.

The *other* tree—of the Knowledge of Good and Evil—has been guiding the thinking of men and nations ever since Adam's fateful choice. Understand! All human beings are *not complete in their present state!* All knowledge that would enter human minds could only be physical and material. For his enormous sin of rejecting God and the Tree of Life, man was rejected by God and cast from the garden. Mankind was cast out with him—and taken captive!

The arch-kidnapper's work was complete at that moment. The whole world ever after would be held hostage—taken captive—until the sacrifice of Jesus Christ would pay the enormous ransom necessary to free them!

Again, the Bible says, "Satan... deceives the whole world" (Rev. 12:9). A staggering statement! But how can the devil deceive *seven billion* people? The Bible says "...he was cast out into the earth, and *his angels* were cast out with him" (vs. 9). Notice "his angels." These are demons—fallen angels. They assist Satan in his work of mass deception.

And if Satan has deceived the *entire* world, again, it cannot be God's world. It must be one or the other! It becomes clear *why* the world is cut off from God. Deceived people practice lives filled with sin (Jer. 17:9; Isa. 59:1-2).

People do not want to be told they are deceived. No one enjoys hearing he is ignorant of God's purpose. These statements wound human pride, but not as much as remaining in deception wounds *correct understanding*.

If one cannot accept Revelation 12:9, any hope of breaking free is lost! Such people have chosen to remain with their captor.

### **"The god of this world"**

II Corinthians records, "...the *god of this world* has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the *light* of

the glorious *gospel*...should shine unto them" (4:4).

The true gospel is about the soon-coming kingdom of God—God's world-ruling government. No wonder Satan seeks to block people from understanding this marvelous truth, which includes when he will be banished from his position of enormous influence—from being *super kidnapper*.

My booklet *Who Is the Devil?* (available online at [rcg.org/witd](http://rcg.org/witd)) strips away the mystery, misconceptions, confusion, ignorance, superstition and myth shrouding the TRUTH of Satan's identity.

Jesus three times called Satan "the prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). All three show this "prince" will one day be judged. John 12:31 parallels the *world's* judgment with *Satan's* judgment because this world *is his!*

Let's make this absolutely plain. Matthew 4 contains the account of Jesus' confrontation with the devil after fasting 40 days. Satan repeatedly tempts Jesus by twisting Scripture (one of his favorite devices). At a point, it says, "The devil took Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the *kingdoms of the world*, and the glory of them; and said...All these things will I give You, if You will fall down and *worship me*" (vs. 8-9). In this stunning account, Jesus rebuked Satan and quoted Deuteronomy 6:13, saying, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve" (vs. 10).

The temptation ended and the devil departed.

Get this! At no point did Jesus say, "These kingdoms are NOT yours to give" or "Who do you think you are, offering Me what is already Mine (God's)?" This is because Christ knew the kingdoms (the governments) of this world *are* the devil's—they *were* Satan's to give. So Jesus rejected the terms to receive them from the one who did have the authority to offer them.

Also understand this! The account describes the *temptation* of Christ. What the devil offered was designed to

*tempt* Jesus. If both knew the kingdoms of this world were not the devil's to give, *then where was the temptation?* Surely the devil would have known what Jesus knew. Of course, Christ, who was God on Earth, would have known the devil had authority to offer those kingdoms. The temptation had to carry weight.

For Christ to *overcome* the temptation there had to *be* a temptation! Ultimately, Christ succeeded where Adam had failed. He passed a very real test! He overcame the *world*, the *devil*, and His *flesh*, in overcoming sin and qualifying to pay the ransom price—His life—for man's deliverance.

To remove all doubt, Luke's account adds a key phrase that should hit like a sledgehammer: "All this power will I [the devil] give You [Christ], and the glory of them: for [it] *is delivered unto me*; and to whomsoever I will *I give it*" (4:6). The kingdoms of this world *were* the devil's to give or not give. God had "delivered" them to his control.

This world's nations and governments, with all their "*glory*," are *still* under control of the god of this world! Have you ever heard this? Yet it is the *plain truth* from your Bible! And it explains *WHY* the world cannot of itself break free of captivity.

Do not be confused! This does *not* mean God is disconnected from all activity on Earth. He is still absolutely in charge and in control of His Plan, which involves all human beings.

On trial for His life before Pontius Pilate, Jesus clarified the real source of Pilate's authority over the trial's outcome: "Then said Pilate...Speak You not unto me? Know You not that I have power to crucify You, and have power to release You? Jesus answered, You could have *no power at all* against Me, except it were *given you from above*..." (John 19:10-11). Pilate's authority came from God.

God is working out events in a plan encompassing 7,000 years. He is allowing man to find out that his own ways, governments, values, religions, purposes—and wars in the name of peace—have not, do not, and never will, work. Other passages reveal God



sets up and removes rulers—and governments only have power as He permits.

### Satan's Incredible Influence

Consider this vital passage, speaking of the devil: "...according to the course of this world, according to the *prince of the power of the air*, the *spirit* that now works in the *children of disobedience*" (Eph. 2:2). This is amazing knowledge. The devil has power to use the "air" to broadcast, through his spirit, an attitude of disobedience! Sending moods, feelings and impulses, Satan "works" within minds. This "air power" gives him immense *influence* to send thoughts of confusion, deceit, anger, pride, hate, foolishness, vanity, jealousy, lust, greed, envy and more, into people's thinking! In a sense, the devil owns the largest radio station on Earth and broadcasts 24 hours a day, reaching and deceiving all humanity!

The devil is usually dismissed as mythology, or reduced to a kind of human-boogeyman-spook with horns, pitchfork and a red suit—or just ignored—but this great fallen spirit is not only *real*, but very powerful.

The devil's influence reaches *every nation*. But what of the individual who wishes to obey God? What does God tell him to do? "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary *the devil*, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour: *whom resist steadfast* in the faith..." (I Pet. 5:8-9), and "...God resists the *proud*, but gives grace unto the humble. *Submit yourselves* therefore to God. *Resist the devil*, and he will flee from you. *Draw near to God*, and He will draw near to you" (Jms. 4:6-8).

The apostle Paul adds, "Neither *give place* to the devil" (Eph. 4:27). All who would humble themselves before God, to draw "near unto Him," must not do this. When you give Satan "place" in your life, you give him room to maneuver and greater access to your mind. When Jesus resisted Satan, He told him to depart—and the devil did! Once begotten of God's Spirit, you can do the same!

### Satan Has Ministers

Jesus said He would build His Church, promising it could not be destroyed by anyone or anything (Matt. 16:18). But the devil has also built *his* churches. Let's understand.

Hundreds of millions of people profess to be Christian, but come in every "shape, flavor, size and texture" of belief and practice. Over 2,000 denominations and groups exist in the United States alone, with more all the time. Confusion, division, competition and strife mark the world of "churchianity."

Where did these churches get their *beliefs*? Why cannot they agree on what the Bible says? Many say, "They can't *all* be *wrong*!" But since they all *disagree*, they cannot all be *right*! Many leaders and preachers think they are serving God and think they are teaching the truths of the Bible, but are NOT!

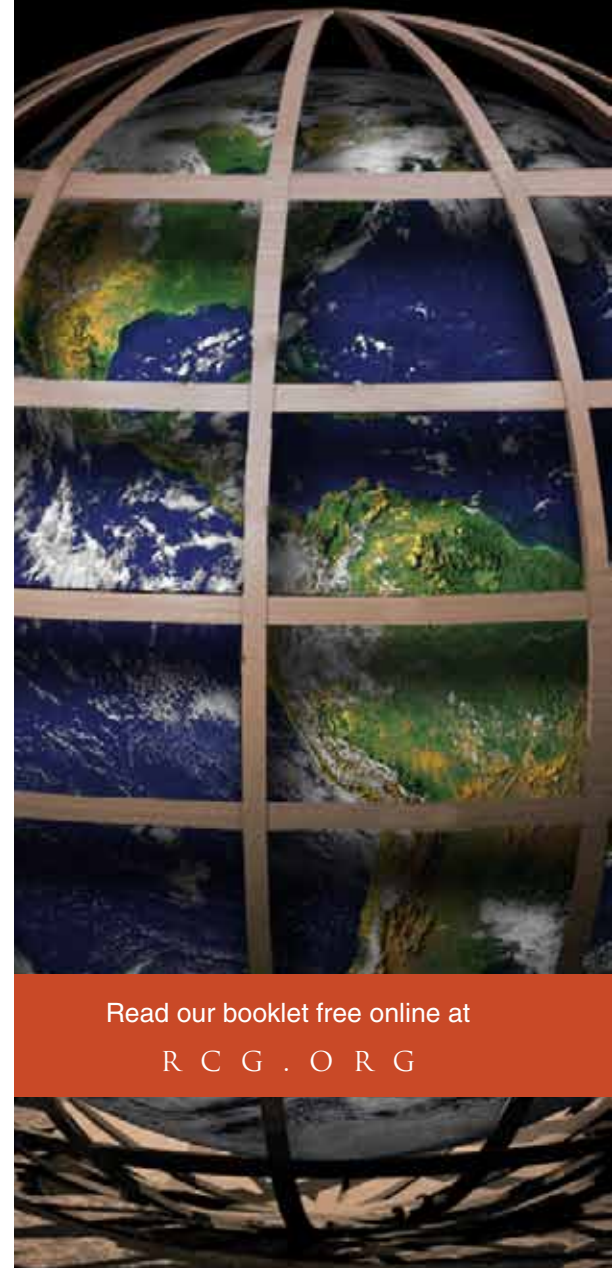
These manmade variations of pseudo-Christianity are all products of a world held captive by the arch-deceiver who has injected false Christianity into an unsuspecting world. The world believes it walks in freedom from God's Law, thinking Jesus kept it for them, when they are actually free from contact with *God*. Their captor has made them comfortable with his easy, convenient, false "Christianity."

Jesus strongly warned what would happen after He was gone, that deception and conditions on Earth would become far worse in the period referred to as "the end of the world" (Matt. 24:3-7). The Greek there means "age," not "world." The *world* will not end—but this *age* under the devil's rule will. Jesus said, "Many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall *deceive many*" (vs. 5). Mass confusion throughout the world's churches proves this statement true!

False ministers challenged Paul's authority in Corinth, and brought other doctrines and beliefs. He identified them for what they were and who they represented: "Such are *false apostles*, *deceitful* workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

# A WORLD IN CAPTIVITY

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R C G . O R G

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (II Cor. 11:13-15).

Deception, confusion and disagreement are inseparable from the world and its supposed Christian churches. But most do not recognize false ministers because they appear to be true—ministers of light—just as the “god of this world” appears to be the true God. The devil is an effective COUNTERFEITER! He counterfeits true ministers with false ones, true doctrines with false ones, and the true God with the false god—himself!

### **True Christians Come Out of This World!**

The world is a condemned building. It is not God’s purpose to rebuild *this* world. It cannot be rebuilt, but must be replaced entirely. This is why Jesus said, “I will *build* My Church” (Matt. 16:18). God is calling a very few out of captivity and Satan’s world to train them for future rulership.

Revelation 20:11-12 shows that everyone will one day have access to the Tree of Life—at the general resurrection of the dead. A few are being called now—set free from Satan—and prepared for rulership as teachers in God’s kingdom. God instructs His people to come “out from among them, [to] be...separate...” (II Cor. 6:17).

John, in Revelation, described a final world-ruling system coming soon called “Babylon the Great” (17:5). God commands true Christians in Revelation, “*Come out of her, My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues*” (18:4).

John also recorded Jesus’ words before His crucifixion, when He was praying about His disciples and true disciples who would come after them: “They are *not of* the world, even as I am *not of* the world. Sanctify them through Your *truth: Your word is truth*” (John 17:16-17). The words of the Bible are true. They are “the truth.”

*Sanctify* means “set apart for a holy use.”

True servants of God *are* set apart for God’s use. The churches of this world do not know the truth. They have been taken captive and taught a false brand of Christianity, not of the Bible!

Those determined to obey God *must come out of this world!* They must give up its ways and choose God’s ways! They must determine to break free of their captor through God’s help and the ransom payment of Christ’s sacrifice.

John stated bluntly, “The *whole world* lies in wickedness” (I John 5:19). This is not surprising since the whole world is *deceived by its captor*. Paul, equally blunt, referred to “this present evil world” (Gal. 1:4). Peter spoke of “the *pollutions* of the world” (II Pet. 2:20). No wonder John warns, “love not the world” (I John 2:15). And James says remain “unspotted from the world” (1:27). Using even stronger language, James adds, “whoever therefore will be a *friend* of the world is the *enemy of God*” (4:4).

These are *powerful warnings* to Christians throughout all ages!

### **God’s Ultimate Plan**

Jesus summarized the state of the world. He was speaking of the Father, “the world has *not known You*” (John 17:25), and that His servants “are not of the world, but I have chosen you *out of* the world” (15:19). Now read: “You [Christians] are all the children of *light*, and the children of the *day*: we are not of the *night*, nor of *darkness*” (I Thes. 5:5).

Satan and his demons are described as the “rulers of *darkness*” (Eph. 6:12). God’s children walk in the light of day, obeying Him through the power of the Holy Spirit, while the children of the god of this world walk in darkness and disobedience, under the influence of his spirit.

The implications of these verses are profound!

God the Father has a plan to rescue His kidnapped children. This is the purpose for which He sent His Son

(John 3:16)—to pay the ransom for and to deliver His Family.

When Christ returns, Satan, as the deposed ruler over Earth, will be removed. No leader can replace a disqualified leader and permit him to remain as co-ruler. The disqualified leader would second-guess and undermine all that the new leader plans to change and implement. He would seek to influence the masses until he could overthrow the government and reinstall himself, without power-sharing. If human governments understand this, certainly God does. He knows Satan must be removed from his position of influence for God’s Master Plan to succeed.

Notice the first action that begins the true peace process for Earth’s inhabitants: “I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should *deceive the nations no more...*” (Rev. 20:1-3).

Events of colossal magnitude will soon *shock* the world—changing everything! Soon, Satan will be bound (imprisoned) and rendered unable to deceive the masses. The temptations of this world and human nature, caused by the devil, will disappear—though there will remain certain fleshly pulls all will have to overcome. Satan’s radio station will be closed! The world will no longer be held captive.

To learn more about all of this, read our crucial booklet *A World in Captivity* at [rcg.org/awic](http://rcg.org/awic).

When Satan is bound, peace will arrive the world over. The saints will rule with Christ from Jerusalem—having restored God’s government on Earth, administered by the God Family. God’s “holy, just, perfect and spiritual” Law (Rom. 7:12, 14) will be enforced among all nations. Right knowledge, happiness, abundance, world peace—and deliverance—lie just ahead. □

## RELIGION

**Pope: Sunday Must Be a Day of Rest**

■ **WARM RECEPTION:** Pope Benedict XVI greets crowds during the 2012 World Meeting of Families in Milan, Italy (June 1, 2012).

PHOTO: POOL - GETTY IMAGES

Pope Benedict XVI emphasized the need for all people to rest on Sunday while speaking to a crowd of 15,000 during his general audience in St. Peter's Square on June 6. The pon-

tiff said that increasing work demands cut into time that should be used to strengthen the family unit and focus on God—part of what he called the “gospel of the family.”

“The demands of work can’t bully people out of needed time off,” *Catholic News Service* reported Benedict as saying.

He later added, “By defending Sunday, one defends human freedom.”

In a 2010 letter to the president of the Pontifical Council for the Family posted by *Zenit*, he explained that today’s workplace promoted competition and maximizing profit, and were factors that “contribute to the break-up of the family and the community and to the spreading of an individualistic lifestyle.”

The pope said in the letter that “it is necessary to promote reflection and efforts at reconciling the demands and the periods of work with those of the family and to recover the true meaning of the feast, especially on Sunday...”

Reinforcing his position that Sunday is the only day that is acceptable to refrain from work and be “free,” the pope declared, “Sunday is the day of the Lord and of man, a day which everyone must be able to be free—free for the family and free for God.” □

## DISEASE

**New Strain of Untreatable Gonorrhea Spreading**

A new strain of untreatable gonorrhea could cause a worldwide pandemic, World Health Organization (WHO) officials warned.

“This organism has basically been developing resistance against every medication we’ve thrown at it,” Dr. Manjula Lusti-Narasimhan, a WHO scientist said in *The Week*.

Europe, in particular, has been hard-hit by the new wave of infections. Since 2010, the disease has spread across 17 countries.

Health officials say the emergence of this new drug-resistant strain, which

was found in Japan in 2008, is due to unregulated access to and overuse of antibiotics, which help fuel genetic mutations within the bacteria.

The world’s second-most common sexually transmitted disease after chlamydia, gonorrhea has infected more than 106 million people since its discovery, but an estimated half of the cases are never reported, according to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

While gonorrhea is easily treated with penicillin and other antibiotics, if left untreated, it can cause a range

of reactions from painful urination to spontaneous abortion. It also increases the risk of contracting HIV, and infected women can pass it to their babies.

“To keep the new strain from galloping across the globe, doctors will have to step up efforts to spot gonorrhea,” Dr. Lusti-Narasimhan stated in *The Week*. “That, along with better sex education and a renewed push to find alternative treatments will be needed to avert a truly dangerous crisis.”

“We’re not going to be able to get rid of it completely,” she said. “But we can limit the spread.” □



## Multiple Earthquakes Devastate Northern Italy



■ **COLLAPSE:** A building is damaged after an earthquake in Cavezzo, Italy (May 29, 2012).

PHOTO: ALBERTO LINGRIA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

A 5.8-magnitude earthquake hit northern Italy on May 29, killing over a dozen people and injuring about 300. It came just nine days after the region suffered a 6.0-magnitude quake that was followed by over 800 aftershocks.

The most recent earthquake “was felt across the whole of Italy, with people running into the streets as far away as Milan, Venice, Genoa and Perugia, with shocks also felt in neighbouring Austria,” *Sky News* reported.

Factories, barns and buildings were reduced to rubble, and thousands of homes were toppled, causing the number of those displaced by both quakes to top 14,000, *BBC News* stated.

The total economic loss of both disasters is yet to be determined.

“The Coldiretti farm lobby said damage to the agricultural industry, including Parmesan makers whose aging wheels of cheese already suffered in the first quake, had risen

to €500 million (\$626 million) with the second hit,” *The Associated Press* reported. “The Modena Chamber of Commerce estimated that the first quake alone had cost businesses €1.5 billion, with no fresh estimates immediately available.”

Scientists predict more earthquakes for the region.

Alessandro Amato of the Italian Geophysics and Volcanology Institute told *Sky News*, “It looks like a new fault line has broken.” □

## Afghanistan Temblors Trigger Landslide

Twin earthquakes of magnitudes 5.4 and 5.7, respectively, hit remote villages in northern Afghanistan on June 12, resulting in a landslide that killed as many as 100 and buried 25 to 30 houses under about 100 feet of rock.

After various search and rescue efforts, only two women were

found alive. Bulldozers were then brought in to move rocks covering the area.

The United Nations issued a statement that they are working with government authorities to provide aid as needed. Also, the organization reported that the earthquake destroyed houses in five other districts.

The governor of the affected Baghlan province, Munshi Abdul Majid, said the area would become a burial site for victims if the bodies were unrecoverable.

The quake, which was felt up to 100 miles away, is not the first for the region. Ten years ago, a temblor in the same area caused the deaths of more than 2,000 people. □

## Third Quake in a Year Strikes Turkey

A 6.0-magnitude earthquake hit Turkey on June 10, marking the third in less than a year to strike the country.

While there were no serious injuries or damage, several people jumped from windows or balconies in sheer panic when the earth began to shake.

In the past 13 years alone, continual shifting of tectonic plates below the nation has caused numerous earthquakes, including a 7.2-mag-

nitude temblor that killed more than 600 people in 2011.

“Turkey is actually on its own plate, called the Anatolian plate, and so it’s bumping and grinding with plates to the north, the Eurasian plate, [and] it’s sliding and bumping with the Arabian plate to the south,” a *CBC News* seismologist explained.

Over the past 13 years, earthquakes have caused more than 20,000 deaths in Turkey. □

homes may have released toxic pollution into farmland and rivers.”

The storms continue a pattern of wild weather, which included unseasonable May snowfalls, hail in London, and hurricane-force winds that produced 40-foot waves.

Despite the storms, water use bans remain in effect in some areas. *The Independent* summed up the situation with its headline: “A month and a half’s rain in 36 hours, 40 flood alerts...but there’s still a drought.”

According to the United Kingdom’s Environment Agency, “While the risk of drought with further water restrictions and associated environmental impacts this summer has reduced, the situation could deteriorate again next year if there is not enough rain this winter, particularly as groundwater levels are still low for this time of year.”

“The soggy start to the summer is likely to be just a taste of the washout in store for the rest of June with more heavy downpours expected at times throughout the next two weeks and beyond,” *Telegraph* reported. □

## Britain Battles Droughts and Deluges

Following several months of drought, Britain experienced heavy downpours that pelted the area with more than six inches of rain in 24 hours—double the June average.

“More than 1,500 people were evacuated and 150 rescued after water

gushed through homes and businesses in Ceredigion, Powys and Gwynedd,” *Guardian* reported.

Damage from the rains raised health concerns for communities in Wales. *The Daily Post* stated, “Floods which left villages devastated and families forced to move out of their



■ **DRY LANDSCAPE:** A wooden branch lies in the mud at the bank of the half-full Bewl water reservoir in Kent, England (April 5, 2012).

PHOTO: JUSTIN TALLIS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



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