

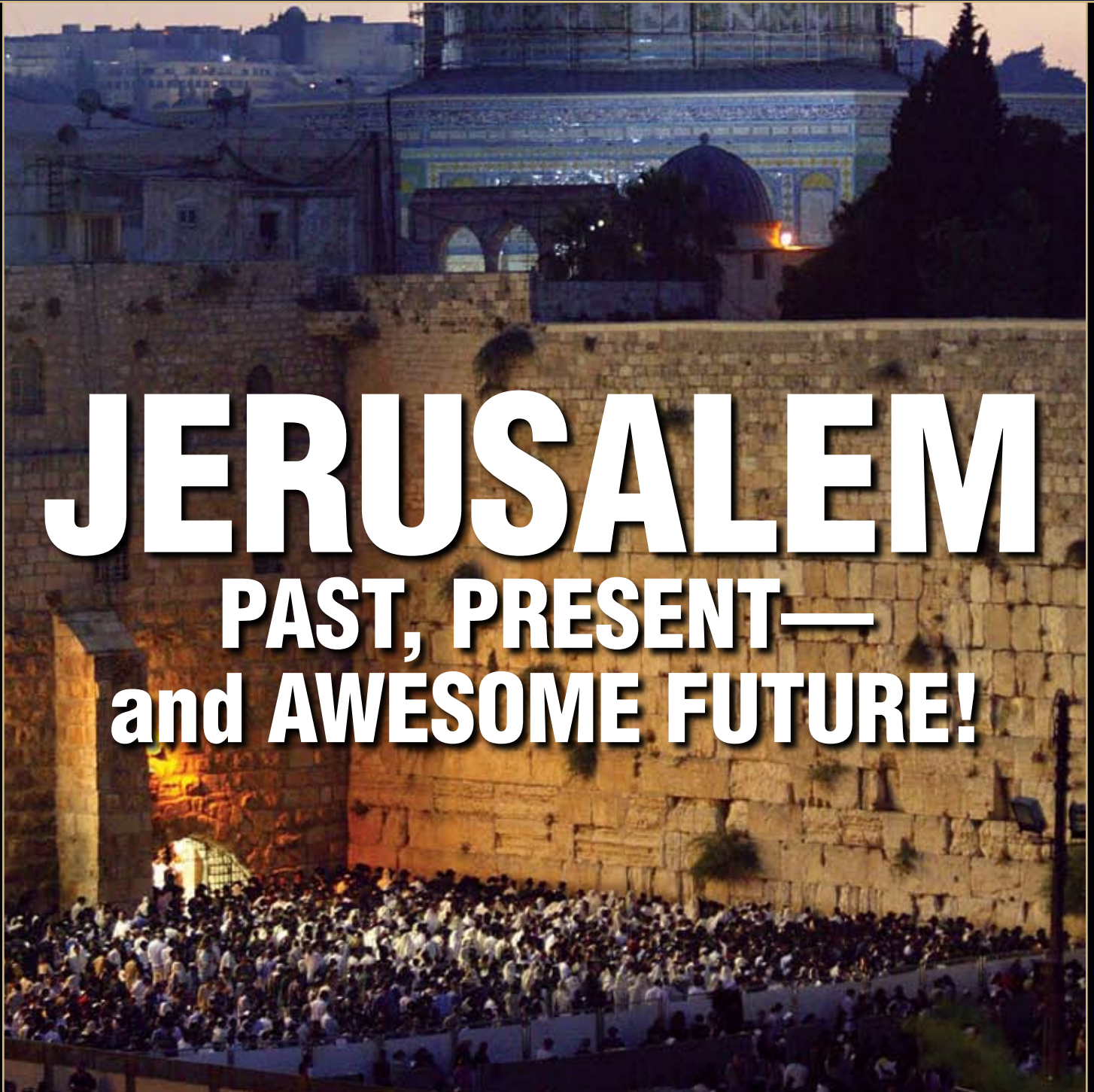
JUNE 2009

THE

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REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING



JERUSALEM

PAST, PRESENT—
and AWESOME FUTURE!

THE REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

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ARTICLES

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■ **CHILD SOLDIER:** A 17-year-old poses at a shack where he sleeps in Monrovia, Liberia. He was a former child soldier during the country's civil war (Dec. 1, 2006).

PHOTO: MCT

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■ **FRONT COVER:** The golden Dome of the Rock shines in the background as Jews pray early at the Western Wall in Jerusalem's Old City to mark Tisha be-Av (July 27, 2004), which marks the destruction of the Temple, first in 587 B.C. and in A.D. 70.

PHOTO: PEDRO UGARTE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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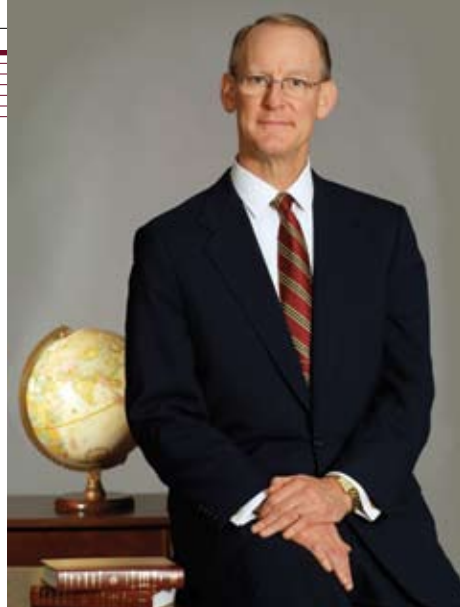
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PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack



The True Jesus – Unknown!

JESUS CHRIST IS renowned the world over, His name familiar in every culture, whether one professes to be Christian, atheist or of any other religion. Many have opinions about Him, regardless of their beliefs about who He was and what He taught. His name stirs great controversy.

Yet, despite worldwide recognition—despite billions professing to follow Him—despite all the knowledge circulating about Him—Jesus Christ remains unknown—even *to Christianity!*

Is it possible the central figure of a religion could be unknown to almost all who profess to follow Him? The answer has everything to do with a different, FALSE Jesus having been foisted on an unsuspecting world.

Opinions range widely about *Who* and *What* was Jesus Christ—as well as what He means in today’s world. But few disagree that He forever changed the course of history and civilization.

Through the centuries, thousands of books, stories, television documentaries, films and even novels have been written and produced about Jesus Christ. Hundreds of thousands of churches have been erected in His name. Millions have claimed to be His ministers. Billions have professed Him “Lord and Savior.”

What is YOUR view of Jesus? What image does His name evoke? Perhaps a thin, long-haired man in a flowing white robe. Maybe a baby in a manger, with three “wise men” giving Him gifts on December 25. Or a cru-

cified figure in a loincloth, with trickles of blood oozing from Him? Possibly Easter eggs and sunrise services—or the Christmas season?

What about Jesus pleading with people to give their hearts to Him?—adding, “Just show love to all people and accept Me into your hearts to be saved.” Or walking through villages giving money to the poor, or saying, “Just believe in Me. Obedience is no longer necessary.”

These and other well-known views of Jesus Christ have been driven into the minds of countless billions over the centuries. Though commonly believed, these images and perceptions *fail the test* of careful biblical and historical examination. The popular, mainstream ideas about the supposed Christ of the Bible and what He taught simply *do not measure up to the facts*—what have been largely unassembled facts.

Most have accepted without question what they have heard, read or were taught throughout their lives about Christ and the teachings He brought. These same people usually vigorously defend their beliefs while feeling no need to examine *proof* of WHY they believe what they do—or to consider how they *came* to such beliefs. Human nature follows the crowd, which follows what is popular.

This has been the case with virtually every one of the widely accepted teachings, traditions and practices of mainstream Christianity. Few are aware—or even care—that these have been taken almost entirely from paganism, false customs and human reasoning—and *not*

from the Bible. Most of the teachings of Christendom have no biblical basis whatsoever—and in many cases Jesus actually commands the exact opposite!

“Another Jesus”?

Thus, the Jesus Christ of the Bible has been left out of professing Christianity—unknown to vast millions, hidden in a cloud of deceit, confusion, lies and commonly accepted falsehoods. He has been replaced—counterfeited and substituted—with “another Jesus,” one entirely different—and the one the apostle Paul warned against in II Corinthians 11:4. Notice: “For if he that comes preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached...you might well bear with him [you put up with it].”

Here are examples contrasting the false Jesus with the true Jesus of the Bible.

■ The ministers of one Jesus teach the saved go to heaven. The true Christ revealed, “No man has ascended into heaven” and “the meek shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5). Related to this, the one tells his followers they have an “immortal soul,” and the wicked go to an “ever-burning hell.” The Other teaches that people ARE souls and the wicked will be destroyed forever in the lake of fire.

■ One Jesus has ministers who speak endlessly of how the Law has been done away—nailed to the cross—having been kept for them by Jesus. The Other taught, “Think NOT that I come to destroy the law, or the prophets” (Matt. 5:17), and “If you will enter into life, *keep the commandments*” (Matt. 19:17)—after which He listed five of the Ten Commandments to make clear what He meant.

■ One Jesus teaches that Sunday is the Lord’s Day. The other declared this about the Fourth Commandment, “The *Sabbath* was

made for MAN, not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is LORD OF THE SABBATH” (Mark 2:27-28). He did not say, “The Sabbath was made for Jews, and I am a Jew, so that is why I keep it—but you don’t need to, because I’m now Lord of Sunday.” One is left to wonder: If Jesus had said to keep Sunday, would the whole world keep Saturday?

More Contrasts

Understand. Jesus, who grew up in a strong, Commandment-keeping middle-class family of parents, brothers and sisters living in humble circumstances, observed the weekly Sabbath. But His family also observed the annual Holy Days, which picture God’s plan of salvation for mankind. Consider more contrasts between the counterfeit and the true Jesus.

■ One endorses the pagan Easter celebration, the worship of the Egyptian/Babylonian goddess Ishtar/Ashtaroth—the Other kept and requires observance of God’s Passover.

■ One broke the only sign that he was the Messiah (and therefore his word!) and was in the grave just 36 hours—the Other kept His word, proving He was the Messiah by remaining there exactly three days and three nights.

■ One celebrates his birthday in late December, through re-invention of a time-honored pagan festival of wild celebration—the Other was born in the early autumn and condemns this tradition as an abomination.

Jesus was reared a Galilean, and as a rugged carpenter—and therefore was looked down upon for not being “cosmopolitan,” or a recognized religious scholar or as having come from aristocracy, like His contemporaries in Jerusalem. And His physical appearance, as foretold centuries earlier, was at best average—far from the handsome image promoted by Hollywood.

Let’s continue the contrast:

■ One Jesus was weak, skinny, effeminate and had long hair—the true Christ was rugged, strong, masculine and wore hair closely cropped.

■ One is largely seen as either a helpless newborn in a manger or dead on a cross—the Other is all-powerful and sitting at the right hand of God.

■ One teaches adherence to ancient pagan holidays condemned in the Bible—the Other teaches observance of the seven annual Holy Days outlined in Scripture and commanded to be kept forever.

Jesus’ Message

Christ was born when anticipation of the Messiah’s impending arrival was in the air, and when Rome changed from a republic to a conquering empire, clearing the way for the gospel to spread to diverse kingdoms, cities, cultures, regions and territories.

Before starting His ministry, Christ defeated Satan in a titanic battle of wills, qualifying to replace him in ruling the earth. He then called the disciples from humble origins, and with His Father’s guidance, personally prepared them *through an intense training period* to become apostles.

Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, cast out demons and preached the gospel to the poor. He shattered myths and changed lives. Yet, despite these—and spectacular miracles such as walking on water, feeding thousands with a few pieces of fish and bread, and other marvelous acts—*leaders* would not accept His words—or His AUTHORITY!

Christ preached a message that is today entirely *unknown* to the multiplying, disagreeing and competing churches of professing Christianity—it was the GOOD NEWS of the kingdom of God—a coming

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CAN AFRICA BE SAVED?

Despite its immense potential, Africa is drowning in seemingly insurmountable problems. Is there a solution?

BY ROBERT R. FARRELL

AFRICA IS FABULOUSLY rich in natural resources, more than any other continent. According to *Capitalism Magazine*, it has 50 percent of the world's gold and diamonds. It possesses a seemingly endless supply of minerals, including most of the world's bauxite, chromium, cobalt, manganese and platinum, along with large untapped oil reserves. It has an abundance of timber, millions of acres of fertile land, and lakes and rivers capable of producing 40 percent of the world's supply of hydroelectric power. The list could go on.

Simply put, Africa is a treasure trove of natural resources.

Yet, despite these riches, most Africans live in societies troubled by war, instability, corruption, poverty, hunger, disease and untimely deaths. The United Nations said that Africa has the largest number of poor countries of any continent, including 34 of the 50 least developed countries. Tragically, as many as 50 percent of Africans live on less than \$1.25 a day (USD throughout article).

Wars ravage the continent. Since 1981, no fewer than 28 nations in sub-Saharan Africa have been at war.

Deadly diseases like AIDS and malaria wreak havoc throughout nations.

The world's wealthiest countries have provided billions of dollars in aid, but to no avail. Indeed, Africa is poorer now than when it first achieved independence from the colonial powers some 50 years ago. Every year, the continent is high on the list of the world's priorities for development, but its circumstances continue to deteriorate.

As the international community ponders the plight of this troubled continent, the question must be asked: "Can Africa be saved?"

Why Africa Matters

Africa is the earth's second-largest continent; a vast expanse stretching some 5,000 miles (8,000 km) between its most northern and southern tips, and 4,500 miles (7,000 km) between its most eastern and western points. With a population of approximately 1 billion, it is also the world's second most populous continent, accounting for 15 percent of the global population. It encompasses numerous ethnic groups in 53 countries, speaking over 1,000 languages.

The continent also leads the world in strategic minerals (rare minerals absolutely vital for industry), possessing 80 percent of the world's platinum, 49 percent of its palladium,



55 percent of its chromium and 45 percent of its vanadium, among others.

Its fertile fields have the potential to feed not only itself, but also many other countries. Its forests have enough timber to build homes for much of the world. Moreover, Africa's massive rainforests have the potential for maintaining or destroying the equilibrium of the earth's atmosphere and ecology. For example, massive deforestation could deplete the world's ozone layer and adversely affect Earth's climates.

If the continent's economic decline can be reversed, a prosperous, vibrant Africa, with its population of 1 billion, would become a huge market of consumers for products and services. A talented, educated populace would provide a skilled workforce, driving African economies capable of competing on the world stage, thus reducing—and possibly even eliminating—the need for aid.

Africa already contributes internationally in many fields of human endeavor—and its contributions would be even more significant if the potential of its peoples and lands were fully unlocked. All nations would benefit.

A Beautiful Continent, a Litany of Problems

Those who travel to Africa are enraptured by its beauty. From majestic Mount Kilimanjaro, to the exotic savannahs of the Serengeti, to the giant Great Rift Valley, to beautiful Lake Victoria, to the mighty Nile River, to the imposing pyramids, to the beauty of Table Mountain, Africa leaves an indelible mark on many a visitor.

It is simply a unique continent. It has both the world's longest river and largest desert. Scores of animals not typically found elsewhere abound in Africa: zebras, gazelles, rhinoceroses, magnificent giraffes, impressive cheetahs and mighty hippopotamuses, to name a few. Rainforests containing an immense array of flora and fauna straddle the equator. Africa's wildlife is stunning.

But the beauty of the continent also lies in its people. Africans—a kaleidoscope of races and ethnicities of seemingly every shade under the sun—are some of the most friendly, generous and easy-going people on Earth.

Many envision images of Africa with only grinding poverty. However, according to the *Washington Post*, perhaps as many as one third fall into the middle income category. Like anywhere else, Africa has its share of nice neighborhoods. The view of the entire continent as being desperately poor is simply incorrect.

Still, Africa does face tremendous problems that have stifled its development.

■ **WAR, DISEASE AND DROUGHT:** Top, a fighter belonging to the al-Shabab militia runs with his weapon as he and others engage Somali government troops in the streets of Somalia's capital, Mogadishu (May 22, 2009). Middle, a child collects water from a puddle after a rainstorm near the Torotoro village, 125 km southwest from Mogadishu (March 27, 2009). Bottom, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir—for whom the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur—addresses supporters during a visit to the town of Majlad in the south Kordofan province (May 20, 2009).

PHOTO: MOHAMED DAHIR (TOP, MIDDLE)/ASHRAF SHAZLY (BOTTOM)/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Poor Leadership

Lack of true leadership is a reoccurring theme in many African countries. Since achieving independence, corruption, instability and violence have hampered the development of former European colonies. Dictators arose, oftentimes poorly educated military leaders. Instead of serving the people, they served themselves and their cronies. Some deliberately fanned the flames of ethnic rivalry, marginalizing other ethnic groups, and applying a “divide and conquer” approach to leadership. Some dictators amassed billions of dollars in personal fortunes as they allowed their citizens to starve to death. Others favored those of their ethnic group above others, establishing virtually one-man states, killing or imprisoning the opposition, and fueling wars and conflicts.

To say that Africans have been underserved by their leaders is an *understatement!* Incompetence and lack of vision is prevalent: “Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keeps the law, happy is he” (Prov. 29:18).

Men have established governments based on their own ideas of right and wrong, primarily to benefit themselves. They ignore the Law of God, which is a lamp of understanding to any who keeps it (Psa. 119:105).

However, “The prince that wants [lacks] understanding is also a GREAT OPPRESSOR” (Prov. 28:16). Certainly, this verse describes Africa’s brutal dictators, whose greed has been fueled by their own covetousness. On the other hand, “he that hates covetousness shall prolong his days” (same verse).

Africa has had many leaders who ruled for decades, yet their people remained poor. With few exceptions, its leadership has been weak, ineffective, oppressive, incompetent, corrupt and downright inefficient.

The strength of any society depends on the quality of its leadership. If Africa is to recover, it must have leaders who can, and are willing to, properly guide the way.

Widespread Corruption

From top to bottom, corruption permeates many African societies. Graft, nepotism, discrimination, bribery and outright thievery are prevalent in far too many nations. According to Transparency International, in 2008 seven of the 10 most corrupt nations in the world were African.

Corruption manifests itself in numerous ways (often blatantly) in government, industry, politics, and even in obtaining basic services. Sadly, to get important matters



■ **WEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES:** Top, a man weighs gold in a market in Iga Barriere, 25 kms north of Bunia, north eastern Congo (Feb. 16, 2009). Middle, a man holds raw diamonds at Gold and Diamond department of Sierra Leone Central Bank in Freetown (Aug. 10, 2007). Middle/top right, a Kenyan farmer works on her fast-growing cash spinach crop in a field in the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya (Oct. 24, 2007). Middle/bottom right, a young Soweto resident plays at one of the seven Gaming Zone centers setup in Soweto by South African entrepreneurs with the financial efforts of family and friends after banks were reluctant to back the business venture in the township (Jan. 16, 2008). Bottom, a general view of the city center in Khartoum, Sudan’s capital (Jan. 9, 2007).

PHOTO: LIONEL HEALING (TOP)/ISSOUF SANOGO (MIDDLE)/SIMON MAINA (MIDDLE/TOP RIGHT)/ALEXANDER JOE (MIDDLE/BOTTOM RIGHT)/MARCO DI LAURO (BOTTOM)/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

accomplished, individuals often face the prospect of paying bribes.

For Africa to have any chance of improving, honesty and integrity must become ingrained in its societies.

Poverty

The UN Human Development Report for 2003 revealed that the bottom 25 countries were African. Shockingly, 80 percent of Africa's people live on less than \$2.50 per day. The average poor person in sub-Saharan Africa lives on just 70 cents per day.

Adjusting for inflation, the average person was poorer in 2003 than he was in 1973! In addition, the number of impoverished has almost doubled over the past 30 years, from 200 million to 380 million, according to the World Bank.

Along with poverty, illiteracy abounds—60 percent of adults in sub-Saharan Africa are illiterate, and 40 percent of children in sub-Saharan Africa are not in school.

Unless poverty and illiteracy are resolved, Africa will be unable to tap the full potential of its citizens.

Underdevelopment

Throughout Africa, infrastructure remains a problem: 36 percent of households in sub-Saharan Africa are without an improved water source; 73 percent are without improved sanitation; only five percent have a telephone; and 37 percent are without electricity (Africa Infrastructure Country Diagnostic). Africa's Sub-Saharan 48 countries (pop. 800 million) generate roughly only as much power as Spain (pop. 45 million).

The continent suffers from impassible roads and broken-down railway networks. Basic services such as electricity are unreliable. A satellite image of Africa at night reveals a continent in darkness, the result of a lack of electricity. Its agriculture is largely dependent on primitive technology and, therefore, highly depends on rainfall. Irrigation is seldom used: When it rains, crops are plentiful; when it does not, there is famine.

Scarce resources are often used for

military purposes instead of benefiting the continent's development needs, which could be channeled into schools, roads, hospitals, irrigation facilities, telecommunications, roads, and other areas vital for Africa's development.

For trade, industry and agriculture to reach their potential, Africa's infrastructure must be drastically improved.

Disease

Disease stalks the continent: poor sanitation, inadequate water supply, malnutrition, and ill-health afflict many people. More than 250 million do not have access to clean water, and more than 200 million do not have access to health services.

AIDS threatens the very foundation of African nations, with 15.5 million people having died from health-related complications since 1981; at least 25 million were HIV positive in 2007 (WHO/UNAIDS). Sub-Saharan Africa has an astonishing 70 percent of global infections. At least 95 percent of AIDS orphans are African (UN Food and Agriculture Organization). A 2008 UNAIDS report revealed that more than 11 million children have lost their parents to AIDS. Average life expectancy is 47 years in sub-Saharan Africa; just without AIDS, it would be 62.

Malaria is another major killer. Some 3,000 children die from it *daily*. Tuberculosis is also significant, along with Ebola and other deadly diseases.

Raging Conflicts

Africa faces severe and mounting problems that are not easily solved. One of the greatest is war. Presently, 15 countries are either engaged in war or are experiencing post-war conflict and tension, be it civil or external. Africa, in recent times, has been wounded by the scourge of war perhaps like no other continent. Here are just five:

■ **Democratic Republic of the Congo:** During the past decade, this massive country has been gridlocked in a brutal civil war. At times, up to seven nations have been directly

involved in this conflict for control of the country's vast mineral reserves. Since 1998, over 5 million people have died, the highest loss of life in conflict since World War II. To put this in perspective, its death toll is up to *one thousand times greater* than the more widely reported Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

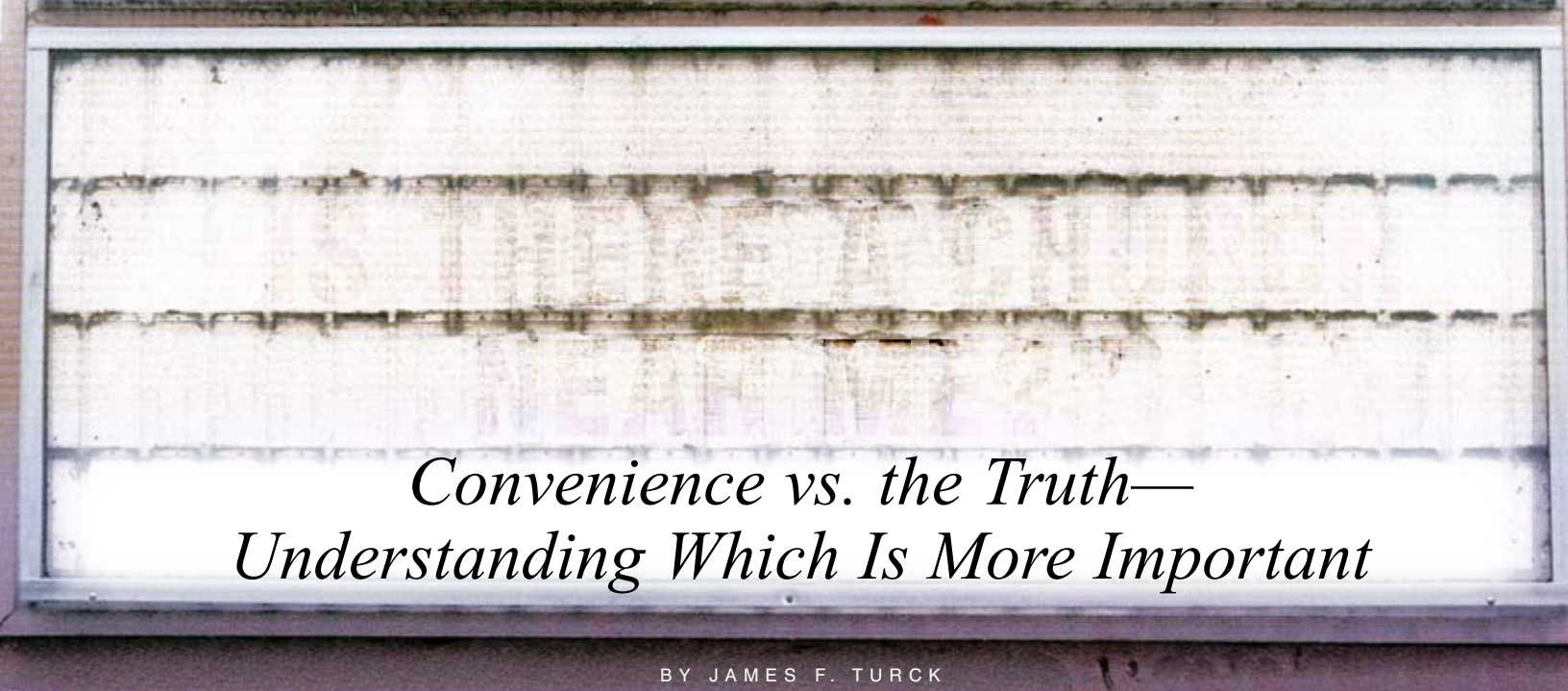
A peace agreement was signed in 2003, reducing the war's intensity. Nonetheless, skirmishes still flare up with significant loss of life.

■ **Sudan:** A bitter war continues between the Sudanese government and rebels in the Darfur region. Rebels took up arms after allegations of decades-long neglect and abuse. Government forces retaliated swiftly. Accurate details of the death toll are hard to come by, but the UN estimates that over 200,000 have been killed and millions displaced. Despite UN intervention, the war rages on, creating a humanitarian disaster, with refugees flooding into Chad and other neighboring countries.

■ **Somalia:** The country collapsed into anarchy with the ousting of long-time ruler General Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991. A U.S.-led intervention to restore order was unsuccessful. In 2006, Islamic militants briefly seized power, but were defeated by Ethiopia. Since then, Somalia has been in a state of lawlessness.

■ **Liberia:** This once peaceful country, created by freed American slaves in the 19th century, was rocked by civil wars in 1989 and 1999. The war came to an end in 2003 with the resignation of Liberian ruler Charles Taylor. After several years of upheaval, peace was finally restored, and the nation is moving forward under the leadership of its first female prime minister.

■ **Sierra Leone:** In the 1990s, rebels fought the government for control of the country's diamond resources. The rebels were notorious for recruiting child soldiers. Human Rights Watch estimates that over 50,000 people have been killed and 1 million displaced. Since then, Sierra Leone has started the long road to recovery.



Convenience vs. the Truth— Understanding Which Is More Important

BY JAMES F. TURCK

ANYTOWN, U.S.A. On a street sits a building with stained glass windows, a towering steeple, a cross, and a wide entrance. A sign in front beckons: “Join Us for Sunday Worship Services – 11:00 AM – Everyone Welcome. Come Just As You Are!”

A woman passing by is pleased she can attend this church “just as she is.”

On page five of the “Lifestyles and Religion” section of the local newspaper is a listing of area churches. A title above reads, “Attend the Church of Your Choice.” The reader runs his index finger down the list. His finger comes to rest on a church conveniently close by. It will do.

Such scenarios play out countless times. On Sunday morning, millions walk through the doors of the church of their choice. Convenience, ease of attending, a laidback atmosphere and a “make me feel good” message are often their only criteria. Although people may not agree with all of the church’s doctrines, they perceive that agreeing with the big or important ones is “good enough.” Cafeteria Christianity is the accepted norm.

But almost no one gives thought as to whether the church he or she has chosen is the Church Jesus Christ built (Matt. 16:18) or if it has His teachings (28:20). Others *assume* they have

chosen Christ’s Church, yet have not proven it.

Does it matter?

Only One Church

The Restored Church of God, which publishes *The Real Truth* magazine, is often contacted by individuals who ask, “Is there a church in my area?”—“Do you have a church near me?”—“Can you tell me if there is a church affiliated with you or one that has similar beliefs in my town?” A few wonder if they can attend a service to “check us out.”

They may be readers of *The Real Truth* or of our literature. Having been exposed to traditional Christianity’s teachings, the expectation may be that The Restored Church of God is just another of the many denominations or sects of what they have been told (and wrongly assume) is collectively the true Church, and that RCG is basically the same in teachings and manner.

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, “I will build My Church.” He was a carpenter and the son of a carpenter. He knew what it meant to conceive, design, plan and build a structure. He followed proper building principles and practices, beginning with a solid foundation. He did not build in a haphazard, shoddy, confusing or disjointed manner, nor have sections scattered everywhere. Whatever He built reflected directly upon Him—structures indicative of His skills as a Master Builder. These reflected quality.

In building His Church, Jesus used the same approach. It is “built upon the foundation [teachings] of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone” (Eph. 2:20), is a “building fitly framed *together*” (vs. 21)—not scattered and divided among many groups—and is “teaching all nations to observe ALL things [not ‘some’ or ‘most’] *whatsoever* I [not men] have commanded” (Matt. 28:20).

Christ called His Church a “little flock” (Luke 12:32). This is far different from what is pictured and practiced by professing Christian churches, whose membership numbers in the billions.

God has only *one* Church. Its doctrines and practices are uniquely different from those of traditional, mainstream Christianity. It holds solely to the truth of God’s Word—the Bible.

Nearly all churches of the world practice an “open door” policy. This is because they are not overly concerned with what attendees believe. Here again, the Church of God is different. A person must have sufficient background and understanding of its teachings prior to attending. This is necessary to appreciate what a person will hear and learn. (Our four-part *World to Come* broadcast series “The True Church” carefully introduces who and what is the *only* Church that Jesus built.)

Only the Church that Jesus built has the true knowledge and understanding of salvation—what it is and what one must do to receive it. It must be the

truth that the true Church teaches that attracts a person—not large numbers of members, *not* a congregation nearby, *not* ease of attending, *not* a “feel good message” and *not* large impressive buildings in which to meet.

Those looking for a *large* church or one *close* to them are not looking for the *true* Church!

Those attracted to the truth must recognize that Christ’s Church is a “little flock,” and follows the pattern of the early Church, which “continues steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). They understand that the Church is not a physical building. It is the *ekklesia*—the “called out” ones—who, believing the same things (vs. 44), continue with one accord (vs. 46), faithfully assembling together on the Sabbath (Heb. 10:25) and, as necessary, in members’ homes (Rom. 16:3, 5; I Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philemon 1:2).

Yet none can *join* the Church that Christ built (and is still building today). God must CALL each person. Jesus plainly stated, “NO MAN can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me DRAW him” (John 6:44). (To understand more, read our article “Are You Being Called?”)

The Truth

The truth of God—His doctrines, the knowledge of the kingdom of God and how to enter it—has its own attraction for those who love it. Such people comprehend they have been given the opportunity “to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 13:11).

Jesus likened it to “treasure hid in a field; the which when a man has found, he hides, and for *joy* thereof goes and sells *all that he has*, and buys that field” (vs. 44). It is also “like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold *all that he had*, and bought it” (vs. 45-46).

There is a willingness to “pay the price” in the mind of one who has been given such great and precious knowledge. In effect, he is willing to “run barefoot across broken glass through an

open field dodging sniper fire” to hold on to the truth. Assembling in homes with smaller numbers (or perhaps even alone), and having to sometimes drive great distances to do so, is not a deterrent. The “pearl of great price” is well worth it.

You have likely read or heard of John 8:32, which states, “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” But do you understand how and from what the truth frees you? Most assume they do.

Revelation 12:9 calls Satan “the great dragon...which deceives the whole world.” Take that statement for what it says. The entire world is deceived by Satan. As God’s (and humanity’s) arch-enemy, this master deceiver counterfeits every one of God’s doctrines. Through traditional Christianity, Satan presents his teachings as from God, pawing off ancient, pagan religious practices to an unsuspecting humanity.

In place of the true Sabbath, the devil presents Sunday worship. In place of God’s Holy Days, he promotes the pagan holidays of Christmas and Easter, which were practiced long ago to honor pagan deities. In place of the knowledge of being born into the divine God Family and ruling with Jesus Christ in the kingdom of God, Satan has duped “Christianity” into believing that being “born again” is some sort of ethereal feeling, and that the reward of the saved is “rolling around heaven” for eternity. That man has an immortal soul; therefore, eternal life really is not a gift from God—and that now is the only day of salvation, meaning that those who lived before Jesus Christ was born or never heard the name of Jesus are “lost,” doomed to an ever-burning hell.

People succumb to these and other false teachings, and remain ignorant of God’s step-by-step PLAN OF SALVATION, through which the vast majority who have lived since Adam will be saved.

The truth sets one free from Satan’s deception—free from bondage to the devil and his lies (John 8:44). It sets a person free from the way that leads to eternal death, and puts one on the path that leads to eternal life. It releases us from slavery to the ways and customs

of this world, into the liberty of Jesus Christ (Luke 4:18; II Cor. 3:17; Gal. 5:1; Jms. 1:25).

Moreover, the truth of God protects the begotten, yet unborn, sons of God from “every wind of [false] doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. 4:14). It sanctifies believers (John 17:17) and cleanses (Eph. 5:26), corrects, reproves and instructs them (II Tim. 3:16).

Hearing and then practicing the truth builds faith (Rom. 10:17; Jms. 2:17-20). It is “able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus...[and] is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine...for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Tim. 3:15-17).

The truth gives wisdom, knowledge and understanding, and is a lamp to our feet, lighting our path toward inheriting God’s kingdom (Psa. 119:98-100, 104-105).

The Straight and Narrow Way

Untold millions have been taught by this world’s ministers that there are “many paths to heaven” or “many spokes on the wheel of salvation.” This is said to try to make sense of the confusion and competing messages of Christendom, and to keep its deceived adherents from questioning its nonsensical teachings.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The Bible—the word of truth—says no such thing.

Notice what Christ says about the path to eternal life: “Enter you in at the strait [narrow] gate: for *wide* is the gate, and *broad* [easy] is the way, that leads to *destruction*, and *many* there be which go in there at. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and *few* there be that find it” (Matt. 7:13-14).

This world’s version of Christianity offers the broad, easy way, a wide entrance, a come-just-as-you-are, nothing-is-expected-of-you sales pitch, which appeals to carnal nature (Rom. 8:7).

Jesus’ words counter this reasoning:

“Not everyone that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *does* the will of My Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21). You must be a “doer of the word, and not [a] hearer only” (Jms. 1:22).

“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more” (Luke 12:48).

Jesus also says, “For many are called, but FEW are chosen” (Matt. 22:14). Actually, few *choose to be chosen!*

Why is this?

In the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:4-15), Christ explains that some who hear the truth: (1) allow the wiles of the devil to stop them from responding; (2) give up because of trials or persecution; (3) are more concerned with the cares of this present physical life, and are not willing to give up the riches and pleasures Satan’s world has to offer; (4) respond to it, practice it and keep it, enduring to the end all while developing holy, righteous, godly character.

True Christianity is a *way of life* that brings countless blessings. It is a rich, abundant and joyful life (John 10:10 – last part; 14:27; 15:11; Rom. 15:11). It involves *more* than just believing the truth. It means actively practicing—LIVING—it.

Yet it also means fighting against the course of this “present evil world” (Gal. 1:4). It means coming out of its ways, practices, customs and religions, and being willing to stand out from the crowd of those who keep Sunday, Christmas, New Year’s, Easter and other worldly celebrations. It means that trials, tribulations and persecution for “being different” will come. Yes, “we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).

It may even mean difficulties with friends, family and employers, and suffering loss. Yet, in return, receiving a spiritual family of like-minded believers now and eternal life later (Matt. 10:34-39; 19:28-29; Mark 10:29-30).

But understand that, through it all, the testing of our faith builds patience (Jms. 1:3) and godly character, in hope

of receiving eternal life (Rom. 5:1-5). “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. 1:7)—that “an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (II Pet. 1:11).

For those who commit their lives to living the truth, “there has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not [allow] you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it” (I Cor. 10:13). And though “many are the afflictions of the righteous...the LORD delivers him out of them all” (Psa. 34:19).

These promises are sure!

God’s Work!

Jesus Christ was a Messenger sent from God with a commission: “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work” (John 9:4); “I must preach the kingdom of God...for therefore am I sent” (Luke 4:43). He “went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom” (Matt. 4:23), “saying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent you, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15).

Christ preached the gospel of the coming world-ruling government of God. His Church does the same.

At the end of His ministry on Earth, Jesus told His apostles, “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:18-20).

He instructed Peter three times, “If you love Me, feed My sheep” (John 21:15-17). Christ’s Church fulfills this commission also. As the Christian’s spiritual Mother (Gal. 4:26), the Church protects, nourishes and feeds God’s spirit-begotten children.

Whether one is close to a congregation, or is an isolated member, it makes no difference. With over 100 books and booklets, scores of reprint articles, a 30-lesson *Bible Introduction Course*, 209 “Question and Answer” letters, numerous other pieces of literature and hundreds of sermons, with more being constantly added, RCG teaches all of God’s truth—all that one needs to know about salvation.

Some congregations in The Restored Church of God begin with one faithful person, couple or family. In time, God often quickly adds to a specific area (Acts 2:47), growing the congregation. Also, those who start as “pioneers” in their area have opportunities at various times of the year to meet with more brethren (for example, at the annual Feast of Tabernacles).

Whether they attend a congregation or worship alone, God’s people are abundantly fed with spiritual food. They receive weekly sermon CDs and *Announcement Bulletins* to hold Sabbath services at home, which educate and inform them about God’s Work. RCG has the largest amount of literature explaining the truths of God that the world has ever seen. This literature, covering every biblical subject, is provided to all members.

Again, Jesus has only *one* Church. It does His Work under a government that explains and declares the truth through two commissions: (1) preaching the *true* gospel of the soon-coming kingdom of God as a witness to the world, and (2) feeding the flock of God.

By simply reading this article, you have come in contact with that Church. It has trained and consecrated ministers of the true Jesus Christ. Though a little flock, His congregations around the world are set apart and fed by the truth.

Those seeking the true Church: The truth taught there is much more important than attracting large numbers or being conveniently close.

Truth or convenience? Truth should always be the deciding factor.

We recommend reading our book *The History of the True Church – Where Is It Today?* □

NORWAY

In the Midst of a Global Crisis

BY ABDON V. BUENA

EARLY IN 2009, Norway's Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg said there was no doubt that the global financial downturn would affect the nation. He also told citizens not to become pessimistic.

Mr. Stoltenberg informed his countrymen that the government would introduce financial aid packages to secure jobs and safeguard the Norwegian economy. He emphasized that Norway has reserves—namely, the Government Pension Fund-Global—from which it can draw.

The fund, established in 1990, was previously known as the Petroleum Fund of Norway. According to Norges Bank Investment Management (NBIM), the fund (as of October 2008) was worth \$326 billion (all USD, unless noted otherwise)—the largest pension fund in Europe and the second-largest in the world. Norway saves almost all state revenue from the petroleum sector, in its sovereign wealth fund, a state-owned fund of financial assets in holdings and investments.

Norway is the world's third-largest gas exporter; its position as an oil ex-

porter has slipped to seventh-largest due to decline in production.

"Norway's sovereign wealth fund, Europe's biggest equity investor, has had roughly a zero percent return on its investments in global stocks and bonds so far in 2009," Executive Director Yngve Slyngstad said (*Reuters*).

Norway is committed to funneling more money toward making life better in poor countries, despite the deteriorating global economy. Norway announced it will boost its contribution to \$4.2 billion in 2009, an increase of some \$632 million over last year. For every \$100 the Norwegian economy generates, the government will give one dollar to aid. This exceeds the goal for industrialized countries, generally 70 cents per \$100.

Norway's action is consistent with its effort to help solve global problems. Six years ago, the *BBC* reported, "Norway is home to a tiny proportion of the world's people, yet it runs 10 percent of the world's biggest charities and spends vast amounts of tax-payers' money on running peace missions abroad. It exports its peculiar brand of pacifism all over the globe, sending envoys and negotiators to far-flung war zones, arranging ceasefires and listening

patiently to political arguments which have nothing to do with its citizens."

Norway recently committed \$1 billion to Brazil's Sustainable Amazon Fund, which provided the South American country the means to meet targets to reduce deforestation, and another \$430 million per year to other developing countries for reducing emissions and forest degradation.

The Norwegian people even give aid to provide clean and potable water to impoverished peoples in China, despite the Asian country's great wealth, which is in trillions of dollars.

The Norwegians are also magnanimous in forgiving debtors. The government voted to write off Liberia's debt of \$35 million.

A Glimpse Into Norway's History

Norwegians share ancestral roots with Sweden, Denmark and other Scandinavian countries. The peoples of Norway (as well as Normandy, France) are the descendants of Benjamin, one of the tribes of ancient Israel (Gen. 49:27; to learn more, read our book *America and Britain in Prophecy*).

They were the Norwegian Vikings who plundered Europe—established

*Please see **NORWAY**, page 16*

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BY BRUCE A. RITTER

JERUSALEM: The name, among many ancient definitions, means “city of peace”—yet, ironically, it has been the focal point of war, uncertainty, turbulence and religious confusion for thousands of years.

Even today, Jerusalem is the center of controversy, with Jews, Christians and Muslims esteeming the ancient city as their particular religion’s holy site, both Israelis and Palestinians wanting it as the capital for their individual states, and the United Nations recommending that Jerusalem be designated an international city.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, having recently returned to office after putting together a fragile coalition of competing political parties and ideologies, faces daunting obstacles. For example:

- Iran continues to flex its military muscles, test-firing a long-range missile capable of striking Israel. Mr. Netanyahu is determined to protect the Jewish state at all costs—even if it means a first-strike to take out Tehran’s nuclear capabilities.

- U.S. President Barack Obama demands that Israel halt all settlement expansion—a move the Palestinian Authority has said must take place before it would restart peace talks with Israel. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton echoed the president’s demand, telling reporters, “Not some settlements, not outposts, not natural growth exceptions. We think it is in the best interest of the effort that we are engaged in that settlement expansion cease” (*BBC*).

JERUSALEM

Past, Present—and Awesome Future!

But the Israeli prime minister remains defiant. A senior official quoted Mr. Netanyahu as telling the Israeli cabinet, “There is no way that we are going to tell people not to have children or to force young people to move away from their families” (ibid.).

Why such contention—where will this lead?

Looking Into the Past

Archeologists, historians and other scholarly experts have their own ideas and opinions regarding Jerusalem’s past. Most either ignore or denigrate the Bible as a reliable source of knowledge. Verifying Scripture’s historical accuracy means legitimizing its spiritual, ethical and moral authority over people’s lives. Human nature will not allow this, for “the carnal mind is enmity [hostile, an enemy] to God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7).

Yet, to understand Jerusalem’s violent past, its contentious present, and the marvelous future the city will soon attain, we must start with God’s Word.

The first time Scripture mentions Jerusalem, it is called Salem, which means “peace.” (Notice Genesis 14:18.) The city eventually became *Jerusalem*.

When God freed the Israelites from Egypt and led them into Canaan, the Promised Land, He commanded them to completely wipe out all the Canaanites and other pagan worshippers in the land. They were to slay every man, woman and child, sparing no one, regardless of age or gender.

The Canaanites were idolaters, worshippers of numerous false gods. Worse, they offered human sacrifices—even the lives of babies and little children. God knew that if the Israelites allowed pagan worshippers to live around them, they would tolerate their practices, marry into their families, and eventually sacrifice the lives of their own helpless little ones.

In fact, that is exactly what happened. The Israelites, at first, zealously conquered Canaanite cities throughout the land, and achieved great success, thanks to God and the stewardship of

faithful leaders, first Joshua, then the elders after his death. But soon, the Hebrews grew tired of fighting, tired of constantly besieging cities and waging war. So they compromised. Instead of wiping out the pagans, Israel suppressed them, forcing the Gentiles to pay tribute. In effect, the Israelites disobeyed God and tolerated sin (which the people of Canaan represented). Israel thought it knew better than God.

But their misguided thinking backfired. The Israelites settled down, grew comfortable...and forgot to put God first. They rejected Him so they could worship the false gods of surrounding nations, pagan deities such as Baal, Molech, Tammuz and others.



A National Religious Center

Meanwhile, one of the many cities Israel left unconquered was Jebus, formerly Salem. Not until hundreds of years later did the Israelites, under King David, permanently seize the city from the Jebusites. David changed its name to Jerusalem, which he designated as Israel’s capital.

The original builders had established the city on two mountains: Zion and Moriah, the place where God ordered Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. David wanted to build a “house for the name of the LORD God of Israel” (I Kings 8:17), so he gathered all the construction materials and had his son Solomon, who succeeded him as king, build the Temple upon Mount Moriah.

The Temple replaced the Holy Tabernacle (Israel had made during the 40-year trek in the wilderness) in Shiloh as Israel’s religious center. Three seasons a year—(1) Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread, (2) the Feast of Firstfruits (Pentecost), and (3) the Feast of Trumpets/Day of Atonement/Feast of Tabernacles/Last Great Day—families from throughout the kingdom came to Jerusalem to worship God, offer sacrifices and observe the annual Holy Days. The Temple served to unify the nation.

However, after King Solomon’s death, the house of Israel split from the house of Judah, each becoming separate kingdoms. Jerusalem remained Judah’s capital. The northern kingdom, in order to keep its families from traveling to Jerusalem three times a year, established its own religious centers, one in the north (Dan) and one in the south (Bethel), each with its own golden calf to worship. Almost the entire northern kingdom whole-heartedly embraced idolatry. In effect, the house of Israel rejected God; so did all 20 of its kings.

The northern tribes never recovered spiritually. As punishment, God used the Assyrian Empire to conquer and deport the peoples of the northern kingdom, who melted into the pages of history, becoming the “Lost Ten Tribes of Israel.”

The southern kingdom, Judah—largely comprised of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi—also had 20 kings, eight of whom God considered righteous. Wavering back and forth between righteousness and disobedience, Judah ultimately failed to learn from Israel’s dismal failure. God used the Babylonian Empire to conquer the southern kingdom, destroy Jerusalem and the Temple, and deport the people en masse into Babylonian exile.

Babylon eventually fell to the Persian Empire, which allowed the Jews to migrate back to Judah 70 years later. The Jews reclaimed Jerusalem and built a second, yet less grand, Temple.

From Kingdom to Kingdom

As with all kingdoms and governments of men, the Persian Empire fell, and

A HISTORY OF UPHEAVAL

The following is an overview of Jerusalem's tumultuous past:

- 1800 B.C.** The Jebusites build the wall of Jebus
- 1350** The name "Jerusalem" appears in diplomatic correspondence as "Urusalim" in five Amarna letters
- 1004/993** King David captures Jebus; makes Jerusalem the capital of Israel's united kingdom (II Sam. 5:6-10)
- 960** King Solomon begins constructing the Temple
- 928** Israel divided into two separate kingdoms; Jerusalem remains capital of house of Judah
- 722/721** Assyrian Empire conquers northern kingdom (house of Israel) and exports it into captivity, which becomes the "Lost Ten Tribes" of Israel
- 701** Hezekiah withstands Assyrian King Sennacherib's unsuccessful siege of capital, and builds Pool of Siloam tunnel to supply Gihon Spring water to the city
- 597** Babylonian Empire captures Jerusalem
- 586** Babylonians destroy city and the Temple, exiling the Jews to Babylon
- 538/537** Edict of King Cyrus allows the Jews (est. 50,000) to return from captivity and rebuild Temple
- 516** Second Temple finished in sixth year of Darius the Great (Ezra 6:15-18)
- 332** Alexander the Great conquers Palestine from the Persians (Dan. 11:3) and captures Jerusalem
- 320/313** Egypt's Ptolemy I captures city
- 170/169** Antiochus IV Epiphanes plunders Jerusalem, outlaws Judaism, and profanes the Temple (Dec. 25, 168 B.C.) by erecting within it an altar to Zeus
- 167-164** Hasmoneans begin Maccabean revolts; Judah Maccabee recaptures city and restores the Temple and Jewish autonomy
- 63** Pompey captures Jerusalem for the Roman Empire
- 37** Rome appoints Herod king of Judea; Jerusalem made capital of Roman client kingdom
- 19 B.C.** Herod begins expanding the Temple Mount and rebuilding the Temple
- A.D. 26-36** Pontius Pilate governs as Roman procurator of Judea
- 27** Temple completed
- 31** Jesus Christ crucified
- 66-73** The Jews revolt against Rome
- 70** Roman army captures Jerusalem, sacks and destroys the Temple; exiles or enslaves survivors
- 132-135** Bar Kochba leads revolt against Rome; reinstates Jerusalem as Jewish capital
- 135** Roman emperor Hadrian destroys the city, renaming it "Aelia Capitolina"; bans Jews from entering
- 313** Emperor Constantine legalizes (false) "Christianity"
- 326** Queen Helena, Constantine's mother, visits Jerusalem and determines locations of events supposedly associated with Christ's last days on Earth; leads to construction of religious sites, including Church of the Holy Sepulchre
- 361-363** Pagan Emperor Julian the Apostate allows the Jews to return to Jerusalem
- 614** Persians take over city, destroy most churches and expel the Jews

was replaced by the Greeks. After the death of Alexander the Great in 331 B.C., his four generals split control of the Greco-Macedonian Empire among them. One general, Ptolemy I, who took over Egypt, seized Jerusalem about 320 B.C. He Hellenized the city and the rest of the land, infusing Greek culture throughout society.

In 198 B.C., Seleucid King Antiochus III—the Seleucids ruled nearby Syria, with Antioch as its capital—took Jerusalem and the rest of Israel. Years later, Antiochus IV (also known as Epiphanes) sought to Hellenize the region, completely devastating the Jewish culture. He stormed the city, slaughtered numerous Jewish residents, and ransacked and destroyed the Temple. (However, the basic structure of the Temple remained intact and was later restored.) He repeated this less than a year later, destroying part of the city. The Maccabees rose up and took back Jerusalem, reestablishing Jewish rule.

In 63 B.C., Pompey conquered the city and the rest of Israel, which came under Roman rule for the next 400 years. Rome installed a client-king to rule the region: Herod the Great. He was infamous for being ruthless, yet commissioned public works on a grand scale. Herod restored the Second Temple and expanded it, making the Temple the greatest religious epicenter in the ancient world.

But the Jews hated living in Rome's iron grip, so Jerusalem was a cauldron of political unrest, leading to a city-wide uprising in A.D. 68-69. Rome responded in A.D. 70 by conquering the city and destroying the Temple. The empire enslaved the Jewish survivors and paraded them in a triumph through the streets of Rome, and forbade the Jews from living in Jerusalem.

With the Temple destroyed, Judaism had to adapt. The Jews scattered to far-away regions, with local synagogues becoming religious centers of worship.

By A.D. 325, Christianity—actually, false Christianity; the true Church of God remained small throughout its history, just as Jesus Christ foretold—became the empire's state religion. Still,

Rome kept Jerusalem off limits to the Jews. Meanwhile, supposed Christians, with the state's backing, built numerous churches and monasteries in the city, which the Persian army destroyed in 614. The Roman Empire took back Jerusalem in 629, but lost it again in 638, to Arab invaders.

Under Muslim rule, the city for the most part became a backwater town for a few hundred years, though two of Islam's most important shrines were built there: the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

Then came the Crusades, the first in 1099. In the name of their religion, the Crusaders massacred Jerusalem's Jewish and Muslim residents. Eventually Islamic troops drove the Crusaders out of the city. The Ottoman Turks took over in 1517, and the city remained under their control for 400 years, ending when the British captured Jerusalem on Dec. 9, 1917.

Modern Unrest

The League of Nations entrusted the British to administer the "Mandate for Palestine" (1920 to 1948), during which the city's population exploded. The newly formed United Nations, in 1947, proposed dividing Palestine between Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem an international city. The next year, as the British Mandate expired, Jewish leadership declared Israel an independent state and proclaimed Jerusalem its capital in 1949. The UN later admitted Israel as a member.

When Israel declared its independence, the Islamic world reacted with violence. Since then, the Israelis and Arab Muslims have clashed numerous times: the 1948 Arab-Israeli War; the 1956 Suez Crisis; the 1967 Six-Day War; the War of Attrition (1967-70); the Yom Kippur War in 1973; the 1982 and 2006 Lebanon wars; the First and Second Intifadas.

Today, the city is as divided as ever, between east and west, Arab and Jew.

Dark Days Ahead

Scripture reveals that Jerusalem, in the final days of mankind's rule, will become headquarters for a great reli-

gious-economic-sociopolitical superpower—and the focal point of a future world war. The siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 served as forerunners (or types) of this prophetic end-time event.

Jesus Christ warned His disciples, “And when you shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is near. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:20-24).

The state of Israel will experience great turbulence. Clashes will intensify. Confrontations will escalate. Yet the United States, Britain and other prosperous sister nations of the West will not intervene—in fact, they will not be able. (Read our book *America and Britain in Prophecy* to learn why.)

Meanwhile, before these events occur, God works through His Church to warn this dying world. His people labor to spread an “eleventh hour” warning to as many as can be reached.

Christ warned, “Watch you therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (vs. 36). Christians must watch world events in order to recognize the formation of the final superpower, which will surround Jerusalem by its armies—the precursor to “the beginning of the end”!

Future World Capital of Peace

Just as humanity finds itself on the brink of global extinction, Jesus Christ will intervene in the affairs of men, bringing the kingdom of God, which will administer the government of God on

the earth (Isa. 9:6-7). This world-ruling SUPERGOVERNMENT will teach human beings the only way that produces the fruit of universal peace and prosperity.

All nations, weary from war, disease, famine, economic uncertainty and religious contention, will look to Jerusalem for guidance (2:1-3; Jer. 3:17; Zech. 14:4). Jerusalem—the international capital for God’s kingdom—will be rebuilt to splendor and magnificence, and will set the example for all peoples and nations to follow (Isa. 62:1-7).

From this model “city of peace,” TRUE PEACE—not merely the absence of war—will spread across the earth (Mic. 4:1-4)!

Rather than being cramped, overcrowded, rundown and crime-ridden like today’s cities, Jerusalem and all other cities in the world tomorrow will be safe—residents will be free from fear of criminals. Tomorrow’s urban centers will be well-planned, clean and spacious, allowing room for agriculture while maintaining limited industry. No more juvenile delinquency—the elderly will dwell in their homes and walk the streets of cities without fear of violence. Families will lead productive lives.

Notice: “Thus says the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain. 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” (Zech. 8:3-5).

This marvelous future is not an invention of men’s utopian fantasy—it is God’s plan for mankind. And this is just the beginning! The Jerusalem of yesterday and today will attain unprecedented greatness—but not by the hands of men. The supreme Creator will bring this to reality.

This is the grand message of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. This is the true gospel of Jesus Christ—the good news of the kingdom of God! □

- 627-629 Byzantine Emperor Heraclius recaptures city
- 638 Muslim Arabs capture city, readmitting the Jews
- 691 Dome of the Rock completed
- 715 Al-Aqsa Mosque completed
- 1009 Synagogues and churches destroyed
- 1071 Seljuk Turks devastate Jerusalem
- 1099 First crusaders capture Jerusalem and massacre most of the city’s Jews and Muslims
- 1187 Kurdish general Saladin captures city; permits Jews and Muslims to settle in Jerusalem
- 1192 England’s Richard the Lion-hearted fails to recapture the city; makes treaty with Saladin, permitting professing Christians to worship at their holy sites
- 1229 Treaty returns city to the crusaders
- 1244 Khwarizmian Turks capture Jerusalem, ending Crusader rule; Mamluk Sultans defeat the Ayyubids and rule city, which is back in Muslim hands
- 1348 Black Death plague hits Jerusalem
- 1492 Jews arrive following Spanish Exile
- 1517 In a peaceful takeover, Jerusalem and Palestine become part of the Ottoman Empire
- 1838 First consulate (British) opens in Jerusalem
- 1840 Ottoman Turks retake city
- 1844 First census: 7,120 Jews, 5,760 Muslims, 3,390 Christians
- 1849 First Protestant church in the Near East
- 1860 First Jewish settlement built outside city walls
- 1892 Railroad connects city to the coast
- 1917 British seize Jerusalem
- 1918 Hebrew University of Jerusalem founded
- 1920 Britain charged with Mandate for Palestine
- 1921-29, 36-39 Arab-Jewish disturbances
- 1946 Militant Zionists blow up hotel, killing 91 people
- 1947 United Nations Resolution recommends turning Jerusalem into an international city
- 1948 British Mandate ends; State of Israel declared (May 14)
- 1948-49 Arab-Israeli War: Armies from neighboring nations invade the country; Jewish Quarter of Old City falls to Arab forces; West Jerusalem proclaimed territory of Israel
- 1949 Israel-TransJordan Armistice Agreement signed, dividing the city between the two countries; Jerusalem declared capital of Israel (Dec. 13)
- 1951 Arab extremists assassinate Jordan’s King Abdullah I as he visits al-Aqsa mosque
- 1967 Six-Day War
- 1969 Protestant extremist burns part of al-Aqsa Mosque
- 1973 Yom Kippur War
- 1977 President of Egypt Anwar Sadat visits
- 1979 Egypt and Israel sign peace treaty
- 1980 Jerusalem Basic Law enacted
- 1987-93 First Intifada
- 1993 Israel and the PLO sign the Declaration of Principles
- 1994 Mutual recognition of Israel and the PLO
- 1995 Israel and Jordan sign peace treaty
- 2000 Second Intifada; final agreement between Israel and Palestine fails

Note: Dates are approximate

NORWAY

Continued from page 11

colonies in France and England, and settlements in Ireland—and raided Scotland’s west coast. Moreover, they colonized Iceland, the Faeroe and Orkney Islands, the Shetlands, the Hebrides, and the Isle of Man.

When King Harald I Fairhair united Norway after winning a war waged from A.D. 872 to 900, he proclaimed himself king. His son, Erik I Bloodaxe (so called because he murdered seven of his eight brothers; the official coat-of-arms of the Kingdom of Norway depicts a wolf holding an axe), ruled from 930 to 935. His surviving brother, Haakon I, who had been reared in England, replaced him, becoming Norway’s first missionary king. In 960, he died in battle.

In 985, Erik the Red established a settlement in Greenland. From there, Erik’s son, Leif Eriksson, sailed to North America in 1000, and established a colony in Newfoundland. The Viking Age ended in 1066 when Norway’s King Harald Hardruler and his men lost the Battle of Stamford Bridge in England.

For many years, Catholicism was introduced, but most Norwegians resisted. It was during the reign of Olaf Haraldson (1016-1028) that Norway finally converted to Catholic belief.

During the 12th century, the rivalry between the church and the monarch contributed to the century of civil war, ending in 1217, when Haakon IV became king. His era was called the “Golden Age” of Norway. He created the chancellor’s office and the royal council, and prohibited blood feuds. A national assembly (1260) passed a new law of succession.

In 1349-1350, the bubonic plague afflicted Norway, killing more than two thirds of its 4 million people. The aristocrats and the nobles were hit hard. Only one bishop survived.

The power of King Haakon VI (1335-80) diminished. The central government lost control over the kingdom,

with fiefdoms sprouting in the local areas conducting their own affairs.

Norway later united with Denmark and eventually converted to Lutheranism, by royal decree, following the reformation in 1537.

Denmark, after its defeat during the Napoleonic War (1814), relinquished Norway to Sweden, but kept Norway’s island colonies—Bur, Iceland, Greenland and the Faeroes, in the Treaty of Kiel. The Norwegians rejected the peace treaty; on May 17 of that year, they formed a constituent assembly at Eidsvoll and drafted a constitution. They chose Prince Christian Frederick of Denmark as king. Sweden threatened Norway by mobilizing its troops, making the latter agree to unite under the Swedish monarch Charles XIII. However, Sweden recognized Norway as an independent kingdom, with its own national assembly, the Storting.

From 1840 to 1914, about 750,000 Norwegians emigrated, especially to the American Midwest. After Ireland, Norway had the highest relative emigration of all European countries.

Rising nationalism in the 19th century led to a referendum that granted Norway’s independence in 1905. The Storting dissolved the union with Sweden and chose Prince Carl of Denmark (Haakon VII) as king.

During World War II, the Norwegians fought side-by-side with the Allied Forces, not only in Norway where some 400,000 German troops were stationed (1940-1945), but also other parts of Europe. The king of Norway and his government were stationed in Great Britain, directing the Norwegian resistance movement. The most heroic act of the Norwegian and British commandos was the sinking of a heavily guarded German ferry boat that carried heavy water bound for Germany’s nuclear research and atom bomb production site. The daring commando operation was made into a movie, *The Heroes of Telemark*.

After the war, Norway joined the United Nations in 1945, and became part of NATO in 1949.

The nation implemented its gener-

ous welfare program in 1967, which includes many established social security plans under the National Insurance Act.

King Olav V died in 1991, succeeded by Harald V, the present-day monarch.

Economy

With its many glaciers, mountain lakes, rivers and waterfalls, Norway produces more hydroelectric power than the country needs, enabling it to sell the extra power to neighboring nations.

The discovery of oil and natural gas in the North Sea in the late 1960s catapulted Norway’s economy, transforming the country into one of the wealthiest in the world today.

The government controls key economic areas, such as the vital petroleum sector, through large-scale state enterprises. The country is rich with natural resources—petroleum, natural gas, hydropower, fish, forests and minerals—and is highly dependent on the petroleum sector, which accounts for nearly half of all exports and over 30 percent of state revenue.

Still, national growth fell to 2.3 percent in 2008 as a result of the slowing world economy and the drop in oil prices.

Despite having opted to stay out of the EU during the November 1994 referendum, Norway is a member of the European Economic Area, contributing sizably to the EU budget.

According to Statistics Norway, the nation’s 2008 revenue totaled more than NOK 1,430 billion (\$264.3 billion), an increase of about NOK 150 billion (\$27.7 billion) from the previous year. There was a dramatic rise in the two most significant components of the income from oil extracting activities. The taxes and duties related to the extraction of petroleum and withdrawals of income from corporations increased by almost NOK 100 billion (\$18.48 billion)—or about 33 percent.

The general government expenditure increased from NOK 870 billion (\$160.8 billion) in 2007 to NOK 960

billion (\$177.5 billion) in 2008. The NOK 43 billion (\$7.9 billion) increase in final consumption expenditure was the main reason. Transfers to the private sector increased by almost NOK 25 billion (\$4.6 billion), of which increased pension outlays accounted for NOK 13.5 billion (\$2.5 billion), and sickness and maternity benefits, etc. for NOK 4.5 billion (\$832 billion).

The largest share of government expenditure is connected to social protection. This category contains expenditure related to sickness and disability, old age and family and children, and constituted almost 40 percent of total government expenditure in 2008. Two other major concerns are health and education, with shares of 17 and 13 percent of total expenditure respectively.

With a gross domestic product of \$481.1 billion, a labor force of 2.59 million, a 2.6 percent unemployment rate, and a 3.6 percent inflation rate, the country exported petroleum and gas product, machinery and equipment, metals, chemicals, ships and fish worth \$177.6 billion (2008 est.). It also imported machinery and equipment, chemicals, metals and foodstuffs worth \$93.21 billion.

The first quarter of 2009 saw 1,418 bankruptcies—an 88 percent increase, compared to the same period last year. Sectors most affected included manufacturing, construction wholesale and retail, accommodation and food service activities.

The Norwegian People

The majority of the population is Nordic in heritage and appearance. Ethnic groups comprise 89.4 percent of Norwegians.

Around 423,000 immigrants and 86,000 Norwegian-born persons with immigrant parents reside in Norway. Together, these groups represent 10.6 percent of Norway's population.

In 2005, the United Nations gave Norway the title "Most Prosperous Country" for the fifth consecutive year. The UN cited that the population benefits from its country's oil wealth,

low unemployment and low interest rates (*BBC*).

Norway's wealth is distributed by a tax system that rules out a wide gap between the very rich and the very poor. Society frowns upon ostentatious lifestyles; even government officials use public transport.

Norwegians enjoy lower taxes than several major EU nations and other Scandinavian countries.



Most Norwegians are healthy, partially due to their love of outdoor life: cross-country skiing, picking wild berries and mushrooms, hunting, and angling. Some prefer solitude in the mountains or the Arctic Circle.

Threats to Its Security

The Global Peace Index of the Economist Intelligence Unit rated Norway the most peaceful nation in 2007. The survey was backed by Nobel Prize laureates the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, U.S. President Jimmy Carter and U.S. economist Joseph Stiglitz (*BBC*).

Meanwhile, Russia plans to create an "Arctic military" force to protect its interests in the disputed Arctic region, according to a Kremlin strategy paper. The document outlines Russia's policy for the Arctic, which is believed to contain as much as 25 percent of the world's undiscovered oil and gas. The paper was signed by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in September and released by the presidential Security Council (*Associated Press*).

The strategy paper stated the Arctic must become Russia's "top strategic resource base" by the year 2020 (*Norway News*).

The Norwegian government has complained, via diplomatic channels, about Russian fighter bombers that fly over the North Sea and inside international air space near Norwegian territory in the past two years. Responding to these incursions, which have increased, Norway has scrambled fighter jets to follow the Russian planes.

"We face new threats," foreign Norwegian minister Thorvald Stoltenberg said at a news conference in Oslo, which foreign ministers of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden also attended.

One of the 13 proposals recommended that nations patrol Iceland's airspace and develop joint surveillance of the seas adjacent to the Nordic region, such as the Baltic Sea and North Atlantic, to monitor oil spills.

The *Norway Post* reported the following: Islamic extremists also pose a threat to Norway's security. The security branch of the Norwegian police (PST) said it has uncovered plans revealing possible terrorist attacks against targets in the country. The PST said it intervened against 25 Islamic fundamentalists it believes planned terrorist acts against Norway and other nations.

PST chief Joern Holme said, "I can truly say that we have on several occasions sent persons out of the country who were about to do things that could have turned out to be very serious" (*ibid.*).

He added, "It is important for us to prevent Norwegian youth from going on so-called Jihad-travels, which could mean that one carries out terrorist acts, and is willing to offer one's life in terrorist acts."

Despite internal and external threats to its continued well-being, Norway—with its abundant food supply and beautiful neighborhoods surrounded by a scenic environment—is still one of the safest places in which to live.

But for how long will the Norwegian "sly wolf" keep her hungry neighbors, such as the Russian bear, at bay? □



WHAT IS A TRUE FATHER?

How many families have real and exciting fun-filled times with their fathers?

BY MICHAEL H. VENISH

BEING A FATHER is one of the most rewarding and exciting responsibilities a man could experience. Despite society's reluctance to admit it, fathers undergird everything that is a family. Yet the very foundation of the family is under tremendous stress and trauma. In the last 45 years, the United States has become a world leader in fatherless families, followed by Britain and other nations.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan wrote in his report to the Lyndon B. Johnson presidential administration, "From the wild Irish slums of the 19th century Eastern seaboard, to the riot-torn suburbs of Los Angeles, there is one unmistakable lesson in American history: a community that allows a

large number of young men to grow up in broken families, dominated by women, never acquiring any stable relationship to male authority, never acquiring any set of rational expectations about the future...that community asks for and gets chaos, crime, violence, unrest, disorder."

We are living in an age when families worldwide face trouble, turmoil and unhappiness.

Police in Santa Clara, Calif., said, "A man who gunned down his two children and three other relatives in an apparent murder-suicide had been helping his brother-in-law settle into the area" (*USA Today*).

In another incident of family violence, *CBS News* reported, "In October, an unemployed financial manager despairing over extreme money problems shot and killed his wife, three children, mother-in-law and himself in

their home in the Porter Ranch area of the San Fernando Valley."

On many occasions, the perpetrators of school and workplace violence first killed family members before embarking on their rampage.

There are causes for every effect! In this case, one cause is the problems between a parent and their children—specifically, a lack of leadership from a caring, loving father.

Every second, three babies are born somewhere in the world. Are they destined to grow up in a kind, loving family environment headed by a father? Sadly, this is not the reality of our time. The facts prove that many of the 54 million yearly births will end up fatherless.

But why?

Lonely Children

In a survey on child health, the National Center for Health Statistics, in Washington, D.C., found that "Fatherless children are at a dramatically greater risk of drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, suicide, poor edu-

cational performance, teen pregnancy, and criminality.”

The Fatherhood Initiative reported that a *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* study of 700 adolescents “found that compared to families with two natural parents living in the home, adolescents from single-parent families have been found to engage in greater and earlier sexual activity.”

On the other hand, “Children with fathers at home tend to do better in school, are less prone to depression, and are more successful in relationships” (The Consortium for the Study of School Needs of Children from One Parent Families).

In a study of 1,197 fourth-grade students published in the *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, researchers observed greater levels of aggression in boys from single-mother households than from boys in father-mother households.

Why should children be left to their own devices, with a cellphone as a companion and the mall as a place of refuge? Should they not be at home with their family? Ask a teenager how much loving guidance and interaction he had with his father recently. Then ask him if his father, who once spent time playing and talking with him as a toddler, lovingly hugs and talks to him now.

“Overall, more than 75 percent of American children are at risk because of paternal deprivation. Even in two-parent homes, fewer than 25 percent of young boys and girls experience an average of at least one hour a day of relatively individualized contact with their fathers” (Henry B. Biller, *The Father Factor: What You Need to Know to Make a Difference*).

Are you a *true* father? Do you understand that your role involves responsible and loving work within your family?

Yes, work!—because the job of a true father takes hard, dedicated work.

A Father's Work

As a father, you must be the major influence in your children's life. A father must not wrap himself up in his work, hobbies or sports. Be careful, as it is

easy to get involved in various outside activities to the detriment of your family.

Remember when you got married, you vowed to take on certain specific responsibilities; these must rise above your personal preferences.

Regardless of secular opinions, the Bible teaches that a father's role is to be the loving head of his home—the leader of his wife and children—the strong foundation upon which they stand.

Fathers, do not allow yourselves to be the cause of the destruction of family integrity. Lead by example. Teach your family to have respect for each other. Ask yourself if your children could



one day say, “The greatest gift I ever had came from God—that gift was my dad.”

You can be that great gift, with time and effort.

Build Memories

I have many happy memories of working with my father in his carpentry shop, and these include the correction he administered when I used his tools foolishly. He would spend time teaching us how to hold a wood chisel, how to use a saw and how to hammer a nail straight.

He also taught us how to play various sports and encouraged us to participate in school athletics, and we did not have television to distract us.

Build happy memories with your children by spending time with them. Tell them about your childhood, where you grew up, what your father did. Tell them about the meals your mother cooked, the adventures you had as a child, the stories your parents told you. Use these precious moments to expand

their thinking by teaching them lessons you learned from your past. Do your children know what type of work you do, or where you work? Have they spent time with you there?

Some of my children's most cherished memories are going to work with me. They used to take turns, and each one would count the days to their turn.

Help make their lives exciting!

What You Can Do

Do not allow society to diminish your role as a father. Whether you are in a traditional family or not, one of the most precious things a father can give to his children is time.

You are the only real investment for your children—not toys, cellphones, television or video games. Turn off the TV! Watching television with your family can be entertaining; however, it does not promote quality family interaction.

Rather, get out the board games and have some fun, or tell them stories about your life; plan a vacation together, asking for their input and suggestions; plan a picnic; grow a garden.

Above all, eat *together*. Too many families eat on the run and do not find time to interact. Eating together has tremendous benefits. Remember: A family that eats together stays together. They communicate. They learn from each other. They share information and news of the day. This develops a feeling of belonging. Eating together as a family is a perfect time to teach each family member respect for one another, as well as etiquette. As the father, take the lead. Keep it light and have fun. At the same time, do not criticize; again, lead by example.

And when they need to be corrected (and what child doesn't need it?), do it with care, consideration and lots of love.

Can you imagine what would happen to a home if a father failed in his leadership role—if he just gave up? This would lead to the eventual destruction of the family.

So fathers, step up and step out. Prove to yourself that you are, in every sense of the word, a true father. □

PERSONAL

Continued from page 2

world supergovernment that would bring justice, equity, peace, happiness, abundance and prosperity to all peoples and nations.

This centerpiece of Jesus' ministry is another of the many things He taught that so few have heard and almost no one believes.

Again, the contrast continues:

■ One Jesus teaches that his followers must spread an *already-existing* kingdom, as they seek to fix *THIS world*—the Other that His kingdom will come *at His Return*, and that His resurrected, glorified followers will first restore and then continue ruling cities and nations in the *world to come*.

■ One largely defines the Christian mission as giving money and aid to the poor—the Other said to give them the gospel of the kingdom of God.

■ One sends missionaries around the world to have the masses “profess” him and “get saved”—the Other directs His Church to announce to all nations the soon arrival of God's kingdom, knowing only the Father decides who comes to His Son.

Jesus Christ promised, “I will build *My Church*” (Matt. 16:18). He is still today building, feeding, protecting, strengthening, guiding, training and governing that ONE *undivided Church*.

■ Yet, one Jesus has followers who build their own thousands of differing, divided churches, and who, because they cannot agree on his teachings, necessarily offer a widely inclusive, counterfeit “body of Christ” to house them—the true Christ built one unified Church, Body and Temple, where everyone walks in harmony, believing and speaking the same thing.

■ One permits the unrestrained promotion of idols, images and pictures all through his churches—the Other condemns all forms of this in His Second Commandment.

■ One is worshipped by billions and leads all brands of this world's recognized, accepted Christendom,

better thought of as Churchianity—the Other is worshipped by a few, and has one discounted, persecuted “little flock” that has come out of the world.

■ One carries neither real power nor real authority, and his churches operate on human strength—the Other has all power and authority in heaven and earth, and divinely strengthens His dynamic Church.

■ One is essentially a dead savior with dead teachings building dead churches—the Other is alive and brings living truth from His living Word to a living Church.

What Does the True Christ Expect of His Followers?

Jesus Christ commanded, “Repent and believe the gospel.” (Mark 1:15). Paul added, “God...commands all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30)—meaning to change their thoughts, attitudes, words and actions, and to live the only way He always intended. God is calling but a select few into the understanding of His truth, to live His way of life.

It takes faith to change, to reject the pulls of the flesh, the devil and society, and permit Christ to live in you through His Spirit. It means growing from human faith to the faith of Christ, to come under Jesus' authority, and to submit to His government, administered in His Church.

Being called into the way of *true Christianity* means you must permit God to build His holy, righteous character within you—a lifelong process involving time, trials, tests and lessons. You must yield yourself as clay to the Master Potter, and put your will aside. You must voluntarily choose to “enter in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and *few* there be that [are finding] it” (Matt. 7:13-14).

With God's way of life come endless benefits for faithful obedience. This means “We have confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask,

we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight” (I John 3:21-22).

Jesus set the example, the pattern for overcoming sin and focusing one's life on being born into the kingdom of God.

There are two opposing ways of life. One is described as the way of “give,” the other of “get.” One of the greatest teachings of Jesus is that “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). Of course, Christ set the ultimate example by giving Himself for mankind. The give way for Christians begins with recognizing they belong to God as “living sacrifices.”

Being called also means being willing to “endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ”—to untangle and disengage “himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who has chosen him to be a soldier” (II Tim. 2:3-4). It means a life of waging spiritual warfare—but also of enjoying unbounded happiness at the same time!

The way of *true Christianity* is infinitely more than mere talk—it requires *action*. It brings with it security, peace of mind, excitement, thrilling news of God's Work, and a host of blessings—including the greatest one: hearing Christ say upon His Return, “Well done, you good and faithful servant: you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things: enter you into the joy of your lord” (Matt. 25:21). In other words, receive rulership under the glorified Christ in His kingdom.

God's is a way leading to inheritance of “all things” as “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:17), who is called “the firstborn among many brethren” (vs. 29).

But the path to God's kingdom is not easy. Building character is the only thing one can carry into eternal life, for “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (I Cor. 15:50).

Two Ways

Let's see a few final comparisons:

■ One Jesus blindly repeats that you are saved by his *death*—the true

Jesus Christ reveals and explains how you are “saved by His *life*” (Rom. 5:10).

■ One has done away with tithing to make himself more appealing and easier to serve—the Other bluntly declares, “This ought you to have done” (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42), and to neglect tithing is to “rob God” (Mal. 3:8).

■ One says, “Come just as you are”—the Other commands, “Repent [change] and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:17).

■ One assures, “You are *already* saved,” because “once saved, always saved”—the Other declares (twice), “He that ENDURES TO THE END shall be saved” (Matt. 10:22), and “to him that OVERCOMES will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I overcame...” (Rev. 3:21).

■ One does not care how you worship him, what customs and doctrines you believe—the Other is a “jealous God,” demanding in John 4 that we “worship Him in Spirit—and in truth!”, and says, “If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed; and you shall know *the truth*, and *the truth* shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

■ Finally, one Jesus works through “another spirit,” the “spirit of error,” the “spirit of disobedience”—the true Jesus Christ works through the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the “Spirit of truth” (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13).

To conclude the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus explained, “Whosoever hears these *sayings* of Mine [what Christ taught], and *does* them, I will liken him unto a *wise man*, which built his house *upon a rock*...And everyone that hears these *sayings* of Mine [truth], and does them *not*, shall be likened unto a *foolish man*, which built his house *upon the sand*” (Matt. 7:24-27).

Which of these will you be?

“Another Jesus” and the true Jesus Christ stand before you! You cannot claim to serve and believe the true—the *right*—Jesus while copying the path and teachings of the wrong one. Which you follow—in conduct

and teachings—becomes the GREATEST CHOICE you will ever make!

Truly Unique

Unlike anything *ever* written about Jesus Christ, *The True Jesus Christ – Unknown to Christianity* accurately examines the life and teachings of the most influential Person in history. It takes you on an extraordinary and gripping journey, and *correctly* answers all the greatest questions about Him—straight from the Bible—AND secular history.

You can learn what only a tiny few have understood.

What did the real Jesus look like? What was His life’s purpose—His ULTIMATE mission? When was He born? Has He always existed? What did it mean that He was the prophesied Messiah—the Christ? Did He abolish the Ten Commandments? Was His gospel about Himself? What did He teach of when one is born again? What did Jesus teach about the Passover? And what about observance of other days? Who will rule during the Millennium? What is the kingdom of God? And where did the other Jesus *come from*?

Do you understand Jesus’ family life, social environment and the first-century world, as well as how He was both God and Man, what His Coming achieved and the purpose of His triumphant Return? Have you comprehended the long, agonizing hours during which Jesus was *illegally* arrested, tried, humiliated, tortured and subjected to the worst instrument of execution devised by men? What about His clash with Satan, and how this determined the *ultimate destiny* of all nations? And what of how that battle is tied to the TRUE gospel?

All these questions—and *many* more—demand plain, easy-to-understand answers. The book brings them.

The most difficult thing for any person is to admit being wrong. Unlearning false knowledge and learning true knowledge in its place is *not easy*. This can be a painful, shattering experience. Throwing aside *all*

preconceived ideas is very difficult for almost all. Do not discount facts and truth simply because you are unfamiliar with a belief. Investigate your Bible for what is revealed. Most *will not* be like the Bereans of the book of Acts who “received the word [Paul’s preaching] with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

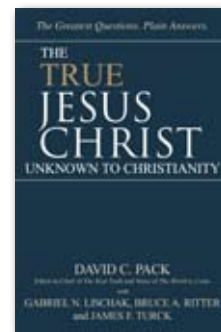
What will you do?

A single book can change people forever. *The True Jesus Christ – Unknown to Christianity* does this! Prepare to be shocked at its contents! Bringing *God’s* perspective, and in plain language, it is based entirely on Scripture, and known facts of history. It examines in-depth the life, ministry and teachings of Jesus as *never* before, and excludes popular tradition, theory and opinion—the usual approach to His life.

I repeat, there has never been a book like this one! But you will not realize this unless you read it all—and with an open mind.

Most have no idea there is a true Jesus and a false one, let alone how to discern which is which. Nor have they any idea the vast range of well-defined customs and teachings *separating them*. Therefore, almost impossible to believe, nearly the whole world worships the *wrong one*! One is well-known to the world—but you will soon have *absolutely no doubt* the TRUE Jesus Christ IS *unknown to Christianity*. He could be about to enter your view for the first time. □

To learn more, read *The True Jesus Christ – Unknown to Christianity*.



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Media Promotes “Missing Link”



■ **OBJECT OF MEDIA FRENZY:** The 47 million-year-old fossilized remains of a primate—which paleontologists named “Ida”—is seen at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City (May 19, 2009).

PHOTO: MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

With much media fanfare, a group of Norwegian paleontologists presented the findings of a secret study of a fossil dated to be 47 million years old. The *Darwinius masillae*, nicknamed “Ida,” is the most complete fossil of its type.

According to the *New York Times* article “Seeking a Missing Link, and a Mass Audience,” the May 12 unveiling was the “first stop in a coordinated, branded media event, orchestrated by the scientists and the *History Channel*, including a film detailing the secretive two-year study of the fossil, a book release, an exclusive arrangement with *ABC News* and an elaborate Web site.”

The *Times* also reported that *A&E* (parent company of the *History Channel*) paid more for this film than any other single documentary in its 25-year history.

Like many evolutionary discoveries, detailed drawings and diagrams have appeared to assert that the new fossil is an anthropoid primate—that

is, a missing link to early primates and (as the theory claims) modern man.

However, the new fossil is actually an adapoid—a long extinct, well-documented primate that would be more similar to lemurs than chimpanzees.

Distinguished paleontologist John Fleagle stated, “...most of the evidence presented in the paper [about Ida] is old news” (*The Loom* science blog, Carl Zimmer).

The original research paper does not support the “missing link” presented by the media circus (emphasis ours): “Note that *Darwinius masillae*...*could* represent a stem group from which *later* anthropoid primates evolved, *but we are not advocating this here*, nor do we consider either *Darwinius* or adapoids to be anthropoids” (*PLoS ONE*, “an international, peer-reviewed, open-access, online publication”).

Stark differences between the research and media events have

caused confusion and doubt among the scientific community and the public.

In his article “The ‘Ida’ fossil: on missing links and media circuses,” John Timmer, science editor for *Ars Technica*, stated, “...I’d forgive the public if the received message were any one of the following: that scientists don’t know what they’re talking about, that they’ll say anything if it will get them into the news, or that they will skew the facts in order to cut a film deal.”

Opening a detailed window into the past may be fascinating to the scientific community, but intense media promotion, as well as already-signed book and movie deals, make the find appear to be more about financial payoff than a new scientific discovery.

To learn much more about the artistic and media leaps found in similar discoveries, read our article “Evolution Exposed: Deconstructing False Science (Part 5),” archived at www.realtruth.org. □

Spacewalk Repairs Enable “Second Hubble Revolution”

After five days of repairs and upgrades, Space Shuttle Atlantis released the Hubble Space Telescope back into orbit, giving it five to 10 more years to investigate the mysteries of the universe.

The 19-year-old Hubble sailed back to its 350-mile path above Earth with a repaired spectrograph and wide-field camera, making the telescope the most powerful it has ever been—now able to peer to within 600 million years of the beginning of the universe.

“Today begins the second Hubble revolution,” senior project scientist David Leckrone told reporters in Houston after Atlantis began its return trip home.

The seven astronauts on the overwhelmingly successful mission restored power to a failed spectrograph (which aided scientists in discovering black holes) and installed a new one. Spacewalkers also fitted the orbiter with a new wide-field camera.

Against the blue glow of the earth, the shuttle crew also encountered many challenges during the five spacewalks. Some of the difficulties, relatively easy to fix on Earth, became herculean while traveling weightlessly at 17,000 miles an hour.

During the fourth walk, an astronaut discovered a bolt was stuck. He had to muscle it loose. Then, he removed 111 more screws, being sure none slipped through his bulky space-suit gloves into space.

Over the years, the 43.5-foot-long Hubble has allowed man to examine dark energy, determine the age of the universe, witness the birth and death of stars, and glimpse about 800 million years into the universe’s past.

Hubble has also produced legendary images: the luminous spiraling arms of a galaxy, speckled with pinks and blues; star-nursery pillars of cool interstellar gas, glowing with ethereal greens; and the dark magentas of the Horsehead Nebula.



■ **SPACEWALK MISSION:** Astronauts John Grunsfeld (bottom) and Andrew Feustel, perch on the end of the Space Shuttle Atlantis’ remote manipulator system, during the first of five spacewalks to repair and upgrade the Hubble Space Telescope (May 14, 2009).

PHOTO: NASA VIA GETTY IMAGES

The telescope’s importance prompted Atlantis crew member John Grunsfeld to call it “arguably the most important scientific instrument ever created” (*The New York Times*).

This fifth and final mission to repair the telescope also restored it to a higher orbit, adding years to its

mission time. Depending on solar activity, the space telescope will reenter Earth’s atmosphere between 2013 and 2020. NASA plans to launch Hubble’s successor, the James Webb Space Telescope, in 2013.

Hubble should be fully operational by the end of summer. □

INTERNATIONAL

London: Sri Lankan Protestors Clash With UK Police



■ **OUTCRY:** Protesters in London, England, stage a sit-in demonstration on the road in front of the Houses of Parliament to show their opposition to the Sri Lankan government's offensive against the Tamil Tigers (May 18, 2009).

PHOTOS: OLI SCARFF/GETTY IMAGES

Hours after Sri Lanka's government declared the defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the killings of top rebel leaders, Tamil protesters in London, England, clashed with police.

The Tamils had been protesting in London for over a month to stop the civil war in Sri Lanka. When the war officially ended, up to 5,000 Tamils held a sit-in protest in front of the Parliament asking for London to mediate the release of fellow countrymen still held in internment camps in northern Sri Lanka.

Violence erupted when law enforcement authorities tried to break up the demonstration and apprehend protesters for public offense. Of the 25 police officers and five protesters injured, three officers and three demonstrators were treated at the hospital.



Over the past several months, following Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa's comments that he saw the imminent defeat of LTTE in their fight for a separate homeland, thousands of Tamil expatriates had been protesting in Toronto, Paris, Berlin, Washington, D.C., and at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, calling for a ceasefire.

More than 800,000 Tamils outside Sri Lanka had been supporting LTTE rebels by pouring US\$200-300 million yearly into a war fund, with most of

the money coming from those living in Australia and other Western nations, making it one of the most well-funded rebel groups in the world (*Jane's Intelligence Review*).

Tamil insurgents had been waging war for over 25 years for a separate state in Sri Lanka. The rebel group was founded and led by Velupillai Prabhakaran, who died when the Sri Lankan military advanced into rebel territory. A master strategist, Mr. Prabhakaran was credited with changing the ragtag LTTE into one of the most feared and brutal insurgent forces. Each rebel, including Mr. Prabhakaran himself, carried a cyanide vial for suicide in case of capture.

Listed as a terrorist organization by 32 countries, LTTE was considered one of the world's most ruthless insurgency groups. The Tigers pioneered the suicide belt and used women for suicide bombings.

Analysts attributed the Tigers' downfall to several grave errors:

- Mr. Prabhakaran refused to lay down arms in return for autonomy in a peace plan brokered by Norway.

- Ties to Russia and China gave Sri Lanka courage to face international criticism for suppressing basic civil liberties, including the banning of foreign press and indiscriminate shelling of civilians. It also allowed them to purchase fighter planes, assault rifles and other arms, improving SLA firepower, enabling the military to inflict heavy damage from safe distances, thereby minimizing SLA casualties.

- While LTTE relied on traditional warfare, the SLA used guerilla tactics, deploying soldiers in small groups.

The Hindu Tamils comprise nearly 20 percent of Sri Lanka's 21 million people, while the majority Sinhalese, who are Buddhist, make up nearly 75 percent of the population. The rest are Muslims and Christians.

Although their religion sets them

apart, it is largely believed by Sri Lankans that Tamils collaborated with imperialist rule, and were thereby given preferential treatment by the British before the island's liberation, a factor which has also caused resentment between the two factions.

At the height of their power, the Tamil Tigers controlled much of northern and eastern Sri Lanka. They had their own police force, law school, taxation system, navy, air force, and a de facto government headquartered in the city of Killinochi.

Defense ministry spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said the government hoped to resettle the estimated 265,000 Tamils displaced by the fighting as soon as possible. But when they



return to their villages, they will be accompanied by a heavy deployment of troops (*Associated Press*).

When the government declared Prabhakaran was dead, the LTTE chief for international relations said, "Our beloved leader is alive and safe. He will continue to lead the quest for dignity and freedom for the Tamil people" (*The Times*, London).

In response, the government displayed Prabhakaran's corpse—with prominent head wound—on state television.

Critics said that while the SLA has defeated the LTTE, the minds of Tamils have yet to be won.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa told the Sri Lankan parliament that "all should live with equal rights. They should live without any fear or doubt" (*The Australian*). □

READER COMMENTS

From online subscribers of our weekly news updates

All recommended books and booklets can be read and downloaded—free of charge—from our website, www.thercg.org, while our magazine articles are archived and freely accessible at www.realtruth.org.

■ "You are helping to revive in me an urgent need for truth. Thank you."
United Kingdom (England)

■ "I'm so looking forward to learning the truth at last!"
United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)

■ "I'm very glad for finding it."
United Kingdom (England)

■ "I was both challenged and encouraged after listening to Mr. Pack [via *The World to Come* program] teaching on the true Church and tithing. I need to convince my business partner that this is right and will be sending him the link."
United Kingdom (England)

■ "Thank you for making it all so clear!"
United Kingdom (Wales)

■ "Please send more information on The Restored Church of God. Thank you."
Oregon, U.S.

Recommended booklet: *Here Is The Restored Church of God*

■ "I need some information on mind

battle and how to love Christ with all my mind and all my heart."
Fiji

■ "I love the way you're presenting the truths of the gospel to a lost world. Thanks!"
Texas, U.S.

■ "I am a veterinary doctor and will appreciate up-to-date articles on current trends of diseases."
Nigeria

■ "Your website really helps me a lot when it comes to trying to learn more about God and Jesus Christ."
Illinois, U.S.

■ "Thank you for [*The World to Come* broadcast] 'God's Tithing Law!'"
Ohio, U.S.

■ "I enjoy the podcasts [broadcasts of *The World to Come*] very much."
Ohio, U.S.

■ "I really like to listen to your video on tithes."
Georgia, U.S.

■ "Thank you for the truth of the Bible, the true Word."
Australia

■ "It will be nice to have good emails come into my attention instead of scams and 'try this.'"
Minnesota, U.S.

■ "I just happened to find *The Real Truth*; I'm so happy!"
Connecticut, U.S.

■ "All this is truly interesting to me and helping me to gain more knowledge of God."
Tennessee, U.S.

■ "This is very informative truth about the Bible and global happenings."
New Zealand

■ "I want to know more about the true Church of God and the Sabbath."
Vanuatu

Recommended literature: *Where Is the True Church?* and *Saturday or Sunday – Which Is the Sabbath?*

REASONS TO VISIT WWW.REALTRUTH.ORG

- All of our articles and “World News Desk” briefs are archived on our website, and most provide links to related *Real Truth* articles, as well as to the extensive books, booklets and other literature regularly promoted within the print version of the magazine.
- Many articles and news briefs feature additional news photographs and informational graphics not published in the print version.
- While the magazine is printed 10 times a year, we also post on our site (www.realtruth.org) additional news articles, reports and analyses throughout each week.
- We offer free email subscriptions of weekly news updates.
- The site features our unique “pop-up scriptures” function.
- Visitors can view *The World to Come* program, presented by David C. Pack, publisher/editor-in-chief of *The Real Truth*.

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A New Beginning for Europe and America?

Personal from David C. Pack
Published from the column
Have the Last Days Arrived?

The World to Come Program
Presented by David C. Pack
The True Church — Answering Its Critics

FROM THIS SUBJECT
God's Biblical World Economy
The World Today: Here at a Glance
A New World Order — Solution to the Economic Collapse?
The World as We See It
World Needs to Change
Unemployment

FAST BROADCASTS
1. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
2. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
3. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
4. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
5. *World's Most Powerful Nations*

ARTICLES

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The World To Come Program

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FEATURED BROADCASTS
GOD'S TITHING LAW! Part 2
A tenth of everything you earn or produce belongs to God! But many believe the law of tithing has been abolished—that it was part of the Old Testament only. Is this true? If not, to whom should you give your tithing? The subject of tithing is vitally important to you!

FAST BROADCASTS
1. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
2. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
3. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
4. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
5. *World's Most Powerful Nations*

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Reader Comments

Writing the goal of our website, increasing the quality of our magazine, we have invited readers to comment about our articles, World News Desk, Personal, and special reports. Below is a sampling of comments received over the past month.

WRITER COLUMN, CANADA "I am looking forward to reading your magazine...I have been searching for answers to everyday questions and have not been satisfied. I think I have finally found what I have been looking for. Thanks!"

UNITED STATES
"I am looking forward to reading your magazine! I am searching for many answers to many questions and they pater in my life. I am in need of a new direction. It almost all areas of my life. I'm hopeful that your magazine will lead me on a different path. Are we truly in the end times? The world is a mess."
—Theresa, C.S.

RECOMMENDED READING
1. *Have the Last Days Arrived?*

FAST BROADCASTS
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2. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
3. *World's Most Powerful Nations*
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World News Desk

Women May Outnumber Men in the U.S. Labor Force

Approximately 50 million women are in the workforce in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. The global economic crisis has

FROM THIS SUBJECT
1. *Women May Outnumber Men in the U.S. Labor Force*
2. *Women May Outnumber Men in the U.S. Labor Force*
3. *Women May Outnumber Men in the U.S. Labor Force*
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WORLD NEWS DESK