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A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING



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THE AFTERMATH

THE REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

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A R T I C L E S

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■ **FRONT COVER:** United Nations peacekeepers attempt to control a crowd at an aid-distribution point outside the destroyed presidential palace in Port-au-Prince, Haiti (Jan. 25, 2010).

SOURCE: JEWEL SAMAD/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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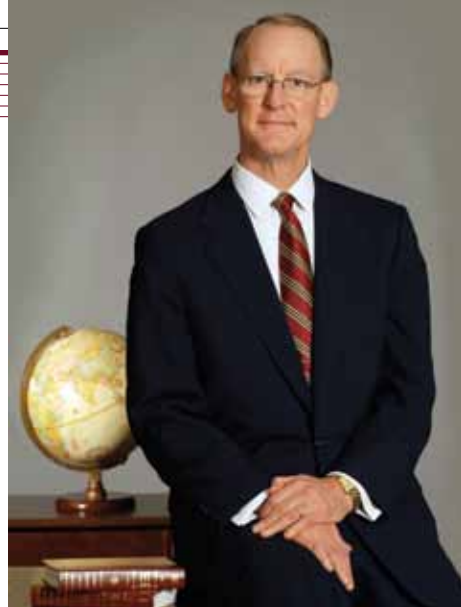
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PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack



Your Marriage Can Be Happy!

THE WORLD IS exploding with problems. Much *knowledge* is available about most of them, but little *understanding*. The breakdown of marriage and the family is a classic example. Seemingly everyone knows it is happening, but no one knows what it *means*—or what to DO about it.

Ever greater numbers of people are questioning the institution of marriage. Many are concerned about where current trends are heading. Some question whether marriage can even survive. Many now get married on their own terms or only on a trial basis. Millions simply live together, unmarried—and increasing numbers now enter “same-sex” partnerships. Other millions have come to believe living single is the best state.

Why is all of this happening?

Religion, education, science and society do not know the true PURPOSE of marriage. They do not even know if marriage *has* a purpose. And many couples do reflect that they are together with no purpose.

Most married people are *unhappy*—with many a virtual study in misery. They have no idea what to *do* about it, or where to turn for answers. Millions stumble along, bouncing from one marital problem to another, never knowing *how* to address them—let alone solve them!

How many *really* happy married couples do you know?—and are you even sure of these? Is your marriage truly happy? Are you enjoying the life that you anticipated? Statistics suggest the answer is probably “no.”

Married life has been the brunt of endless jokes, where traditional conduct and the roles of husbands and wives are ridiculed—and depicted as a bondage only the foolish enter. Great numbers have come to equate marriage with surrendering “freedom” to a lesser, unhappy state of existence.

Others choose to marry, sincerely believing they will find perfect bliss—will “live on love”—only to discover that true happiness is far from automatic. Some even conclude—often within *days*—that marriage was the worst decision of their life.

Sadly, so many enter marriage with no understanding, no preparation, no training and no idea of how to achieve a lifetime of happiness with their chosen partner.

Most couples spend more time planning for a one-day *wedding* than for the lifelong *marriage* that should follow. As a result, half of all marriages fail, ending in divorce, often with former partners becoming *mortal enemies*! Other couples are just as unhappy, but perhaps cannot afford a divorce, or stay together only because of the children or other social or business reasons.

How tragic! And how completely unnecessary!

Programmed to Fail

Why have so few been able to find even a measure of the enjoyment they originally believed marriage would bring? Why have so many others decided to simply live together, avoiding commitment, thus artificially reducing the already skyrocketing number of divorces? Why do so many openly admit that they do not *trust* their mate? Why do over 80 percent of marriages experience *adultery*? Why such confusion about marriage and its purpose?

What has brought the once sacred institution of marriage to such a *deplorable state*?

What happened is no accident.

Consider how marriage is routinely portrayed in the media. Wholesome television programs from the 50s, 60s and early 70s about the family—such as *Ozzie and Harriet*, *Leave it to Beaver* and *Little House on the Prairie*—have been replaced by *All in the Family*, *The Simpsons* and *The Osbournes*, or worse.

Books and movies have also accelerated this decline, and in every way. Fornication, cohabitation, adultery, homosexuality and every other conceivable “alternative lifestyle,” now including same-sex “marriage,” have been depicted uncounted thousands of times in the media. Invariably, programs, movies and books have portrayed immorality as exciting, fascinating, mysterious—and the virtual “norm” for what is now the large majority.

Their impact on marriage has been stunning. In fact, marriage has become a laughingstock. Wholesome images of marriages, families and role models of the past have almost disappeared. Sadly, millions have copied new, modern role models, discarding traditional marriages and families as obsolete relics that history has properly scrapped.

Recent generations have been conditioned to believe marriage is better “the second time around.” By this logic, the *third* marriage would be even better!

Accompanying these trends has been a corresponding decline in traditional values and the importance of character. This trend is worldwide. Under constant attack, standards of right and wrong—good and bad—old-fashioned “righteousness” and “unrighteousness”—have been blurring and crumbling. How many people any longer even speak of character, once called virtue?

With the steep decline in the most basic character has come an unwillingness to remain committed to vows exchanged on the wedding day. With the near disappearance of ethics, standards and basic knowledge of right and wrong has come the assumption that when marriage difficulties arise—as they inevitably do with imperfect human beings—couples should simply take the easy way out—divorce!

The Author of Marriage

Why do so few understand there are great principles—transcendent spiritual LAWS!—governing what most think is merely a *civil agreement*? How many recognize that men and women have separate, different, God-ordained roles that must be understood for marriage to succeed? How many couples have been actively taught the real *purpose* of marriage? Most no longer even know the origin of marriage, let alone the vital answers to these and other important related questions!

The answers involve *revealed* knowledge—knowledge men *cannot themselves discern*. God must REVEAL it.

In place of revealed truth, modern education has taught the great evolutionary lie—that life is continually evolving to a higher state. Scoffers, preferring to believe

that human beings are a product of dumb luck, dismiss the biblical account that God supernaturally created two actual people—Adam and Eve—and then identified them as history’s first married couple.

Of course, those who believe the unproven, and in fact, easily disproven, *fiction* of evolution must also believe that, at some point, *men* devised the marriage institution. Believing otherwise is incompatible with evolution. One cannot have it both ways. Either God created marriage—or men did.

But human beings did NOT create marriage! Therefore, apart from God, they cannot know its true purpose—or the KEYS to decades of happiness with the *same person*.

It is not our purpose here to prove God exists or that the Bible is His inspired Word. We have several booklets, brochures and articles that address these subjects. We start with the fact that the Almighty God, who designed and made the heavens and the earth, also designed and created marriage.

Divine Institution

Though marriage appears to be merely a physical union, starting with a wedding ceremony performed by a man, it is actually a *divine institution*. As the true Author of marriage, God understands what makes it succeed, bringing supreme happiness and joy—or fail, bringing divorce and broken lives. This same God clearly reveals this knowledge in His Word.

For every effect, there is a cause. When a marriage experiences all the right effects, it is because right CAUSES have been understood and correct principles practiced. When a marriage is filled with problems of every sort, right causes have been either unknown or ignored.

Please see **PERSONAL**, page 16



PHOTOS: GETTY CREATIVE IMAGES

“**W**ALK OFF 30 Pounds in Eight Weeks”—“30 Things You Can Do to Avoid Cancer”—“Foods that Fight the Flu!” All the information necessary to live a healthy life fills books, Internet help sites and magazine articles, yet every year millions suffer from obesity, heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, influenza and other maladies.

Why?

When it comes to health, everything you do produces an effect—good or bad. It is that simple. Food choice, exercise, water consumption and sleep habits *all* have an effect.

Generally speaking, the human body is an incredible machine capable of taking a lot of abuse. But as one grows older, the abuse begins to catch up. Years of eating empty foods and a lack of activity eventually can *cause* obesity, disease, constant sickness, cancer, skin problems, sleep disorders, etc. These are all the *effects* of decisions you made.

Name something—anything—in your life that was not a direct result of a choice. Even choosing *not* to do something is a decision that produces an effect.

Generally, those who are cautious about decisions they make live full lives. They invest the appropriate amount of time to consider consequences that a decision could bring. These individuals “count the cost” of the actions they take (or do not take).

Then there are those on the other side of the fence who go through this process haphazardly, oblivious to the fact that what they do now will ultimately paint the picture of who they become. They drift aimlessly, allowing life’s circumstances to “call the shots.”

While some of these daily decisions are routine and minimally affect us, others have a lasting impact. One of these vital areas is health. Unless you are successful in managing this aspect of your life, almost nothing else matters.

Whether you realize it or not, you *do* make the choice of whether you

Sickness or Good Health YOU DECIDE!

Millions find themselves sick and miserable. A close examination of the facts reveals that some *choose* to be unhealthy. What about you?

BY KENNETH M. OREL

will enjoy vibrant health or endure poor health.

Health Today

The Western world's overall state of health is disturbing. While many citizens of developing countries suffer from a lack of food and have little control over their well-being, those in wealthier nations have become negligent in managing their health. Millions of people are unhappy, overweight and constantly sick, with a lower quality of life as compared to earlier generations.

What is missing?

A trip to the grocery store is revealing. Shoppers make one bad choice

betes—many turn to doctors who prescribe the latest drug. When that does not work, they turn to television infomercials and Internet advertisements that promise, “Lose 50 pounds in 50 days!” or “Watch the fat melt off while not making a single change to your diet!”

Sadly, millions have their hopes dashed after spending money on what turn out to be empty promises. An entire industry profits on the premise that people do not want to change their lifestyles, but prefer a supposed quick-fix miracle solution.

Despite this, you must understand there are no shortcuts.

is no longer capable of functioning as it was designed. The result is sickness—cancer, stroke, heart disease, diabetes—along with a myriad of other illnesses.

Our article “What You Need to Know About Fasting” explains the true cause of poor health.

“Illness results from some kind of physical sin. God made the human body; therefore, He knows what is good for it. God created laws of health that yield blessings when obeyed. If broken, they bring curses—illness, sickness, disease. All too often, mankind violates these perfect laws—just like it rejects God's spiritual laws. People often eat too much of one kind of food and not enough of another; or we eat the wrong food altogether. Breaking God's dietary laws results in ILLNESS.”

There Is a Way Out!

No matter how bad the physical condition in which you may find yourself, it is never too late to do something about it. You are capable of improving your life and experiencing the great joy that God desires for you. He wants those who follow Him to prosper and be in health (III John 2).

You can start heading toward a healthier lifestyle. There is hope!

The Bible provides guidelines, which, if followed, will lead to better health. For most people, this is a stunning statement. But the solution to overcoming poor health is available if you choose.

It takes courage to change course, especially if you have made poor health decisions your entire life. You should (1) accept the fact that you have been “doing it wrong” and commit to change; (2) understand there is a way out; (3) turn to the source of right knowledge—God's Word—to learn how to make wise decisions; (4) CHANGE!

Read our booklet, *God's Principles of Healthful Living* and David C. Pack's thorough booklet *The Truth About Healing* to learn how you can live a vibrant and prosperous life from this day forward. □

“The Bible provides guidelines, which, if followed, will lead to better health. For most people, this is a stunning statement. But the solution to overcoming poor health is available if you choose.”



after another. Shopping carts are filled with “non-foods” loaded with sugar, grains that have been depleted and bleached, unhealthy fats, and over-processed foods full of chemicals and strange ingredients.

Never have there been so many health-related problems. In the United States alone, the aggregate cost of medical care in 2007 was \$2.26 trillion. The U.S. offers the most advanced healthcare in the world, and people spend a staggering amount of money on their health, yet they keep getting sick.

Again, why is this?

No Shortcuts

When confronted with a health concern—such as heart disease or dia-

betes—many turn to doctors who prescribe the latest drug. When that does not work, they turn to television infomercials and Internet advertisements that promise, “Lose 50 pounds in 50 days!” or “Watch the fat melt off while not making a single change to your diet!”

Sadly, millions have their hopes dashed after spending money on what turn out to be empty promises. An entire industry profits on the premise that people do not want to change their lifestyles, but prefer a supposed quick-fix miracle solution.

Despite this, you must understand there are no shortcuts.



RACISM

IS THERE A SOLUTION?

Racial prejudice has led to unfathomable suffering—and a massive death toll. Is an end in sight?

BY JEFFREY R. AMBROSE

ROSARNO, ITALY, is a small town nestled near the tip of the Italian peninsula, a short drive from the Mediterranean coast. A compact downtown gives way to fertile plains in every direction, which yield oranges, lemons, clementines and kiwis. Rosarno had been mostly known for its agricultural bounty until January 2010—when something went wrong.

“The riots began...when a local resident fired a pellet gun at a documented African migrant worker, lightly wounding him.

“African immigrants in the area responded by burning cars and vandalizing shops. Some local Italians

retaliated by forming bands that began going house-to-house attacking immigrants. The clashes...left dozens injured, including a group of immigrant men who were beaten with metal rods.

“By Sunday evening, police had escorted more than 1,000 immigrants to relief centers in other cities to ensure their safety.

“Italians across the peninsula... say the riots were spurred by long-simmering racial tensions—conditions that have worsened with a rising tide of immigration and deep economic problems” (*The Wall Street Journal*).

It seems that wherever two distinct

ethnic groups have contact, racial strife eventually rears its ugly head.

Will it ever come to an end?

No Boundaries

Victims and perpetrators of racial prejudice are not confined to any period in history, place, skin color, income group or other boundary. *No one* is immune! But the images we associate with the term *racism* depend largely on the part of the world in which we live.

For instance, those currently living in the United States most commonly think of tension between whites and blacks, or increasingly, Hispanics and blacks or whites.

Further back, though, other forms existed.

In North America

Relations between American Indians and early New World colonists were often

■ **HEATED EXCHANGE:** Left, members of white supremacist group the National Socialist Movement hold swastika flags at an anti-illegal immigration rally in Riverside, California. Right, a counter-protester yells at members of the National Socialist Movement (Oct. 24, 2009).

PHOTOS: DAVID MCNEW/GETTY IMAGES

violent, with each side deeply distrustful of the other. One of the complaints against the British Crown recorded in the Declaration of Independence was that King George III “excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.”

But groups discriminated against are not always those with skin darker than the majority. The fair-skinned Irish were once the object of prejudice in Great Britain and then in the United States. “The comic Irishman—happy, lazy, stupid, with a gift for music and dance—was a stock character of the English and American stage” (*The Boston Globe*).

Ethnic tensions boiled over in Pennsylvania in a largely Irish Catholic neighborhood in North Philadelphia in 1844 during a rally of the American Republican Party, which espoused anti-immigrant ideas.

According to an account from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, a second rally took place several months later. “This time, three thousand nativists and Irishmen attended the meeting. As tensions began to mount between these two groups, a thunderstorm sent the crowd running for cover to the market house, and this is when the violence erupted. The Irish residents and nativists clashed violently for two days, resulting in the burning of dozens of homes and two Catholic churches. The violence was finally suppressed by the militia, but not before at least 20 persons were killed and over 100 wounded.”

By the mid-1800s, the American south was characterized by slavery, which expanded rapidly due to a confluence of racism, economic opportunity and greed.

“Worst of all was the fate dreaded by slaves in the Upper South (Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky), where conditions were easiest: they might, for a dozen reasons, suddenly be sold ‘down the river’—down the Mississippi... to the regions of malaria and yellow fever; to the endless exhaustion of

the cotton fields and sugar plantations. Even some of the slave-holders deplored this internal slave-trade; yet without it the Cotton Kingdom could not have prospered...Many a great gentleman of South Carolina owed his standing to his plantations and slaves in the West” (*The Penguin History of the USA*, Hugh Brogan).

An estimated 10 million slaves were brought to America before the Emancipation Proclamation of 1862. Even more may have died in transit and within the first year of forced labor, called the “seasoning” period.

World War I saw anti-German sentiment arise in the U.S., with one German-born Illinois resident lynched by a mob. In response, some German families that had been in the New World for generations Americanized their last names—Bruns became Browns, Fischers became Fishers.

In Asia

The idea of a “master race”—a people intrinsically, genetically superior to all others—has long found fertile soil in Asia.

In Japan, the belief that the emperor is a direct descendant of the gods, combined with the insular environment of the island nation—and the unique gifts and achievements of the Japanese people—have helped foster a mindset of superiority. To this day, a determination persists there to outperform other nations in every endeavor.

Only a small fraction of Japan’s population, perhaps 2 percent, is registered as foreign. In 2005, a United Nations investigator was “concerned that politicians used racist or nationalist themes...to whip up popular emotions. He singled out the treatment of ethnic Koreans and Chinese and indigenous tribes” (*BBC*).

On the mainland, the Chinese have their own version of racial superiority: “The human race, according to a Chinese legend, was created by a divine potter who left his clay figure of a man too long in the kiln. When it came out burned and black, he threw it away as far as he could—and it landed in Africa.

The second one he pulled out too soon: It was too white. So he threw that one away, more gently, and it landed in Europe. Now he knew the correct timing. The third man was a gorgeous yellow, and from him the East Asian races descended” (*The New York Times*).

In Africa

Racism in Africa did not start with the colonial period, nor did it end with that time’s passing. As terrible as European and American slavery was, it was rivaled beforehand by the routine enslavement of one African tribe by another.

Despite slavery now being outlawed in virtually every nation, descendants of colonial-era slaves are still in forced servitude in remote regions of countries such as Niger today.

Former president of Benin, Mathieu Kérékou, in a 1999 speech at a primarily African-American church near Baltimore, Maryland, recalled the roles of oppressors on both sides of the Atlantic: “Benin is located on the Slave Coast, and a lot of slaves were sold out into the Americas from my country, Benin, and most of the black people you see in Haiti...in Brazil, and even here in the U.S. all came from Benin. And others come from Nigeria...And if you’ll be found in the streets of Africa, people will certainly think of you as being citizens either of Benin or Nigeria...”

“Benin, my country, was the most important place for slave trade...We are the ones—our ancestors were the ones who sold out your ancestors to the white people, and the white people bought your ancestors and got them into the various countries that they sent them just to build their economies, in the plantation, in the factories, farms just like in America here” (University of Dubuque).

The most visible example of tribal conflict in recent years occurred in Kenya after the 2007 presidential election. Riots broke out after the incumbent from the Kikuyu tribe, Mwai Kibaki, won, infuriating supporters of Raila Odinga, his Luo opponent.

This situation was worsened by arbitrary lines carved through African soil

to produce artificial nations. “One hundred years of colonialism (less in many countries) and the subsequent creation of four dozen new states, each insisting on the sanctity of colonial boundaries as a sensible way of avoiding future conflicts, could not blot out 800 tribal boundaries” (*The New York Times*).

Another current flashpoint of racial conflict on this continent is in southern Sudan. In this case, the enmity is between Arabs in the north and blacks in the south.

In 2004, an Arab militia leader “issued a directive to ‘change the demography of Darfur and empty it of African tribes’” (*Outside Magazine*).

“Change the demography”—a clinical-sounding phrase reflecting a process more accurately described elsewhere as *ethnic cleansing*. “Estimates on the number of dead range from 200,000 to 400,000 if you count starvation and disease. Close to three million people have lost their homes” (*ibid.*).

Shaping the 20th-century World

Racist ideology, including but not limited to anti-Semitism, helped ignite World War II, with the aftermath shaping the global balance of power for the rest of the 20th century.

Adolf Hitler’s Nazi party forged his notions of world domination by an Aryan über-race into domestic and foreign policy. He considered Germany’s Slavic neighbors to the east “mud races.” America was a “mongrel” nation, the proverbial melting pot redefined as a cauldron of racial impurity.

Jewish men, women and children in Europe were reduced to “the Jewish problem,” to be solved through systematic mass murder.

Hitler made his intentions known in a 1939 speech: “One thing I should like to say on this day which may be memorable for others as well as for us Germans: In the course of my life I have very often been a prophet, and have usually been ridiculed for it. During the time of my struggle for power it was in the first instance the Jewish race which only received my prophecies with laughter when I said



■ **ETHNIC VIOLENCE:** Thousands of looters carry away stolen items in tribal violence that was sparked after defeated presidential candidate Raila Odinga rejected the victory of incumbent Mwai Kibaki in disputed elections (Dec. 31, 2007).

PHOTO: ROBERTO SCHMIDT/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

that I would one day take over the leadership of the State, and with it that of the whole nation, and that I would then among many other things settle the Jewish problem.

“Today I will once more be a prophet: If the international Jewish financiers in and outside Europe should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war, then the result will not be the Bolshevization of the earth, and thus the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race

in Europe!” (N.H. Baynes, ed., *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler*, Vol. 1).

“British Israelism”

British Israelism is a corruption of the biblical truth regarding the modern descendants of the “Lost Ten Tribes” of Israel. So-called British Israelists often equate the now-antiquated British Empire with the kingdom of God. This is at odds with Scripture, which clearly states that Jesus Christ will establish this kingdom (govern-

ment) at His Return, still in the future. (See II Timothy 4:1.)

It is true that the Jewish inhabitants of the modern state of Israel on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean, as well as the Jewish Diaspora around the world, do not represent *all* of the 12 tribes of ancient Israel. They are primarily descended from Judah, *one* of the 12 tribes.

Ed Koch, the Jewish mayor of New York City from 1978 to 1989, was quoted in *U.S. News and World Report* as saying, “The 10 Lost Tribes of Israel we [Jews] believe ended up in Ireland.” In fact, the British Isles are among a number of places to which these tribes migrated.

But many British Israelists exclude the Jews altogether, portraying them as scheming impostors. They also apply the “master race” idea to Anglo-Saxons—conveniently, since most of them are of this background. In its worst forms, it closely resembles neo-Nazi white supremacist thinking.

British Israelism is a particularly dangerous and repugnant form of racism because it claims to be justified by the Bible. This causes some people to accept its validity without close scrutiny and pushes others to recoil from the Bible under the false assumption that the idea is found within its pages.

Does God Play Favorites?

Those who believe in the God of the Bible must face the question: *Did* God create a master race? Is it Old Testament Israel?

From early in the book of Genesis, Scripture follows the forefathers of the nation of Israel, then the nation itself, as well as other nations—as they came in contact with Israel. The New Testament follows *spiritual* Israel, the Church (see Galatians 6:16), and refers often to Israel, all the way to near the end of its last book (Rev. 21:12).

But does this make the Israelites God’s master race? No! God chose Israel as a small nation of slaves, one that was willing to follow Him because of their dire circumstances. He was also keeping a promise to Abraham, grandfather of Israel (Jacob), who faith-

fully obeyed Him: “The LORD did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for you were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers, has the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt” (Deut. 7:7-8).

Israel was intended to be a model nation. Ultimately they failed, as they could not resist the pulls of the flesh or the idolatry practiced in neighboring nations. But in spite of themselves, they proved the point: unless a nation—or person—is converted to a spiritual mindset (Matt. 18:3; Acts 3:19), failure is inevitable.

Root of the Problem

As stated by columnist Stanley Crouch, “Every group needs to know that evil transcends color, place, politics, sex and religion. It is a universal and recurrent problem we all have to face and fight” (*New York Daily News*).

Again, no one is immune, either to the effects of racism, or to falling into this mindset themselves. Even the apostle Peter, who was used by Jesus Christ to lead the New Testament Church from AD 31 until his death, fell into prejudice on at least one occasion: “For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If you, being a Jew, live after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compel you the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” (Gal. 2:12-14).

But racism is only a symptom, not the disease itself. Behind this effect is a cause: human nature is selfish, and gravitates toward hatred. It prefers itself, and reflexively dislikes anything

that is much different from the self. If we think that we are entirely innocent, we deceive ourselves. (See Jeremiah 17:9.)

This nature must be changed. The good news is that it will be!

Plan for All Races

God is the Creator of all the races—yellow, black and white (with brown and red). Each has strengths and gifts as well as weaknesses.

God’s solution for racism has never been to erase the distinctions of the races by intermingling them until there is one homogenized “in-between, not-quite-white/black/yellow” race. This would effectively erase the diversity that He created.

The solution is to enable humanity to unlearn hatred, anger and prejudice, through a real change of heart: “For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people” (Heb. 8:10).

Those whom God calls to His way of life are unlearning racism now. True Christians “have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew... Barbarian [nor] Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all” (Col. 3:10-11).

At a time that is fast approaching, “...there [will] be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

“In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be *Egypt My People*, and *Assyria the work of My hands*, and *Israel Mine inheritance*” (Isa. 19:23-25).

To learn about the details of God’s plan for the modern descendants of ancient Israel and all of humanity, read David C. Pack’s book, *America and Britain in Prophecy*. □

Desperation and Disease

Grip Post-quake Haiti

WEEKS AFTER a 7.0-magnitude earthquake rocked Haiti, leaving more than 200,000 dead and at least a million injured, the nation ended its search for survivors, refocusing its efforts on grappling with food distribution problems, riots and disease fears due to unsanitary living conditions for the more than 1 million left homeless.

The nation's government estimates that the death toll from the worst earthquake to hit the impoverished island nation in 200 years could reach 300,000.

After days of attempting to solve logistical issues, which impeded the arrival of rescue provisions, supplies finally came, but the constant fear of riots hindered attempts to distribute aid, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

"Scott Lewis hoped to deliver more than one million meals to Haitians on Wednesday via a 15-truck convoy brimming with beans and rice.

"Instead, 'It was the convoy to nowhere,' Mr. Lewis said. Well after dusk, the 52-year-old founder of a U.S. disaster-relief organization had barely delivered any food, other than some bags left at a missionary hospital, and a few more bags that got looted from the convoy as it crawled along crowded streets.

"Trucks conked out. Communication with the U.S. military broke down. Traffic snarled the

streets. Hungry crowds made handing out food unsafe" (ibid.).

The Associated Press reported that desperate Haitians overwhelmed UN soldiers, forcing distribution efforts to cease.

"In front of the wrecked National Palace, people's desperation boiled over. Uruguayan [United Nations] peacekeepers had to fire pepper spray into the air to try to disperse thousands jostling for food.

"The overwhelmed soldiers finally retreated, and young men rushed forward to grab the bags of pinto beans and rice, emblazoned with the U.S. flag, pushing aside others—including a pregnant woman who collapsed and was trampled. Thousands were left without food."

With each passing day, doctors fear unsanitary conditions, lack of proper food and improvised tent camps, which house an estimated 1 million survivors, could become breeding grounds for typhoid fever, measles and E. coli.

Makeshift hospitals continue to struggle to provide follow-up care to avoid infections for those who have already received treatment.

"We are talking about thousands of amputations and maybe half of the people who have been amputated have several limbs amputated," said Dr. Mirta Roses, director of the Pan American Health Organization, in a press conference at Haiti's airport (*Reuters*).

Many more suffered head and eye injuries.

Almost a month after the quake, the city still remains in chaos. Homeless survivors sleep on streets, aid groups continue to wrench crushed bodies from underneath buildings now reduced to rubble, and people wait in long lines to receive treatment from a limited number of medical personnel.

Rape, child-trafficking, looting and gang fights also reportedly plague the city. An estimated 4,000 criminals escaped when a nearby prison collapsed during the quake.

United Nations and American soldiers are working with Haitian law enforcement officials to attempt to bring order after one of the worst natural disasters in history.

"You're talking about a country that pre-earthquake had limited resources and capability, and what resources it did have were concentrated in the capital," Kim Bolduc, coordinator of the UN relief effort, told *The New York Times*. "This context helps explain why this emergency is probably the most complex in history, more than the tsunami, more than the [2005] Pakistan earthquake."

Haitian-American author Edwidge Danticat, who lives in Miami, told *The Associated Press* that given Haiti's condition as a country, it will be almost impossible for it to bounce back.

"Life is already so fragile in Haiti," she said, "and to have this on such a massive scale, it's unimaginable how the country will be able to recover from this" (ibid.). □



Philosophers, theologians and religious leaders have never been able to understand the reason behind human suffering, but there is an answer.

BY SAMUEL C. BAXTER

THIRTY-FIVE SECONDS. In just over half a minute, a 7.0-magnitude earthquake levels much of Haiti. Its capital, Port-au-Prince, is demolished. Homes, schools, hospitals, churches topple, crushing most everyone inside.

Minutes pass. Shocked and bloodied survivors swarm the streets. Shrieks of panic echo through the dust. Dazed, some slowly realize loved ones did not get out in time. Some do escape, but with crushed arms and mangled legs.

Days pass. A young girl screams as a nurse trainee amputates her hand—without anesthesia. There is little aid. Corpses float among litter and debris in a river. The dead are burned in the street, along with garbage. Thousands of lifeless bodies—a tangle of arms, legs and torsos locked together in rigor mortis—dumped in mass graves.

After two weeks, makeshift tent cities burgeon—tens of thousands of displaced Haitians build shelters out of bed sheets and tarps. United Nations peacekeepers struggle to hand out food and supplies. Throngs of survivors crowd the distribution station. Unable to

control the desperate mob, UN troops disperse the crowd with tear gas, leaving thousands hungry.

Thirty-five seconds. Just 35 seconds began some of the most heart-rending suffering in decades.

Grasping for Meaning

Religious leaders struggled to offer words of comfort to those shocked by the devastation.

“I have nothing to say that makes sense of this horror,” Britain’s Archbishop of York said, “all I know is that the message of the death and resurrection of Jesus is that he is with us” (*BBC*).

Other religious figures attempted to put meaning behind the events in the ruined nation.

A Haitian Pentecostal pastor used the tragedy as a teaching point: “When God speaks we must listen,” he said. “The earthquake is God’s voice and He will do other things. The stars will crash down onto the earth” (*Guardian*).

A famous American televangelist said the disaster was vengeance due to a 200-year-old “pact with the devil.” Other professing Christians believe God’s hand could be involved because the country is steeped in Voodoo.

Philosophers argue that “God allows suffering to prompt people to be good” or that “if God were

■ **QUAKE AFTERMATH:** Top, a Haitian man pulls a load of salvaged metal from earthquake rubble in Port-au-Prince, Haiti (Feb. 3, 2010). Bottom left, a woman carries a basket on her head in a tent city in the nation’s capital (Jan. 25, 2010). An estimated three million Haitians were left homeless or injured by the earthquake. Bottom right, an injured woman cries in pain as she is treated at a makeshift hospital in Port-au-Prince (Jan. 21, 2010).

PHOTOS: JOHN MOORE (TOP)/ROBERTO SCHMIDT (BOTTOM LEFT)/SOPHIA PARIS/MINUSTAH (BOTTOM RIGHT)/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

THE HAITI EARTHQUAKE

WHY DID GOD ALLOW THIS?



■ **HUNGRY MASSES:** A police officer tries to push back a frenzied crowd waiting for food handouts outside a police station in Cite Soleil in Haiti (Jan. 26, 2010).

PHOTO: JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

to intervene, He would deny free will.”

Churchgoers, on the other hand, simply remark, “God works in mysterious ways,” or say that the catastrophe allows them to “extend God’s love to survivors.”

In the end, Haiti seems inexplicable.

One question looms: how can a God *of love* allow such suffering?

Weakened Foundation

Haiti has long been a powder keg of troubles ready to explode. Before the quake, the average person lived on \$2.30 USD per day. Eighty percent lived below the poverty line, with 54 percent in abject poverty.

The massive quake was another blow to the poorest nation in the Americas,

which has been wracked with government instability and frequent natural disasters—forcing it to become almost completely dependent on foreign aid.

The nation has suffered tragedy after tragedy. After winning independence from France and freedom from slavery in 1804, a bright new chapter seemed to open up for the island. Yet from 1804 to 1915, the nation cycled through more than 70 different dictators. This was followed by a stream of democratically elected leaders turned self-appointed “presidents for life,” who were then chased out by military coups and terrorism—years of turmoil at the expense of Haiti’s citizens.

Since then, the nation has suffered even more election troubles, violent gang wars, and a barrage of devas-

tating natural disasters. In 2008, four hurricanes—Fay, Gustav, Hanna, and Ike—pummeled the nation in less than a month, killing 800 people. The hurricanes destroyed about 60 percent of the nation’s harvest and rendered entire cities uninhabitable.

After the four storms, Port-au-Prince Mayor Jean-Yves Jason estimated that 60 percent of the buildings in the city were unsafe due to hurricane-weakened foundations (*AP*).

On top of that, “The metropolitan area is home to two million people in an area originally planned for 200,000. Houses are poorly constructed with lax codes, if any” (*The Haitian Times*).

How can nations of the world allow this country to continue to struggle?

How can God?

Turbulent History

Government instability has always plagued Haiti. Consider select events from 1957-1993:

- 1957 – François Duvalier, a doctor known as “Papa Doc,” is elected president.
- 1964 – Duvalier declares himself president for life.
- 1971 – The Haitian Constitution is amended to allow the president to choose his successor; Duvalier chooses his son, Jean-Claude, then 19.
- April 1971 – Duvalier dies, and Jean-Claude declares himself president for life; he uses a secret police force called Tontons Macoutes (meaning “bogeymen”) to enforce his policies.
- 1986 – Jean-Claude Duvalier flees the country after a revolt; Lieutenant General Henri Namphy runs the country and tries unsuccessfully to get rid of the Tontons Macoutes.
- March 1987 – A new constitution that calls for presidential and national assembly elections by the people is adopted.
- November 29, 1987 – Elections are canceled after terrorist attacks on polling places.
- January 1988 – During the rescheduled vote, the people elect a civilian president and a parliament.
- June 1988 – Namphy overthrows the new government and declares himself president of the military government.
- September 1988 – Officers of the Presidential Guard seize power from Namphy; Lieutenant General Prosper Avril declares himself president.
- March 1990 – Avril resigns due to protests.
- December 1990 – Jean-Bertrand Aristide wins Haiti’s first free election.
- September 1991 – Aristide flees the country after being ousted in a military coup; the Organization of American States and United Nations lead trade boycotts to try to force Aristide’s return to power; many Haitians try to flee to the U.S. but are forced back to Haiti; later some refugees are sent to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
- July 3, 1993 – The military government agrees to allow Aristide to return and restore his government by October 30; they later renege on the agreement. □

SOURCE: CNN



■ **TRAPPED FOR DAYS:** A 28-year-old woman lies pinned under the rubble of her house for days in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. After working for hours to free her, emergency workers had to amputate one leg to remove her from the debris (Jan. 15, 2010).

PHOTO: CHRIS HONDROS/GETTY IMAGES

Not Only Haiti

For 200 years, Haiti has been seemingly trapped in a cycle of futility. In spite of continued outside efforts—billions of dollars of aid, debt-forgiveness, foreign peacekeeping forces—Haiti remains a completely destitute nation.

But it is not just Haiti. History shows humanity has always been plagued, to one degree or another, by the same problems. The record of man is rife with disease, war, dictators, famine—with never any true improvement.

Why does God allow civilization to flounder?

Most misunderstand God’s reason for creating mankind. Central to

God’s Plan is the purpose of building His holy, righteous character in people, so that one day they can be part of the God Family, and become sons of God in His soon-coming, eternal kingdom!

A key element in this plan for humanity is *time*. Imagine if God had demanded that people live His way. Mankind would have fought against Him and accused Him of being unfair. This is the reason God gave humans free will.

After Adam and Eve chose to reject instruction, God stepped back and allowed lesson learning to begin.

Throughout history, mankind has called the shots. The results? War.

Please see **HAITI**, page 19



JORDAN

MID-EAST MEDIATOR

A regular player in regional peace efforts, Jordan must also confront challenges of its own to ensure the nation's sustainability.

BY MARK A. SHARPE

THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM of Jordan shares a border with Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Israel. Jordan is one of two Arab nations considered pro-Western due to its close alliance with the United States, European countries, and Israel.

For this reason, Jordan is sometimes called on to act as a mediator in the continuing conflict between Israel, Palestine and other Middle Eastern nations.

Line of Kings

After the end of British control of Transjordan in 1946, King Abdullah, the second son of Sharif Hussein of Mecca, became king over a newly independent Jordan.

Two years later, when the British mandate ended in Palestine, the combined forces of Transjordan and other Arab countries invaded Palestine. The West Bank and part of the Old City of Jerusalem remained in the hands of

■ **DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS:** Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (left) meets with King Abdullah II in Amman, Jordan (Nov. 2, 2008).

PHOTO: OMAR RASHIDI/PPO VIA GETTY IMAGES

Jordan after the war. King Abdullah united the West Bank and Transjordan, thus forming the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1950.

In 1951, King Abdullah was assassinated, and his eldest son, Talal, succeeded him as king. Due to illness, he reigned for only one year before abdicating the throne. His son Hussein then became king upon turning 18 years old in 1953.

From 1953 to 1999, King Hussein ruled Jordan. Under his stewardship, he put down a Palestinian uprising, relinquished all claims to the West Bank, and signed a treaty with Israel. He also worked tirelessly to try to bring peace and prosperity to Jordan.

Economic Outlook

King Abdullah II assumed full constitutional powers when his father, King Hussein, died on February 7, 1999. Since then, he has instituted a number of changes to improve Jordan's global image.

According to the royal website, King Abdullah II has been working on the advancement of civil liberties, making Jordan one of the most progressive countries in the Middle East. He has been involved in enacting legislation that guarantees women a full role in the kingdom's socioeconomic and political life.

Jordan has a literacy rate of nearly 90 percent, and spends 4.9 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on education, according to the most recent estimates provided by the *CIA World Factbook*.

The main tourist attraction in Jordan is Petra. Considered one of the New Seven Wonders of the World, Petra is a majestic city intricately carved out of sandstone cliffs by its earlier settlers, the Nabataeans.

Thousands of tourists visit Petra each year to view its grandeur, and see other historical ruins. Jordan's service industry accounts for over 60 percent of the nation's GDP.

Challenges to Sustainability

Despite possessing oil reserves, Jordan remains almost wholly dependent on imported oil, mainly from Saudi Arabia and Iraq. This has put a strain on the country's ability to fund social programs.

Jordan has long wrestled with severe water shortages. Inadequate water supplies threaten to derail the nation's long-term plans for growth and sustainability.

According to the World Health Organization, Jordan has one of the lowest levels of water resource availability, per capita, in the world. Water scarcity could become an even greater problem over the coming years as the population is projected to relatively quickly double.

Jordan's stability, religious tolerance and hospitality are attractive to refugees fleeing wars and persecution in their own countries. As a result, the nation faces the challenge of providing for refugees entering its borders.

"Official figures put Jordan's current population at 5.7 million, not including hundreds of thousands of Palestinian

and Iraqi refugees. There are more than 600,000 Iraqi refugees, nearly 250,000 Egyptian workers and hundreds of thousands of other Arab nationals—including Syrians, Palestinians and Lebanese—already in Jordan" (*IRIN News*).

Jordan's population, which is over 90 percent Arab, is traditionally conservative. Yet, with modern technologies such as the Internet and cable television, a change is evident.

A Gallup poll about perceptions of Western culture in Islamic nations reported that "in all of the countries surveyed, respondents view Western values as having a negative effect on local values." Of those polled in Jordan, 53 percent responded that Western values had a "very negative influence" on their society.

Western Ties

Despite many citizens' negative perceptions of the West, Jordan maintains close ties with the United States.

According to the U.S. Department of State, "Since 1952 the United States has worked closely with Jordan to improve the lives of Jordanian citizens. Development assistance totaling nearly \$6 billion has resulted in dramatically improved health indicators, road and water networks, hundreds of schools built, thousands of Jordanians in critical fields educated and trained in the U.S., and grants and loans for U.S. agricultural commodities...These programs are an essential contributor to a strong bilateral relationship centered on a stable, reform-oriented Jordan."

Jordan also joined the United States in its war on terror after a 2005 terrorist bombing destroyed three hotels in Amman. In an effort to track down those responsible and to prevent further attacks, Jordan sent troops to Afghanistan and Pakistan, despite the disapproval of its Arab neighbors.

Jordan's foreign minister, Nasser Judeh, said, "We're talking about finding the root causes, finding the root of where terrorists plan and plot, and trying to stop them right there and then" (*The New York Times*).

Looking to the Future

Even though the socioeconomic programs have borne some levels of success, much work lies ahead to overcome the immediate challenges now threatening to prevent Jordan from realizing its fullest potential.

In a taped message to the nation on the occasion of Eid al-Adha, a Muslim festival, King Abdullah II summed up how Jordan will face its future challenges.

"We will continue reform, modernisation and progress in all aspects—political, economic, social and administrative—to achieve comprehensive development that will have a positive impact on people's lives and enable them to have the decent living they're entitled to by their country and society. I am aware of the tough economic circumstances, and as I have said in the past, and as you always say, better to bear our own burdens than allow others to carry them for us." □

PERSONAL

Continued from page 2

The Creator God designed marriage to be a source of great happiness, something for which everyone yearns. *You* can have an exciting, happy, successful marriage—but only if you follow God’s prescribed formula. This personal reveals the formula—the causes!—behind a happy marriage. It introduces the truth of how to build a wonderful, joyful marriage. There are basic principles, unknown to all but a very few who are willing to truly study and believe God’s Word to see what He instructs.

God’s Instructions from the Beginning

The first reference to marriage describes Adam and Eve being brought together by God, forming the first marital union of a man and woman in history. Genesis 2 states, “The LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helpmeet [suitable] for him” (vs. 18).

God explains that men and women were not designed to be alone. People never work as well—are not as productive—when they are alone. Men were created—in fact, designed—to need an assistant, a help, a wife to stand beside them. Of course, wives are also aided by husbands in a variety of ways.

Studies show that the average person becomes happier after marriage. This increase has actually been measured, with studies revealing that, no matter the person’s prior level of happiness, he or she receives at least a small boost.

Genesis describes Adam inspecting all the animals God had created and finding none suitable for him. So God put him to sleep, took a rib from his side and created the woman: “And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made He [the Hebrew means “builted”] a woman, and brought her unto the man” (Gen. 2:22).

Adam realized the woman was literally part of him—that she had come *from* him: “And Adam said, This is

now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Gen. 2:23).

Next, God tells Adam and Eve what to do once married—in His first recorded instruction about the marriage institution: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” (Gen. 2:24-25).

Married couples are to live together, forming a new household, apart from their parents. The phrase “and they shall be one flesh” is speaking of sexual relations. The verse is defining where sex belongs—within marriage!

This account establishes marriage as God-ordained! This institution was created, designed and presented to the first human couple as the way that God intended the two sexes to live together.

Now notice this passage in Ecclesiastes describing the advantages of marriage: “Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor” (4:9). And, “For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falls; for he has not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?” (4:10-11). As well as, “If one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken” (4:12).

Notice the phrase “a threefold cord.” This establishes the minimum number to be a family. One child makes any couple “threefold.” To be a rope—a “cord”—a minimum of three strands is required, making it possible to weave them together. Each additional child then further strengthens the marriage, makes the rope stronger, and binds the family more, making it harder for a couple to break up. God explains that producing a family is central to marriage. Adam and Eve were told, “be fruitful, and *multiply*” (Gen. 1:28).

Husband’s Responsibility

The most crucial New Testament passage about marriage and the specif-

ic roles of husbands and wives is Ephesians 5:22-33. These 12 verses introduce the most fundamental understanding that each partner *must* bring to the marriage.

“Husbands, *love your wives*, EVEN AS Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it” (Eph. 5:25). This emphasizes the importance of husbands showing real, sincere, deep love for their wives!

The husband’s first and greatest responsibility is to unfailingly love his wife! Initially, many husbands try to do this, but their effort wanes over time. Men often begin to take their wives for granted, not realizing they are to love them “as Christ loved the Church.” This is the extremely high standard that God sets—an unending, boundless love, paralleling the way Christ cares about His bride, the Church. Christ never gives up on the Church, but rather forgives, understands, is patient with, and works with His wife-to-be.

Wife’s Responsibility

What about wives? Let’s read their most crucial obligation—understood by so few: “Wives, *submit yourselves* unto your own husbands, AS UNTO THE LORD” (Eph. 5:22). Society has completely reversed, and denigrated, the Bible. Yet, this is what God requires of the woman. Remember, the Author of marriage knows what works.

Most women are taught today that they are equal in authority to their husbands. Certainly women *are* equal before God as human beings. Men are not more important or better than women. But God places the man in charge of the marriage.

The Bible is plain.

The typical marriage counselor laughs at this, seeing it as archaic and out-of-step. Few brides-to-be enter marriage having been taught anything about being subject to their husband’s loving authority. Most would ridicule and outright reject this idea!

How It Works

Today, many men are unwilling to take the lead in marriage. Of course, many

get married only to find their wife has no intention of letting them lead. These are separate problems, and both are very *real*.

Society has seen the near disappearance of strong leadership, with most men no longer knowing how to lead. This creates a crucial void in the marriage—and it frustrates women, who were designed by God to most naturally follow the strong but loving lead of a wise man. Women were designed to need to know their husbands love them, and will provide for and take care of them. A woman should feel that, if necessary, her husband will defend her with his life! (Reread Ephesians 5:25.)

Understanding these things leaves a woman much more secure and comfortable in the role of follower.

The woman married to a man who will not lead will spend her marriage frustrated, unable to know when to passively accept indecision or to speak up and take action because her husband will not. Many women are forced to step into a leadership void in their homes, because the man will not fill it—and somebody has to. Someone must take the lead whenever any two or more people do *anything*!

On the other hand, some husbands view their role like a drill sergeant over raw recruits. They try to *drive* their wives, bossing them around, frustrating and squelching them.

No woman wants to feel her opinions do not count—that her views do not matter, because the man “knows everything.” This is no better, and is even in some ways worse, than a marriage in which the man will not lead. For a marriage to achieve the peace and happiness that God intends, both extremes must be avoided.

Husbands should gently and lovingly lead their wives, drawing them out, asking their advice—and using it when appropriate. The wise husband knows that his wife is his *best advisor*—that she knows him best and knows how to compensate for his areas of weakness.

This verse repeats and adds to the husband/wife instruction: “Wives,

submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them” (Col. 3:18-19).

The wife’s role is given first because family government must be established before anything productive can be accomplished. Again, the husband must *lovingly* lead the wife—and that is why God inspired Paul to record this twice. But if the wife does not submit, the marriage will not last. All the love in the world from the husband will not keep a marriage together if the wife is determined to be in charge. Also, all the family government in the world will not keep it together if the husband does not truly love his wife.

No successful marriage can have one—*either* one—without the other!

Another vital point. Since obviously the wife must also love her husband, the husband must also periodically be willing to yield to the wife’s wiser position or view on any given matter. He must be humble enough to take her advice when her plan is better than his own. Incidentally, feeling appreciated, understood and valued, the woman’s love for her husband then *grows*!

Husbands, be wise enough and willing to seek your wife’s counsel. Train yourself to *want* her ideas. Realize that two partially good ideas can become either one good, very good or even wonderful idea! Your wife has much to offer, but you must be willing to receive it.

The Fine Art of Right Communication

Miscommunication, bad communication or lack of communication is one of the leading causes of divorce. The role of the husband is to take the lead in proper communication with his wife.

Husbands must understand that the wife has often been home all day with the children. She may be frustrated, and in desperate need of conversation with someone above the age of 12—or maybe even three. The husband who comes home from work not wanting to talk, but rather to just sit down, have

a beer, read the paper and watch the news, has effectively cut off his wife from communication with another adult.

Do not forget about her needs. Talk to her. Find out about *her* day. Allow her to open up. Show interest in what she has accomplished and what may have happened with the children.

Wives, be sure you **DO** open up to your husband. You may be by nature “*more verbal*” or “*less verbal*” than he is. Depending upon which is the case, strive to do a little more listening, or a little more talking. The couple should strive to find a balance in communication, with each expressing an opinion about the things on their minds.

Husbands and wives should both always remember to discuss their problems with each other, while relying on God for ultimate spiritual understanding. All problems should always be discussed with God. Wives, in particular, should discuss their spiritual problems with their husbands, while never neglecting to remember that God is the One ultimately guiding and helping them spiritually. Your husband cannot grant you salvation.

Also, avoid arguing *at all costs*. NOTHING productive *ever* comes from heated exchanges. The devastating effect of this kind of “communication” lasts longer, and bites deeper, than the couple doing it even begins to realize. If you are wrong, always apologize. Defending the indefensible is silly—and unproductive. Never store up feelings, and then dump them in a heated moment of release. The Golden Rule—“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”—is also the greatest rule of communication within marriage!

Manage Your Finances Together

Another point: all wage earners are paid a specific amount of money. Whether large or small, this is the amount they must live on. Financial problems—usually caused by couples living beyond their means—along with poor communication and sexual problems—form the “big three” causes for marital break-up.

A few helpful points:

■ First, develop the habit of systematic, monthly saving early in your marriage.

■ Next, avoid credit-buying. It is a trap far deeper than it appears. If you do use credit cards, pay them off immediately every month.

■ Finally, plan your purchases. Develop *priorities* so that you do not try to buy everything at once. Then, determine to buy quality as much as possible. Practice patience. Be willing to wait. You will be glad you did!

The Truly Happy Marriage

God tells husbands: “*Live joyfully* with the wife whom you love all the days of [your] life” (Ecc. 9:9). For this to be possible, the wife must be doing the same—and this should be the daily goal of every married couple. None of the principles in this article will bring true, complete happiness unless *both* mates are diligently applying them. Successful marriages are always the product of *two* people working *together* toward the same purpose in the same way—with the same understanding.

If you have a wonderful husband or a wonderful wife, you are truly blessed—and much more unusual than you may think. But if you do not have a good husband or a good wife, then strive to grow as much as you possibly can, understanding that your mate may follow your example.

God says this to husbands who have been blessed to have found a wonderful wife: “Whoso finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor of the LORD” (Prov. 18:22).

A virtuous wife *is* wonderful—“a good thing”—and wise husbands-to-be will diligently search for such a woman before getting married. Special favor from God is just one benefit that

comes from marrying a woman of great character.

Wives, strive to be special in every way that you possibly can. Husbands, strive to be worthy of such a woman. You may discover God has sent you one.

The couple that *works* at their marriage will find that their marriage *works!*—and far better than they had ever dreamed!

On your wedding day, you promised—probably vowed!—before God

Commitment is the bedrock foundation of EVERY strong marriage. Remember, “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” The rewards that flow from dedication to your wedding vows will bring joy beyond words.

Happiness depends far more on what *you* do than on what your mate or anyone else does. No matter the current state of your marriage, you *can* improve it. Take responsibility. You can grow—and it can get better. Remember, GOD instituted the marriage covenant—and the *principles* governing its success. Without them, *real* happiness is impossible! With them, *you* can experience a boundless *joy* you have never known!

The Restored Church of God offers more helpful material—and truth—and ALL FREE!—on marriage and the family—than any other church on Earth. And this would have to be the case with wherever is the one Church that Jesus Christ built.

The place to start is our essential booklet *You Can Build a Happy Marriage*. We have much more material regarding keys to childrearing, proper dating and courtship, the God-ordained purpose of sex, the family unit—and divorce and remarriage.

Also examine our extraordinary magazine for teenagers, and another for families, plus seven Bible story books—and lessons in seven levels—ALL vital for teaching the truth of God’s Word to children and teenagers of all ages.

The family is under assault as *never* before. Take the time to explore the vast cornucopia of truth we have available on every conceivable question you could ask about these subjects—but also many, many others. You will be so very glad that you did. □



“Successful marriages are always the product of *two* people working *together* toward the same purpose in the same way—with the same understanding.”

to spend the rest of your life married to the same person. Do not let this commitment wane or blur in your mind. It was “for better or for worse.” It is easy for a couple to remain committed when times are “better,” but not so easy during a “worse” phase. A close relationship with God, based on a deep recognition that He knows how to produce all the best and most wonderful things in both marriage and life, has no substitute. No matter what difficulty your marriage is facing, bring God into it. He has all the true and lasting solutions.



HAITI

Continued from page 13

Famine. Disease. Crumbling nations. Destitute peoples. Hatred. Murder. These are the ways of man.

God cannot instill His character into people by divine fiat. Only through experience can mankind see that its *own* ways always bring more and worse suffering. On the other hand, God's ways produce peace and happiness.

At the end of mankind's chance to try things its way, all humanity will finally be able to look back and see that their governments and religious systems FAILED! It is at this time that all of the suffering will come into perspective.

But in the wake of disasters such as Haiti, it seems hard to keep in mind these reasons behind the untold suffering and how it fits into God's Plan.

People ask, *Why did God allow so many to die?*

God *hates* senseless suffering. He sees a dead father and his infant son lying side-by-side a week after an earthquake, a woman with her hands raised to the sky mourning the loss

of her husband who was buried under the rubble of a collapsed building, a family of five subsisting on a bottle of water and cup of rice in a tent city. He hears the cries of His potential children and it pains Him, as it would any father. He is "not willing that *any* should perish" (II Pet. 3:9) and would "have *all men* to be saved" (I Tim. 2:4).

All men means *all men!* Everyone will be offered salvation, including those who died in the Haiti tragedy. We can take comfort that God is working out His Plan here on Earth.

"Nigh at hand"

Speaking to His disciples, Jesus outlined the world conditions that would be present just before His coming to usher in the kingdom of God.

"Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world?"

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of

wars: see that You be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

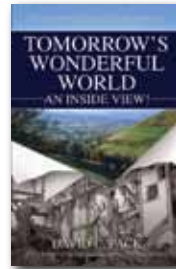
"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and *earthquakes*, in diverse places" (Matt. 24:3-7).

Those who do heed these words can take comfort that "when you see these things come to pass, know you that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (Luke 21:31).

This time is fast approaching. World events prove that this chapter of God's Plan is nearing its close. Although it may seem difficult to understand now, with God's kingdom established, mankind will finally be able to see the purpose for suffering. A time when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall

there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

Read David C. Pack's *Tomorrow's Wonderful World - An Inside View!* to understand the time when all men can be saved—and sorrow, such as Haiti's, will cease. □



The Truth Behind St. Valentine's Day

St. Valentine's Day is the world's "holiday of love." Since the Bible states that God is love (I John 4:8, 16), does He approve of the celebration of this day? Does He want His people—true Christians—partaking of the candy and cards, or any customs associated with this day?

Wus God says He wants you to live life abundantly (John 10:10), does that include celebrating a festive, seemingly harmless holiday like Valentine's Day? The God who gives us everything—life, food, drink, the ability to think for ourselves, etc.—surely approves of St. Valentine's Day, the holiday for lovers to exchange gifts—right? Do not assume anything. Do not even take this article's word for it. Go to history books and encyclopedias. You will know the truth behind St. Valentine's Day. And you will know what God expects you to do about it.



Valentine's Day

Like Christmas, Easter, Halloween, New Year's and other holidays of this world, Valentine's Day is another attempt by "Christians" to perpetuate customs and traditions of pagan gods and idols by "Christianizing" them.

As innocents and harmless as St. Valentine's Day may appear, its traditions and customs originate from the rituals of ancient history. In particular, the festival of the Roman god of love, Cupid, and the festival of the Roman goddess of love, Venus, are the source of the holiday.

striking women with job damage, made from skin of the sacrificed goats. The Lupercal festival, purified women and granted fertility to the women of the Roman Empire. The Lupercal festival was held in honor of Lupercus, the husband, protector of health and strength and a spring and fertility spirit.

The Roman Lupercal festival was held in honor of Lupercus, the husband, protector of health and strength and a spring and fertility spirit.

February 15, the Lupercal festival was held in honor of Lupercus, the husband, protector of health and strength and a spring and fertility spirit.

SHOULD CHRISTIANS CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY?

To learn more about Valentine's Day, visit www.thercg.org/family

AMERICAS



■ **CLASH IN CARACAS:** Policemen surround students as they protest against the suspension of the signal of private *RCTV* broadcast network in Caracas (Jan. 26, 2010).

PHOTO: MIGUEL GUTIERREZ/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Angry protesters by the thousands spilled into the streets of Venezuelan cities last weekend. The ensuing violence resulted in the death of a teenager and wounding of nine police officers.

The protest was in response to government closure of the popular television station *RCTV Internacional*.

This was the second time in just over two years that the station, which has been critical of 11-year President Hugo Chávez, has been shut down.

In the nation's capital, Caracas, and other Venezuelan cities, police fired tear gas and plastic bullets on rioters, who blame Mr. Chávez for surging crime, electricity shortages,

water rationing and a 25 percent inflation rate.

International freedom groups, as well as the United States government, sharply criticized the closure as an attack on freedom of expression.

"Any time the government shuts down an independent network, that is an area of concern," U.S. State Department spokesman Philip Crowley told *Reuters*.

Supporters loyal to Mr. Chávez claim Venezuela's problems are not the president's fault.

"Things aren't all as we would like them to be, but we know that El Comandante (Chavez) is doing what he can to help us, the poor," one 39-year-old bricklayer told *Fox News*.

Mr. Chávez maintains that escalating crime in his country is the fault of Colombia's right wing paramilitary, which is attempting to destabilize Venezuela's security.

Political science professor, Margarita Lopez Maya, says that while many do not feel the president can solve the problems, there does not seem to be anyone else who can, as no effective opposition exists in Venezuela. □

ASIA

China Now Biggest Exporter

For the first time ever, China has edged ahead of Germany as the world's largest exporter. "Total 2009 exports were more than \$1.2 trillion... ahead of the 816 billion euros (\$1.17 trillion) forecast for Germany..." (*The Associated Press*).

Low-cost manufacturing, a huge labor force and purchasing power have helped catapult China into rapid economic growth. Chinese auto sales surpassed United States' totals in 2009.

In addition, nearly 100 million Chinese have Internet access and 300 million have cellphone subscriptions—more than any other nation.

Although Chinese gross exports overtook those of Germany, "China

sells low-tech goods such as shoes, toys and furniture, while Germany exports machinery and other higher-value products. German commentators note their country supplies the factory equipment used by top Chinese manufacturers" (*ibid.*).

Imports also grew 55.9 percent in December alone. This included more than 5 million barrels of oil per day. Aluminum and steel were also up sharply.

China has been rapidly buying up raw materials around the world while global prices are low.

While some believe China is spending its way to global dominance with government stimulus packages, others fear the nation cannot sustain

its rapid growth—especially with the current economic downturn.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) annual report stated, "Many countries are at risk of overextending unsustainable levels of debt" (*Guardian*).

Daniel Hoffman of Zurich Financial Services, a contributor to the WEF report, said he was particularly concerned that China's economy is on a "very unbalanced growth trajectory." He said that "despite the fact that China appears to have navigated the financial crisis and global recession, much of the domestic impulses derive from high credit growth, which entails an increased risk of misallocation of capital and renewed bubbles in financial asset prices and real estate" (*ibid.*). □

HEALTH ISSUES

Study: Frequent Testing Does Not Reduce Chlamydia in Teenage Girls

Regular testing and treatment does not reduce the numbers of urban teenage girls who contract chlamydia, according to a study by the Indiana University (IU) School of Medicine published in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*.

During the study, the number of infected teenage girls changed little—even though they were screened every three months and given necessary treatment.

At the study's onset, 10.9 percent of the teenage girls were infected with the sexually transmitted disease. After 18 months, 10.6 percent were infected. By year four of the study, approximately 10.4 percent were infected.

"The high rate of reinfection we found in our study strongly suggests there may be some real limits on what we can do to control chlamydia without doing a better job of controlling chlamydia in young men," Dr. J.

Dennis Fortenberry, pediatrics professor at the IU School of Medicine said in a statement issued by the university.

The most common bacterial STD, chlamydia is connected to increased risk of pelvic inflammatory disease, increased susceptibility to HIV, and various pregnancy and infertility complications.

Chlamydia is more common in sexually active teens than in any other age group. □

Animal Diseases Increasingly Jump to Humans

Dozens of diseases once limited to animals have reportedly infected humans during the past 20 years, with more expected to soon cross the genetic barrier.

Examples of diseases spreading from animals to humans that are emerging or re-emerging include HIV, hantavirus (from rodents), bird flu, rabies, malaria, West Nile virus (from mosquitoes), H1N1 influenza virus, SARS, and Lyme disease (from ticks).

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) experts warn that a growing spread of diseases could result from environmental changes and more people moving into rural areas.

"We appear to be undergoing a distinct change in global disease ecology," Montira Pongsiri, an environmental health scientist at the EPA in Washington, said. "The recent emergence of infectious diseases (such as swine flu and SARS) appears to be driven by globalization and ecological disruption" (*The Independent*).

David Murrell, lecturer in ecology at University College London, said, "Since 1940, over 300 new diseases have been identified, 60 per cent of which crossed to



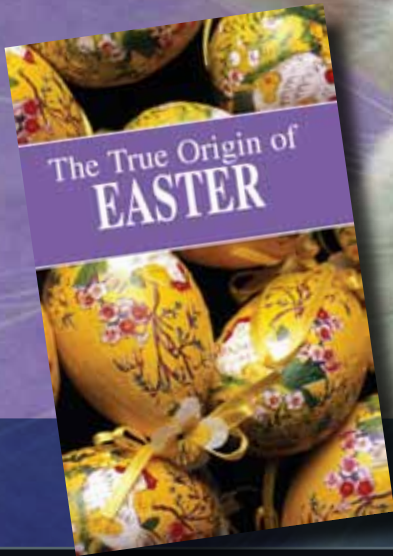
■ **FLU FEAR:** Health workers cull 133 chickens suspected of being infected by the bird flu virus in the village of Jagapati in Badung, on the resort island of Bali (Feb. 10, 2009). Indonesia is the country worst hit by avian influenza with 115 deaths officially recorded since 2003. Experts fear the virus that is usually spread from birds to humans through direct contact, could mutate into a form easily transmissible between humans.

PHOTO: SONNY TUMBELAKA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

humans from animals and 70 per cent of these came from contact with wildlife. I would expect the

emergence of new diseases from contact with animals to continue in this century" (*ibid.*). □

What do eggs and rabbits have to do with Easter?



Learn the facts about sunrise services, eggs, Lent and other traditions surrounding this holiday.

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