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REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

GULF OIL SPILL

WHY *ANOTHER*
AMERICAN DISASTER?



THE REAL TRUTH

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VOL. VIII | NO. 5 | JUNE 2010

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■ **BANGKOK BURNING:** Smoke rises from a fire that burned all night at CentralWorld shopping mall, which was attacked by protesters venting their anger against the Thai government (May 20, 2010).

PHOTO: PAULA BRONSTEIN/GETTY IMAGES

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■ **FRONT COVER:** Fire boat response crews battle the blazing remnants of the offshore oil rig Deepwater Horizon (April 21, 2010).

PHOTO: PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS TOM ATKESON/
U.S. COAST GUARD/MCT

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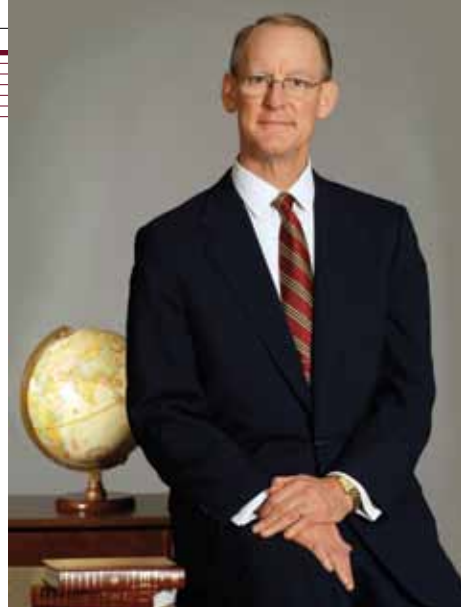
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PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack



The Kingdom of God— What No One Knows!

MOST PREACHERS and religionists speak of the kingdom of God. But just what *is* this kingdom—and when does it appear? Is it in heaven? Is it the British Empire?—the universal church?—or the Millennium? Is it “in the hearts of men” or merely the “good within each person”? Millions believe these popular ideas—yet they are ALL wrong! In fact, none of them are even *close* to right!

Unnecessary confusion and disagreement reign because God’s Word is ignored. Soon you will understand the kingdom of God as never before—and as almost no one else does!

One World Government?

In 1966, as God began to call me into His truth, I had the opportunity to meet with my United States congressman from Ohio. All applicants to the U.S. Naval Academy were required to have a personal interview with their congressman before possible acceptance. At the end of the interview, my congressman asked if I wished to ask him any questions. Here was a highly respected, long-time member of Congress—for 26 years, until 1973—giving me the opportunity to ask him any question.

I had only one.

I was learning about a coming, world-ruling, super-government to be established at the Return of Jesus Christ. I asked the congressman his opinion of one world government, *if* it were in the hands of men. His answer was immediate and emphatic, “I do not believe it would work, but if I did, I would shout it from the housetops.” He went on to express various concerns.

Since that time, more and more people have suggested that one world government is the only way to save civilization. But many questions arise. Who would bring it? How would it be phased in? What laws would it administer? How would they be enforced? Would sovereign nations relinquish their authority to it? Would it succeed, or eventually oppress and enslave all mankind? These questions always stop thinkers, planners, leaders and politicians in their tracks!

What Jesus Taught

Jesus declared, “Repent you, and believe the gospel.” So first then, we must ask, just what is the gospel? Most “gospel believers” never concern themselves with what exactly they believe. The truth of the gospel has remained hidden to the vast majority of professing Christians. Ever since the first century there has been a conspiracy to deceive would-be Christians about the meaning of the gospel.

As a result, most believe the gospel is about the *Person* of Jesus. Certainly, Jesus’ role *is* enormous, but

He is not the gospel. The Bible shows that Jesus Christ is preached in conjunction *with* the gospel.

Others proclaim a “gospel of salvation” or “grace.” Still others a “gospel of miracles” or a “social gospel,” or one about “foods” or “healing” or “faith.” Some talk of “gospel music.” These are ALL manmade ideas—and *not* what the Bible says!

Notice what Mark recorded. “Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the *kingdom of God*” (Mark 1:14). That is the gospel Jesus preached. It was in this context He said, “Repent you, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15). What gospel?—the “kingdom of God.” Verse one refers to the “beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ” (Mark 1:1). The gospel of Jesus Christ was about the kingdom of God—not something else! One must believe and understand *that* gospel to be saved. No counterfeit or substitute will do.

Strong Warning Not to Pervert Gospel

The truth of this subject is so important that God inspired the apostle Paul to warn ministers and Christians of all generations. Let’s read: “I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto *another* gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we [apostles], or an angel from heaven, preach *any other* gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be *accursed*. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach ANY OTHER GOSPEL unto you than that you have received, let him be ACCURSED” (Gal. 1:6-9).

This is a strong statement! Paul went on to stress to the Galatians “that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (Gal. 2:5). So there is the TRUE gospel, with all others *false*.

Plainly, Paul never taught a different or additional gospel, as some allege. In fact, God used him to be the one to warn against ever allowing such false teaching. He even pronounces a curse on any man, angel or even apostle—note the reference to “we”—who violates this command. A powerful scripture!

Paul further explained the apostles were entrusted by God to preserve the true gospel. Notice: “But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God” (I Thes. 2:4). This is a responsibility not to be taken lightly. True ministers teach what God commands, not what “pleases men.”

Why do preachers not fear to do this? Why are so many willing to teach a variety of false gospels? The answer? They fear preaching what could displease their congregation—and mean losing their job. Also, the churches of mainstream Christianity cannot agree on what the gospel is.

Why?

Since Jesus said the gospel was about the kingdom of God, and men do not know what God’s kingdom *is*, they have concluded it may be a particular denomination or Christianity collectively—or a “warm feeling” in the “hearts of men”—or the Millennium—or British Empire. Some have even concluded the gospel of the kingdom is not for mankind today!

What incredible ignorance!

The masses are deceived by the god of this world, who uses his ministers as instruments to spread the most popular false gospel, that of the *Person* of Jesus, instead of Jesus’ MESSAGE about God’s kingdom.

Paul also warned, “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing [it is not surprising] if

his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness...” (II Cor. 11:13-15).

This is a shocking scripture. Satan has ministers who appear to be God’s ministers.

Paul next describes the work of such men. Notice: “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve thru his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that comes [speaking of false preachers] preaches *another Jesus*...or if you receive *another spirit*...or *another GOSPEL*, which you have not accepted...” (II Cor. 11:3-4). If Christ *is* the gospel, then why are “another *Jesus*” and “another *gospel*” shown as separate problems?

People need to wake up to the deception—the mass delusion—of a supposed Christianity that denies virtually all the truths of the Bible! God’s Plan for mankind is staggering—incomparable to anything human beings have devised to replace it. The world ignores plain, clear, unmistakable scriptures found throughout the Bible about God’s kingdom.

This Personal explains the astonishing truth so many ignore!

Christ’s Message—An Advance Announcement

Like a newscaster far ahead of his time, Jesus came with an announcement about a complete change in the way the world would one day be governed. World peace, happiness, harmony, universal health and prosperity would come.

Everywhere He went, Jesus spoke about the kingdom of God. It was the subject of most of His parables. When commissioning His 12 apostles, He sent them to preach the kingdom of God. He later sent 70 more disciples, commanding them to preach God’s kingdom. Paul

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Gulf Oil Spill: Why *Another* American Disaster!

The oil slick threatening the nation's southern shoreline is the latest in a seemingly never-ending series of major American crises. Why?

BY SAMUEL C. BAXTER

THE DEEPWATER HORIZON offshore oil rig exploding, catching fire and sinking 5,000 feet to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico was extremely bad news. The pipe, cracked in three places, continues to spew oil, mixed with bubbles of methane gas and sediment, already leaving at least 6 million gallons of oil in the ocean.

This is bad news for the environment. Miles-long oil slicks are washing ashore from Florida to Texas—coastlines that are essential nesting grounds for loggerhead and green sea turtles. Offshore, countless species of fish, jellyfish and crabs are laying eggs at sea amid the rust-colored swirls of light crude. Also, tides of brown muck coat many acres of pristine Louisiana wetlands. The oil could remain in the plant life and

soil for years, possibly destroying the fragile ecosystem.

This is also bad news for the coastal economy. The spill came just after hope seemed to reappear for Gulf Coast states. But as the rig went up in flames, which could be seen 50 miles away on Louisiana beaches, so did the renewed dreams of many in the region. The oil spill is crippling the fishing industry, as contaminated fish and shrimp are unsellable. While hotel occupancy is up 4 percent in Florida

■ **WASHING ASHORE:** BP crews clean oil off of a beach in Port Fourchon, Louisiana (May 24, 2010).

PHOTO: STEVEN JOHNSON/MIAMI HERALD/MCT

Europe's \$1 Trillion Bailout

Can Germany Keep the EU Afloat?



■ **EURO BAILOUT:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel, right, and Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle address a news conference after a special German cabinet meeting at the Chancellery in Berlin (May 3, 2010). Ms. Merkel and Mr. Westerwelle announced that Germany would support the \$1 trillion European Union financial aid package.

PHOTO: ANDREAS RENTZ/GETTY IMAGES

With billions of dollars pledged to keep Greece and the entire eurozone from drowning financially, Germany has been pushed to take a leading role in the future of the EU.

NORMALLY, the sun-drenched streets of Athens in late spring would be filled with visitors arriving by cruise ship to

admire ancient ruins, stroll city streets and beautiful sandy beaches, or browse shops and partake of the local cuisine.

Instead, usually bustling hotels remain largely vacant as a result of the widely reported escalating violence that has overtaken the nation during its prime tourism season.

Frustrated by the devastated economy and newly accepted austerity measures, gas-masked Greek citizens armed with sticks and hurling Molotov cocktails at cars and buildings roam

the streets, smashing shop windows and torching businesses. An angry mob of tens of thousands even set fire to a bank, killing three employees and seriously injuring four others, including a police officer who protestors fire-bombed and left burning in the street.

Because of its rapidly deteriorating economy and inability to meet ballooning financial obligations, Greece hesitantly struck a deal with the European Union and International Monetary Fund for a massive \$1 trillion bailout. The three-year Financial Stabilization Mechanism shores up \$670 billion from the EU, along with \$370 billion from the IMF for Greece as well as other eurozone countries. Member-states

that fail to curb their spending habits under the rescue program face debt restructuring, or expulsion from the eurozone.

In an unprecedented additional move, the European Central Bank announced it would buy faltering states' private and government debt in an attempt to calm markets by reassuring investors. Germany bought the largest share—\$652 billion.

European officials are nervously aware that the problem could spread to Portugal, Italy, Ireland and Spain, which could destabilize the euro and world markets while tainting the European Union's prestige.

As EU power brokers, mainly France and Germany, scramble to avert an all-out debt crisis within member-states, leaders are between a rock and a hard place—forced to weigh financial self-preservation against sustaining dependent nations. In effect, the trillion-dollar stopgap seemingly puts a band-aid on a gaping wound of rampant overspending.

During a Confederation of German Trade Unions (ETUC) conference in

Berlin, *The Associated Press* quoted German Chancellor Angela Merkel as saying, "We didn't do more than buy time to get the differences in competitiveness and budget deficits of euro zone countries in order."

According to analysts, however, the economic and political cost of reconstituting a new European Union based on Germany's historically stable currency would pale in comparison to the future burden of financing the eurozone's \$3.8 trillion debt load. So it appears Germany may well have to bear with the struggling union.

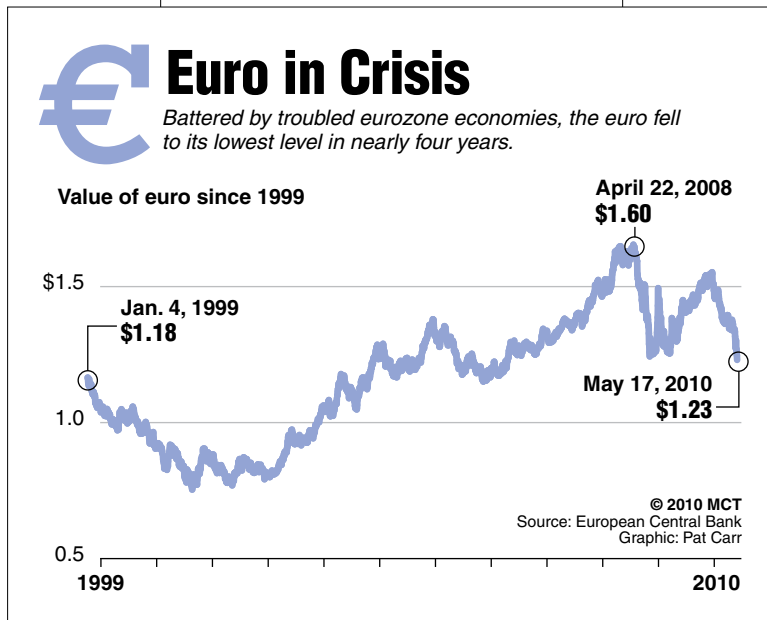
Still, the German economic powerhouse is taking a hard-line stance against paying for others' mistakes. In an interview with the Berlin newspaper *Bild am Sonntag*, Chancellor Merkel said that in the future countries should face sanctions and be stripped of EU voting rights if they fail to adhere to euro Growth and Stability Pact rules on debt. During another

interview, she said they should face expulsion from the union itself.

Upset with Germany's reluctance to help Greece, French President Nicolas Sarkozy threatened to leave the eurozone if Berlin refused to stay the course with its commitments pertaining to the bailout.

"History tells us that one way or another, Germany is going to have to open its wallet to end this crisis, as it has so often in the past," a *BusinessWeek* editorial stated. "But simply handing out money won't fix the imbalances that caused the crisis. For years, skeptics in the U.S. and Britain have argued that the euro experiment was doomed to fail. Now even true believers are concerned that something must be done, and soon, to relieve the mounting stresses on the system."

After the EU passed the mammoth rescue package to prevent a financial pandemic, ripples of fear and waning investor confidence continued to spread through world markets. With the euro at a new four-year low and moving toward parity with the



Yet if billions of dollars are only a makeshift fix, what further drastic measures will EU member-countries have to take to survive future crises?

Reluctant Involvement

The concerted effort among member-states in the European Union has not been without problems. Analysts fear the trillion-dollar safety net may fail to help geographically disadvantaged countries with non-competitive economies to meet the zone's stringent monetary requirements.

Despite their cooperation in rescue efforts, the Netherlands, Austria and Germany are not pleased with bailouts or debt restructuring. The German populace in particular resents being Europe's "cash cow" for fiscally irresponsible and economically uncompetitive countries. A recent poll revealed that 59 percent of Germans think Berlin should return to its pre-euro currency and its own central bank—the well-established deutschmark and Bundesbank—and one in every three Germans believes the euro will not survive the next decade.

American dollar, investors globally are seeking more secure markets—stalling growth for the eurozone.

“It’s not just a European problem, it’s the U.S., Japan and the U.K. right now,” Ian Kelson, a bond fund manager in London with T. Rowe Price said in *The New York Times*. “It’s across the board.”

Solidarity Needed

But it is not just political leaders and analysts that are concerned about the far-reaching implications of Europe’s financial turmoil.

With the deepening global economic meltdown, Pope Benedict XVI continues to emphasize a need for a change in approach to government and the economy.

“The crisis and the difficulties that international relations, states, society and the economy are currently going through...are largely due to a

lack of trust and of adequate aspiration toward solidarity,” he said to members of the Vatican foundation Centesimus Annus, a group formed to promote the church’s social doctrine (*AP*).

In early May, at the 16th Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences conference, themed “Crisis in a Global Economy – Re-planning the Journey,” the pope said the current economic system “driven by self-interest and profit-seeking” is incapable of regulating itself “apart from public intervention and the support of internalized moral standards” (*Zenit*).

The conference title came from a line in the pope’s 2009 encyclical letter, “Charity in Truth,” in which Pope Benedict stated, “The current [financial] crisis obliges us to re-plan our journey, to set ourselves new rules and to discover new forms of commitment, to build on positive experiences

and to reject negative ones.”

In the same letter, Pope Benedict described a solution: “In the face of the unrelenting growth of global interdependence, there is a strongly felt need, even in the midst of a global recession, for a reform of the United Nations Organization, and likewise of economic institutions and international finance, so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth.”

In the past, the Vatican has repeatedly played a role in helping unify Europe—often with Germany at the helm—and will inevitably do so again.

To understand more about the historical role of religion in European politics and how it will again influence the continent, read “A True World Political Authority”...With ‘Real Teeth’ – History and Prophecy Align.” □



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Are We in the Last Days?

Do we live at the time of the end? Can you know?

BY DAVID C. PACK

EVERYONE WANTS to know what the future holds. With world trends and conditions growing grimmer by the day, what lies ahead for all nations has become the very greatest concern. Millions are searching—wondering about the course of daily events.

Many “sense” or even firmly believe that we are in the last days. But they have rarely sought to prove this. Yet they can—and should—*know* whether we are. So must you!

It has become painfully obvious that this world is in terrible trouble. Mankind is overwhelmed with every kind of trouble, evil and ill—war, terrorism, violence of every kind, famine, disease, pollution, overpopulation, political upheaval, religious confusion and tremendous economic turmoil and decline, threatening to make the Great Depression look like child’s play.

Then there are the hundreds of millions who live in abject poverty, ignorance and oppression. Now add rampant and worsening immorality and perversion in every Western nation, growing hatred, unrest and the never-ending cycle of war in the Middle East, deteriorating conditions throughout Africa, frightening weather patterns across many

parts of the world, devastating fires, earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, drought and floods occurring with greater frequency and intensity—and headlines screaming of murder, rape, robbery and crimes of every kind. These mushrooming problems now threaten all nations.

Is all of this really only a little temporary worsening of what is otherwise “business as usual” for planet Earth? Many—and much louder!—are the voices that say time is running out to solve the really big problems facing the world. More and more world leaders are expressing pessimism about the rise of troubles within and between nations. So are educators, military planners, sociologists and scientists. Because this is also an age of religious sundowners and doomsayers, most will not pay real—serious!—attention.

Almost 2,000 years ago, Jesus’ disciples asked Him, “Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world?” (Matt. 24:3).

Jesus answered, “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 [various] places. All these are the beginning of sorrows” (vs. 4-8).

When Christ foretold the “end of the world,” He meant man’s *civilization*—not the planet “blowing up.” In the Greek, end of the “world” means end of the “age.”

He further stated, “And when *these things* begin to come to pass then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws near” (Luke 21:28). The “these things” He referred to include a whole series of events prophesied to occur for the first time in history! *These things* are happening—and intensifying—NOW! They are another powerful indicator that these *are* the last days!

Most believe man is capable at the last minute of “snatching victory from the jaws of defeat,” and will save himself by solving his own problems! They think “everything will turn out all right, somehow!” Though wrong in the short term, this is ultimately correct—but by very different means! Yet you do not need to fear the future. Just as God reveals what lies ahead, He also provides a way of escape for those willing to listen.

To learn much more about this subject, watch *The World to Come* broadcasts “Are We in the Last Days?” and “Is the End Near?” at www.realtruth.org. □

MAXIMIZE Your Children's Summer

Parents, TV or the Internet:
Which one will guide their
summer break?

BY JAMES RODRIGUEZ

PHOTO: GETTY CREATIVE IMAGES



SCHOOL IS OUT for the summer! Put the books and backpacks away! While this is great news for children who cannot wait to escape from homework, parents may think differently.

As adults, summertime's promise stretches out before us, with visions of anticipated relaxation and hopes for creating long-lasting memories. Each year, we look forward to special times with our families.

When school breaks for the summer, millions of young people find the first couple of weeks extremely satisfying. No schedule to keep, no getting up when it is still dark outside, no rushing to get ready in the morning or competing with brothers or sisters for time in the bathroom. *Finally, a time to simply relax and do nothing,* they think.

But that becomes old fast. Soon they must channel the energy used to get ready for school, attend seven hours of classes and complete homework into other activities.

But how? Parents are responsible for answering this question.

It has been said that a family that does things together—whether it be cooking, enjoying dinner, playing games—stays together! This is even more true in the Internet age where time is easily swallowed by computers and electronic devices.

With some creative thinking and planning, you can increase the opportunities to experience activities that encourage family closeness, love, friendship and bonding, which will yield warm memories for years to come.

Plan Ahead

As early as possible, examine your schedule to see what prior obliga-

tions you will have during the summer months ahead, making sure to leave plenty of free time to spend with your kids.

Set goals for each of your children, write them down and then think of ways to implement them. This will take effort, but the rewards are well worth it. For example, depending on the age of your children, assign a number of books to read each summer. They will be able to take them along on lengthy car rides or simply read them outdoors in the cool of the evening with a tall glass of lemonade.

Take advantage of the hot summer weather by exploring the outdoors. Depending where you live, there is a wide variety of things to do. Nature walks, rock collecting, hikes through trails in your area, biking, bug hunts, kite flying in your local park or a picnic are some ideas. You can even camp out in your backyard one night and

recount stories and lessons from your life. Make it a teaching moment by scheduling this when a meteor shower or lunar eclipse is to take place. Or enjoy a night of star gazing on a clear night—picking out as many constellations as possible.

Most of all **HAVE FUN!** Let your children remember their summer as a time when their parents went out of their way to go on seemingly spur-of-the-moment outings. Your children do not have to know that what appears to be spontaneous family fun was actually planned. Take a drive to a nearby country farm, a museum, flea market or county fair. The possibilities of places to visit are as broad as your imagination!

Troubling Trends

But keeping your children engaged may not be as simple as it seems. The evidence is overwhelmingly clear that families are under assault

as never before. Work and the stresses of our hectic lives devour much of our time, often allowing someone or something else to unknowingly take our place as parents.

Studies reveal that children spend more time watching television than in any other activity except sleep—more than four hours a day!

In addition, Americans in general

spend more time using the Internet, and less time with family. The average user is online 17 hours per week.

The percentage of Americans who use the Internet has reached 80 percent, with the highest percentage of Internet use among Americans under the age of 18, according to a study by the Center for the Digital Future.

In 1996, *The Christian Science Monitor* reported that television, combined with the Internet, now reaches children at a younger age and for more time than any other socializing institution except the family. If that was 14 years ago, how much more so today?

Generally, parents feel obligated to provide the kind of life for their children that they never had—including every material convenience that their children want. Often both parents work and some even have two jobs to make this happen. As a result, Impulse Research Corp. reports that more



Be a TRUE Father!

A father's role is more crucial than meets the eye.

BY MICHAEL H. VENISH

BEING A FATHER is one of the most rewarding and exciting responsibilities a man can experience. Despite society's reluctance to admit it, fathers undergird everything that is a family.

Yet the very foundation of this unit is under tremendous stress. In the last 45 years, the United States has become a world leader in fatherless families, accompanied by Britain and other nations.

U.S. Senator 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."

There is a cause for every effect! In this case, a lack of leadership from caring, loving fathers underlies much of society's troubles.

Lonely Children

The United States National Center for Health Statistics revealed, "Fatherless

children are at a dramatically greater risk of drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, suicide, poor educational 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 who have supportive fathers are more likely to be better students, build healthy relationships and be less prone to depression.

"Overall, more than 75 percent of American children are at risk because of

than 50 percent of families spend less than 10 hours per week together—roughly 1.5 hours per day!

Columbia University examined the effect of family time on the character and social development of children. Teenagers who ate dinner with their families five times or more per week were more likely to perform better in school and less likely to use tobacco, drink alcohol or use illicit drugs than those who ate with their families two times or less per week. The study found that mealtime at home improves vocabulary skills of children and provides a forum for family members to learn about what is happening in the lives of others.

Our Responsibility

Children are a most precious resource. Arguably one of the most important relationships in society is that of a parent and child. Parents have been entrusted to rear, train and develop their children into young adults.



Recognize that children need parents' attention and loving guidance to grow into mature adults. They were made this way by a Creator who understands what His Creation needs—and provided an Instruction Manual, the Bible, to guide them in all matters, including the parent-child relationship.

Psalm 127:3 states, “Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is His reward.”

Parents have been given a gift from God to look after, treasure and care for. God considers children precious in His sight, given to parents to train, mold and teach.

In fact, God commands parents in Deuteronomy 6:7 to teach your children “when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lay down, and when you rise up” in the morning. In other words, parents are required to teach their children every moment they are with them.

When numerous digital distractions threaten to cheat your children of a productive summer, you are obligated to make time for the most precious gift you have been given. What type of memories will you foster for them and their children in the years to come?

Plan ahead to ensure this summer is the most memorable, most rewarding yet. Your children will one day thank you greatly. □

paternal deprivation,” Henry B. Biller wrote in *The Father Factor*. “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.”

Are you a *true* father? Do you fully understand your role in the family?

A Father's Work

As a father, you must be a major influence in your children's lives. You must not wrap yourself up in your work, hobbies or sports. Your responsibilities as a father must rise above personal interests.

Regardless of secular opinion, 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, be sure to lead by example. Teach your family to have respect for each other. 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. Use these precious moments to expand their thinking by teaching them lessons you learned from your past.

Do not allow society to diminish your role as a father. Whether or not you are in a traditional two-parent family, one of the most precious things a father can give to his children is *time*. You (with their mother) 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, but it does not promote quality family interaction. Rather, play board games, ask for their input about an upcoming vacation, plan a picnic, or grow a garden.

As a father, take the lead. Keep it light and have fun.

In his book, *Train Your Children God's Way*, David C. Pack details the importance of the special bonds fathers

develop with their sons and daughters.

“Fathers, strive to always be a hero to your son(s). Be sure that he can always look up to your example...It has been shown that positive father role models produce sons who are both generally more sound in thinking and better at overall problem-solving. An example of strength and maturity displayed by you will reappear later in your sons.”

Concerning daughters, Mr. Pack writes, “It has been said that girls tend to marry men who are most like their fathers. This makes being a good father more crucial than meets the eye. It is not unusual for *abused* girls to marry *abusive* men. The daughters of warm, kind, patient, wise and loving fathers generally look for the same qualities in prospective mates.”

Prove to yourself that you are, in every sense, a true father and be an example to your children.

For more about a father's crucial role in the family, read *Train Your Children God's Way*. □





Failed Thai Revolt Leaves 82 Dead



CLASHES BETWEEN Red Shirt protestors from the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship and the Thai army ended with dozens dead after military forces stormed Bangkok's central district and forced the opposition to surrender. Up to 3,000 demonstrators had gathered there to demand early elections to replace the current Thai government. Since mid-March, protests have resulted in more than 82 deaths, including two foreign journalists, and approximately 1,800 injuries.

While most of the two-month demonstration was relatively peaceful and without incident, heightened tensions between protestors and military troops prompted the army's use of deadly force to clear the city's streets of the anti-government campaigners.

"Surreal scenes of warfare erupted in one of the ritziest parts of the capital, as troops armed with M-16s marched through the central business district past upscale apartment buildings to retake the area around manicured Lumpini Park, which has been under the control of protestors camped there for weeks," *The Associated Press* reported.

The Red Shirts, a rural movement made up of farmers and peasants that began after former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's oust by military coup, started the protests under the premise that the current government is undemocratic, and violating their right to vote.

"The divisions in Thailand are complex," *The Australian* reported. "The Red Shirts of the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship have their base in the relatively impoverished rural north-east of Thailand. They support former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted from office in a coup in 2006.

Originally elected in 2001 and re-elected in 2005, he is a multi-billionaire who continued to run his family conglomerate, at great profit, while in office. He became popular with the poor by distributing money to rural village chiefs and undertaking other populist economic measures."

"After the coup there was a democratic election in 2008," the paper

sides were further deadlocked after demonstrators demanded the United Nations be involved in the mediations, a measure Thai authorities immediately dismissed.

In response to the military crackdown and resulting surrender, angry protestors set fire to 27 locations around the city, including the stock exchange and Southeast Asia's sec-

Thai Battlegrounds

Leaders of the opposition Red Shirts surrendered after the army stormed their camp in Bangkok, but protests broke out in the capital city and around the country.

In Bangkok

Red Shirts set fires at the Thai stock exchange, several banks, the power company headquarters and a high-end mall

In Udon Thani

Rioters set fire to government offices

In Khon Kaen

Protesters vandalized a city hall

In Ubon Ratchathani

Mobs attacked troops

The Issue

Red Shirts want Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva to resign, call for new elections

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Source: Reuters, BBC, ESRI Graphic: Pat Carr



stated. "Thaksin couldn't run but his allies won again. After less than a year in office, they were confronted by mass Yellow Shirt [opposition party] demonstrations, which paralysed the airport. The courts ruled some of Thaksin's allies ineligible for politics, there were some parliamentary defections and all of a sudden Thailand had a new government, led by Abhisit Vejjajiva, of the estimably liberal Democrat Party."

Although protestors indicated a willingness to negotiate, they still refused to vacate their urban encampment. Negotiations between the two

ond-largest department store, forcing authorities to implement a nighttime curfew to restore order to large parts of the country.

Even though the situation has been resolved, *CBC News* reported that Thailand's Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva said it will take some time to re-establish peace in the Asian nation.

"We will continue to move swiftly to restore normalcy," he said, "and we recognize that as we move ahead, there are huge challenges ahead of us, particularly the challenge of overcoming the divisions that have occurred in this country." □

■ **ROCKED BY VIOLENCE:** Top, an anti-government protester hurls a firecracker over a barricade (May 18, 2010). Left, Thai soldiers take positions near the protestors' camp (May 19, 2010). Right, anti-government protestors take cover from security forces (May 19, 2010).

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES (TOP), MANAN VATSYAYANA/AFP/ (LEFT), BAY ISMOYO/AFP/ (RIGHT) GETTY IMAGES

The Disappearing Family Farm

The lifestyle of the family farmer is fading fast.
How does this affect you?

BY JACOB C. TOEWS



PHOTO: CAINSTOCKPHOTO.COM

IN THE 21ST CENTURY, few are able to step outside on a warm summer morning and hear hens clucking contentedly and cattle lowing in the field. Nor are they able to walk to the garden and pull up fresh carrots, harvest

succulent lettuce and pick tomatoes from the vine. This way of life is rapidly disappearing.

Gone for most are the times when farmers would work together with their wives and children to feed the cows or harvest that year's

crop of onions and garlic from the garden.

Gone are the days when youngsters, after finishing their chores, could run down to the pond, straddle the branch of a large willow, lean back against the trunk, and spend an idyllic hour watching the turtles and fish or listening to the yellow warbler while looking out over acres of cornfields.

Gone are the evening meals where families recounted the day's accomplishments.

A class of society is being lost, and with it, iconic barns and sprawling rural landscapes are fading at an alarming rate. The concept of a small family farm—one that has been owned and operated by one family for possibly several generations—has been all but destroyed.

Changing Structure

The ever-encroaching crush of urbanization plays a major part in the disappearance of the family farm.

“According to the Census of Agriculture,” a United States Department of Agriculture report revealed, “the number of U.S. farms fell sharply until the early 1970s after peaking at 6.8 million in 1935...By 2002, about 2.1 million farms remained.”

“The American Farmland Trust estimates an acre of U.S. farmland goes into development every two minutes, while Environment Colorado estimates the state lost 1.26 million acres of agricultural land between 1997 and 2002,” *The Denver Post* reported. “This loss averages 690 acres per day in Colorado, the third highest in the nation.”

Statistics Canada said the situation there is similar, as the amount of farms surveyed by the census “continues to drop, according to data from the 2006 Census of Agriculture, declining 7.1% to 229,373 farms over the five-year period between the censuses...This represents 17,550 fewer farms than in 2001.”

As the farming community ages, those within it and the land they own come under intense pressure.

“Aging farmers and ranchers, whose average age has risen from 52 to 57 during the last 20 years, are often retiring without a younger family member willing to take over, thus too often removing multi-generation ranches and farms from production” (ibid.).

Statistics show that less than a third of farms have a designated successor in the family. Many young couples are unwilling to invest \$500,000 in a business that requires them to work 12-16 hours per day throughout most of the year and then get a return that amounts to the equivalent of what a farmers’ wages would have been 30 years ago.

Bright city lights are another distraction. Today, farming is looked down upon while city-based, high-paying white-collar jobs are glamorized. Also, some farmers do not want their children to have to “work as hard as I do,” and advise them to pursue a different profession.

Economic Imbalances

Another reason for the disappearing family farm is the ever-increasing disparity between dwindling income and soaring expenses. Net farm income in 2000 dropped to \$39.7 billion—the lowest since 1995. On the other hand, production expenses rose to \$197.5 billion or 88 percent of gross cash income—the highest since 1980-1984.

While food prices have gone up substantially in supermarkets, the wages farmers are paid have been left out of the equation. Although private manufacturers can include all their costs plus a fair profit, government boards often set prices for what farmers receive for their products. Because of this, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that farmers will have the largest job loss of any other occupation.

“It has been estimated that living expenses for the average farm family exceed \$47,000 per year,” an Environmental Protection Agency report stated. “Clearly, many farms that meet the U.S. Census’ definition would not produce sufficient income to meet farm family living expenses.

In fact, fewer than 1 in 4 of the farms in this country produce gross revenues in excess of \$50,000.”

Growth of Agribusiness

Giant agribusinesses are an additional factor. Even though 90 percent of all farms are still owned by families or individuals, more and more farms are becoming “corporations.”

These giant agribusinesses are not just involved in local farming, but also in the distribution, processing, storage and retail of farm products nationwide. The result is that milk in a carton now can contain the milk of hundreds of cows. The same can be said of the fast-food burger.

“The days when hamburger meat was ground in the back of a butcher shop, out of scraps from one or two sides of beef, are long gone...the huge admixture of animals in most American ground beef plants has played a crucial role in spreading *E. coli*...” Eric Schlosser wrote in *Fast Food Nation*. “A single fast food hamburger now contains meat from dozens or even hundreds of different cattle.”

As small family farms are squeezed out of existence, investment groups and equity firms are buying more and more land, according to a *Reuters* article.

“The World Bank and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) cited the trend in a report in January, noting a ‘sharp

increase’ in agricultural investments the world over. Such private investment could offer significant benefits to the sector—not to mention the human race—by helping modernize farming tools and techniques, the agency said.

“Not everybody is thrilled by Wall Street’s hayride, however. At a World Bank gathering in Washington last month critics addressed the implications of the trend, calling it a modern-day land rush. They worry in particular about what they label an unfair transfer of valuable land and water resources from the poor to the wealthy.”

Matter of Subsidies

In the agricultural industry, certain products can be produced cheaply in large quantities, stored over long periods, and shipped easily. These items must be heavily subsidized to keep prices artificially low on the world market. Yet subsidies—money paid to industries to produce goods more cheaply for a nation so that it can better compete in the global market—can harm the family farm.

“Since 1970, [U.S.] farm subsidies have totaled \$578 billion, according to the Historical Tables of the U.S. budget...Roughly 90 percent of commodity payments go to farmers raising grains and oilseeds (wheat, corn, sorghum, soybeans), cotton and rice; they represent about a fifth of farm cash receipts,” a *Newsweek* article stated.



Subsidies can lead to chronic overproduction and dumping of surpluses on the global market, which often forces smaller, non-competitive producers out of business. The abandoned land is then swallowed by larger conglomerate farms.

Farm Invasions

In South Africa, a different problem is affecting family farms. Increasing attacks are driving many from their land. For example, “a militia led onslaught

lies have also been forced to leave the properties along with their employers. The General Agriculture and Plantation Workers Union reported last year that more than 60,000 people have been left destitute as a direct result of the land grab initiative in 2009, since the attacks began in earnest last February. The figure adds to the already crippling unemployment rate of more than 94% in the country. But despite this, there has been no effort by either the unity government or by SADC to stop the attacks that are

appears one of the best environments capable of producing strong, character-driven families. This—building strong character—is the most tragic loss as family farming dies out.

Over centuries, an agricultural lifestyle presented favorable conditions for the mental development of children because it exposed them to an immense variety of stimuli. It allowed them to channel their boundless energy in helping parents care for animals, collect eggs, grow vegetables and harvest grain.

For adults, farm life provided a slower pace, with time to think. Built into the occupation was a healthier diet and workout routine. Life in the fields provided what Pulitzer-Prize-winning author and agriculturist Louis Bromfield called “the only profession in which man deals constantly with all the laws of the universe and life.”

Not until the Industrial Revolution did nations move from an agrarian society into ever-expanding metropolises. While this shift has provided many modern benefits, society has inadvertently lost the strong focus on the moral character, integrity and work ethic.

How can modern nations recapture the values once automatically instilled in children raised on the farm?

Individuals can fight against the general pull of the environment around them. But the only widespread solution would be a complete reset of today’s society, including its schools, cities, religions and governments.

In this “reset” society, family agriculture could regain great prominence. Cattle could feed in large unpolluted pastures. Regularly favorable weather conditions would provide a bumper crop, with continuous surpluses of food. In this society, there would be peace, with weapons of war converted to farm implements.

While this seems impossible—it is not!

For a full, inspiring view of what is just ahead, read *Tomorrow’s Wonderful World – An Inside View!* □

“For adults, farm life provided a slower pace, with time to think.”



PHOTO: GENE KREBS

on commercial farms in Rusape saw a local farming family come under siege, with two people being assaulted by a mob of land invaders,” *AllAfrica* reported.

In 2008, the South African Development Community (SADC) ruled that land grabbing was unlawful, but this was largely ignored. Under the guise of land “reform,” the attacks have intensified.

“The ongoing land attacks have also left tens of thousands of people unemployed, as farm workers and their fami-

having such far flung implications for the country” (ibid.).

Greatest Loss

In this technologically advanced world, most are unaware that a prosperous society does not hinge on acquiring gadgets, vehicles or other luxury items. Rather, a significant indicator of a healthy society is the stability of the family unit.

As small farms vanish from the countryside, with them dis-



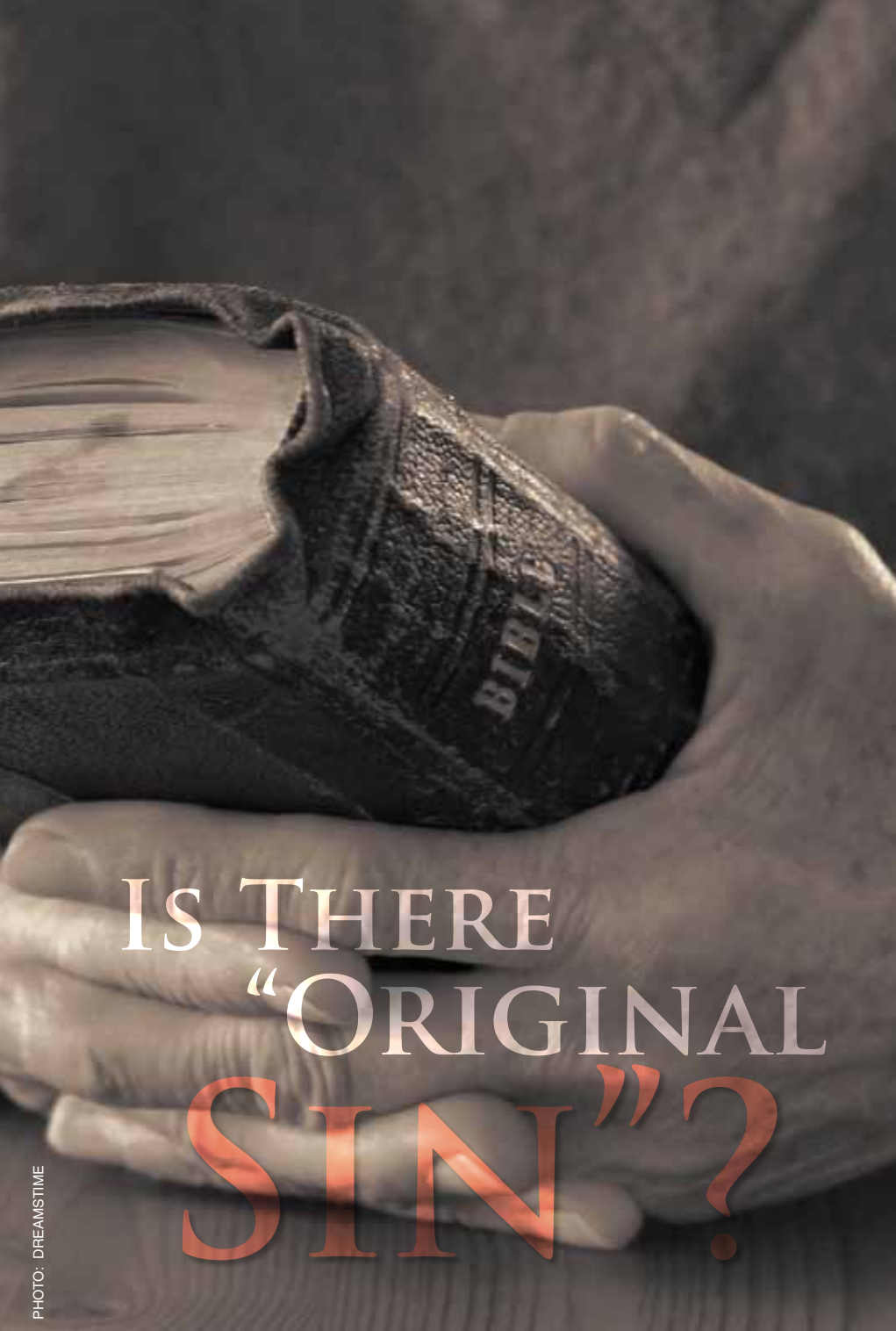


PHOTO: DREAMSTIME

IS THERE “ORIGINAL SIN”?

IT ALL BEGAN with a conversation. Satan, through the serpent, asked Eve whether God had said they were not to eat the fruit of every tree of the garden. God had previously instructed Adam and Eve that they could eat of every tree, except one. Eve, remembering God’s command, replied that they could eat of every tree except for the “tree of the

knowledge of good and evil,” nor even “touch it, lest you die.”

God had actually said “you shall surely die” (Gen. 2:17). Satan countered that they “would not surely die,” implying that God was not being truthful and was holding back something good from them. In effect, he was saying, “you cannot rely on God’s word.”

Influenced by Satan’s convincing argument, Eve reasoned that it “was

Nearly 6,000 years ago in the Garden of Eden, an event took place that set the course of human history. Through the ages, it has affected every person who has ever lived. None have escaped the effects—including you!

BY JAMES F. TURCK

good for food, and that it was pleasing to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make wise [so] she took of its fruit, and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.” Thus, Adam and Eve conducted the first human scientific experiment. Rejecting God’s clear instructions, they observed, reasoned, hypothesized, and then acted to see if the hypothesis was correct. The result?

“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked” (Gen. 3:7). While Eve was deceived, Adam was not. He knew what he was doing.

Some religious scholars teach that Adam’s eating of the fruit was the “original sin,” and that this same sin is a “genetic defect” that has been passed on to every person’s soul at birth from generation to generation. It is considered the sin that separates all people from God and brings death.

Millions believe this doctrine. From youth, Catholics are taught it.

But is it biblical?

An Idea Is Born

While Adam and Eve certainly did sin, the Old Testament mentions nothing about this supposed universal sin

transmitted to the entire human race through heredity. Neither do any of the books contained in the New Testament. It is simply not there.

This doctrine has its origins in pagan religion, and was introduced to the Catholic Church by the second century Catholic writer Irenaeus. Augustine, who, before his conversion to Catholicism, was a Manichaean, later cemented it into Catholic dogma.

According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, “Manichaeism is a religion founded by the Persian Mani in the latter half of the third century. It purported to be the true synthesis of all the religious systems then known, and actually consisted of Zoroastrian, Dualism, Babylonian folklore and Buddhist ethics and some small and superficial, additions of Christian elements. As the theory of two eternal principles, good and evil, is predominant in this fusion of ideas and gives color to the whole, Manichaeism is classified as a form of religious Dualism.”

This pagan religion influenced Augustine in his formulation of the original sin doctrine.

The original sin doctrine is simply a fiction of men! It essentially teaches that Adam, not us individually, is really responsible for our sin. Romans 3:23 clearly states, “For *all* [not just Adam!] have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

Every human being has sinned of his own account! All are responsible for and guilty of their *own* sins—not those of Adam, Eve or anyone else!

This doctrine also teaches that Adam passed on his sin as some sort of inherited genetic defect, in and through our flesh, which is now inherently wicked. How absurd! Adam no more passed his sin to us than he did having only 23 ribs after God removed one to form Eve.

Many Christians believe that all people deep inside are essentially good, and secretly want to obey and love God. This derives from the pagan teaching that human beings have a pure, pristine, immortal soul locked inside an evil “prison house” body, only able to “escape” at death. Romans 3:11 and 8:7 preclude any supposed

secret, noble motives lying inside a person’s “mind,” and that these are somehow able to control the “flesh.”

What the Bible Says

Religious scholars claim that certain of Paul’s writings support the original sin doctrine. Let’s examine them.

The first is Romans 5:12, 19: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned...For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Verse 12 shows that all human beings suffer death because of what this first man did. But the key is the latter part of verse 12—“death passed upon all men, for that *all* have sinned.” The end of verse 16 emphasizes that death comes not because of Adam’s sin alone, but because of “many offenses” committed by individuals.

The second is Romans 5:13-15: “For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offense, so also is the free gift. For if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, has abounded unto many.”

What is this “imputed sin”? Is it *original* sin? And what was the “similitude of Adam’s sin”? Of whom was he a “figure”?

First, imputed sin is sin that people are responsible for because they *knew* the Law when they committed the sin (Rom. 4:15). People cannot sin or thus be guilty of sin where there is no Law. Yet Adam sinned, as did all others after him, including Cain (Gen. 4:7-8). This demonstrates that God’s Law has been in place since Creation.

Second, the “similitude of Adam’s sin” was that it alone

cut people off from the Tree of Life (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:24). No other sin in history ever did that! This first human being’s choice, in effect, spoke for all people who would follow. Adam was a “figure” of Christ because they both were unique forerunners.

When Adam took of the tree that God had forbidden, he took it upon himself to decide between what was right and what was wrong—between good and evil. His decision did “open his eyes,” and the spirit of Satan’s influence did enter the minds of Adam and Eve. Their decision negated the opportunity to acquire spiritual knowledge and understanding they could have otherwise had by eating from the Tree of Life. With this decision, human nature came into existence for the first time. All have *voluntarily* followed Adam’s path.

Adam was the first person to make the wrong choice, thus cutting off all humans from the Tree of Life. His decision affected all mankind. Christ, on the other hand, was the first to live a perfect life in harmony with God and the first to offer redemption to all people through the forgiveness of sins (Rom. 5:18-19). In this way, both Adam and Christ affected the entire human race.

Not Born with Original Sin

Human nature, really Satan’s nature, is not something with which a person is born. At birth, a person is neither inherently evil nor good. You are *not* born with any supposed “original sin” on your soul! But over the process of time, after being influenced by the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4) from an early age, an individual takes on an attitude of rebellion against God and His Law (Rom. 8:7) and sins of his own accord.

Yet upon true repentance, baptism and the receiving of the Holy Spirit, human nature can be replaced with God’s divine nature. For those who choose this path, a wonderful, exciting future lies ahead!

To understand more, read *The Awesome Potential of Man*. □



OIL SPILL

Continued from page 4

ceded...that the ruptured oil well could conceivably spill as much as 60,000 barrels a day of oil, more than 10 times the estimate of the current flow.”

Additionally, much of the oil may be in underwater plumes unseen by Coast Guard flyovers or in satellite images.

“There’s an equal amount that could be subsurface too,” University of California Berkeley professor Robert Bea, who worked for Shell Oil Co. in the 1960s during the last big northern Gulf of Mexico oil well blowout told *The Associated Press*. Oil below the surface, he continued, is “near impossible to track.”

The American Experiment

The Gulf oil spill has similarities to many of America’s current problems: it is on a scale never seen before, requires solutions that have never been tested, and all under conditions that are anything but ideal.

With the oil spill and many other crises taxing the nation, the U.S. has entered a new phase of the “Great American Experiment,” having to implement never-before-tried solutions. Yet the nation stands ready to tackle the problems as it always has—head-on.

Even with compounding American crises, most everyone remains confident the nation is ever-resilient, more than able to weather these hard times.

And why shouldn’t the country confidently face daunting tasks? For two centuries, the United States, along with Britain, has had the greatest army, been the world leader in agriculture, manufacturing, production, technology and trade, and held crucial strategic sea gates and defensive strongholds throughout the world. And throughout this time, the nation has repeatedly been given challenges—the Civil War, World War I and World War II, the Great Depression—and has almost always emerged victorious. But *why*?

Most look to the founding fathers as the source of this nation’s greatness,

either citing the unique political ideology set down in the Constitution as the backbone of the country’s success, or believing that the nation was founded on strong Judeo-Christian roots and that strong faith in God has guided the nation to preeminence.

The answer does in fact come from the lives of the fathers of the American people—but NOT in the way most think!

Abraham, the father of the descendants of the ancient nation of Israel, was given a promise from God for his obedience.

“That in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and *your seed shall possess the gate [sea gates] of his enemies*; and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because you have obeyed My voice” (Gen. 22:17-18).

The same promise was passed to Abraham’s son Isaac and later to Jacob: “Therefore God give you of the dew of heaven, and the [fertile places] of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine” (Gen. 27:28).

Jacob was later renamed Israel, and the promise was expounded on by God: “...be fruitful and multiply; a *nation* and a *company of nations* shall be of you” (Gen. 35:11).

Who fits this description? Certainly not the tiny slave nation of ancient Israel or the modern state of Israel on the Mediterranean! When all these specific details are aligned, only two countries emerge: America (a nation) and the United Kingdom (a company of nations).

Because of the promises made to these true “founding fathers” alone, America has enjoyed abundance during its meteoric rise to prominence.

Nation in Decline

In contrast to modern thinking, America did not achieve its superpower status through sheer human effort. Yet, with the unconditional promise of Abraham fulfilled, the blessings America has long enjoyed are being withdrawn.

So what changed? The people of the United States have been ungrateful for their blessings—feeling they are the product of a manmade political system or “unalienable rights” conferred on them by God.

America’s rise, however, was only due to one thing—Abraham’s obedience. Notice why God promised to bless Abraham’s offspring in the first place: “because you have OBEYED My voice.” Only through obedience to God’s laws can the United States return to superpower status.

What then is one of America’s greatest offenses? Covetousness. “For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them *every one is given to covetousness*; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one deals falsely” (Jer. 6:13).

Current world events make obvious the consequences of U.S. disobedience:

■ Old allies of America are turning their backs on the nation: “...thus says the Lord GOD; Behold, I will raise up your lovers [allies] against you, from whom your mind is alienated, and I will bring them against you on every side” (Ezek. 23:22).

■ Once the greatest producer of natural resources, America now must borrow, import and beg to stay afloat (Deut. 28:44).

■ America’s military might continues to wane, being unable to secure peace in Iraq or Afghanistan: “And I will break the pride of your power” (Lev. 26:19).

■ Foreign nations jump at every opportunity to lampoon and mock the country (Ezek. 23:22 and Jer. 4:30).

Instead of heeding the warnings of punishment from a loving God, Americans continue to believe that they can solve their problems. Yet the conditions of the nation—widespread unemployment—\$12.9 trillion in national debt—two “unwinnable” wars on the other side of the globe—make a major Gulf oil spill pale in comparison. Instead of changing their lives, Americans think they can solve the current crises through physical means!

Read carefully: “They have healed also the hurt of...My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace” (Jer. 6:14). Today, much of American life still *feels* normal—peace, but when there is no peace—yet punishment looms unless the nation turns toward God in obedience.

God would never punish without offering a way of escape. Notice: “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they [leaders and religionists] shall say, *Peace and safety*; then sudden destruction comes upon them...But you, brethren, are not in

darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief” (I Thes. 5:2-4).

Individuals can know and respond to what is coming. To understand the pending punishment of America detailed in Scripture—and what it means to you—read David C. Pack’s book *America and Britain in Prophecy*. □

PERSONAL

Continued from page 2

preached this same “kingdom” message everywhere he went. (Carefully read Acts 19:8, 20:25 and 28:23, 31.)

The terms *kingdom of God* and *kingdom* are found scores of times through the New Testament. Yet nearly everyone has lost the knowledge of—and meaning of—what this kingdom is!

“Gospel” is an old English word meaning “god spell” or *good news*. So is “kingdom,” which simply means government. In other words, Christ preached “the good news of the *government* of God.” Peace, happiness, health and abundance would certainly be good news for a mankind that has not known it for 6,000 years.

Jesus’ disciples asked Him what would be the sign of His Coming and of the end of the age. First, He warned His servants of future generations, that there would be deception from many who would come “in [His] Name” (Matt. 24:5), saying, “Christ was Christ”—meaning they would put emphasis on Jesus’ Person not His message. But He also foretold that “this gospel of the

kingdom shall be preached in ALL THE WORLD for a witness unto ALL NATIONS; and *then* shall the end come” (Matt. 24:14).

We are now in the time of the end. Remember, if the kingdom of God had been preached throughout the centuries—from Christ’s time to the present—proclaiming it today could not be a sign we have reached the last days. Impostors and false leaders suppressed the preaching of the true gospel until 1934 when Herbert W. Armstrong began fulfilling this prophecy. The Restored Church of God is today preaching this gospel—but for only a little longer.

Life After Death?

When Jesus spoke of the “kingdom,” what did He mean? The kingdom of God has two separate aspects.

Many speak of salvation—the belief in an afterlife. Some have supposed the gospel is exclusively about “receiving eternal life” or the popular, but unbiblical, idea of “going to heaven” upon death. Of course, the Bible says much about salvation. Actually, salvation is directly related to—is one aspect of—the kingdom of God.

The other is about government. When the kingdom arrives, it will be a world-ruling government. The Bible describes this government in detail.

Message About Government

Prior to Jesus’ birth, an angel appeared to His mother, Mary. Let’s read: “The angel said...you shall...bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob *forever*; and of His kingdom there shall be *no end*” (Luke 1:30-33).

While on trial, Jesus told Pilate, “My *kingdom* [His government] is not of this world.”

Pilate asked, “Are you a king then?”

Jesus responded, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world” (John 18:36-37).

Jesus Christ was born to be a king—but where and over what?

Here is what the prophet Isaiah foretold about Christ: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the GOVERNMENT shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. Of the increase of His *government* and *peace* there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his *kingdom*, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even *forever*” (Isa. 9:6-7).

Obviously, heaven is not awaiting either God’s government or peace. When Christ establishes His government, it will usher in peace and justice for all nations ON EARTH! David’s throne is on Earth!



The Kingdom of God— What No One Knows!

The *World to Come* broadcast series on this topic is available at www.realtruth.org

All God's Prophets Preached the Gospel

The apostle Peter spoke of "...when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution [or restoration] of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of *all His holy prophets since the world began*" (Acts 3:19-21). Of course, heaven *has* received Christ "until" this restoration.

Imagine! Every one ("all") of God's true servants have preached that Christ will return to restore "all things." Prior to Satan's rebellion, God's government was present on Earth. For thousands of years, God's servants have foretold its restoration in detail. I have studied all of the Old Testament prophets many times and seen that each did announce, in one fashion or another, the coming kingdom of God and restitution of all things.

The book of Jude records the preaching of Noah's great-grandfather, Enoch. It is a record of what was spoken over 4,500 years ago—even before the Flood. Consider the incredible scope of these words: "And Enoch also...prophesied...saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints [note the number: there have always been, and still are, much fewer true Christians than most would ever believe], to execute judgment upon *all*, and to convince all that are ungodly... of all their ungodly deeds which they have...committed, and of all their hard speeches...sinners have spoken against Him" (Jude 1:14-15).

Get the clear meaning. The saints (all true Christians) are coming with Christ to judge the entire world, according to their conduct. The truth is astonishing—even shocking. But do not be ignorant of it.

Daniel Understood

The prophet Daniel also understood the kingdom of God was a literal government that would one day rule real people and real nations on Earth. He held no illusion that the kingdom was mere "sentimental fluff" or a "warm feeling"

in the "hearts of men." God used him to explain much special understanding about how and when God's kingdom would come.

All that Daniel was shown was to be "*closed up and sealed* till the time of the end" (Dan. 12:9). I repeat, we are now in that time—and there are many proofs of this. You will want to read our eye-opening booklet *Are These the Last Days?*

Daniel's message is for us, today! He reported big—tremendous!—news that will affect you in your lifetime! Daniel understood and spoke the same gospel Jesus preached—and it is critical we understand what he said.

In chapter 2, Daniel was speaking to the Chaldean King Nebuchadnezzar about matters that had come to the king in a dream. Nebuchadnezzar was the king of a vast empire—Babylon—that he ruled about 600 years before the time of Christ.

The king's magicians were unable to reveal what God could reveal through His prophet Daniel. It was God's purpose to reveal, through that worldly human king, that there is an Almighty living God who rules the entire universe and all kings, governments and nations on Earth are ultimately subject to Him. The humanly wise King Nebuchadnezzar had no knowledge beyond the existence of other human kings and their many false gods. It was the true God's intention to reveal the existence of His government and that it rules the entire universe. He intended to make plain His supreme purpose of bringing that government to Earth in the latter days.

This astonishing prophecy details many things about the restoration of His government—including the time sequence for its arrival.

The first verses of chapter 2 describe the image of a giant man: "This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay" (Dan. 2:32-33).

The image is constructed in four distinct parts. Verses 34-35 then describe a supernatural "stone that smote the image [and] became a great mountain,

and filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:35). Now notice this stone "was cut out *without hands*" (Dan. 2:34). This is because God, not men, had formed it.

The "stone" shatters the image and replaces it, and goes on to encompass the whole Earth. This can only be describing God's government coming to Earth. Again, Daniel is merely announcing the same "kingdom" message that Jesus preached. You do not need to believe me, because this is what your Bible states in a series of verses no one must interpret for you.

Verse 37 plainly states, "You, O king, are a king of kings: for the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory" (Dan. 2:37). Now verse 38: "You [Nebuchadnezzar] are this head of gold" (Dan. 2:38). We must always let the Bible interpret the Bible. This is what it just did.

Verses 39-40 go on to describe three successive kingdoms that would follow Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon.

These verses show historic world empires depicted by different metals in the image. These were *literal* kingdoms: (1) the Chaldean-Babylonian Empire of gold, (2) the Medo-Persian Empire of silver, (3) the Greco-Macedonian Empire of brass, and (4) the Roman Empire, made of iron mixed with clay in its final appearance. The record from history is that these four kingdoms (or empires) did rule successively. The fourth kingdom will one more time rule and influence the world just before—and up to—when God's kingdom is established.

God expressly reveals to us now that HE is the One who establishes and removes—and establishes and removes, again and again—earthly governments (or kingdoms).

Defining a Kingdom

Many ask, "But what is a kingdom?" Preachers and theologians have tried to spiritualize away the meaning, because they have not carefully examined God's definition—what the Bible says.

This is found in verse 39, which refers to these kingdoms "which shall bear rule over all the earth" (Dan. 2:39). This cannot refer to the nebu-

lous idea of a kingdom in the “hearts of men”—or some kind of church or churches. It speaks of rulership by governments with authority over literal nations—and literal people. Will you let preachers tell you otherwise—or will you believe the Bible definition of a kingdom? And remember, these kingdoms “bear rule over all the Earth”!

Note two important aspects of the towering image: First, the metals *decrease* in value descending from the head to the legs and feet. So the quality of each succeeding kingdom or empire is less in value than the preceding one. Second, the metals *increase* in strength descending the statue’s body. In other words, the power and scope of each succeeding kingdom or empire is greater than the one before it.

Finally, notice the two legs represent a divided kingdom. The Roman Empire was indeed divided, with capitals at both Rome and Constantinople. The 10 toes are part iron and part clay. Iron cannot mix with clay, so this pictures instability. When the feet break, the entire man will collapse. Careful study must be made of Revelation 13 and 17 and Daniel 7, with Daniel 2, to fully understand the succession of these four kingdoms, and to see more clearly that the *10 toes* are in fact *10 separate kings* who temporarily unite in the last days.

Together, these four chapters present a powerful and sobering prophecy about latter-day events—that will affect *you and me in our lifetime!* Revelation 17:8 describes a “Beast” that ascends out of a “bottomless pit” and is ridden by a “woman.” This Beast involves 10 kings who receive power and unite under a charismatic leader who will take the role of the “Beast.” This will be the seventh, and last, short-lived resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire—arising *now* in the heart of Europe. The booklet *Who or What Is the Beast of Revelation?* is vital for you to understand. I urge you to take time to read it.

A United States of Europe lies just ahead. It is crucial that you comprehend what these prophecies mean!

Something incredible happens “in the days of these kings” (the 10 toes, depicting the last 10 kings of Revelation 17:12). Christ’s arrival removes all doubt about exactly what the kingdom of God is. Also, God tells us when it will arrive: “And in the days of these kings [the last 10] *shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people [God will never allow human beings to seize control], but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever*” (Dan. 2:44).

God—not men—will establish the greatest world-ruling empire of all time. And He will never allow men and their opinions to disrupt it, for it will “stand forever.” This promise is sure. It will happen—whether men believe it or not! My job is to report it to you, not make you believe it!

The Woman of Revelation 17

Now let’s understand a vital connection to the seven revivals of the Roman system. Revelation 17 describes each as having “a *woman* sit[ting] upon [a] scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having *seven heads* and *ten horns*” (Rev. 17:3). The heads are seven separate revivals, again, with a *10-horn* final one composed of 10 kings.

Of the woman, “...upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the *saints*, and with the blood of the *martyrs* of Jesus” (Rev. 17:5-6). Verse 1 calls her a “great whore that sits upon *many waters*,” with verse 15 explaining the “waters” are many “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (Rev. 17:1, 15).

This graphic description is of a large, very powerful modern-day *church* descended from the ancient system of Babylon. She is a “mother” of many “harlot” daughter churches. These left her in protest because they

disagreed with some few of her abominations. Understand. This is not a small church, but rather a great church ruling many peoples and nations. The chapter speaks of the woman’s “fornication” with the “kings of the earth,” and of her as “that *great city*, which reigns over the kings of the earth.” This city’s identity is all too obvious.

Revelation 12 describes a very different woman—the true Church—that the powerful other “woman” church has persecuted for 2,000 years. God ultimately destroys the whore and her daughters by turning the Beast she rides against her. But first she must “ride” the final resurrection of the Holy Roman (Babylonian system) Empire!

There is not much time left until this last revival appears—with the wonderful kingdom of God to appear soon after. (Read Revelation 19:11-16.) All the governments of men—of every large and small country today—will be smashed and replaced by God’s supergovernment.

Soon all nations will see “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of *our Lord*, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever,” as Isaiah foretold (Rev. 11:15). Just as countries today are real, literal, physical kingdoms, from just this passage, so is God’s government also real and literal.

Jesus Christ was born to be a King—to rule all nations of Earth forever with the help of *other* spirit-composed kings. This is the central theme of the entire Bible: “And out of His [Christ’s] mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite *the nations*: and He shall *rule them* with a rod of iron...and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:15-16).

Have you been told about these passages—*any* of them? I never learned or even heard of them in the church of my youth—and yet, here they are, available with unmistakable clarity.

For more incredible truths about God’s soon-coming supergovernment, read *What Is the Kingdom of God?* □



AMERICAS

Flooding Causes Death, Devastation in Tennessee

More than 30 people across the southeast died after a massive storm system hit Tennessee and neighboring states Mississippi, Arkansas and Kentucky. Torrential downpours devastated the region and caused the area's worst flooding in more than 100 years. It was the most destructive non-hurricane-related event in the United States since the Civil War.

Storms lasting two days dumped more than 13 inches of rain into the Cumberland River and its tributaries, causing them to crest 12 feet above normal levels in some areas. Record-breaking downpours also caused deadly flash floods, which engulfed unsuspect-

ing drivers on the interstate and trapped others inside their homes.

Rushing torrents snapped bridges off their supports, gouged holes several feet deep into roadways and created scrap piles of dozens of cars. Some residents had to be rescued by boat or by neighbors who pulled them to safety by breaking windows of their homes.

Authorities declared 52 out of 95 Tennessee counties disaster areas and over 22,000 residents lost power throughout the state.

One of the worst affected areas was Nashville, the country music capital of the world. Many of its historic buildings, which house prized country memorabilia, including the Country

Music Hall of Fame and the Grand Old Opry concert hall, filled with water. The 160,000-square-foot area of Soundcheck Nashville, which houses gear for more than 1,000 musicians and business owners, was completely flooded, with losses estimated to be in the millions of dollars.

In certain sections of downtown Nashville, flooding more than eight feet deep forced streets to close. Approximately 1,500 residents were evacuated from the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center to a nearby high school for safety reasons.

Following the storms, residents were asked to conserve as much water as possible after one of the city's two water treatment facilities flooded.

"As the rising Cumberland River

■ **FLOODED CITY:** The Cumberland River overflowed its banks and inundated Nashville after more than 13 inches of rain fell in two days across Tennessee (May 4, 2010).

PHOTO: JEFF GENTNER/GETTY IMAGES

Please see **DEVASTATION**, page 24





■ **WAIST DEEP:** A resident wades across a flooded sidewalk in Nashville, Tennessee (May 3, 2010).

PHOTO: RUSTY RUSSELL/GETTY IMAGES

DEVASTATION

Continued from page 23

threatened a levee that protected the remaining plant, neighborhoods and businesses northwest of downtown, city workers and about 200 volunteers frantically filled and stacked sandbags,” *The Boston Globe* reported.

But even after the rain stopped falling, floodwaters continued to rise. Rescuers and volunteers used boats and other amphibious vehicles to make their way through the water, picking up hundreds of trapped residents and tourists from various parts of the affected areas.

“Soggy furniture, drywall and flooring lined the curbs as residents and volunteers tried to stay positive while cleaning up the damage flooding left behind,” *CNN* reported.

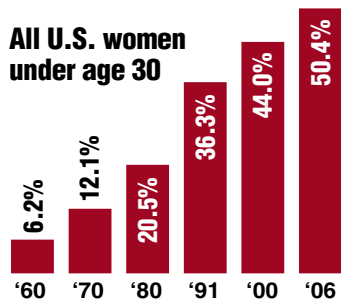
Nashville officials estimate property damage amounts to over \$1.5 billion and maintain the recovery effort will take many months. □

One in Four Babies Born Out of Wedlock

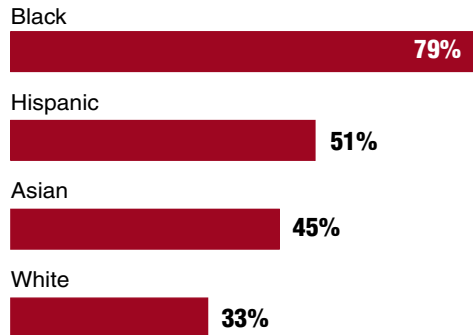
Unwed Mothers

The percentage of increase of out-of-wedlock births since 1960

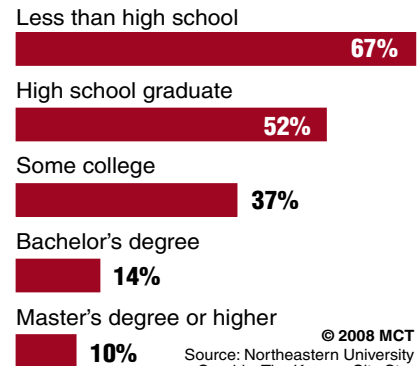
All U.S. women under age 30



By race, ethnic group



Mother's education level



© 2008 MCT
Source: Northeastern University
Graphic: The Kansas City Star

According to a recently released survey from the United States National Center for Health Statistics, 38.5 percent of all births in the country occur outside of marriage—a historic peak. Of the total number of births to women between the ages of 20 and 29, 60 percent are born to unwed mothers—up 42 percent from 1970.

Statistics also reveal that the number of unwed mothers cohabitating with the birth child's father has risen. Approximately 20 percent of unwed mothers under age 20 and 13 percent between the ages of 20-24 were living with the father at the time of birth.

Researchers also noticed an increase in the number of

unmarried households with biological children, from 200,000 in 1970 to 1.7 million in 2007, the time of the most recent survey.

Another age group with a considerable increase in the number of unwed births were those in their 30s and 40s, which account for one out of every six births.

The survey shows that the more traditional institution of marriage does not seem to be as appealing to younger adults. In 1950, for example, the median age for first marriages was 20 for women and 23 for men. Today those numbers have risen to 25 for women and 27 for men, reflecting society's changing attitude about marriage and childrearing. □

EUROPE

New British Prime Minister Following Gordon Brown's Resignation



■ **LEAVING OFFICE:** Above, Britain's former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, his wife and children walk to their car after he announced his resignation (May 11, 2010). Right, Prime Minister David Cameron talks to civil servants during a meeting in central London (May 13, 2010).

PHOTO: LEON NEAL/AFP/GETTY IMAGES (ABOVE) LEFTERIS PITARAKIS - WPA POOL/GETTY IMAGES (RIGHT)

After Britain's general parliamentary election left the nation with no clear ruling party, Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced his resignation, making way for the Conservative Party's David Cameron to become the next British premier.

According to British House of Commons rules, the majority party must have more seats than all other parties combined to elect a prime minister. In the recent election, Mr. Brown's Labour Party had only 29 percent of the vote, or 306 of the 326 seats needed to remain in power. Mr. Cameron's party won 36 percent and the Liberal Democrats 26 percent.

Mr. Brown, Britain's prime minister for nearly three years, revealed why he stepped down.

"The reason that we have a hung parliament is that no single party and no single leader was able to win the full support of the country," he said.

"As leader of my party I must accept that as a judgment on me. I therefore intend to ask the Labour Party to set in train the processes needed for its own leadership election."

In a surprising move, the center-right Conservative Party allied with the left-wing Liberal Democrats to form a coalition government, choosing David Cameron as their leader.

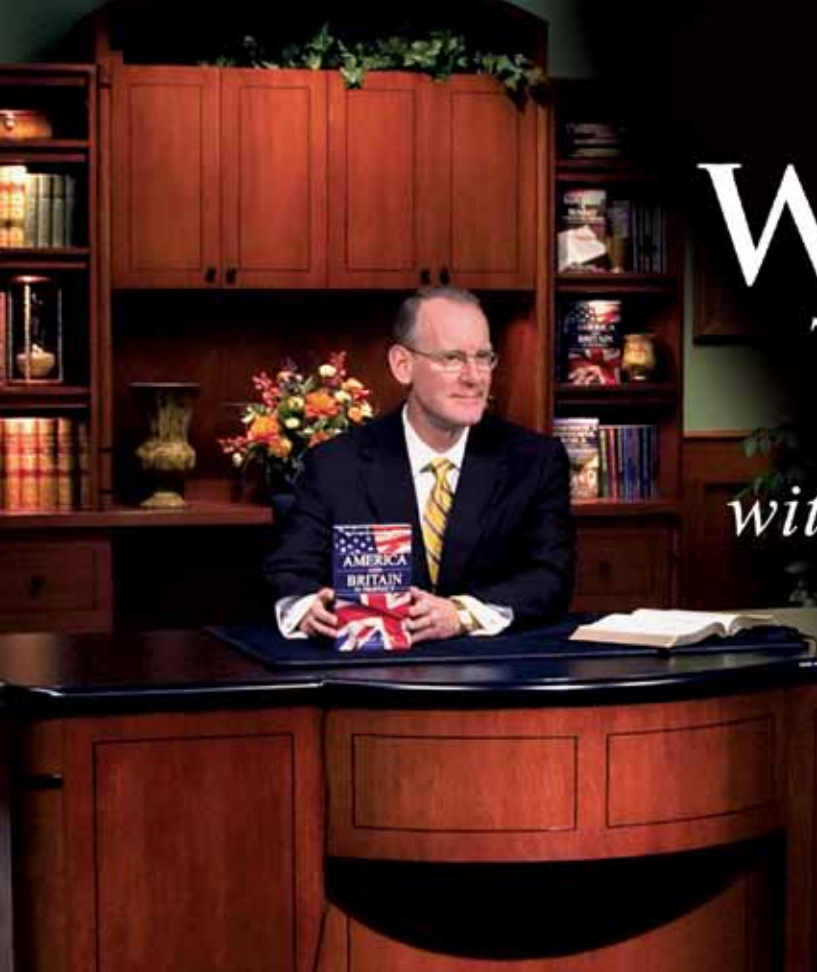
British news analysts are unsure

how Mr. Cameron will lead the nation—with *BBC* calling him an "unknown quantity"—especially considering that one coalition term gives Liberal Democrats five seats in the cabinet and one-third of the seats in the majority party.

Mr. Cameron has quickly revealed he is not afraid to stand his ground in political debates. After only two weeks in office, the new prime minister refused to help rescue Europe from financial crisis, despite insistence from Germany and France. He also announced a controversial \$8.6 billion worth of cuts in British governmental spending, which will take effect immediately. □

THE WORLD TO COME

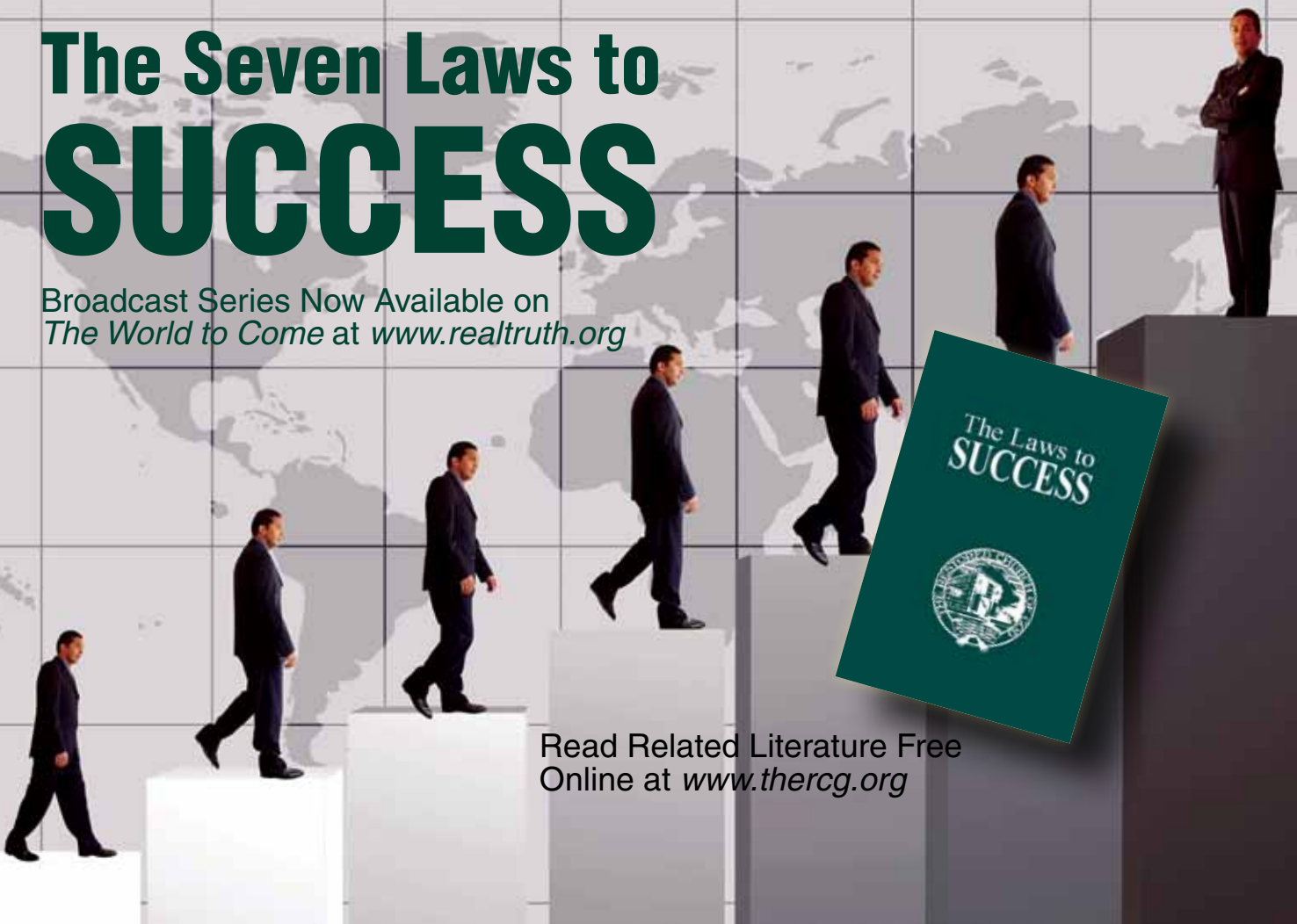
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