

JULY-AUGUST 2004

THE

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REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

WHY THEY HATE US

ANTI-AMERICANISM
ON THE RISE

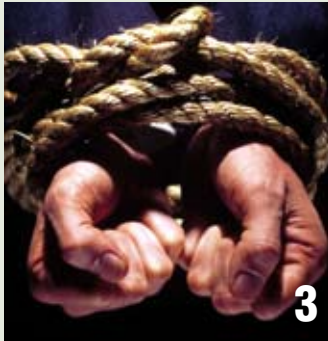
THE REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

VOL. 2 | NO. 4 | JULY-AUGUST 2004

ARTICLES

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Black Gold – How the Mid-East Holds the West Hostage

Modern society is dependent on oil. Without it, industry would come to a halt. How vulnerable is the Western World? What could an oil shortage mean for the economy?

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Many agree that something is wrong with television today, and that this is an indication of problems in society in general. But is television programming merely a reflection of society, or does society mirror television?

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Why They Hate Us – Part One: God's Hand Removed

There is a flagrant—and intense—increase in world hatred of the United States and, to a lesser degree, Britain and the other English-speaking countries of the West. It is, in fact, seemingly popular to feel this way and express it loudly. Why is this? Can anything be done about it? When and how will it end?

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There is a growing sentiment of anti-Americanism around the world. U.S. power, prosperity and prestige, symbolized by the American flag, are being targeted for complete destruction by those who hate this nation and what it stands for.

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The **REAL TRUTH** magazine is provided free of charge. This is made possible by the voluntary, freely given tithes and offerings of the members of The Restored Church of God, and by the offerings and donations of co-workers and donors. Contributions are gratefully welcomed and are tax-deductible in the U.S. and Canada. Those who wish to voluntarily aid and support the Work of God in preaching and publishing the Gospel to all nations are gladly welcomed as co-workers. Contributions should be sent to the address below.

The preparation and production of this magazine involved the work of editors, proofreaders, graphic artists, illustrators, writers, researchers and those who support the Work of God.

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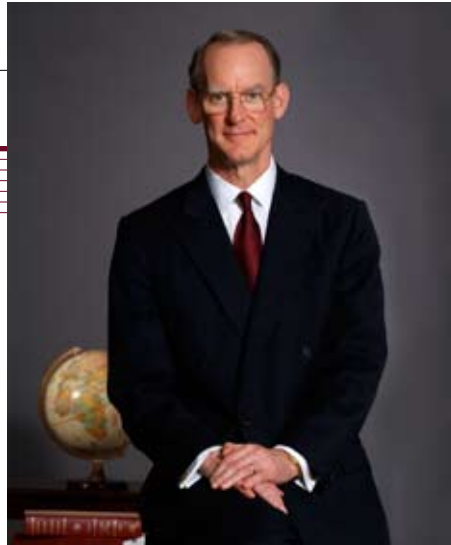
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PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack



The Greatest Nations in Prophecy

SUPPOSE YOU COULD know the direction and conclusion of world events—world history—in advance of the outcome. What if you could know the courses of nations before they happen? What if the future of great nations—indeed the greatest nations—could be known? In other words, imagine knowing tomorrow’s biggest headlines before they come to pass, and how events will affect you, and every human being, personally.

Now imagine knowing in detail exactly what is in store for the United States and Britain—the greatest nations in all history. The governments and leaders of the West do not know the shocking, world-shattering changes just over the horizon for the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and certain other Western European nations—with the Middle East at the center of the coming explosion of events.

But you can know—and, if you read our book mentioned later, you soon will!

Ominous Signs Abound

Turmoil, fear and confusion now grip the nations of the West. Terrorism, resultant economic upheaval and widespread uncertainty have left people confused, not knowing where to turn for answers to the great questions about the future, now on the minds of millions!

Many sense that the differences both between and within nations are intensifying, threatening to spin out of control. New and different power blocs are forming, with traditional alliances wavering, waning or disappearing.

Ominous signs of grave difficulty in resolving humanity’s most fundamental problems are everywhere. Many sense that the world is hurtling toward terrible calamity. Disease, famine and war sweep the planet as never before. New diseases are continually appearing and old ones are reappearing worse than ever. This and famine, which always follows in the wake of war, are decimating entire segments of local populations. Weapons of mass destruction, so incomprehensibly destructive that they boggle the mind, now threaten humanity as never before. Many nations are learning to live “on alert” to terrorist “cells,” which can strike anywhere without notice.

World conditions, events and trends speak daily in frightening terms about how things could quickly turn in the wrong direction. The courses of nations, including the greatest nations, hang in the balance. History shows that all the great civilizations eventually crashed, having become decadent, awash in material prosperity and greed—and educated in wrong knowledge. This can happen again!

Of course, many are unmoved—unfazed—not concerned about the tumultuous events surrounding them, trusting that things will work out in the end “because they always do.” Many, believing things will eventually

“turn out alright,” close their eyes, choosing to pursue pleasure and the accumulation of material goods at an even more frantic pace. But for the short term, things will *not* turn out alright. World conditions are and will become far more serious—and even catastrophic—than most realize.

At the same time, regarding just the physical location of nations, the new “generation X” reflects an appalling ignorance of the most basic geography, and a nearly total lack of knowledge about even the most rudimentary understanding of relationships between countries—with studies now revealing that most people ages 18 to 24 cannot even locate well-known nations on a map.

Why can the very best minds not find peace? Why do even these remain in almost complete ignorance of the staggering events soon to strike all humanity? Both Isaiah, in the Old Testament (Isa. 59:8), and Paul, in the New Testament (Rom. 3:17), flatly state that men do “not know the way to peace.” This vital knowledge has been missing for millennia. The institutions of men are woefully uninformed—and ultimately toothless—concerning the causes of peace, leading to the right effect all peoples long for—world peace. In the end, neither diplomacy nor war has worked, while knowledge of the right causes that lead to peace remains unseen, eliminating any hope of success.

While men may talk about, call for and pretend to seek peace, world leaders always seem to fall back on the tool of war to achieve it—as suffering, misery and unhappiness increase in its wake. Even Napoleon warned, “You have got to be very careful with war, because, with all the excitement, you may grow to love it.” Nations *have* grown to love war—indeed, they are addicted to it. For 6,000 years, man has proven himself unable to break the cycle of war.

As a result, history’s greatest wars lie dead ahead!

What About the Greatest Nations?

Against the backdrop of growing fear, mixed with ignorance, many wonder—and are openly asking—about America and Britain’s role in the great prophecies foretold in the Bible to occur in the “last days.” Recognizing their rise to extraordinary prominence, having become so big and dominant, that their impact on the world at large is enormous, people naturally wonder, “What about the United States and Britain?” Surely, among the Bible’s great prophecies, God would not ignore these nations. Are they mentioned in prophecy? If so, where? And will these nations be exceptions to the collapse of all the great civilizations that preceded them?

Not knowing who or what to believe, some ask their ministers—and find that they do not know! Others turn to so-called prophecy experts—psychics, seers, crystal ball-gazers and self-described prophets—and other “experts”—but find that none of these know either. The educated of this world—but uneducated in basic, right spiritual knowledge—commentators, columnists, generals, scientists and educators have absolutely no idea how to answer this question. Deceived, and having closed their minds, many at least do recognize this is beyond their field.

It was only about 200 years ago that America and the British Commonwealth of nations suddenly shot to great prominence and power. Not so long ago, the combined wealth of these nations was over 70 percent of the total wealth and physical resources of the world. All the rest of the nations combined possessed less than 30 percent—considerably less than half of just these two nations. Of Britain, it was often said, “The sun never sets on the British Empire.” Yet, right on schedule, Britain has declined to an almost third-rate power.

Now consider. About one-third of the Bible is prophecy, and nearly 90 percent of this remains unfulfilled.

Virtually all of it has to do with world events, trends and happenings for our time. How then could the mightiest nations of all time be left out?

But, invariably, religious leaders explain that America, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are merely Gentile nations, thus believing that end-time prophecy totally disregards these great nations, with America and Britain the *greatest* of all time. Deceived, they usually focus on the prophecies describing the Jews, while remaining completely ignorant of the enormous understanding available to those who know where and how to find pivotal knowledge, missing in today’s world, about the identity of the Anglo-Saxon peoples of the West. These “leaders” simply do not know where, how—or what!—to look for. Therefore, the answers remain elusive.

Explosion of Interest in Prophecy

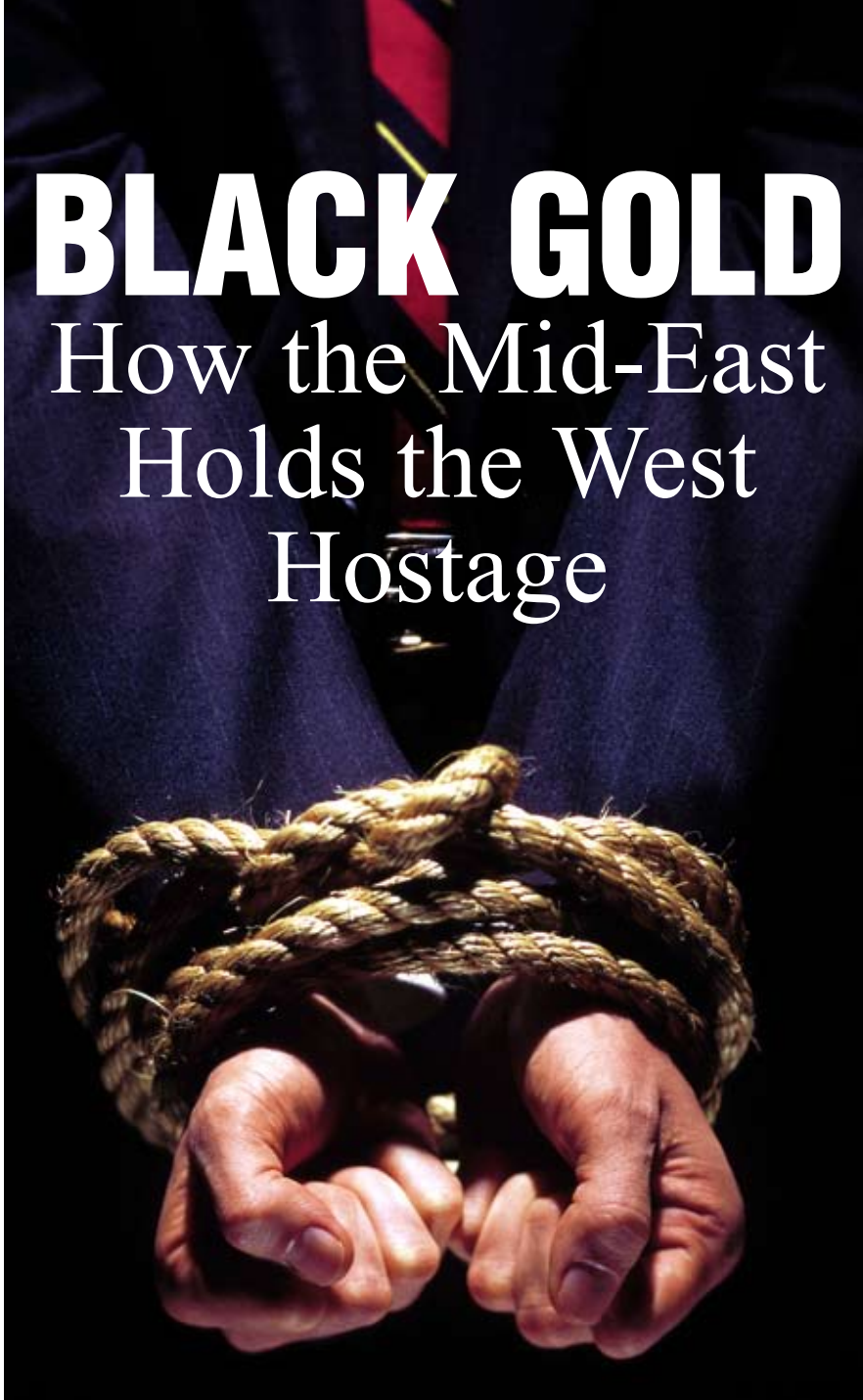
Knowing that something is terribly wrong, many sense that the world has reached what the Bible calls the “end time”—or “last days.” This has caused a mushrooming of interest in biblical prophecy.

Literally, millions of people now routinely discuss terms such as “Great Tribulation,” “Millennium,” “Beast,” “Armageddon,” “God’s Wrath,” “Anti-Christ,” “False Prophet,” “Abomination of Desolation” and others, without proper meaning or comprehension. Again, they simply do not know where or how to look within God’s Word to get correct understanding of what these and other terms mean, and how they will play out, sequentially, within God’s great Master Plan for the end of the age. Like a kind of giant prophetic “Rubik’s Cube,” the many critical pieces of the puzzle never come together. This is because, instead of directly examining the hundreds of clear scriptures on these and other aspects of prophecy—for proof (I Thes. 5:21), many seem

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BLACK GOLD

How the Mid-East Holds the West Hostage



Modern society is dependent on oil. Without it, industry would come to a halt. How vulnerable is the Western World? What could an oil shortage mean for the economy?

FOR OVER HALF a century, American citizens have been accustomed to traveling freely by automobile, with minimal impact to the family budget. The automobile has evolved into an American expression of

personal wealth, independence and freedom. More importantly, it has become a critical part of the domestic economy. Most Americans drive daily to and from work, spending a significant portion of their income on

cars, trucks, parts, service and fuel. Thus, the automotive industry is a leading indicator of the health of the economy.

Gasoline has been a relatively inexpensive commodity in the United States for over 100 years. But recently, the price of gasoline exceeded \$2 per gallon—with some experts expecting this to increase throughout the summer. With control of the world supply of crude oil largely in the hands of nations increasingly hostile to the U.S., many recognize that the long era of cheap energy may be over.

Just how dependent is the U.S. on foreign crude oil? What is the cause of such a rapid increase in the price at the pump? What does this mean for you and your family?

Black Gold in America

Use of the automobile has, more than any other factor, encouraged the massive consumption of petroleum. Conceptions of the automobile can be dated to roughly 500 years ago, as its possibilities were considered by Leonardo da Vinci. However, actual production has a much shorter history. One of the first gasoline-powered automobiles was produced in 1886 by the German company Daimler. Yet, in America, the concept has evolved from simple designs at the turn of the 20th century, to the sophisticated, computerized marvels of today.

The freedom enjoyed by U.S. citizens contributed to the assumption that personal transportation was more a right than a privilege. The turn of the last century saw the United States become, by far, the world's greatest producer of petroleum. America remained the top producer of crude oil until a few years prior to World War II. But imports began to exceed exports in 1948. However, net production continued to increase in the lower 48 states until it peaked sometime in 1970, and it has been declining since that time (except for a brief period between

1984 and 1985). Alaskan crude temporarily made up for this decline, but peaked in 1988, and has since fallen around 30 percent.

During this period, the U.S. has become increasingly dependent on foreign crude oil. Imports increased around 40 percent between 1973 and 1996, with net imports of oil at 46 percent and climbing. Today, the United States is much more dependent upon imports than in 1973, when the nation experienced a short-lived disruption in supply. The Middle East holds enormous power to disrupt world oil supply because of its massive petroleum reserves.

Even if personal travel were all that was at stake, these developments would be enough to cause grave concern. However, oil is also the fuel of commerce, as commodities and manufactured goods are transported entirely by trains, trucks, planes and ships.

Additionally, and perhaps most critically, oil remains the most important source of energy used in modern warfare, powering most ships, planes, tanks, and transport vehicles. In short, the war-making capacity and effective defense of any modern nation requires an abundant and ready supply of oil. Should the United States be concerned, Strategic Petroleum Reserves notwithstanding? Just how important is oil to the survival of a modern nation?

Oil and Allied Victory in World War II

Germany is a country blessed with human ingenuity, but with limited natural resources. During his quest to establish a German “1,000-year Reich,” Adolf Hitler recognized the value of petroleum in modern warfare when he attacked Romania, seeking to secure its abundant oil fields.

The German Reich also recognized the importance of controlling the huge petroleum reserves in the Middle East—and moved energetically early in the war to achieve this objective.

Many do not realize that some Arab nations were solidly aligned with Germany during World War II. Along with the Germans, they generally worked to defeat the English- and

American-led Allied Forces, until it became clear that the Allies would ultimately be victorious. These Arab nations then moved to make deals with the Allies. Their national proclivities have changed little today.

Hitler’s quest to control Middle Eastern crude oil ended with the defeat of his tactical genius, General Erwin Rommel, at Alamein, in North Africa. With Egypt secure, Britain and America were able to effectively retain control of critical Middle Eastern oil reserves.

Roadblocks to Progress

Most will agree that conservation and proper management of our natural resources is prudent and wise—but that those resources should not remain untapped, and rendered essentially useless.

We should certainly strive to protect the water we drink, the land we live on, and the air we breathe. Effective management of renewable resources such as timber and wildlife also has long-term benefits. However, the ongoing battle today between industry and environmentalists—with each failing to take a balanced approach that would consider both sides of the issue—has each faction essentially focusing on their own agenda, without consideration for the overall implications that this issue presents for *everyone*.

Karl Marx regarded the masses as ignorant, knowing that populations could be fooled and used to be unwitting participants in a socialist movement. He coined the derogatory term “useful idiot” to describe such people. It seems that western culture has set out to prove Marx’s statement. For example, when oil prices increase rapidly, many invariably find it convenient to blame American oil companies, along with their executives, rather than groups that have worked against exploration and development of domestic reserves.

The ongoing conflict between these groups has resulted in the delaying or canceling of various projects through any means (such as The Protected Species Act, or Clean Air Act)

that would enhance the wealth and quality of the nation as a whole. One such example is the blocking of the development of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which prevents the U.S. from tapping its oil resources.

Has this damaged America’s ability to produce its own energy? Absolutely. Has it contributed to reduced security in the nations of the West? Unequivocally.

While we would all appreciate technological advancement that would reduce our nation’s dependence upon hydrocarbon-based fuel, all indicators are that petroleum will remain the main source of energy as long as the present economic system exists.

OPEC and Fading Western Resolve

Many have come to accept that the U.S. must ultimately be dependent on foreign oil. Because of its political position and historically natural support of the tiny nation-state of Israel, the U.S. government has had to adopt an increasingly inconsistent foreign policy in regard to the Middle East.

While the overall sympathies of the United States continue to gravitate somewhat toward Israel, increased dependence on foreign oil and cultural drift have compelled a morally weak nation to also accommodate the enemies of this young nation. The power wielded by Arab nations has been an important consideration in U.S. foreign policy for decades.

The U.S. government, aware of oil’s importance to the U.S. economy and the perceived power of the masses, must express policy and strategy in carefully prepared terms to avoid offending an increasingly hostile domestic population. The Arab nations are becoming more aware of this growing weakness and disunity, and could ultimately challenge U.S. resolve in a big way once again. One could surmise that the enemies of the U.S. sense that a unilateral response by the United States, even in self-defense, would not occur, because of the mass hysteria it would invoke domestically!

In short, the diverse conglomerate of America naïvely assumes that Arab

desires and objectives are similar to those of the western developed world and should be provided equal consideration.

The current President has even gone so far as to entertain Muslim Imams in the White House to appease both foreign and American Arabs. Though well-meaning, this form of political correctness results in over-sensitivity toward civilian casualties and religious insult, which usually paralyzes the U.S. military from using the force necessary to destroy their enemy. The true God warned that the modern nations of ancient Israel would not use effective force: "And I will break the pride of your power" (Lev. 26:19). It is likely that the fallout from the present Iraqi conflict has only begun.

Saudi Arabia, a pro-West Arab country, accounts for about 10% of the world's total crude oil production. Even more importantly, this 8-million-barrel-per-day (BPD) production can, in a crisis, be increased overnight to 11 million BPD. In short, Saudi Arabia is a critical linchpin to the western economy.

The House of Saud, protected by the United States since World War II in exchange for acting as a world oil supply stabilizer, has come under increasing internal attacks from radical

Muslim factions that want to topple the government. Many believe they could soon achieve their objective.

Combine this with the chaotic situation in Iraq, along with generally growing confidence and hostility of most other Arab nations, and one can see that events could spiral quickly out of control, affecting *many* nations! Will the governments of the West be able to summon the collective will required to pursue war, which it perceives as its only option? And *is* this the only option? These problems *could* be solved if men would obey God.

Ensnared?

Americans now view the world narrowly through secular eyes and can no longer comprehend or believe supernatural grand design and destiny, as their forefathers once did when the nation was being constructed. "Manifest destiny"—a phrase of national confidence, coined by James Monroe, acknowledged the supernatural birthright legitimacy of the United States and its incredible expansion and control. However, today, any hint of religion when assigning America's place in history is viewed as contemptible—perceived by many as a racist and imperialist past that cannot be forgotten quickly enough.

The average U.S. citizen seems to willfully ignore common displays of Arab and Muslim hatred of America and Britain—such as the mass celebrations that followed the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York—refusing to believe that all but the most moderate in the Arab world would similarly rejoice at any future massively destructive acts! Combine the intense religious hatred, with jealousy of the blessed American and British nations, the growing impotence of the West, along with the dependence upon a commodity largely controlled by this region, and one can easily conclude that someday, perhaps very soon, oil will be used as a weapon against the Western World.

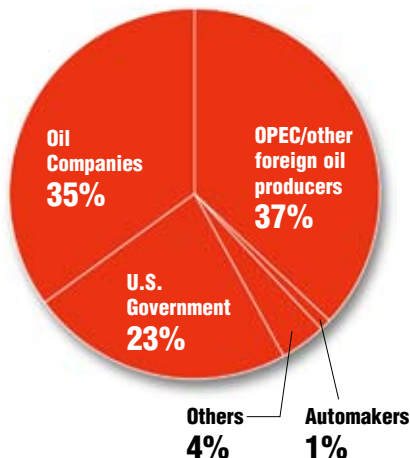
Just How Vulnerable Is the United States?

As discussed above, the United States is vulnerable to a disruption in the supply of foreign oil. However, the U.S. does not appear at first glance to be as exposed to the actions of the Arab world as Europe or Japan. Only 17% of imported U.S. crude oil, for example, moves through the Persian Gulf, while European dependence upon Middle Eastern crude stands at

Please see **BLACK GOLD**, page 11

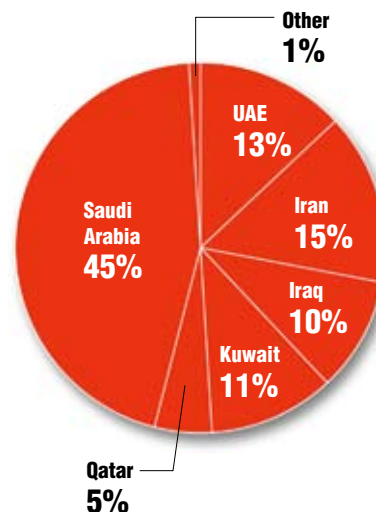
WHY HIGH FUEL PRICES?

Answers from American public when asked, "Who do you think is mainly to blame for the increase in fuel prices?"



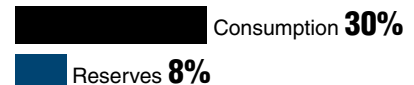
SOURCE: Harris Poll of 2,408 adults, 5/10-17/2004

TOTAL PERSIAN GULF OIL EXPORTS (2002)

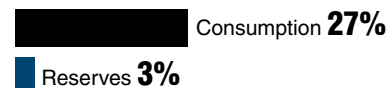


WORLD CONSUMPTION AND RESERVES

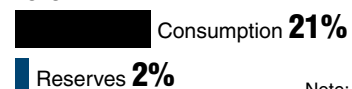
NORTH AMERICA



ASIA



EUROPE



MIDDLE EAST



Note: Certain regions are excluded.



The TELEVISION ADDICTION

PART TWO

Many agree that something is wrong with television today, and that this is an indication of problems in society in general. But is television programming merely a reflection of society, or does society mirror television?

BY JAMES F. TURCK

IN PART TWO of this series, we conclude our look at television, beginning with the shows of the past and moving to the programming of today. The content of television programs has changed dramatically from its early days. This was once a much more wholesome form of entertainment. Series such as *Father Knows Best*, *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, *Leave It To Beaver*, *Captain Kangaroo*, *The Andy Griffith Show*, *The Big Valley*, *The Lawrence Welk Show*, *The Red Skelton Show* and *Lassie* come to mind. No ratings needed here! There was a clear portrayal of what was right vs. what was wrong. The majority of programs taught and promoted good manners, proper respect, values and morals. Many times, a particular episode would teach a helpful, valuable lesson about life. They tended to show the negative effects of wrong behavior.

Foul language was non-existent. There was no gratuitous, graphic violence or sex. The comedy shows were clean. TV shows pictured traditional families with a husband, wife and children. The father was portrayed as the breadwinner, head of the home, capable, wise, intelligent and able to lead his family. The wife was shown in her proper role, following and supporting her husband's lead, caring for the children and the home. Children were obedient and well-behaved, and they honored and respected their parents. Proper correction and discipline were evident.

And for the most part, society reflected all of this. Not so today!

Television today is far removed from this type of programming. And society has moved right along with it. The old TV shows have given way in recent years to shows such as *Dark Angel*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Boston Public*, *Home Improvement*, *Seinfeld*, *Will and Grace*, *Like Family*, *Becker*, *Sex and the City*, *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, and other such programs.

While some of these shows' titles might lead you to think they provide quality entertainment, they do not. The content of seemingly harmless programs is full of coarse, vulgar language, sexual innuendo, scenes of adultery and fornication, homosexual relationships, graphic violence, sarcasm and putdowns. This was rare—if not unheard of—in the early years of television.

Increasing Violence

Recall that, in 1972, the U.S. Surgeon General's office found a link between viewing violence on television and aggressive behavior. In testifying before a U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Communications, Surgeon General Jesse Steinfeld said, "It is clear to me that the causal relationship between televised violence and antisocial behavior is sufficient to warrant appropriate and immediate

remedial action...There comes a time when the data [is] sufficient to justify action. That time has come."

It is estimated that the average child will have witnessed 8,000 murders and over 100,000 other acts of violence on television by the time he leaves elementary school. By age 18, that number will increase to 200,000 acts of violence, including 40,000 murders. As viewing continues throughout adulthood, this number will only increase. It is no wonder that so many, having been conditioned from an early age, seek to solve problems and conflicts through violence.

But has anything changed? Are acts of violence shown on TV decreasing?

Not according to a study conducted by the Parents Teachers Council, published in a report titled *TV Bloodbath: Violence on Prime Time Broadcast TV, A PTC State of the Television Industry Report*. It stated that "PTC analysts examined all prime time entertainment series on the major television networks (ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC, UPN and the WB) from the first two weeks of the 1998, 2000, and 2002 November sweeps periods...A total of 400 program hours were analyzed. Television broadcasts of movies, news, and sports programs were not included in this analysis. PTC analysts reviewed the programs for all instances of violence. Mild forms included threats of violence, mayhem or pyrotechnics (fires, explosions, car crashes), deaths implied, and fist fights or martial arts fights. More extreme examples of violence included use of guns or other weapons, depiction of blood, graphic depictions (e.g., a dismembered body), deaths depicted, and torture."

Some of its findings (from www.parentstv.org):

■ Overall, violence increased in every time slot between 1998 and 2002. On all the networks combined, violence was 41% more frequent during the 8:00 p.m. (ET/PT) Family Hour in 2002 than in 1998.

■ During the second hour of prime time (9-10:00 p.m. ET/PT), violence was 134.4% more frequent in 2002 than in 1998. During the third hour

REVEALING TV STATISTICS

■ Americans watch an average of more than 4 hours of television a day, or 2 full months of TV a year. By age 65, the average American will have spent nearly 9 years glued to television.

■ 40% of families always or often watch television while eating dinner.

■ Only 14% of 12th-graders who watch TV six hours a day or more achieve proficiency on reading tests, whereas 52% of students who watch an hour or less do.

■ Virtually all 3,500 research studies of more than 40 years show a link between watching media violence and committing acts of real violence.

■ Since 1980, the proportion of overweight children has doubled due, in part, to inactive leisure time activities, such as watching TV.

▶ U.S. households with at least one television: **98%**

▶ U.S. households having two TV sets: **34%**

▶ U.S. households with three or more TV sets: **40%**

▶ Americans that regularly watch TV while eating dinner: **66%**

▶ Chance an American falls asleep with the TV on at least three nights a week: **1 in 4**

▶ Number of hours per day television is on in an average U.S. home: **7 hours, 12 min.**

▶ Number of videos rented daily in the U.S.: **6 million**

▶ Number of public library items checked out daily: **3 million**

▶ Average minutes per week that American children ages 2-11 watch TV: **1,197**

▶ Average minutes per week that parents spend in meaningful conversation with their children: **38.5**

▶ 4-6 year-olds who, when asked to choose between watching TV and spending time with their fathers, preferred TV: **54%**

▶ Children ages 5-17 who have a TV in their bedroom: **52%**

▶ Children ages 2-5 who have a TV in their bedroom: **25%**

▶ 4th graders that watch more than 14 hours of television per week:	81%
▶ Hours per year the average American youth watches television:	1,500
▶ Hours per year the average American youth spends in school:	900
▶ Chance that an American parent requires that children do their homework before watching television:	1 in 12
▶ Percentage of Americans who say they watch too much TV:	49%
▶ Percentage of parents who would like to limit their children's TV watching:	73%
▶ Hollywood executives who believe there is a link between TV violence and real-life violence:	80%
▶ Increase in network news coverage of homicide between 1990 and 1995:	336%
▶ Reduction in the American homicide rate between 1990 and 1995:	13%
▶ Number of ads aired for "junk food" during four hours of Saturday morning cartoons:	202
▶ Number of TV commercials seen in a year by the average child:	30,000
▶ Number of TV commercials seen by the average American by age 65:	2 million
▶ Percent of toy advertising dollars spent on TV commercials in 1997:	92%
▶ Americans who believe that "most of us buy and consume far more than we need":	82%
▶ American children ages 6-11 who were seriously overweight in 1963:	4.5%
▶ Percentage of American children ages 6-11 who were seriously overweight in 1993:	14%
▶ Americans who can name The Three Stooges:	59%
▶ Americans who can name three Supreme Court Justices:	17%

Source: *TV Free America*

of prime time (10-11:00 p.m. ET/PT), violent content was nearly 63% more common in 2002 than in 1999.

■ In qualitative terms, television violence seemed to have become more graphic over time. In 1998, the most common form of TV violence during all hours of prime time was fist fights or martial arts combat (in which no one was killed). By 2002, these relatively mild fight sequences became less frequent and were supplanted by more frequent use of guns or other weapons. In 1998, 44% of all violent scenes during the Family Hour were mild fight sequences compared to 32% in 2002. In 1998, 29% of all violent sequences included the use of guns or other weapons. By 2002, that number increased to 38%.

■ Looking at the second hour of prime time, violent scenes containing depictions of blood were 141% more common in 2002 than in 1998.

Foul Language

Language that was once unacceptable is now common in a wide variety of shows. Another study the PTC conducted during the same time period as mentioned above reviewed programs for all instances of foul language, including curses, offensive epithets, sexually suggestive or indecent and censored language. Among other things, the study found:

■ Foul language increased overall during every timeslot between 1998 and 2002. During the Family Hour, it increased by 94.8% between 1998 and 2002 and by 109.1% during the 9:00 p.m. ET/PT time slot. Ironically, the smallest increase (38.7%) occurred during the last hour of prime time—the hour when young children are least likely to be in the viewing audience.

■ One teen-targeted network had a 188% increase in foul language during the Family Hour between 1998 and 2002. Such language increased by 308.5% during the second hour of prime time.

This use of foul language has carried over into everyday conversations. *American Demographics* recently published a survey indicating that 55%

of women and 72% of men say they swear in public. It is even more prevalent among younger generations, with 74% of 18- to 34-year-olds swearing in public as opposed to 48% of 55-year-olds who responded to the survey. The use of curse words is also slowly creeping into the vocabulary of younger and younger children.

Attack on Fathers and Families

Today, there is a trend in TV programming geared toward degrading and undermining the roles of husbands and fathers in the family.

One might ask, "What is wrong with the shows mentioned earlier? Don't they provide an overall message of 'good triumphing over evil,' and promote 'good, wholesome American values'?"

While this might appear to be the case on the surface, a closer look at the content and dialogue of such shows paints a different picture.

Husbands are constantly depicted as bumbling, ignorant, insensitive dunderheads. They are the brunt of jokes and always in trouble in their relationships with family and friends. They just can't seem to get it right. If it were not for the advice of their wives, they would be totally inept at managing their lives, marriages and families.

Wives are shown as wiser, smarter, better educated and more level-headed, always knowing what to do, no matter the situation. The woman is portrayed as the guiding, stabilizing force in the marriage and family. If it were not for her, everything would fall to pieces.

How about children? Are they respectful to parents and one another? Hardly! Sarcasm and putdowns flow freely from their mouths to parents and each other in a never-ending game of one-up-man-ship.

It seems that no aspect of family life is off-limits to the writers of so-called "TV sitcoms." What is supposed to be quality family time spent around the table sharing a meal together is reduced to a trip through the sewer.

As with everything else on TV,

Please see **TELEVISION**, page 17

WHY THEY HATE US

PART ONE: GOD'S HAND REMOVED

There is a flagrant—and intense—increase in world hatred of the United States and, to a lesser degree, Britain and the other English-speaking countries of the West. It is, in fact, seemingly popular to feel this way and express it loudly. Why is this? Can anything be done about it? When and how will it end?

BY MARK P. DENEE

THE UNITED STATES of America—the land of freedom and justice, the land of opportunity, and the land of plenty. It is also this country, along with its allies, that won the Cold War, and liberated both Europe and Asia. Yet today, the U.S. is loathed and scorned! Many in the world now roll their eyes in disgust at the very mention of this great country's name. Others will curse, spit on the ground and burn its flag. And still others will commandeer jet airliners and fly them into buildings, killing thousands of its citizens. They do this all because they hate it—but why?

Most have forgotten and no longer consider what the world would be like if the “other side” had won World War II. Of course, it was not meant to be at that time, according to God's Plan, as we will later see. But nonetheless, the world now barely pays lip service to the American (as well as British, Canadian and Australian) lives sacrificed to liber-

ate two continents and a world from fascist aggression.

Instead, most of the world now prefers to mock and laugh, particularly at the United States, at every turn. There is a desperate and increasing worldwide loathing of this country and its people. Very soon, the hate will turn to war, as it always does, but this time, the attacks against America will not be limited to Islamic extremists. In fact, most of the world will witness the United States, Britain, Canada and the other modern-day descendants of ancient Israel being brought to their knees, and will figuratively “kick them while they are down.” The mocking and laughing will continue, but thankfully, this punishment will only last for a short time.

This article will explain why much of the world despises America and, to a lesser degree, Britain, Canada and the other primarily English-speaking nations. For most Americans, this hatred is extremely perplexing—“Why does the world hate us so much? What have we done?” And indeed, at first glance, the issue can be difficult to understand. The United States, despite some radical (and extremely ridiculous) views, is not, after all, a Nazi or Communist regime. So we will explain why and examine how this hatred will increase in the very near future and eventually lead to

war, all as part of a lesson that God is allowing the modern-day descendants of Israel, and all of mankind, to learn—that living life his own way instead of God's way will only result in great pain, misery and suffering.

A Dying Superpower

Without a doubt, the United States of America has been the world's most powerful single nation in all history. At the end of World War II, America suddenly found itself with territories, influence and resources stretching around the world, and essentially unchallenged. Some today still consider the U.S. a superpower. Others argue that it is also properly referred to as an empire. And if one were to compare America's worldwide military, economic, diplomatic and social influence with that of the British and Roman empires, then it could be referred to as such.

However, the riches and might of the U.S. are all a result of blessings from God—blessings that were unconditionally promised to America's forefather, Abraham (see Gen. 22:16-17) as a result of his obedience. (To learn more, read our book *AMERICA AND BRITAIN IN BIBLE PROPHECY*, the subject of this issue's “Personal” from the Editor-in-Chief.) It is not a result of what the American people have accomplished—this is one important lesson that they have tragically forgotten. For there was a time near the beginning of their country's existence, that many did realize and acknowledge that their nation's many great blessings must have come from a higher power. And indeed they did. Yet today, most Americans walk the world with pride and absolute arrogance, unconcerned to a large degree with how others view them (until recently) and completely unaware of what is to come.

America's power and abundance alone generates hatred. Other countries are simply *jealous* of her success, wealth and power. Jealousy drives lust, and lust drives hate, and hate leads to war (Jms. 4:1-3). But in the past, during the "good times," American political, diplomatic and social status and influence flourished around the world. As long as the good times funded by America continue, then all the friends remain. But as soon as the U.S. is no longer willing or able to "host the party," the friends begin to slowly disappear. The Bible provides the analogy of "lovers" to such situations between countries, and even prophesies of a time when those "lovers will despise you" and "seek your life" (Jer. 4:30; Lam. 1:2; Ezek. 23:9, 22).

In addition to the simple jealousy of America's blessings, hatred is also fueled by the excessive pride and arrogance that is so often associated with their national and individual characteristics. Again, this would have been endured or even ignored as long as America was "buying the drinks." But now that God is removing His blessings from America, the parties are over and suddenly the arrogance is that much more obvious, and therefore, the U.S. is even *more* despised and hated. One of the purposes of God's punishment on the United States is to "break the pride of [her] power" (Lev. 26:19).

The U.S. as "World Police"

Most nations of the world (the so-called "international community") have often looked to the United States in recent decades as the "world policeman." This is a role that has been accepted only with hesitation by the U.S.—those in the know (i.e., the military generals) understand, at least partially, the futility of such endeavors. However, social and political pressure on *any* U.S. administration is generally enough to convince them to use their resources to enforce whatever is the current definition of international law.

Whether it is the recent tragedies in Somalia and Bosnia, older conflicts such as Korea and Vietnam, or even the seemingly never-ending Middle

East crisis, almost every time there is a predicament, the world looks to the U.S. to restore, enforce and invest in some sort of "peace." To a certain degree, this is because the U.S. would have been the only possible choice for such action, but it has also become, on the part of most other nations of the world, an issue of national laziness and political correctness: "Let the Americans fix the problem. Besides, they have the money and the boys willing to sacrifice their lives for someone else's problems. Besides, it would be the right thing to do." To an extreme, it is now becoming an opportunity for the rest of the world to watch America suffer and fail. And as God removes His hand, this will become more evident in anything—and everything—that they do.

America and Her Allies

There are a few nations that are often considered to have a "special relationship" with the United States—namely Britain, Canada, Australia, Israel and a few other English-speaking countries of the "western world." They are all to a large degree treated on the world stage as one and the same, as a sort of permanent alliance. Granted, on occasion, one or more countries may, for domestic political reasons, voice objection to America's direction (e.g., Canada during the last Iraq war), but in general, and when it comes down to the wire, they are indeed one and the same, and will stand and fall together. They are, after all, historically related and are most certainly very socially and strategically integrated.

These countries are also, although to a lesser degree at this point, hated for their wealth and success, which are also a result of blessings from God, promised to Abraham and his descendants. They are also hated because of their "special relationship" with the United States. Osama bin Laden has, for example, issued statements against each of the above, specifically, in al-Qaeda's war against the "Jews and Crusaders" (*BBC News*, November 12, 2002).

The "war on terror" has already brought these nations closer together. World events in the very near future will continue to do so, thereby escalating the rest of the world's hatred of all of them! These countries will stand and fall together during the next huge world calamity, the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21). How exactly Osama bin Laden and the Islamic terrorists will play a part is uncertain. However, Bible prophecy shows that God will once again use Assyria—modern-day Germany—leading a United States of Europe, to administer the punishment. But we will address this in greater detail in a subsequent part of this article.

Hypocrisy

Another dangerous and condemning aspect of being a superpower and playing the role of "world police" is hypocrisy. Obviously, the United States, as the primary liberator of Europe in 1944-45, as the prosecutor of that war's crimes, and the main proponent for other similar engagements around the world since then, has taken many opportunities to tout its vision of morality and judgment.

This has been most evident in recent months and years, as the U.S., Britain and their "coalition of the willing" dealt with the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. President Bush was confident in his decision because he believed it was "the right thing to do," and that any people would prefer to live under a democracy. And so, the rallying cry was "freedom and justice" for the Iraqi people. The U.S. and their allies were invading as liberators and giving back to the people what had been taken from them for so long—their country and their freedom. However, in the heat of battle, and in the ensuing resistance, the right to just, decent incarceration for some Iraqis was compromised. America saw itself in a mirror—and was, but just for a moment, horrified.

Americans often proclaim to be acting in the best interest of the world—for peace and safety—and, to some degree, their intentions are good. However, they fail to consider the sad

state of their own lives. They fail to stop for a moment and look longer in that mirror to really see what they and their nation have become. In issue after issue, *The REAL TRUTH* magazine addresses the grim conditions that America, Britain, Canada and the other Western nations face today: widespread addiction to alcohol, drugs and illicit, perverted sex; dysfunctional families and broken homes; exploding immorality; rampant homosexuality; pleasure seekers; and near financial bankruptcy. If only the American people would see this, they would not be so proud and arrogant. They would not be so quick to take it upon themselves to enforce their misguided “morality” on others, or at the very least do it while shouting “freedom and justice.”

The U.S. badge of honor has been tarnished. The entire world now doubts

America’s best intentions and even their ability to implement them. Every move they make now seems to end in near disaster. And all the while, anti-American sentiment increases.

The Bible reveals the peoples of America and Britain descended from Israel’s son Joseph. Notice this stunning prophecy: “Joseph[’s]...branches run over the wall [our peoples have expanded the world over]: the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, *and hated him*” (Gen. 49:22-23).

God foretold this exploding hatred 4,000 years ago. This series will continue to explain *why* such hatred.

Man needs to stop and realize that his way will not work—that it will only bring misery, illness and death. Humanity needs to seek and implement God’s will, and understand and live His way. Eventually, mankind will.

In the next installment of this article, we will contrast all that America, Britain and their allies have done for the world with their current state of betrayal and isolation. We will *identify* the absolutely intense hatred of America around the world, but particularly in Europe, and the sinister popularity of it all. We will then examine the near future and why they who once knew God will be punished by those who never did.

This is all according to God’s great plan—Bible prophecy is being fulfilled before your eyes, and you have a chance to understand it! Take the time now, before it is too late, to read carefully all the pages of this magazine. Go to our websites and study our other literature. Reflect on and consider the state of your own life, and then seek God, and ask Him for understanding. □

BLACK GOLD

Continued from page 5

about 29%, with 75% of the oil bound for Japan passing this direction.

While the U.S. might not appear to be as susceptible to shocks caused by events in the Middle East, it may be, in reality, more vulnerable than continental Europe or Japan because of its massive trade deficit.

The established world trading routes for crude oil have evolved largely because of the logistics of transport. In other words, it makes much more economic sense for Middle Eastern crude to be shipped to nearby European ports for use, than faraway America; while Latin American crude will find the least costly route to North America.

For example, if an interruption of crude oil exports from the Middle East (presently around one-half of world production) occurred, Europe and Japan’s demand for oil would not go away. World pricing would be determined by world supply and demand—not just demand in the United States, as available resources would be transported to those willing and able to

pay the highest market price. With the U.S. trade deficit putting tremendous downward pressure upon the dollar, and European and Japanese trade surpluses providing additional cash in the form of Euros and Yen, it is plain that the total available supply would tend to move in the direction of Europe and Asia first. The U.S. could find itself isolated, very alone, and very thirsty for crude oil—very fast!

The Final Outcome

The Western World, in many ways, finds itself ensnared by the impulsive and unpredictable nature of the Arab world. Where is this leading? Will the Arab nations use oil in an attempt to dominate the earth? Will their religion expand until it overwhelms all regions of the world?

Bible prophecy clearly presents the final sequence of events, in which the Middle East is key. But, their role may not be what you think.

Events in the Middle East will, indeed, act as triggers to the great cataclysm at the end of this age! Oil will very likely be used as a weapon, but the Arab nations will, once again, overestimate their power, and underestimate the strong reaction that will ensue.

The hostile use of oil by Middle Eastern nations will almost certainly galvanize the “clay” and “iron” (Dan. 2:33) of the rising beast power in Europe, as the Arab nations could likely be the catalyst for the final sequence of apocalyptic events at the end of this age. (To learn more about this beast power, read our free booklet *Who or What is the BEAST of Revelation?*) However, they have not been given the power to achieve victory for themselves. Only the one true God of the universe gives and removes such power!

The conflict of greatest consequence will not be fought between the Middle East and the Western World. In the near future, a historically familiar political-religious assembly of *European* nations will arise to once again use its terrible war-making capacity to destroy and enslave nations (Isa. 10:5-7).

This brief war will astonish many—God intends to use it to correct His sinning people. Once He has humbled them, He will use them to lead humanity in total world peace! To understand why such events are coming upon America and Britain, read the Personal in this issue, “The Greatest Nations in Prophecy.” □



EATING YOURSELF TO DEATH

The Junk Food Epidemic

According to a National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, one-third of the U.S. diet consists of junk food—an astonishing figure! And as a result, disease has skyrocketed. What is “junk food”? What are its health implications? And why has it become so prevalent in today’s society?

MATT WAKES UP in the morning with hardly any energy. Although he did get his regular 8 hours of sleep, he still seems very tired. Unable to muster the energy to get up, he lies in bed for an extra 30 minutes. When he finally does get out of bed, he sees that he is running late.

“No time to sit down for break-

fast,” he thinks to himself. “I’ll pick something up on the way to work.” So Matt stops by his local grocery store, picks up a half-dozen doughnuts and a cola, thinking the sugar and caffeine will give him that boost of energy he is looking for.

Groggy and unable to concentrate, Matt staggers through the first 4 hours of work. He then breaks for lunch. Someone makes a run to the local fast-food restaurant. Matt chooses to have a

burger, fries and a soft drink.

He stumbles through the rest of the day, and then heads home. For dinner, he has a few slices of pizza and a soft drink.

By the end of the day, Matt is exhausted—even though he expended hardly any energy. For much of the day, he was sleepy, in a terrible mood and unable to get much accomplished because he could not concentrate.

The next day goes exactly the same.

Does this describe your day? Are you overweight? Are you tired and moody throughout much of the day? Do you sometimes have trouble concentrating?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then you could be suffering symptoms of a junk food diet.

You Are What You Eat

But, what is junk food, and how can you tell if you are consuming a junk food diet?

Junk food is a term used for foods that taste good, are high in calories and quick to prepare, and have little nutritional value. While most people have their own list of foods that they would consider junk food, it generally refers to foods that are high in sugar (such as soda pop, candy, ice cream and most pastries), high in fat (particularly, saturated fat—such as burgers, pizza, hot dogs, french fries and most fried foods) and high in salt.

But the above list is not all-inclusive. For example, most would consider the imitation juice on the market today as healthy. However, these products are loaded with sugar, artificially flavored, and contain very little *pure* juice. Many foods that we consider healthy could in fact be considered junk food. One must study and investigate in order to expand on the above list.

However, it is not necessarily harmful to eat these foods IF done occasionally and in *moderation* (Phil. 4:5). But as soon as the majority of the food consumed comes from junk food, it could be said that one has a junk food diet—of which, the effects are devastating.

The Health Implications?

Eating an abundance of junk seems normal to today's generation. Many parents feed their children a large amount of sugary breakfast food, causing them to become extremely hyperactive. They then take their children to doctors, whose solution is to simply prescribe medication to control their behavior—merely treating the *effect*, not the *CAUSE*. These parents are totally unaware that a change in diet would rectify the situation.

Eating junk food is also one of the main contributing factors to the development of cancer. The body desires and needs certain vitamins and minerals to function properly. But, when you eat a poor diet, you severely impair the body's ability—its immune system—to fight off toxins and diseased cells. As a result, those cells can become cancerous.

Another devastating effect of a

junk food diet is the obesity epidemic. Eating a regular diet of junk makes one quickly gain weight. Currently, 31 percent of adults and 17 percent of children in this nation are obese. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, obesity is fast approaching the number one preventable cause of death—a close second behind tobacco. Obesity can cause many other health complications, including cardiovascular disease, high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease, heart attacks, strokes, sleep apnea and others.

In an article in the *Daily Telegraph*, one pediatrician at the Royal London Hospital stated, "Four...children were being treated for apnea, a sleep disorder caused when airways are blocked by folds of fat.

"In other words, they are being choked by their fat," she said. "Were we able to study all severely obese children, I am confident we would identify many more with obstructive sleep apnea."

The article went on to describe how another doctor treated "a super-obese child aged eight with type 2 adult onset diabetes." These are chilling observations! So, as you can see, the effects of eating too much junk food could be devastating.

This leaves us with one question: Why has junk food become such a big problem?

Reasons Behind Popularity

There are three main reasons why junk food is so widely consumed. Most people could easily identify the first two, while being basically oblivious to the third and most important reason.

■ **Convenience:** People often choose to eat junk food simply because it is convenient. It fits well with today's hurried lifestyle. Society is so fast-paced that it leaves hardly any time to cook a well-prepared and nutritious meal. So, people pick foods that are quick, easy and convenient—which are usually also the most nutrient deficient.

■ **Advertisements:** Junk food marketers advertise through any and every means possible, including television

commercials, loud radio spots, Internet pop-up ads, and even through vending machines. Many of these contain subliminal messages or imagery. Consider. Have you ever heard or listened to a song and later found yourself unconsciously singing or humming that same tune? Even if you are unaware of the song, your mind captures it on a subconscious level. This is the same effect that junk food marketers are hoping for. And it has worked! Thus, to combat this cunning tactic, one must "keep [his] heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23).

■ **A Lack of Discipline:** Today's generation is one of terribly weak character. They have not had to suffer through a Great Depression or either of two world wars, and thus lack the inner strength and resolve of their predecessors. Many people completely understand the health implications of eating too much junk food, yet they consume it anyway because they lack discipline.

Weak parents, trying to be more like friends than parents, give in to their children's every whim—and they feed their children's taste buds instead of their bodies. What they do not realize is that they are doing their children a great disservice. They are sowing the seeds of addiction to junk food, which, left unchecked, could result in their untimely death.

However, if children are taught to eat nutritious food, they will not leave that pattern when they get older (Prov. 22:6).

A Change Is Coming

But there is good news. Jesus Christ will return soon to establish God's government on earth. At that time, "all things" will be restored (Acts 3:21). The world will be forced to obey God's laws, including His *health* laws. Gone will be the sugary, greasy and salty foods of today, and in their place will be good, nutritious, cleansing, building, sustaining and healing foods. That will be a wonderful time for all. (To learn more about this subject, read our free booklet *God's Laws of HEALTHFUL LIVING*.) □

A GENERATION CORRUPTED

Youth today stand together in twisted unity. Their morals, attitudes and aspirations are very similar. What are they? How did they come to be? And what does this generation mean for the present—and the near future?

BY BRADFORD G. SCHLEIFER

IT IS 8 A.M. and class begins. The idle chatter dampens with the arrival of the instructor. This is what happened at the beginning of class decades ago. But today, it is *very* different. Many students do not arrive on time or have forgotten such things as paper or pencils. Others hold open conversations while the teacher, often unsuccessfully, tries to gain control over the class.

Such is the scene that takes place each weekday in America. Whether the students are in kindergarten or finishing their last year of college, the scenario is quite similar. Are these children and young adults actually being prepared for the world ahead of them, ready to take on responsibility?

The education of youth, and the society around them, particularly in the Western World, has produced a new generation—one vastly different from those of past decades. As a generation that appears—at least in their own eyes—to have figured out all the issues and problems in the world, they are “self-aware” and believe that they can do whatever they please, as long as it “doesn’t hurt anyone else.”

Where did such thinking originate? How did the concepts of character, morality and sacrifice fade from this darkening generation? There is but one answer: They were essentially taught this way!

And amazingly, they have been taught with such lockstep conformity that by the time they are young adults, this outlook is second nature—their basic character. Of course, students are not *actively* taught to give themselves over to their baser instincts. However, it is what is *not* taught that allows such thinking to run rampant.

Rarely are children disciplined for their misconduct or even taught that such

actions are wrong. Improper conduct is “winked at”—or even encouraged. Children are taught from a very young age that their *feelings* should be their moral compass. They are taught to reason their way through a situation with feelings—do what they *feel* is right.

Sexual limitations have also been lifted. Gone are the days when children were reprimanded for being too loud on field trips. Today, these same school trips are interrupted by children performing sexual acts at the back of the school bus. Because such is not disciplined, these same youth may turn to pornography to pay their way through college. Truly, all such acts are accepted and even considered healthy exploration of oneself.

A wise man, when speaking of the present world, said that there will exist a generation that sees itself as pure, yet is involved in all sorts of vile activities; a generation that curses its father and mother and whose speech is full of hateful things. Simply scanning the world around you quickly reveals that such a generation exists today.

The problem is not limited to youth; the deeper problem is that these corrupted youth are becoming adults. They are replacing the “old guard,” who based choices on *character* and *integrity*. Today, choices are based on *situation ethics* and acceptance of whatever “feels” right.

Can anything be done to turn the tide? Is there any hope left?

Yes! There is a solution. These children and young adults are not without hope. The conformity of corruption that exists can be reversed. But before we can look at a solution, and the hope it inspires, we must look at how far and to what degree this generation has slid.

Ruling Their Parents

People are influenced the most when they are young. This is why it is so important for parents to instill in children, at a very early age, the proper focus and framework on which to base right and wrong. Today, parents often fall short of this standard.

The next time you are walking through a supermarket, listen to par-

ents talking to their children. Watch how they interact. Often, you will witness children commanding their parents. While this may not be obvious at first, you will notice that it is the *child* who is getting what he wants and the parent who is bowing to his whim.

For instance, a toddler may grab for cookies while his mother is pushing the cart down the supermarket aisle. When his mother takes the cookies and puts them back on the shelf, the child bursts into a wild tantrum. Frustrated, the mother attempts to *reason* the child back to calmness, explaining that this is not the right environment to “express himself.”

This may be followed by a series of attempts to verbally placate the child, ultimately failing. Finally, out of embarrassment and desperation, those same cookies are placed back into the cart, quickly calming the child, teaching him a devastating lesson.

Instead of being told “no,” the child learns how to manipulate his parents to get what he wants—satisfying *his* wants or desires. He is shown to do, feel and think what is “right in his own eyes” (Prov. 12:15), with no regard for those around him.

(Interestingly, parents have fallen back on the modern idea of reasoning with their children. They assume that strict punishment harms the child’s self-esteem or development. Such reasoning has been *proven* unsound. Studies show that children are actually *incapable* of reasoning until they are age seven or eight.)

Even at a very early age, children are given more power than they can possibly understand. They are taught that what they *feel* is right *is* right! The seeds of self-importance are already deeply planted.

And these seeds are fertilized and nurtured when they enter the school system.

Mis-Education

The last several decades have seen some major changes in how and what children are taught. There have even been extreme shifts in what the students are *not* taught!

Children are no longer taught that honesty and respect are essential attributes for success. In their place, strong-arming and intimidation are the standard. A recent incident reinforced this thinking: A high school teacher caught some of her students cheating on a test, and issued them a failing grade. Because the test constituted most of their *final* grade, the students failed the course and their parents were notified. This would have taught the students that cheating does not pay and that their actions carry serious consequences. But, in the end, a very different lesson was learned.

Upset by their children’s failing marks, some parents filed a lawsuit against the school board and teacher involved. They claimed that the failing mark, and the stigma involved, ruined their children’s chance at college and would ultimately adversely affect their lives. Amazingly, the school board buckled!

Not only were the failing marks overturned, but the teacher, who had lost all authority in her class, was forced to resign. While the parents hold the greater share of the blame, the weak school board ensured that these children would learn that consequences can be dictated (often with the help of legal counsel), regardless of the original action!

What sort of far-reaching lesson is this for children?

Once children are legally adults, schools no longer can hide behind the excuse of bad parenting—as was the case above. Most universities turn a blind eye to immoral conduct under their own roof. Others are more than happy to become active participants in such acts—sometimes with university funding.

Such was the case at Harvard University. At the request of some students, Harvard funded a student-run sex magazine. Their only stipulation (which was dictated after the magazine received national media attention) was that the publication could not contain pornographic *images*. Articles could be as illicit and graphic as desired, but no actual photographs of sexual acts

could be included. The *written word* was considered to be protected by the constitution and could not be censored. Imagine the shock the founding fathers of the United States would feel if they knew that the constitution was being used to protect pornographers.

There are other times when the students are able to fund themselves. A new trend is emerging in schools around the country. Gone are the days when students took summer jobs or student loans to fund their education. Why “waste” all your time working when you can run adult websites from your dorm room?

Young women have found that they can make thousands of dollars by filming themselves in sexual acts, or by simply romping around their dorm room nude and then posting it on the Internet. When asked, many participants state that it is just another job to get them through school! With the tuition paid, many schools are noticeably missing from the debate.

Society has sunk so low that being in the porn industry is “just another job.”

But immoral sex is not the only result of this characterless generation. After college sporting events, fans turn to rioting and violence. Overturning cars, breaking windows and lighting fires are just a few of the post-game recreations. Absolute and uncontrolled violence reigns supreme, often with police unable to do anything other than wait until the unruly mob sobers. And these are the fans of the *winning* team!

From kindergarten to college, schools have dropped the ball in properly educating our children. While lessons about character are notably absent, schools actually *teach* students to be shallow. (To learn more about the state of today’s education system, you may read our trend report *The Education Crisis*.)

The product of such a system should come as no surprise.

Lessons Learned—Lessons Applied

Children who are taught that they are not responsible for their actions carry such lessons into adulthood. The news

is filled with stories of ridiculous litigation: Fast food industry responsible for making one overweight or the tobacco industry responsible for people choosing to smoke. People do not want to take responsibility for their actions. It *feels* better to blame someone else—and all the more when courts reward you for your own lack of character. The tables have been completely turned!

But is this really surprising?

Children are taught by schools, parents and peers that it is much easier to blame someone else for their actions than to take responsibility for them. Such conduct would continue into adulthood. As the Bible states, what you are taught as a child will continue with you as an adult (Prov. 22:6). Are you beginning to see why the corrupt, yet uniform, education that children receive is completely destroying almost an entire generation?

Power Without Character

Recently, there has been much news coverage about abuses committed by American and British soldiers against Iraqi prisoners. Such reports are often followed by these questions: “Why did this happen? How could anyone do this?”

The answer is simple. When you put young people (like those described above) in a situation where they have ultimate power, problems will ALWAYS ensue. How can a generation that knows no limits, sees no boundaries and yields to no rules of ethics be expected to make right, moral judgments?

One would not put just anyone in front of a ticking bomb in the hope they could defuse it. That person would have to be taught, and properly educated to understand how to avoid a potentially dangerous situation. This world has put an untrained generation in front of a ticking bomb—with no education, training or hope of defusing it.

And the resulting explosion is the product of such misguided thinking.

“There Is a Generation...”

With example after example, there seems to be very little hope left. We

have reached the time that God’s Word describes in the following way: “*There is a generation* that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness” (Prov. 30:12). Other parts of this passage describe this generation in even more detail: “*There is a generation* that curses their father, and does not bless their mother...O how lofty [Hebrew: proud] are their eyes!... whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives...” (vs. 11, 13-14).

In 1920, famous lecturer Roger Babson said, “I looked to the SOURCE which determines future conditions. I have found that the source may be defined in terms of ‘*RIGHTEOUSNESS*.’ When 51 percent or more of the whole people are reasonably ‘righteous’ in their dealings with one another, we are heading into increasing prosperity. When 51 percent of the people become ‘unrighteous’ in their business dealings with their fellows, then we are headed for *BAD TIMES*...”

God states this in a much more succinct manner: “Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach [wicked thing] to any people [nation]” (Prov. 14:34).

With over 80% of marriages today experiencing adultery (not to mention the sexual relationships existing between unmarried individuals), the 51% of “unrighteousness” that started the collapse of our modern society seems like a distant memory.

A Generation Punished

Years ago, the term “Generation X” was coined. Since then, there has been “Generation Y.” It seems fitting that youth today receive the label “Generation Z.” This is the alphabet’s last letter! The Bible shows that when a generation has become as corrupted as the youth of today, the country, empire or civilization of which it is part collapses!

There is nothing man can do to save himself from the slippery slope on which he does not realize he is standing. Living lives of self-indulgence and decadence, young adults today have no idea what it means to sacrifice. Very few have even imagined what it would be like to miss a meal.

What has this created? WEAKNESS!

So much pomp and circumstance will mean nothing when the world starts to collapse around them. They will not know how to deal with the coming adversity. God's Word speaks of a time in the very near future when these attitudes and sins will "catch up" with the world.

We are at the end of 6,000 years during which God has allowed man to rule himself. Mankind has walked according to its *feelings* for all of that time. Its end, as we know it, is nearly here. God is going to punish the world for breaking the laws He set forth millennia ago.

How will a generation never punished by their parents handle being punished by their Creator? They will *not* handle it. The weakness that has developed in this generation will rear its ugly head with full force.

Again, there is hope. When a parent

punishes a child, it is meant to help the child, to develop him into a better person. So it is with God. After correcting mankind, He will usher in an age of proper education—fully teaching the entire world how to live in happiness and joy.

What does this mean for *you*? Are you worried about the world around you? Do you feel that you are unable to help or affect it?

Your Education of Character

While the world is not going to change by the efforts of men, it will change soon, when Christ returns. Are *you* preparing for that return? You can, and in doing so, you will be given a chance to *truly* help large numbers of people. When Christ sets up His kingdom on earth, those He has trained will help Him.

This is your potential: You could serve *with* Christ, helping billions of people live a way of true happiness,

peace and joy. Gone will be the time of corrupt, rotten attitudes, thoughts and desires. And you can be part of ushering in this age!

Learning about God's purpose in our lives opens the door to change. People can change who they are and how they live. But many in this age will find it too difficult to overcome their societal "training," ignoring the *special* training God is offering them!

Recognize such attitudes at work within yourself. Overcoming them will be difficult, but it *is* possible! Being reared and educated a certain way does not mean that you must remain the same. In fact, realize that, the younger you are, the less time has been spent ingraining such attitudes into your mind. However, *you* must choose to change! Your decision is more important and the reward greater than you yet know! (To learn more about your great human potential, read our book *The AWESOME POTENTIAL of Man.*) □

TELEVISION

Continued from page 8

families begin to emulate these actions, thinking this is how they are supposed to act.

Television also attacks families in other ways. In the place of traditional families, it promotes homosexual lifestyles. Each season brings more of this programming content. One-quarter of movie ads aired during the so-called "family hour" are for R-rated films. Time spent watching television (over 4 hours per day for the average American) leaves little time for meaningful conversation with children (38.5 minutes per week). In fact, 54% of 4- to 6-year-olds would rather spend time watching TV than spend time with their fathers.

Sex

As it has with every other standard of decency, television is constantly pushing the boundaries in regard to sex. What was once unmentioned and left in the bedroom is now standard fare. Not content with innuendo, virtually every

prime time show has explicit scenes of fornication or adultery. Little is left to the imagination. Partial nudity is becoming more prevalent during prime time, even among the major networks, as they strive to compete with cable and satellite television. It is almost impossible to watch any show without being subjected to sex.

How much sex is on the tube? A study, *Sex on TV 3: Content and Context*, by the Kaiser Family Foundation, holds some answers.

Among its findings:

■ Almost two-thirds of all shows (64%) have some sexual content, including one in three (32%) with sexual behaviors (the rest include sexual references in conversation). This rate of sexual content is similar to that found two years ago (68%), up from about half of all shows (56%) four years ago.

■ One in seven shows (14%) now includes sexual intercourse, either depicted or strongly implied, an increase from 10% of shows two years ago, and 7% four years ago.

■ In the top 20 shows among teen viewers, eight in ten episodes include some sexual content (83%), including

one in five (20%) with sexual intercourse.

■ Overall, 15% of all shows with any sexual content—including those with more modest content such as talk about sex, kissing or touching—included a safer sex reference, up from 10% two years ago and 9% four years ago. The rates for certain programs with more advanced portrayals were much higher, as noted above (for example, in shows with sexual intercourse, where the rate was 26%).

Reality TV

No longer content with "make believe," television has moved into the world of *reality*. With the introduction of shows such as *Survivor*, *The Mole*, *Big Brother*, *Fear Factor*, *The Bachelor* and *Scare Tactics*, reality television is coming of age. Yet, these shows are just more of the same, with the added dimension of reality. They contain just as much sex, violence, and filthy language. Added to the mix is competition, scheming, backstabbing, plotting, humiliation, fear and the like. These shows seem to fill the viewers' need for voyeurism and to

live vicariously through the lives of others.

Good and Evil

As with anything mankind creates, television is a mixture of good and evil (Gen. 2-3). While some programs are good, such as certain nature, history, documentary or educational programs, most of it is very bad. Under the influence of Satan, the god of this world (Rev. 12:9; II Cor. 4:4), man has followed a path that *seems* right to him, but that ultimately leads to pain, suffering and death (Prov. 14:12; 16:25). What could be used as a wonderful tool to teach, guide and instruct mankind in RIGHT ways, is instead more often a destructive force in society.

Through television, the God-ordained institutions of marriage and family (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:23-24) are under attack. Husbands and fathers are portrayed as pitiful and bumbling,

vision, as much as television mirrors society, “reality TV” is not that much different than what viewers have been watching for the last few decades.

What God Says

While society in general may see nothing wrong with the content of television, the Creator God feels differently. Through the prophet Isaiah, He declares, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” (55:8-9).

God describes this present society and television programming in the following way: “Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips

are clean entertainment. But sadly, these are becoming fewer and farther between. It will take work and effort to find them. But this *can* be done!

Christ told His disciples to “watch” and be aware of world events in order to be ready for His Return (Matt. 24:44; Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36). Watching the news to keep abreast of world events, trends and conditions will mean that seeing acts of violence or evil is unavoidable.

Yet, these things should not consume an unreasonable amount of our time. A balanced approach should be taken. There are many alternatives to spending endless hours in front of a television, viewing programs with no redeeming value.

Read a good book, talk with your family, play board games together, visit the zoo, library or museums. Take a walk. Get some exercise. Almost anything burns more calories than watching TV. Learn to use your mind,

“There are many alternatives to spending endless hours in front of a television...”

and ineffective at leading the family. Wives’ roles have been reversed. Instead of honoring parents as God commands (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16), children are shown as sarcastic and disrespectful. Families are portrayed in every dysfunctional way possible, all in the name of comedy. Homosexual and other “alternative” lifestyles are promoted as viable, acceptable and normal.

Television has moved sex from the proper confines of marriage between a man and a woman, to endless innuendos and depictions of seemingly harmless casual sex. In truth, TV *promotes* fornication and adultery. It is constantly breaking the barriers in its use of coarse, foul, filthy and crude language. Violence is glorified in such graphic detail that it no longer shocks or disturbs viewers. It leaves them numb to real-world violence. And since society has come to mirror tele-

have spoken lies, your tongue has muttered perverseness. None calls for justice, nor any pleads for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity...

“Their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goes therein shall not know peace” (Isa. 59:2-8).

What Should You Do?

Is *all* TV bad? No. Is it okay to watch some programs? Yes. There are *some* good, wholesome programs. Some are helpful and educational. Others are historical and informative. Some

instead of allowing TV to numb it. Find a hobby, such as music or arts and crafts. The alternatives are endless!

King David said, “I will set no wicked thing before my eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me” (Psa. 101:3). He strove to avoid seeking after, or purposely setting before him, anything contrary to God’s Law.

The Bible tells us to “flee fornication” (I Cor. 6:18) and to “put away from you a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from you” (Prov. 4:24). This ought to be done no matter what form these things take!

When Christ returns to set up the kingdom of God, every evil, wicked and wrong way will be done away. The time is coming when “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9). □

What Would the World Be Like...?

PART TWO

In the last issue, we looked at just some of the ways the world would be different if people obeyed the first four of God's Ten Commandments. We will now examine some of the differences we would see if commandments five through ten were obeyed.

IN TODAY'S SOCIETY, God's laws are universally ignored and broken. Even professing Christianity, not realizing the benefits that could result from keeping the Ten Commandments, claims that they are "done away."

However, what would happen...

If Everyone Honored Their Parents?

What if the whole world obeyed the FIFTH COMMANDMENT? The end of juvenile delinquency would only be the beginning. Honoring parents would naturally lead to honoring God.

Reform schools and youth detention centers would close or would become educational centers. Drug dealers and gangs would be out of business—as youths would honor and obey their parents who warned them about these dangers. Without drug habits to feed, theft would decrease.

With correct honor for parents, we would see positive changes in values and the media. Respect for the elderly would reappear, along with respect for

authority, including police officers and teachers. Generations would live longer as they would receive the promised blessing due to showing honor to their parents.

If There Were No Killing?

What if the whole world kept the SIXTH COMMANDMENT, even in just the letter of the law? What would it be like? What would be missing from the world as we know it, and what would be present in its place?

One difference would be that military assaults and invasions would no longer be carried out. The ever-present threats of nuclear, chemical and biological warfare would no longer exist. The defense budgets of all nations would be available for more constructive uses.

On the domestic level, people would no longer have to live in constant fear for their lives. Homicides, suicides and abortions would end. Police forces would be greatly reduced. Television and movies would not glorify violence and murder.

And if the *spirit* of the Sixth Commandment were obeyed (Matt.

5:21-22), think of the problems that would disappear. There would not be the suspicion and fear that exist in society today. Discrimination and violent civil unrest would vanish.

People would feel safe walking at night. Parents would feel safe allowing their children to play outside, without having to watch over them constantly.

In Zechariah 8:4-5, we read, "Thus says the Lord of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."

These are just a few of the blessings that will be enjoyed in the millennium, the one-thousand year rule of God's kingdom on earth (Rev. 20:2-7; II Pet. 3:8). As we read, in Isaiah 11:9, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

There will be no murderers in the kingdom, as we read in I John 3:15: "Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer: and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." At that time, the one who inspires hate and murder (John 8:44), will be removed (Rev. 20:1-2) and no longer able to influence the world.

The following offers a glimpse of just a few of the changes we would see in the world if just this one command from God were obeyed.

Impact on Judicial Systems:

Think of the decreased demand on the world's judicial systems if the Sixth Commandment were kept. Their

caseloads would drop sharply. There would not be defense lawyers trying to plea-bargain for clients who had committed heinous acts of murder.

There would not be all of the “red tape” involved in determining when, and to what degree, killing constitutes murder. Much of forensic science would be a thing of the past. The endless appeals process would become obsolete. There might still be a police force, to deal with those who break other laws, but it would not have to be as large, and they would not need to carry firearms.

Prison populations would not be increasing at the rate that they are today. According to a report by Darrell K. Gilliard and Allen J. Beck, Ph.D., BJS Statisticians, at midyear 1997 an estimated 1,725,842 persons were incarcerated in the nation’s prisons and jails. Federal and state prison authorities and local jail authorities held in their custody 645 persons per 100,000 U.S. residents.

Prisoners in the custody of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Federal Government accounted for two-thirds of the incarcerated population (1,158,763 inmates). The other third were held in local jails (567,079).

There would be no more armed robberies or assaults with deadly weapons. There would be no need for “self-defense” classes. There would be no more “hate crimes,” or even slander (character assassination). This would change the tone of political campaigns and elections. Yellow journalism (the brand of reporting found in supermarket tabloids) would be a thing of the past.

Impact on Military: Imagine what the world would be like if nations lived without the fear of invasion. It has been said that throughout history, most nations have been either preparing for war, at war, or recovering from war.

If the entire world obeyed the command “thou shalt not kill,” nations would not be amassing nuclear arsenals. They would not have to take inventory of such arsenals, constantly worried about theft by rogue states.

Terrorism would disappear. All branches of the armed forces would become obsolete. All funds currently directed toward military efforts could be used to beautify the earth, and to build rather than destroy.

Effect on Gun Sales: Obedience to the Sixth Commandment would also result in a dramatic drop in gun sales. According to statistics, Americans use firearms to defend themselves from criminals about 760,000 times a year. This figure is the lowest among a group of 15 nationwide polls done by organizations including Gallup and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Approximately 11% of gun owners and 13% of handgun owners have used their firearms for protection from criminals. (*justfacts.com*)

What About Families?: Imagine the difference that would be seen on the family level. Abortion would be abolished (approximately 4,000 babies are aborted every day in the U.S. alone). There would no longer be the “silent” sins of domestic violence and child abuse. In the U.S., a woman is beaten by her husband, boyfriend, or live-in partner, every nine seconds.

According to government agencies that investigate child abuse, about 3 million children in the U.S. were reported as abused or neglected in 1997; 2.3 percent of children in the United States—or about 1.5 million children—experience abusive violence each year.

Divorce caused by domestic violence would also dramatically drop.

Change in Travel: Concerns about travel safety would not be as great. There would be no more cases of “road rage.” Between 1990 and 1996, road rage resulted in approximately 83,000 deaths.

There would be no more cases of carjacking, and hijacking of commercial vehicles (airplanes, buses, trains, etc.). People and nations would work together to settle their disputes peacefully.

How Entertainment Would Change: Violence would no longer be glamorized as a form of entertainment. According to a Canadian study,

television violence affects children of varying ages differently:

“As toddlers, children will mimic what they see and hear on television. A number of preschoolers pay greater attention to the TV than toddlers, though most preschoolers can’t tell the difference between fantasy and reality—and may not distinguish between commercials and programs.

“Once children reach elementary school age, they begin to stay up late and watch more adult programs.

“Teens prefer adult programming that deals with subjects like growing up, dating, alcohol, drugs and sex. Horror movies, music videos, and X-rated films are also popular with teens. These programs often contain violent pornographic images and scenes of abuse against women. Research has shown that these shows can convey to boys the message that violence against women is OK, and can make teenage girls more afraid” (*Television Violence: A Review of the Effects on Children of Different Ages*, Wendy L. Josephson, Ph.D., 1995).

“Dale Kunkel, American media critic, monitored the content of five major U.S. newspapers and watched the nightly newscasts on ABC, CBS and NBC throughout November 1993. He found that 48 percent of television news stories about children, and 40 percent of newspaper stories, involved reports of crime and violence” (*How the News Media “See” Kids*, Dale Kunkel, Fall 1994).

These types of programming have long-term effects on children. They may grow up unable to distinguish fiction from reality. This results in a disassociation of cause and effect (e.g., a child sees a film, in which an actor is killed, then sees the same actor [alive and well] in another film). They may attempt to “experiment” for themselves. Obviously, there would not be “Hollywood special-effects” results.

If There Were No Adultery?

What if the whole world kept the SEVENTH COMMANDMENT? Adultery would not exist. People would consider

the long-term consequences of their actions.

Most television programs and movies would have to rewrite their scripts. Advertising would have to find a new theme to sell everything from ratchet wrench sets to used tires without their traditional sex pitch. Magazines would have to, as well. The Internet's biggest moneymaker and fastest growing business—pornography—would collapse.

There would be no more prostitution, strip clubs, adult movie theaters, exotic sex shops, or escort services. Extramarital affairs would not exist, drastically affecting the divorce rate. Illegitimate births and sexually transmitted diseases would cease. Sexually suggestive clothing styles would disappear. And the list goes on.

All of these changes and more will be effectively implemented in the coming millennium, when influence from the “god of this world” (II Cor. 4:4) is gone and human nature is brought in check.

If There Were No Stealing?

What if everyone obeyed the EIGHTH COMMANDMENT? How would the world be different?

To most people, the most obvious difference would be the absence of news stories involving thefts and robberies. Retailers would no longer have to mark up prices to compensate for losses due to shoplifting. That savings would then be passed on to consumers.

According to the latest National Retail Security Survey report, “Internal theft now costs U.S. retailers \$14.9 billion annually, compared to shoplifting costs of \$10 billion. Employee theft and shoplifting combined account for the largest source of property crime committed annually in the United States.”

Government and Industry:

There would be positive effects on the government level and in the way businesses operate as well: Governments would no longer have to deal with the problem of tax evasion. Aside from the immediate benefit of

increased revenue, money would not have to be spent pursuing those who do not want to “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's” (Mark 12:17).

The face of the business world would change, as there would no longer be scandals involving theft, money laundering, fraud and insider trading. There would be no deceitful dealings with stockholders and other investors. Accountants would keep honest records. And again, consumers would reap the benefits, through lower prices on goods and services.

On the personal level, locks on vehicles and homes would not be as much of a necessity. Burglar alarm systems would also become relics of the past.

Some benefits of obeying this one commandment are not as obvious: For instance, professional writers would no longer have to worry about someone stealing their work, through copyright infringement. In fact, copyright law itself would become obsolete.

Likewise, inventors would not have to carry patents on their products. If even the “spirit of the law” were obeyed, and people did not *covet* the things of others, people would feel free to work *together* on ideas, and existing products could be improved without an air of competition.

Again, contrary to the premise of consumer-driven “free enterprise” capitalism, the public would ultimately benefit. There would not be the need to constantly compare goods and services, in search of the “best deal,” because business would be universally conducted with the consumer's best interests in mind. There would not be different product standards for different demographics of society—there would truly be an environment of “one price fits all” and everyone “gets his money's worth.”

On the Job: The workplace would also undergo major changes if everyone obeyed this commandment. Management-labor relations would improve, due to everyone doing “honest work for honest pay.” Since honesty ultimately precludes stealing, there

would be no need for labor unions to look over industry's shoulder to ensure fair treatment of workers.

There would also not be the insurance company battles we see today, over issues of workers' compensation. If an employee were injured on the job, the company would see to it that he and his family were taken care of. And there would not be the danger of fraudulent claims.

“Dramatic increases in workers' compensation premiums throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s fueled unsubstantiated charges that costs were high in part because workers abused the system, fraudulently collecting benefits for faked injuries or remaining on benefits far longer than their recovery required. The American Insurance Association estimated fraud losses at 10% of the cost of claims paid, or about \$3 billion. The National Insurance Crime Bureau doubled the AIA's estimate to \$6 billion, even though it was involved in only 99 fraud prosecutions in 1994 and 134 in 1995 nationwide. The Coalition Against Insurance Fraud adopted the AIA's estimate. One insurance company president put the cost of workers' compensation fraud at \$30 billion a year. These huge numbers grabbed the attention of the public and policyholders. The presumption in the press and in the state houses was that fraud was rampant and that most workers' compensation fraud was claimant fraud” (*LRA's Guide to Workers' Compensation*).

Employers and employees would work together, and both would benefit. There would be increased company loyalty. Workers would be motivated to stay with their company for “the long haul.” Promised retirement benefits could be counted on. And ultimately, again, consumers would benefit, as well, in the form of better products and lower prices.

If There Were No Lying?

Imagine a world in which everyone automatically obeyed the NINTH COMMANDMENT. How different it would be from today's world! If everyone could

be counted on to always be truthful, in every situation, people's *conduct* would change dramatically, not just what they say. If people were always bound "to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth," their actions would reflect it.

Change in the Judicial System:

Consider how the legal system would change if just this one commandment of God were universally obeyed.

Since would-be criminals would not have the option of hiding behind the Fifth Amendment—whether or not the truth would incriminate them—some might think twice before committing their crimes.

Also consider what Christ stated in John 8:32: "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

(Today, when cross-examined on the stand, crime *victims* and *eyewitnesses* are not given the option to invoke the Fifth Amendment—and everything they say is "used against them." Their private lives are often paraded around for all to see, as part of a defense team's effort to discredit them.)

Also, since court case participants would not have to be "sworn in," court proceedings would not be as lengthy. Polygraph tests would be obsolete. And defense lawyers, most of whom specialize in camouflaging their clients behind a barrage of "legalese," would have to seek another line of employment. Criminals would have to accept their fate—and any who would be wrongfully accused (obviously no longer as a result of someone else's dishonesty) could count on a proper representation of the facts, and a prompt acquittal. The whole appeals process would vanish.

If everyone were honest, there would not even be the need for "trial by jury." While not every case brought to trial would be "open and shut," verdicts could be rendered according to the "mouth of two or three witnesses" (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15). The entire jury selection process would become obsolete—and jurors would not be unnecessarily involved in the matter.

There would not be the need for forensic experts or criminal psychologists, or other court-ordained investigators. And courtroom proceedings would not be sensationalized, ratings-driven spectacles. In the end, there would truly be "justice for all."

Honesty in Politics: Imagine how different politics would be if all politicians were honest. There would not be the "mud-slinging" and slander that we see today—if democratic elections were held—and they would *not* be. Candidates would win or lose elections according to their own merits, rather than how much dirt they could dig up on their opponents.

Elected officials could be counted on to deliver what they promised. Therefore, candidates would not make promises they couldn't keep. People would have faith in their leaders and representatives, who would truly have their constituents' best interests in mind.

Of course, God's form of government is not democratic; but this change, of and by itself, in such a system, would evidence visible positive results.

There would not be the mistrust and competition between political parties. There would not be special interest groups lobbying and competing for funding or legislation. Such activities involve agreements of "scratch-my-back-and-I'll-scratch-yours"—not taking into consideration the well-being of others.

If There Were No Coveting?

What if the entire world kept the TENTH COMMANDMENT? With no more lust and covetousness around, idolatry and adultery would greatly diminish. But that is just the beginning. Lust-driven consumerism would disappear, and along with it, consumer debt and bankruptcy.

More people would drive affordable vehicles, instead of going into debt to buy something that appeals to lustful vanity. In short, materialism and impulse buying would vanish. Notice what the apostle James wrote: "From where come wars and fightings among

you? Come they not hence, even of your *lusts* that war in your members? You *lust*, and have not: You kill, and *desire to have*, and cannot obtain: You fight and war, yet you have not, because *you ask not*. You ask, and receive not, because you *ask amiss*, that you may consume it upon your *lusts*. You adulterers and adulteresses, know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do you think that the Scripture says in vain, The spirit that dwells in us *lusts to envy*?" (Jms. 4:1-5).

The world will one day learn that only with the help of God's Spirit can mankind successfully control lust and keep the Ten Commandments.

The Time Is Coming

If the entire world—every nation!—obeyed just these six commandments, we can see that dramatic changes would take place.

During the millennium, these commandments *will* be obeyed (as well as the first four). Notice Isaiah 2:4: "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Also notice Paul's instruction in Philippians 2:4: "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

Paul is not saying that we should covet the possessions of others or meddle in their lives. Rather, he is saying that we should be concerned for their health and well-being, and also give due consideration to their property.

Notice Micah 4:4, which is speaking of the coming millennium: "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken it." At that time, people *will be* concerned for their fellow man. They *will* learn how to treat others the way they themselves desire to be treated. □

Where and How Did We Get the Bible?

Part One: Design and Layout of the Old Testament

Many facts about the assembly and preservation of the Bible show God's guiding hand in the entire process. Here is the amazing story of how God preserved His Word!

BY GEORGE C. ROGERS

WHERE DID THE Bible come from? Who authored it? How did we get it? Is it complete?

Many sincerely wonder: Do we have the entire Bible? Some feel that we cannot know. Is there any way to prove this?

The answer to both questions is "yes!"

Consider for a moment. Are *you* able to preserve important financial papers that you need to keep? Can *families* preserve treasured photographs, protected in an album? Are *companies* able to preserve records vital to their existence? Can the *National Archives* protect important documents and artifacts from America's history? Is the *Internet* capable of preserving virtually EVERYTHING?

The answer to all these questions is "Of course!"

If God can create the universe—and all life within it—surely He can preserve His Word. Yet, most seem to think that God is less capable of preserving what is vital to Him than human beings are!

The design and development of the Bible is a fascinating story. This series will explore in essential detail the *canonization*—the binding and confirming—of those books that God intended to preserve for all time as His Word—Scripture.

The Parameters

Three separate areas need to be understood and appreciated to answer these questions. We will follow this general format in presenting the overwhelming evidence:

(1) The design and layout of the Old Testament (including canonization).

(2) The design and layout of the New Testament (including canonization).

(3) The study of the Apocrypha and other documents not canonized.

The Jews preserved the Hebrew Scriptures. Romans 3:1-2 tells us: "What advantage then has the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

The oracles of God consist of the Sacred Scriptures and the Sacred

Calendar. To find the source of the *true* Scriptures, we must look to the Jews, whose leaders were commissioned to preserve and protect them.

How certain can we be that God is able to preserve His Word for us today—nearly 2,000 years after the final canonization of the New Testament? Christ answers this in Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

Notice another statement by Christ that expands on this principle: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:17-18).

The term, "the law or the prophets," is a short term for the Hebrew Sacred Scriptures, as we will see shortly. Christ did not come to destroy the Scriptures, or nullify the Law of God, but to fulfill them—the prophecies of His human existence and sacrifice.

Notice the following verse, which indicates that Christ realized that the Jews possessed the proper Scriptures, prophesying a specific fulfillment: "But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?...But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled" (Matt. 26:54, 56).

Acts 17:10-11 shows *where* the brethren looked in order to find the

true Scriptures: “And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming there went *into the synagogue of the Jews*. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and *searched the scriptures daily*, whether those things were so.”

Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman, was always familiar with the true Scriptures: “And that from a child you have known the *holy scriptures*, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (II Tim. 3:15-16).

Many other verses could be cited to reinforce this point, but the trend is clear. Every synagogue possessed exact replicas or copies of the texts found in the Temple. Even the term “holy scriptures” literally meant “Sacred Scriptures.” Sacred refers to the Holy Place of the Temple. The term “holy scriptures” is actually translated “Temple Scriptures” in the Englishman’s Bible. Again, *all* the sets of Scriptures in the synagogues were replicas of the texts found in the Temple.

The Arrangement of the Books

The King James Version and virtually all other more modern translations list 39 individual books in the Old Testament. These books *do* represent the entirety of the Old Testament. But the one problem with these books is the order in which they are found.

Since these books comprise the official Hebrew canonized Scriptures, this is where we should look to establish the correct order. First, notice that Christ told His disciples, after His Resurrection, that Bible verses foretold of His life and mission: “And He said unto them, These are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the *law of Moses*, and *in the prophets*, and *in the psalms*, concerning Me. Then

opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures” (Luke 24:44-45).

As Luke wrote of this account, he was specifying which Scriptures—the Hebrew canonized Scriptures—Christ pointed out as His inspired Word. They foretold of His life and fulfillment of many prophecies concerning Him.

Luke was specifying this information to the gentile readers of his Greek manuscripts.

The Hebrew canonized Scriptures are emphasized here in contrast to such counterfeit documents as the Septuagint, written in the Greek language. (More will be covered about the Septuagint later.) Accurate and valid copies of the Hebrew Scriptures translated into the Greek language *did* exist in the first century.

Notice that Christ himself identified the Hebrew Scriptures by the following terms: (1) The Law of Moses, (2) the Prophets, and (3) the Psalms.

These are the three major divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures—the Old Testament. They were arranged according to the recorded words of Jesus Christ in Luke 24:44-45.

Note what Flavius Josephus states in regard to the number of books in the Hebrew Scriptures: “For we [the Jews] have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing and contradicting one another, but only 22 books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine” (*Against Apion, Book I, Section VIII*).

The following scholars associated with the Catholic movement also publicly acknowledged that there were 22 books to the Hebrew Scriptures: Origen (A.D. 210), Athanasius (365), Cyril of Jerusalem (386), and Jerome (410).

We first list the books of the Law, also known as the Torah or Pentateuch:

■ **The Law of Moses:** Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Note that in this first section of the Law, the order is not changed. The radical changes appear in the second

(the Prophets) and third sections (the Psalms or Writings).

Now, we list the original order of the Prophets. Note how the books are divided and sub-divided:

■ **The Former Prophets:** Joshua-Judges (combined into one) and Samuel-Kings (combined into one).

■ **The Latter Prophets:** Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and “The Twelve” prophets (one book)—Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

Finally, the third division, known as the Psalms, is also known as the Writings, and is divided into three parts:

■ **The Former Poetic Books:** Psalms, Proverbs and Job.

■ **The Megilloth or Festival Books:** Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther.

■ **The Latter Restoration Books:** Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah (combined into one) and Chronicles (combined into one).

This original order is completely chronological. This will be more thoroughly appreciated once we study the canonization and other historical aspects.

The Significance of the Numbers

There is another aspect of the significance of the number 22. Sextus Senensis, a Jewish scholar, A.D. 1520, is credited with the following statement: “As with the Hebrews there are 22 letters, in which ALL that can be said and written are comprehended, so there are 22 books in which are contained ALL there can be known and uttered of divine things” (*Introduction to the Old Testament*, Green, p. 87).

With the significance of the 22 books or scrolls of the Hebrew Scriptures and the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, a type of an alphabetical “acrostic” most likely paralleled those 22 books. An acrostic exists when 22 verses each begin with a word spelled with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and each letter (beginning with the first) continues in order all through the alphabet in sequence. In other

words, the first letter of the alphabet corresponds with the first letter of the first verse. Then the second letter of the alphabet corresponds with the first letter of the second verse, and so on. The parts of an acrostic can be single verses each, or sets of verses, or possibly chapters or even books.

An example of a complete acrostic is Psalm 119. Here, eight verses are grouped together into 22 sets of verses. The first letter of all eight verses of each set is the same letter of the alphabet. Thus the first eight verses begin with the first letter, the next eight verses all begin with the second letter of the alphabet, and so on. Not only is this poetic chapter a perfect and complete acrostic, the syllables of each verse have to perfectly match each other, because it was set to music.

Psalm 119 covers the subject of the Law of God being perfect and complete. Thus, a perfect and complete acrostic is used to emphasize that completeness. Every single verse of this chapter in the original Hebrew mentions the Law of God, using terms such as law, precepts, judgments, statutes, commandments, etc. The eight verses per meter, times the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, equals 176. There are precisely 176 verses in Psalms 119.

Together, Psalms 111 and 112 form a complete acrostic showing that God will completely redeem His people. Both chapters contain 10 verses each, but the 10th verse of both chapters contains two sections.

The way our Bibles are divided into chapters and verses does not always properly coincide with the method or intent with which these were written. Proverbs 31:10-31 contains 22 verses forming another complete and perfect acrostic. These verses describe a complete and perfect woman. Another complete acrostic is found in the book of Lamentations, which emphasizes the complete destruction upon all Israel.

A broken acrostic runs through Psalms 9 and 10. Here, seven letters seem to be purposely left out. This is said to represent the broken condition

that will occur on earth during the time frame that Psalms 9 and 10 portray in the prophetic sense.

During Christ's time (as documented by Josephus and various others), the Hebrew Scriptures consisted of 22 books. As a point of interest, when one adds the 22 books of these Scriptures to the 27 books of the New Testament, a total of 49 books results. To the Jews, the number of 49 (seven times seven) represents absolute completion.

(Also, if every one of the Old Testament books are counted individually—and the Psalms are counted as five because of their natural division—the Old Testament total is 43 books. Adding this to the New Testament total of 27 yields the number 70, which is ten times God's number of completion or perfection.)

By the second century, many Jews became somewhat envious of the significance of "their" Scriptures being combined with the New Testament to give a total of 49 books. At that time, the Jews adjusted the order of the Hebrew Scriptures to increase the number to 24. This was done by dividing Joshua-Judges into two books and by dividing Samuel-Kings into two books, giving a new total of 24 books (see *The Design and Development of the Holy Scriptures* [Outline], E.L. Martin, pp. 9, 12).

This slight rearrangement by the Jews gave a different number, but the books within a division were never moved to another division.

Before and during this time, the Jews had complete disgust for the Egyptian Septuagint Version, which totally reshuffled the books of the second and third divisions (the Prophets and the Writings).

As mentioned before, this is where the Catholics inherited their erroneous order of the Old Testament and passed it on to us today in the same distorted order, through the King James Version and most all other versions available today.

Some have observed that many Hebrew Bibles bear the label TANAK (or often TANAKH) on the front cover and have asked what this means. This

name is actually derived from the three parts of the Hebrew Scriptures:

TORAH is the name given to the division on the Law of God—first 5 books.

NEBEE-EEM is the name for the Prophets division.

KETHUVEEN is the Writings division.

By taking the initial letters of the three titles (T,N,K) they form the word TANAK. The Bible of the Jews was named for these three major divisions. This shows their acceptance of the true divisions, as opposed to various corrupted versions like the Septuagint.

History of Old Testament Canonization

Moses compiled and wrote all 5 books of the Law (Pentateuch) during the 40 years in the wilderness. He used pre-Flood documents and other sources to compile the book of Genesis.

Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus were written during the very first years in the wilderness. Numbers was written as the continuous record of the journey through the wilderness. Of course, at the outset, Moses never anticipated that the journey would last 40 years. The book of Deuteronomy was written during the very last months at the end of the journey.

Just before his death, Moses presented to the priesthood of Israel the five books he had compiled and written (Deut. 31:9). These original Scriptures were stored in the Ark of the Covenant. Under authority of the high priest, scribes made copies of these scrolls.

All the kings of Israel were required to copy the entire Pentateuch, or five books of the Law. This precept was added by Samuel and observed by David, Solomon, and later by most of the kings of Judah.

Next, the Book of Joshua/Judges was written by Samuel. This book was classified with the prophets mainly because it was written by a prophet—Samuel. The work was primarily historic, but laid the groundwork for the following books of Samuel/Kings and the Latter Prophets. Samuel established the prophetic order with his

“company of the prophets” throughout Israel (I Sam. 10:5, 10; 19:20).

Some of the historic facts from the book of Joshua were most likely compiled from sources generated by Joshua and some of the loyal servants of God that followed after him. By the same token, much of the detailed information of the history of the earlier kings of Israel and Judah was most likely recorded by Elijah and later compiled and written by Isaiah for the section of Kings in the Book of Samuel/Kings. After all, who was more qualified to write of the experiences of Elijah than Elijah himself?

Elijah carried on with the Prophetic Order of schools in Israel that Samuel had inaugurated over 200 years earlier (II Kgs. 2:3, 5; 4:38). (One of the purposes of these schools must have been to document historic events and transcribe previous records to be compiled at some later time into canonized manuscripts. Elisha and others associated with these schools for the prophets certainly contributed to the historic records after the time of Elijah.)

Obviously, the books of the major and minor prophets were written by the authors to whom the books are attributed. These prophets wrote and sealed their own works, to be added to the Scriptures during subsequent times of canonization.

King David wrote and canonized much of the Psalms. David had assembled all the building materials together (his son, Solomon, would build the Temple after his death). David established the 24 (two week) courses for the priests and for the Levites and singers, as well. He wrote two of the five books. These first two books consisted of the first 72 chapters of Psalms, the official Psalms used for the Temple service by the singers.

The Psalms dedicated to Asaph and to Korah were also written by David and dedicated to these outstanding singers. These Psalms would include most of Book 3. Other contributors to the book of Psalms included Moses (author of Psalm 90 and a number of the following Psalms in book 4). More of David’s Psalms appear in book 5

along with some the Psalms of degrees written by Hezekiah.

Solomon compiled and wrote the Proverbs after the time of David. Agur of Proverbs 30 and Lemuel of Proverbs 31 both refer to Solomon. Lemuel means “the king who rejected God.” I Kings 11:1-8 shows that Solomon later did just that.

Though Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon were written by Solomon, these books, along with other writings, were not canonized until the time of Ezra, as we will soon examine.

The Role of Hezekiah

During the time of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and Isaiah the prophet (this was during Isaiah’s younger years), the threat of attack and captivity by Assyria was very real. Hezekiah and Isaiah proceeded to canonize certain books for the remnants of Israel and Judah to look to for proper guidance, in case all religious services were suspended by an Assyrian invasion and captivity.

At this time, Israel had already been recently taken into captivity. Much of Judah had later been taken into captivity by the Assyrians (II Kgs. 18:13). These Jews were taken to Eastern Europe where many still live to this day. Only the Jews of Jerusalem were spared along with other Jews who were able to find refuge behind Jerusalem’s walls. Jerusalem was spared due to God’s favor toward King Hezekiah (II Kgs. 18:5-7).

Each of the 15 Psalms of degrees (chapters 120-134) coincides with one of the 15 steps leading to the Temple. The singers would advance one step daily with each of the Psalms of degrees at a designated time of the year in their worship service. Of these Psalms, five were attributed to David, another to Solomon, and scholars attribute the other nine to Hezekiah, who also canonized much of the Psalms. Isaiah 38:9-21 shows an extensive psalm by Hezekiah. Certainly he was gifted and qualified enough to compose some of the Psalms.

Hezekiah established a “tri-grammaton” symbol, which indicated that a book of the Scriptures was officially

bound or confirmed—canonized. This was continually used to seal canonized books after his time.

Later during the time of King Josiah, Judah was under threat of invasion and captivity as had occurred during the time of Hezekiah about 85 years earlier. Josiah was assisted and advised by certain servants of God, including Jeremiah. This somewhat paralleled the time of Hezekiah, in which he was assisted and advised by Isaiah.

Another similarity was that both Hezekiah and Josiah had been preceded by very wicked fathers. When both ascended to the throne, they re-established the true worship of God in Judah and both reopened and restored the Temple that had been closed and defiled by their evil fathers.

During Josiah’s time, the threat came from Babylon. Yet, Josiah besought God and peace was promised to Judah as long as he lived (II Chron. 34:27-28). He was much beloved of God for his righteous zeal (II Kgs. 23:25). During this time, additional scripture was canonized primarily by Jeremiah. This canonization involved most of the minor prophets.

Jeremiah wrote the book of Lamentations after Josiah was killed in battle—much to the dismay of Jeremiah and all Judah. Lamentations is indeed prophetic of what the modern descendants of Israel are yet to suffer, although written in the shadows of the imminent invasion by Babylon. The book of Jeremiah was not completed until well after the fall of Jerusalem.

During the captivity of Judah in Babylon, Daniel was in an exalted position of power and had authority to preserve Hebrew Scriptures as they were taken to Babylon.

Most likely, there were a number of copies in addition to the Temple Scriptures. The various references that Daniel made to the Scriptures were authentic, as he had access to them and carefully examined them (Dan. 9:2, 11).

Ezra was the priest and scribe who gathered all the books and made the final canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Some of the historical background of that time will be covered shortly, but first we should focus upon some of the editing that Ezra and others made to clarify certain portions of Scripture.

Ezra inserted some editorial notes to clarify to the Jews of his time the current names of certain towns mentioned in the Law. Some of the editorial notes attributed to Ezra are Genesis 14:7, 17; 23:2, 19; 36:31-39.

Moses also inserted some editorial remarks. Some of them attributed to him are Genesis 2:13-14; 12:8. (This was the location where Bethel was yet to be settled.)

Samuel added some important parts to the Law. In I Samuel 10:25, which states, "Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the LORD," the term "a book" should be "the book." This indicates that Samuel wrote in a book that already existed. The only book that was laid up before the LORD at that time was the law of Moses.

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 is the part that Samuel added, dealing with instructions concerning a king over Israel. Ezra later inserted editorial comments in Deuteronomy 34:5-6, and 10 pertaining to Moses after the time of his death.

As stated above, Ezra was responsible for the final canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures. It was understood in the first century that the prophetic spirit in that era had ended with Ezra.

Ezra came to Jerusalem and Judea after the Babylonian captivity, where 50,000 Jews had returned to rebuild Jerusalem and other cities. The Temple had been rebuilt by about 515 B.C. Most of these returning exiles were not zealous to obey God. Many had intermarried with the surrounding idolatrous gentiles. In about 457 B.C., God sent Ezra to rectify the situation.

Ezra 7:10 summarizes: "For Ezra had prepared his heart to *seek* the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."

Ezra came with 2,000 priests, Levites, and servants of the Temple to restore the worship of God. This pro-

cess of turning the Jews back to God took about 13 years.

Nehemiah, who was sent to be governor over Judea, assisted Ezra in restoring the true worship in Judea. Ezra and Nehemiah summoned all the Jewish leaders together to sign a special covenant that they would henceforth obey the laws of God (Neh. 10:28-39). However, the high priest Eliashib was not present at this gathering.

This meeting established the governing assembly in Judea known as the Great Assembly. It was headed by Ezra, Nehemiah and all the principle priests and elders of Judea. This 120-member assembly also convened to establish which books were to be canonized. They assisted Ezra in his responsibility of final canonization during the years that followed. After Ezra's death, the high priest was to preside over the Great Assembly.

Eliashib, who never met with the assembly, disagreed with Ezra and the assembly. Eliashib had other allegiances (Neh. 13:4-7). His grandson, Manasseh, was married to a Samaritan princess. This represented a political-religious alliance between the top families of Samaria and Judea.

Manasseh was excommunicated from Judea. He relocated to Samaria, where Samballat (his wife's father) made him high priest of the Samaritans. One of the points of the above-mentioned covenant was for those who married gentile wives to put them away.

Manasseh refused to give up his Samaritan wife. This event was the real beginning of the Samaritan form of religion, and the beginning of reasons for later antagonism that developed between Samaritans and Jews. Manasseh had a temple built on Mt. Gerizim (a counterfeit of the Temple on Mt. Zion). He also rejected all the Hebrew Scriptures except the Pentateuch—the five books of the Law.

Ezra and the Great Assembly later divided the Hebrew Scriptures into the 3 major divisions and 22 individual books. Ezra changed the Jewish script to square script, as had been used in

Babylon, in order for Jews to recognize Samaritan schemes to pass their counterfeit writings as canonized Scripture. The Temple Scriptures and eventually all copies of it were changed to square script.

Since the Samaritans had also corrupted the Sacred Calendar, Ezra changed the names of the months to the names of those the Jews learned in Babylon. Thus, Abib became Nisan, Zif became Iyar, etc. The Babylonian names for the months of the calendar have been retained to this day.

Chronicles was written by Ezra. Isaiah had long since written the Book of the Kingdoms (Samuel/Kings). The outlook of the book of Chronicles was from a priestly perspective. Ezra emphasizes throughout this book that Jerusalem has always been the headquarters of God's government. This was emphasized to show that the Samaritans were falsely claiming they were the center of God's religion.

Ezra references 15 secular sources to validate his claim, while the Book of the Kingdoms gave hardly any outside secular sources. Ezra, along with Nehemiah, took careful measures to counter the deceitful tactics of the Samaritans by canonizing the Hebrew Scriptures (source of the Old Testament). Likewise, the Samaritans' descendants, under Simon Magus, counterfeited the New Testament, forcing the apostles to canonize it.

How do we know that we have the same Hebrew Scriptures that Ezra canonized? After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70, preservation became the responsibility of Jewish religious leaders instead of the state. Several Jewish sects made sure that the others did not change the text.

In the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., some of the Jews tried to replace the official text with illegitimate ones. To stop this effort, the officials restored the old authoritative manuscripts handed down since pre-Roman days. These were made the standard text—the Massoretic Text. This is the same one followed today and is the same set of scriptures that Ezra canonized.

(To be continued.) □

WORLD NEWS DESK



GEOPOLITICS, STRATEGIES & ECONOMIES

Major U.S. Troop Rearrangement

The Pentagon is considering plans for what would be the most significant rearrangement of American forces abroad since the onset of the Cold War. In particular, U.S. forces in Europe are expected to face a major overhaul, with two divisions being withdrawn from Germany. Pentagon officials say the moves are meant to provide maximum ability to enter potential battlegrounds in the Middle East and Central Asia. Critics, however, are concerned that such moves will weaken the United

States' already strained relations and reduce influence with its traditional allies. According to an article in *The International Herald Tribune*, the Pentagon has already informed the German government of its intentions, despite the moves having yet to be approved by the President, but indicating that its plans are relatively firm.

In an article published last year, well before the extent of the plans were known, Kurt Campbell and Celeste Johnson Ward, of

the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies wrote, "The most serious potential consequences of the contemplated shifts would not be military but political and diplomatic. Unless the changes are paired with a sustained and effective diplomatic campaign, therefore, they could well increase foreign anxiety about and distrust of the United States."

Source: *The International Herald Tribune*

The European Court of Justice

The British newspaper, *The Telegraph* painted a bleak picture of the new European constitution, in particular the new powers it will give to the European Court of Justice. Ambrose Evans-Pritchard writes in the opening paragraph that the court "...emerges as the undisputed master in the new constitution, coming of age as a fully-fledged supreme court with vastly increased jurisdiction and the unchecked power to strike down the laws of 25 member states."

We are reminded that the new constitution is unlike all preceding European treaties in that it dissolves the old Union and establishes an

entirely new one in its place on "altered foundations." The new "Euro-judges" in Luxembourg—one from each country—will have great power and the final say on many far-reaching issues. For example:

■ Article I.14 stipulates that the Union "shall adopt measures to ensure the co-ordination of economic policies of the member states."

■ Article I.15 says, "Member states shall unreservedly support the Union's common and foreign security policy in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity.



They shall refrain from action contrary to the Union's interest."

■ Article I.10 states, "The constitution, and law adopted by the Union's institutions in exercising competences conferred upon it, shall have primacy over the law of member states."

There still exists, however, in the draft text under Article 59, the guarantee for any state to withdraw from the Union. The British Foreign Office is adamant that as long as withdrawal is possible, Britain will retain its sovereignty. But without it, Evans-Pritchard writes, it loses all.

Source: *The Telegraph*

European Parliament Elections

Europeans punished the established political parties in several countries during recent voting for the European Parliament (EP). The biggest shock came from the UK, where the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), which advocates complete withdrawal from the EU, appears, at the time of writing, to have secured 20% of the vote and 17 seats. This places the UKIP third in the country, behind the Conservatives and Labour parties (both each at 22% at the time of writing). This leaves the more established Liberal Democrats trailing at 14%.

“Eurosceptics,” as those warning of the political dangers of the EU are known, also achieved a significant victory in Sweden, where a new Euro-

critical party called Junilistan came in third in the election, garnering 14.4% of the vote and three seats in the new EP.

In addition, in both France and Belgium, far-right parties made significant gains, and increased their representation in the European Parliament.

While the above results are interesting, and may even be significant, in regard to the individual nations in which they occurred, it also continues to point to a general restless, desperate mood across the continent. Europeans continue to be disappointed in their economy, and the overall appearance of a dis-jointed strategic and foreign policy.

Source: *EU Observer*



Euro Young Trust Their Rulers

An Internet survey of Europeans ages 18 to 30 indicates that they consider the EU to be the “most trusted” institution they know, more so even than other international institutions such as the World Trade Organization

or the United Nations. They even trust the EU more than their national governments. In addition, 80 percent of those polled consider themselves “European citizens” and two-thirds believe the EU has a “positive future.”

As in past political/social/cultural transformations, the youth of a country or continent have played a significant part. It appears that in Europe, this will happen once again.

Source: *EU Observer*

RELIGION

2004 Expedition to Noah’s Ark

All plans are still “GO” for a joint U.S.-Turkish team of explorers to brave the mountains of Ararat in eastern Turkey in order to reach the site of what they are confident is Noah’s Ark. This well-planned, well-equipped and well-financed expedition is scheduled for the timeframe of July 15 to August 15 this summer. Satellite photos from the

same period last year have convinced the expedition planners that receding snow and ice has now presented an excellent window of opportunity for exploration. As emphasized when the expedition was first announced on April 26, 2004, they plan to make available live worldwide video coverage of the ark directly on the spot, by mid-August.

This expedition appears to have greater prospects for success than any of its predecessors. The whole world will be watching if they are able to fulfill their intended mission. Public disclosure of the ark at this point in time could have far-reaching implications.

Source: *turkishpress.com and christianitytoday.com*

PERSONAL

Continued from page 2

content to trust in human “experts.”

As a result, confusion and disagreement about how to solve this great Rubik’s Cube are also mushrooming, and indeed have never been greater.

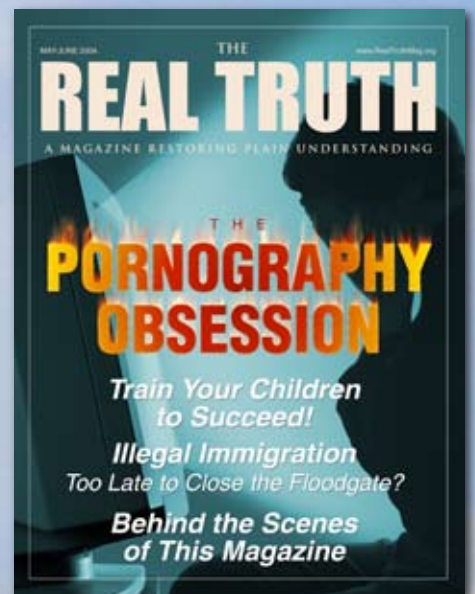
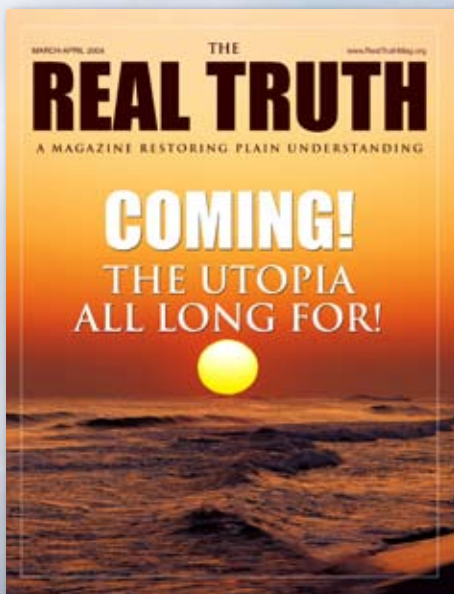
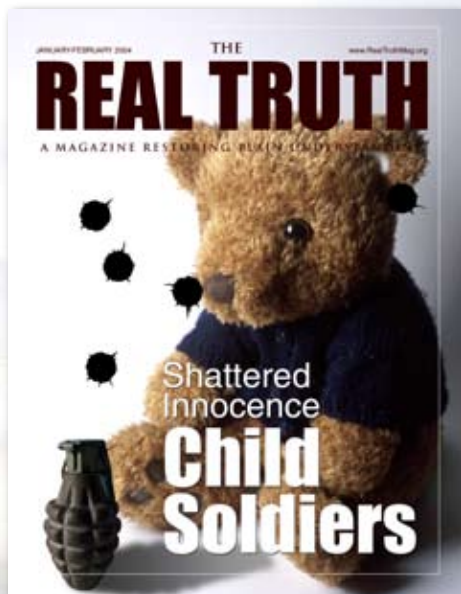
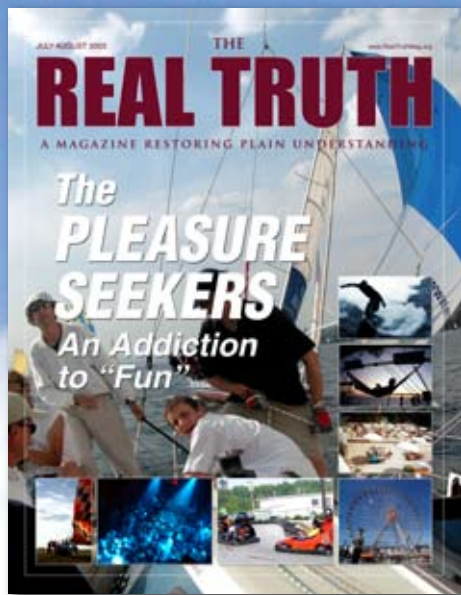
The Bible is approximately 750,000 words. Since about one-third is prophecy, this means that 250,000

words are devoted to many, many specific prophecies. Now ask: What possible purpose would God have for devoting a full third of His words to a subject—*any* subject—and then leave mankind in the dark about it? Understand! God gives prophecy for two clear purposes: (1) As a warning for those who will take heed and (2) proof of the existence of the true God of the Bible—and, therefore, the authority of the Bible.

I urge you to read our vitally impor-

tant book *AMERICA AND BRITAIN IN BIBLE PROPHECY*. You have never read *anything* like it! Few things could be more crucial to understand than the future course of events foretold to strike the world’s greatest nations—the United States and Britain. This fascinating book brings the plain truth of the Bible to the final events prophesied to *soon* strike an unsuspecting world in general—and the United States and Britain in particular! You cannot be without this knowledge! □

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