

THE WORLD AHEAD

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EDITORIAL

The Importance of ZEAL



Roderick C. Meredith
Editor in Chief

Most of us have seen the television images. Multiple thousands of Muslims in Iraq or Iran screaming at the top of their lungs, "Death to America! Down with the Great Satan!"

These people are misinformed and misguided. But they have a fervency and ZEAL which few American Christians possess. They are willing to endure martyrdom for their religion. Are you?

In our laid-back, "me now" society, few people get excited about religion anymore. Oh, they may shout and scream at a bad driver who cuts in front of them. And the kids may shout and scream at a rock concert. But get all worked up about religion? Well, really....

Yet, this lack of emotional involvement and expression in important things is part of the problem facing our entire Anglo-American-Canadian society. True religion demands *total commitment*. Genuine worship of God the Father and Jesus Christ demands ZEAL. But one note of caution: godly zeal must be directed by *right* knowledge, wisdom and love.

The very *Shema* of the Jewish people—which Jesus Christ said is the GREAT commandment of the law—gives us this command, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD *is* our God, the LORD alone! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deut. 6:4-5 NRSV; cf. Matt. 22:36-37).

You cannot love God with all your being without fiery ZEAL for the true God and His ways! Yet when the resurrected Jesus Christ describes the final era of His Church—the era just before His Second Coming—He has to exhort its members, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be ZEALOUS and repent" (Rev. 3:19).

At the end of this six thousand years of human experience, most people have become somewhat jaded. They feel they have been "fooled" before. They feel they can't unreservedly trust anybody or anything. They are also involved—up to their eyeballs—in the pursuit of pleasure.

Our TV situation comedies with their constant sarcasm and put-downs of religion—along with the voyages into the never-never land of monsters, space travel, demon gods and other far-out situations constantly pictured in the media—make the idea of fervently *worshipping* the true God seem rather mundane to most people. Yet these same videos, films and television shows will soon entirely DISAPPEAR from the world scene according to prophecy! And the real GOD—the Creator and RULER of heaven and earth will be in *total charge of everything* on this earth in the soon-coming millennial rule of Jesus Christ as King of kings! (Rev. 11:15).

So it is vitally important that *all* of us understand the need to get truly *excited* and totally involved in the pursuit of what is permanent and fulfilling—*true* religion. If you're afraid of being deceived, then zealously

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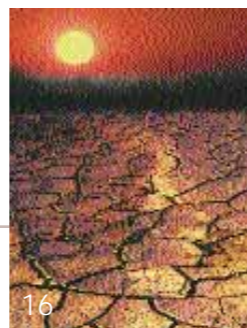
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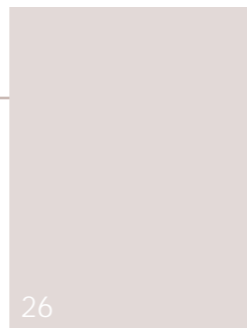


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The United Nations at 50...

United for a Better World?

by Thomas E. Robinson

“Approaching its 50th anniversary this fall, the United Nations is getting more criticism than congratulations. From its dubious peace-keeping operations to...its paper-spewing bureaucracy to the personal style of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, nearly everyone finds something to dislike” (*World Press Review*, “The U.N. at 50: Midlife Crisis,” June 1995, p. 8).

“But there is no alternative; as Nigerian author Ben Okri has written, ‘The United Nations remains the only organization still vaguely capable of articulating the notion of one world, a sort of symphony of humanity.’” Is there really no alternative?

“The United Nations is getting

ready to celebrate. Up to 160 heads of state and government are expected to show up at a special three-day commemoration of the U.N.’s 50th anniversary during the General Assembly session in New York, culminating on October 24, United Nations Day” (*Gemini News Service*, “Plans for a Serious Party,” Dec. 16, 1994, reprinted in *WPR*, June 1995, p. 10).

According to a press release from the Fiftieth Anniversary Secretariat, “The Fiftieth Anniversary is a historic opportunity to inform and inspire a larger public about the Organization. Coinciding with a turning point in international relations, it is a time to rekindle the ideals of the charter and to spread the spirit of cooperation among the peo-

ples of the world. An overall theme, **‘We The Peoples of the United Nations... United for a Better World,’** was endorsed by the General Assembly in October 1993.”

An Idealistic Beginning Bogs Down in Reality

“On June 25, 1945, the chiefs of the 50 delegations unanimously approved the U.N. Charter, including the preamble written by the American poet Archibald MacLeish that begins: ‘We the peoples of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind....’” (*Los Angeles Times*,

Reuters photo

“50 Years Ago, Hopes Soared as U.N. Began Life,” June 26, 1995).

Would it work? “Some of its most idealistic advocates had hoped, with the failed example of the post-World War I League of Nations before them, that the United Nations might acquire a kind of transcendent authority that would allow it to override the selfish nationalisms that were widely seen as the cause of the destructive global conflict that was just ending. But from its beginning the United Nations was, as indeed it had to be, a voluntary organization of sovereign states and nothing like a world government. As such its powers can consist only of what its members are willing to delegate” (*Los Angeles Times*, “Troubled Organization at the Age of 50,” June 26, 1995).

How effectively has the U.N. lived up to its purpose? Larry Martz, editor of *World Press Review*, writes, “In the 50 years since the war-weary nations gathered in San Francisco to unite for peace and prosperity, the world has never come close to achieving the lofty aims of the United Nations charter. War, famine, disease, and poverty persist; the ancient evils of slavery, torture, tyranny, and the exploitation of children are with us still. These 50 years have seen repeated outbreaks of genocide, terrorism, and brutal repression that the U.N. has been powerless to prevent” (June 1995, p. 3). “Yet,” he maintains, “the United Nations does a great deal more good than harm in the world, and there is nothing to take its place. The challenge is to make it better” (p. 3).

“The Defeat of Civilization”?

Outside the U.N. Headquarters in New York stands the famous statue of a man beating his sword into a plowshare—a biblical, prophetic image from the books of Isaiah and Micah. “Swords to plowshares” is a popular motto of the U.N. But has

the organization even *begun* to recast the world’s implements of war into farming tools or other peaceful equipment? Is the world even *close* to peace? And are we *really* “united for a better world”?

“Elefera Music was sitting down to a family meal [in mid-July] when Serb troops burst into her home in Srebrenica. ‘Hurry up and finish your lunch,’ they told her. ‘We need to talk to your sons.’ Minutes later they grabbed the two young men and pulled them outside. As Elefera watched, horrified, one soldier pulled a large knife and gutted Asmi, 20, killing him. Then they took away Ahmed, 15. Later that afternoon, the Serbs rounded up all males in their teens and older and took them off for ‘interrogation’—leaving 10,000 or more people unaccounted for and raising fears of a mass atrocity” (*Newsweek*, July 24, 1995, p. 42).

Perhaps nothing so illustrates the complete impotence of the United Nations to deal with international crises than the awful tragedy in Bosnia. Former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Jeane Kirkpatrick, writes, “Almost everyone understands this war is not a conflict of limited importance, as the U.N. Secretary-General and selected European leaders have tried to pretend it is. It is a particularly heinous example of aggression that seeks not merely to conquer a country but to destroy, expel and dispossess peoples in a process of ‘ethnic cleansing’” (*San Diego Union-Tribune*, “The U.N. Emasculation of NATO,” July 14, 1995).

A *Los Angeles Times* “Commentary” really cuts to the quick. “We Americans should hang our heads in shame,” it asserts. “The Serbs are in the midst of cleansing eastern Bosnia of its Muslims.... And the Western democracies are doing little more than watching. Granted it is not too late to punish the Serbs for flouting virtually every international

norm and making a mockery of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the United Nations and their members. But it is too late to prevent what could prove to be one of the most devastating legacies of the slaughter in Bosnia: **the rot of the West.** Since the beginning of the breakup of Yugoslavia, the Western democracies have exhibited such strategic myopia, moral weakness and political paralysis that their behavior calls into question the very existence of a Western community of civic states...” (“What Does the West Stand For if It Does Nothing?,” July 23, 1995).

What can we conclude from all this? If the U.N. and the West have failed to provide a “moral compass” to guide international poli-



U.N. photo

into the abyss of degradations. No cause, no goal can justify such barbaric actions and methods. They are crimes against humanity... **a defeat of civilization.**” The *Journal* article contends that “the value of these words is in recognizing the profound damage Bosnia is doing to the West’s moral authority, which Europe’s and America’s leaders have almost irredeemably devalued by now” (July 17, 1995).

So what does that essentially mean? Is the U.N. finished? Jeane

serves no function will not survive for long, nor will a world organization that cannot protect peace.... Everyone understands that the United Nations, the United States and NATO were on the same side—no matter what they may say to the contrary—and that side has been defeated.”

Those attuned to Bible prophecy are not surprised. As Raymond McNair’s article in this issue of *The World Ahead* describes, America and Britain are spiraling toward a great calamity. And, even though the United Nations may be revived and gain strength by the hand of *other* nations, its days as a basically American-led and financed institution are definitely numbered.

WRONG with the organization?

The French periodical, *Liberation*, asked Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, “Fifty years after the signing of the San Francisco charter, the U.N. is going through a credibility crisis. Why?” He responded, “The easy answer is that the U.N. depends on the will of its member states. It is up to them to decide, and they haven’t reached a decision.... I would add that the Persian Gulf war gave the U.N. too much credibility. It was followed by a major crisis of credibility as people realized that the U.N. cannot solve every problem” (“The U.N. Is a Force,” Jan. 12, 1995, reprinted in *WPR*, June 1995).

The same *WPR* contains an article from the March 14 *Geneva Post* which states that the U.N.’s failure “is hardly surprising considering the fact that the drafters **never worked out the paradox between collective security and individual state sovereignty.**”

According to C. M. Lichenstein, recent co-chairman of a congressionally-appointed commission on improving the U.N.’s effectiveness, “The initial concept was terribly, terribly flawed. It is, **I suppose, theoretically possible**

to set up an institution that is somehow or other going to be better than the people who set it up” (*The New York Times*, “U.N. Finds That Its Reputation Has Slumped,” June 25, 1995).

For such reasons, many seem to think the answers lie in stronger, centralized world government. The U.N. even *aspires* to such a role—in a limited sense. An article in the winter 1994/95 *Newsletter of the 50th Anniversary of the U.N.*, titled “Global Governance Report,” relates

Answers to U.N. Problems?

The general consensus seems to be that “for all its weaknesses and chronic financial problems, the United Nations remains the only—and so the essential—global forum where many of the world’s gravest problems can be discussed and efforts made to manage them” (*L.A. Times*, “Troubled Organization at the Age of 50,” June 26, 1995). The answer most people would seek is major reform. Yet, what form would it take? What is basically

thinks that “**what is always lacking is a will to peace.**”

For thousands of years, people have been “saying, ‘Peace, peace!’ when there is no peace” (Jer. 6:14; 8:11). In the end-time, the Bible

the law of God, nor indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7). It is impossible to obey God with a selfish mind. To find real peace, our attitude of mind must be drastically changed.

This important fact is even recognized in the 1945 Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” But only God has the power to transform the human mind through the giving of His own Holy Spirit. Only by His Spirit can we be enabled to think like the loving Creator of all humanity and come to truly obey Him from the heart.

Swords into plowshares? So many think that WE are somehow going to bring this about by *ourselves* and that, on our *own*, we can be “*united* for a better world.” Is this what the Bible teaches?

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore [Is. 2:2-4; cf. Mic. 4:1-3].

that “the Commission on Global Governance has launched its long-awaited report, *Our Global Neighborhood...*” which “recommends the creation of a rapid deployment force of volunteer soldiers for troubled spots around the world, the expansion of the Security Council membership and strengthening of the International Court of Justice.”

There are, of course, more serious pushes for a one-world government—as there have been for some time. The semblance of such a government *is* going to emerge in the near future, and Bible prophecy reveals that it will be through the economic and religious might of the final European revival of the Holy Roman Empire (Rev. 17)—though not every country on earth will be directly controlled by it politically.

Sadly, your Bible reveals that man’s last attempt at global government will be the cruelest and most totalitarian ever experienced—even worse than Nazi Germany under Adolph Hitler! HUMAN world government will never really work. Why? Essentially, for the same reason the U.N. doesn’t work: people cannot construct an institution superior to themselves—and people have problems!

The Ultimate Solution

What is the true root cause of human conflicts? Jeane Kirkpatrick

reveals, “Surely their valiant ones shall cry outside, the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly” (Is. 33:7). That is already true, but it is going to

get *far worse!* Why? God answers, “The way of peace they have not known, and there is no justice in their ways; they have made themselves crooked paths; whoever takes that way shall not know peace” (Is. 59:8).

Why do wars happen? The Apostle James, Jesus Christ’s brother, asked—and answered—the same question: “Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war” (James 4:1-2).

The real cause of human conflict is the lack of submission and obedience to the Great God of the universe and His supreme law: “The carnal [egotistical] mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to

Upper left page 6: Tens of thousands of Croatian Kajina region Serb refugees clog the road on August 11 as U.N. officials prepare to start withdrawing most of the 13,400 U.N. peacekeepers from Croatia. **Bottom right:** Photo taken from the Dutch TV shows U.N. soldiers standing in front of hundreds of Bosnian Moslem refugees near Srebrenica. **Upper left page 7:** U.N. aid is distributed among the Srebrenica refugees. **Bottom right:** Bosnian refugees weep as they arrive at the U.N. refugee camp in Tuzla. **Agence France-Presse**

Kirkpatrick, in offering her analysis, writes, “It is *possible* that NATO and the United Nations can recover from the Bosnian debacle. It is *probable*, though, that a military alliance that

What Is a Woman's Role?

by John H. Ogwyn

The Pope wrote a letter about it in July. The United Nations is holding a conference about it in September. Attitudes in the Western world have undergone a transformation concerning it during the 20th Century. What really is a woman's role in society?

When the 20th Century opened, a woman's place in society seemed clearly established both in law and in custom. However, there were a variety of forces at work which served to overturn concepts that many had thought to be the eternal order of things. One of the most profound changes in thought that has occurred during this century has been the near-universal acceptance of democracy and equality as the ideals in defining human relationships. This is an ongoing process which is reshaping societies the world over.

The Women's movement is an important part of the progressive agenda which is intent on rearranging Western society. It is impacting the family, the economy, politics, international relations, not to mention entertainment, fashion and religion.

Controversy in Contemporary Religion

The Catholic Church is increasingly hard-pressed to defend its refusal to ordain women to the priesthood. Many Protestant churches have, in recent years, changed their ordination practices to conform to contemporary sentiment. While some Pentecostal and Charismatic

churches have had women evangelists and ministers since their inception, Episcopalians, Methodists, Lutherans and Presbyterians have only begun ordaining women to their ministries in recent decades. Not all mainline churches have been willing to accept this and it has led to bitter debate, and in some cases, splits and schisms.

Today, even among more conservative, evangelical Protestants, there is increasing pressure to reinterpret traditional male and female roles within the church, reflecting the acceptance of new gender roles within the larger society. Of course, the battle over women's roles is not only being fought in Western societies, but in the Islamic world as well. Muslim fundamentalist clerics have revolted against Western influence and have tried to use political power to force women to conform to traditional styles of dress and, in general, to "keep them in their place."

What is their "place"? Is it simply defined by custom and tradition, or perhaps by laws that were enacted by men? Has a woman's place been dictated by evolution and blind chance? Or, has it been God-ordained? Often, the Bible has been brought into the center of the argument. It has been quoted by defenders of the status quo, and it has been reinterpreted by moderate reformers and even by certain radical feminists. Do all of the traditional cultural limitations placed on women reflect the biblical teaching? Or are the current attitudes of a genderless equality more in line with the teachings of Jesus Christ?

Many women have felt put-down and undervalued,

not only by secular society, but by the church itself. Some have felt that even God might look at them as not quite so important as men. Most have had some degree of frustration about why things are the way they are. Increasing numbers have rebelled, while others have accepted their "place" with resignation.

No doubt about it, the Bible has played a great role in shaping Western society. Its real meaning, however, has often been misunderstood, misapplied and distorted. People generally read the Bible from their own cultural perspective. It was no different among the early Fathers of the Catholic Church. Men like Origen and Augustine were molded by a pagan society steeped in Greek philosophy. Their view that women were "defective men," which was taught by Augustine and later by Thomas Aquinas, didn't originate with the Bible. They got that idea from the Greek philosopher Aristotle. The tendency of many, then as now, has been to read *their ideas* into the Bible, to try and find a verse here or there that seems to support *their* viewpoint.

If we are going to understand this issue from a biblical perspective, then we have to sweep away preconceived ideas and simply look at what the Bible has to say. This teaching is found not only in specific commands, but also in examples that are recorded throughout Scripture. The Bible shows us not only the ideal that God had in mind from the beginning, but also examples of the practical application of these ideals in a far less than ideal society.

What About Equality?

Before we go further, let's address the now almost universal ideals of democracy and equality that shape thought on this and almost every other topic at the brink of the 21st Century. The Bible does teach equality in several important ways. Solomon addressed one aspect of universal equality in Ecclesiastes 3:19-20. He described something that brings all—rich and poor, black and white, male and female, young and old, good and bad—to a place of absolute equality—the grave. "All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all go to dust," he wrote. The Apostle Paul wrote, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). He also noted, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). All of us will be brought to a state of parity by the great equalizer—death. Therefore, all humanity stands equally in need of a Savior.

God's love is equally manifested to all, regardless of gender, race or economic status (John 3:16). All of us can have *equal access* to God the Father through Jesus Christ, regardless of physical distinctions that determine status in the human realm (Gal. 3:28). Additionally, physical dis-

tinctions such as race, gender or physical disability have nothing to do with the reward God has in mind for those who love him (Is. 56:1-7). All who meet God's conditions are "heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Pet. 3:7).

The Bible also teaches equality in yet another area, that is, *equality* before the law. "You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him" (Ex. 22:21). The law emphasized that special favoritism was not to be extended to rich or poor (Lev. 19:15), and that fairness was to be the basis of all of our business dealings (vv. 35-36).

The Bible clearly teaches *equality* of status. Our status is that of human beings made in the image of God (Gen. 1:27) with the ultimate potential of being born into His family (2 Cor. 6:18). There is inherent value and respect that should be attached to that status. However, though the Bible teaches equality of inherent status among human beings, it flies in the face of contemporary concepts by showing that both differences and hierarchy of function are approved by God (cf. Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 11:3). We are all individuals and therefore different in our talents, abilities and interests. Differences are, by their very nature, inequalities. God designed men and women to be different. We were made that way in order that we might perform different, but equally necessary, roles. The more we conform to the Creator's intent and purpose, the happier and more fulfilled we will be.

What is the function or "place" of women? Is it limited to the kitchen and the bedroom? Should they be hidden away from public view behind a veil? While some clearly hold these views, they are *not* biblical views!

A Virtuous Woman

In ancient pagan religions, women were generally relegated to the sidelines as observers rather than participants. Apart from a specialized role as priestesses who functioned as temple prostitutes, there was little part for women to play in the worship of the gods.

Old Testament religion, however, presents a far different picture. Sarah is pictured as Abraham's partner in faith and her outstanding example is found in the list of men and women of faith in Hebrews 11. Her example and attitude are held up to Christian women by an apostle in 1 Peter 3:5-6. In addition, we are given the examples of loyal and devoted Ruth, courageous and resourceful Queen Esther, wise and level-headed Abigail, brave and clever Rahab. What about the Prophetess Deborah who, as a leader of Israel, showed trust in God when the men who were her contemporaries drew back in fear?

In the New Testament many of the earliest and most devoted disciples of Jesus Christ were women. These were people who had a personal relationship with God in their own right. When the Messiah was crucified, His life

ebbing away, it was His mother and several other women, accompanied by the Apostle John, who remained at the foot of His cross faithful to the end. Interestingly, the person to whom the resurrected Christ gave the honor of first revealing Himself was a woman, Mary Magdalene!

Christ included women among His disciples and clearly enjoyed their friendship. This is evident in the account of Jesus' relationship with the family of Mary, Martha and Lazarus (Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1-3). There are many women praised in the New Testament as persons of faith and ability. We read of Eunice and Lois, the mother and grandmother of the young evangelist Timothy. They successfully transmitted godly values within their family in spite of the hostile pagan society in which they lived. We also read of Lydia, a successful cloth merchant, who was the first convert in Europe, and of Phoebe, a faithful deaconess in Corinth, who had the confidence of the Apostle Paul. There are many others as well. In the Bible, women are often presented as outstanding examples of courage, faith and wisdom. The idea that women are merely "defective men" is foreign to the Scriptures.

A familiar biblical passage dealing with women is Proverbs 31. This chapter was originally a mother's teaching to her son about an approach to life, responsibility, and what to look for and value in a wife. The role that it outlines for women is far broader than what has been assigned women in most cultures.

The virtuous woman that is culturally scripted in this chapter is a person of character, intelligence and resourcefulness. She is a person of ability who is highly respected in her own right. She is also a woman who recognizes what should be most important in her life.

What are her priorities? Clearly, she places her relationship with God first. She is one who deeply reverences God (Prov. 31:30) and takes His way of life seriously. As a wife and mother, she also gives next priority to her own family and to being a good homemaker. She is supportive of her husband and deserving of his confidence (vv. 11-12). She is concerned about the family's health and sees that wholesome meals are provided and clothing needs are met (vv. 14, 21). She is competent and capable in her own right, and does not need to be micro-managed by her husband or by anyone else (vv. 11, 16). She is capable and willing to supplement the family income by the use of her talents and abilities (v. 24). She is also concerned about helping and serving those less fortunate (v. 20).

One thing that certainly needs to be understood about this passage of Scripture is that it is NOT picturing *one day* in the life of the perfect woman. Some women have read this section and felt overwhelmed with all that


is mentioned. What is described is the composite of a lifetime of activity! While Proverbs 31 describes a host of specific duties and functions that might vary greatly over time, it also describes some constant values as well.

These invariables include, first and foremost, the righteous character that is the most important attribute of both virtuous women and virtuous men. Clearly this section of Scripture also shows that while activities beyond the scope of home and hearth are not forbidden to women, a married woman should nevertheless give priority to the needs of her family over outside pursuits or endeavors. Though the results of many outside endeavors are quickly evident, the results from time invested in rearing a family aren't fully seen for many years. This is an enormous source of frustration for a multitude of young mothers. And yet, the rewards of a lovingly nurtured family are priceless!

Proverbs 31 describes a beautiful scene that, thankfully, a number of women have experienced in their later years. "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her" (v. 28). Sadly, all women aren't properly valued for the efforts they have made, but this passage clearly expresses God's attitude toward those who have made right choices. "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates" (vv. 30-31). No, the Bible does not denigrate women as inferior, and any culture that does is simply not reflective of a biblical perspective.

The fact that God did not assign the woman the role of family breadwinner was not due to intellectual inferiority on her part. Rather, it was the fact that she has an irreplaceable, vital role to play in shaping the next generation. The undervaluing of the traditional roles of wife and mother is part of an all-out, insidious assault against the family.

Communities composed of loving, intact families are presented as the ideal throughout the pages of the Bible. We all recognize, however, that the world in which we live is less than ideal. Throughout the centuries many women have been forced by circumstances to provide for themselves as well as for other family members on either a temporary or a permanent basis. Countless numbers have shouldered this burden quite successfully.

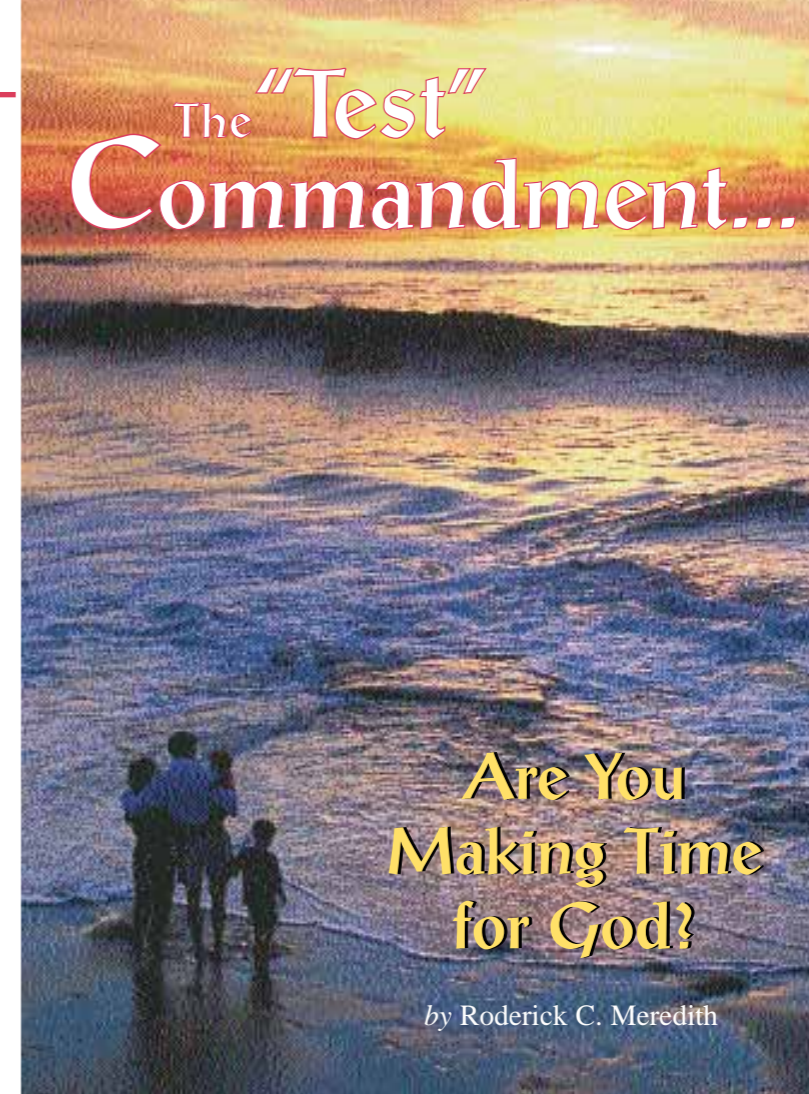
What is a woman's place? Her God-intended place is one of great honor and respect. Women are to be valued for their status as human beings made in God's image—human beings of talent and capacity. A woman should also be valued for her function in society. Despite the Satanically inspired attack on the family, men and women alike should never forget that there is no higher function than that of a virtuous woman who looks well to the needs of her household. 

In our hectic "world-on-the-go," many beat themselves into the ground by overworking. Often, there does not even seem to be time to breathe! As Paul Roberts reports in the July-August issue of *Psychology Today*, "Despite promises that technology and automation would shorten our work week, nearly every study suggests we're actually working more hours now than even a decade ago.... That, in turn, has had an enormous impact on the way we perceive our time. In 1983, according to one survey, 25 percent of adults reported always feeling 'rushed.' By 1994 the percentage had climbed to nearly 40 percent" (p. 40).

Because of this "time-poverty," rampant anxiety paradoxically mixed with boredom, plagues our society. The answer offered by Roberts' article is clear from its title, "Goofing Off." He comments, "Play isn't simply the antithesis of work: It's an antidote to *all* the mundane duties of adulthood" (p. 36). Indeed, to be physically, mentally and even emotionally rejuvenated, all of us need the rest and relaxation not only of proper sleep, but also of well-spent leisure time. Even with the precious little time we have left after work, whether employment or school, most of us *do* manage to fit some "fun-stuff" into our schedules.

But did you know that there is an even *more* important kind of rest required for *spiritual* rejuvenation? Leisure, as important as it is, will *not* solve our problems of boredom and

The "Test" Commandment...



Are You Making Time for God?

by Roderick C. Meredith

tedium—and it will not give us the rest that true peace of mind does.

The *real* problem of our day-in, day-out living is that we can find no great PURPOSE in it. What is the meaning of life? How do we discern the objective of life that we should be striving for? Far too little time is spent searching out the answers to these questions from the very One who *created* life. He is there to direct and guide us in these important matters if we will simply make available the time to be taught—as He explicitly instructs.

In previous articles in this series on the Ten Commandments, we have examined the first, second and third commands that God delivered at Mount Sinai. Now we arrive at the fourth: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do

no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it" (Ex. 20:8-11).

This commandment completes the first section of the Decalogue telling us how to love God. How does the Sabbath show love to God? An old adage says, "You

make time for what you value most." If God is first in our lives—as the *first* commandment mandates—then we will make time for Him. People devote vast portions of their lives to work, socializing, academics, sports and entertainment—especially television. Where in all this is the time for the true God? The cares of this life constantly demand our attention. Yet God *insists* that we set them aside each week for an entire 24-hour period—a *whole day* devoted solely to our Creator. Only then can we really begin to draw close to Him.

Made for Man... WHY?

The fourth commandment states that the "seventh day" followed the other six days of creation. Look back, then, to the beginning: "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work

which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (Gen. 2:2-3).

The word *Sabbath* means “rest” or “cessation.” God ceased from creating physical things on the seventh day of creation week and thereby created the Sabbath day. Exodus 31:17 says that



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God was “refreshed.” Does that mean he was tired? No. God is *never* fatigued. But He does enjoy times of relaxation, when he can stop and enjoy the fruits of His labor (Gen. 3:8).

The fourth commandment tells us to keep the Sabbath HOLY. You cannot KEEP cold water hot! The Sabbath is *already* holy. God “sanctified it.” “Sanctify” means “to set apart for holy use.” Men cannot MAKE anything holy—only God can do that by putting His presence in something. Men may only keep things holy in the way they treat those things.

Many argue that God the Father gave the Sabbath command and Christ dispensed with it. But the previous article in this series showed that Jesus Christ was the Word or Spokesman who did the actual work of creating on behalf of the Father (John 1:1-3, 14; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16-17). So not only was Christ the God of the Old Testament (1 Cor. 10:4) who *spoke* and *wrote* the Sabbath command, He was also the One who actually made

the Sabbath itself! No wonder Christ, in the New Testament, said, “Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28).

Notice that Christ is the LORD—not the destroyer—of the Sabbath. Immediately preceding this, He had stated—concerning the many legalistic do’s and don’ts that the Pharisees had added to God’s Sabbath commandment in order to be absolutely sure no one transgressed it—“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath” (v. 27). Two things are clear from this quotation: 1) The Sabbath was not just for the Jews—it

was made for all humanity; 2) The Sabbath was not intended to be a heavy burden with arduous, minutely defined restrictions—instead, it was “made for man” to benefit him.

Remember from Genesis 2:3 that “God BLESSED the seventh day and sanctified it.” When God blesses something, He puts His divine favor upon it. So, in the act of creation, the One who later became Jesus Christ bestowed divine favor on, and set apart for holy use, a recurring space of the most enduring thing in the physical world—time. In putting His presence in the seventh day, He made it holy. And He absolutely commands that we keep it that way. Why?

Our NEED for Time with God

Our Creator knew that we would need a time of rest and worship every seventh day. That, basically, is why the Sabbath was given. Throughout the week, all of us tend to get completely wrapped up in our daily con-

cerns. God knew this would happen and, rather than *burdening* us, He sanctified the Sabbath as a time for us to be LIBERATED from our daily routine to really draw close to Him. In our materialistic world, we desperately need this weekly Holy Day to spend *real quality time with God* and to think on those things He wants us to. Taking time every seventh day to really commune with God in earnest Bible study and prayer—as well as meditating upon the reason we exist and the way to perfect peace and happiness as revealed in God’s Word—will invigorate us with the purpose and zeal to live abundant, fulfilled lives EVERY day.

God was well aware that, without the Sabbath, we would quickly lose contact with and forget Him. For this reason, in Exodus 31, God set up the Sabbath as a covenant in itself. The pre-incarnate Jesus told Moses: “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely MY Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a SIGN between Me and you *throughout your generations*, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you.... It is a SIGN between Me and the children of Israel *forever*; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed” (vv. 13, 17).

The Sabbath belongs to God. It is to be a “sign” between Him and His people *forever!* A “sign” in front of a store identifies it. The “sign” which identifies the true God, along with those He has set apart, is the seventh-day Sabbath! The role of the true God that sets Him above anything else that people have worshipped as gods is the fact that He is the CREATOR of all things. The Sabbath, which was made by God at the completion of the physical creation, keeps us in remembrance of that all-important role.

The seventh-day Sabbath also reminds us that WE are God’s peo-

ple. This does not just apply to the Jews. As our article series on “America and Britain in Prophecy” has shown, the reason the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel became lost is that *they forgot the identifying “sign”* of God’s Sabbath. Today, the Jews are thought to be the only Israelites. That’s because, among the 12 tribes, they alone held onto the Sabbath.

Don’t think that the Sabbath was just for physical Israelites either. The Gentile who was joined to God’s chosen people was to keep the Sabbath (Is. 56:2-5). Christians should be Jews inwardly, with circumcised hearts (Rom. 2:28-29). Both Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ—we are all Abraham’s seed (Gal. 3:28-29). And the Church in the New Testament is called “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16). In this context, remember that the Sabbath is a sign between Jesus Christ and Israel *forever!* And forever is a very long time.

Are You Passing God’s Test?

Before the Israelites were given the Sinai covenant, God revealed His holy Sabbath day to them. Exodus 16:1-30 shows how God gave them manna to eat as they trekked through the desert. On the first five days of each week, they were to gather a certain quota of this “bread from heaven” from the ground. They had to eat it on the day it was gathered because it would spoil if left overnight. However, on the sixth day, they were to gather up *twice* as much in order to have manna for *two* days because, not only were they *forbidden* to gather on the seventh-day Sabbath, God would not even *provide* any that day. Miraculously, God preserved the manna overnight in this case.

The purpose of the manna, according to verse 29, was not just to feed the people but to *teach* them to observe the Sabbath! The pre-incarnate Christ said He did this “that I may *test* them, whether they will

walk in My law or not” (v. 4). So the Sabbath is the *test* commandment—the one that really shows who is committed to God’s way. That should not surprise us. Others will readily accept us if we live by a code of not cursing God, not murdering, not committing adultery, not stealing and so on. But keeping the Sabbath? Somehow that’s different. Somehow that makes us really odd in the minds of many.

Sabbath-keepers have often had to sacrifice employment because they will not work during God’s holy time. Of course, in the long run, they will be blessed for their obedience to God. But it takes a great deal of faith and trust in God to stand on this conviction. This is another reason the Sabbath is a real identifying sign of God’s people—it is a visible badge that sets apart those who are *truly willing* to walk in God’s way despite the obstacles.

Sadly, God’s people have often failed His test. And that is no small matter. Under the Old Covenant, Sabbath-breakers were to be stoned to death (Ex. 31:15; Num. 15:32-35)! Transgressing God’s Sabbath was one reason the Israelites had to wander in the desert 40 years and, centuries later, be taken captive (Ezek. 20:15-16, 23-24). And it is also a BIG reason why their modern descendants will go into a yet *future* captivity in the soon-coming Great Tribulation (Ezek. 22:6-8, 15, 26; 23:36-38, 46-47)!

Despite the biblical and historical records of the trials of God’s true New Testament Church, *many* called by God later *lost faith* and forsook the Sabbath, turning to doctrinal error. They were seduced by false teachers. **Nevertheless, the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ, kept God’s Sabbaths (Mark 1:21; 6:2; Luke 4:16, 31; 6:6; 13:10).** The custom of Paul, the “Apostle to the Gentiles,” was to teach Gentiles each Sabbath (Acts 13:42-44; 17:2; 18:4). Throughout history, Sabbath-keeping has been one of the main ways to iden-

tify the lineage of the true Church of God that Jesus built. Among other things, it is an important identifying *sign* to look for. How about YOU? Are YOU passing God’s test? God hasn’t changed (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8). He would enjoy spending the next Sabbath with YOU—if you are willing.

The Spirit of the Law

Perhaps you are still wondering if you should keep the Sabbath and, if so, how. The New Testament tells us, “There remains therefore a Sabbath rest [Gk. *sabbatismos*] for the people of God” (Heb. 4:9 NASB). Some maintain that this figuratively refers to our new life in Jesus. That is clearly not the intent of this verse. The respected *Anchor Bible Dictionary* assures us that *sabbatismos* refers to “seventh-day Sabbath celebration.” So this verse speaks of *literally* keeping the Sabbath. However, the context of the verse shows that it is to be observed as a physical TYPE of something else. But that something is NOT the Christian life in this age. It is, rather, our life in the *future* millennial rest of the WORLD AHEAD—when Jesus Christ sets up the Kingdom of God over the entire earth.

Notice what the *Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Jamieson, Fausset & Brown has to say about Hebrews 4:9: “This verse indirectly establishes the obligation of the Sabbath still; for the type continues until the antitype supersedes it.” As the coming millennial Sabbath “will not be till Christ...comes...the typical earthly Sabbath must continue till then.” Yet, even in the World Ahead, human beings will continue to keep God’s weekly Sabbath holy (Is. 66:23; Ezek. 44:24).

So how are we to keep the Sabbath? The Pharisees tried to legislate, in minute detail, all that was

(continued on page 29)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pleased with Magazine

Thank you for the *World Ahead* magazine. I enjoy every issue, every topic. It's not just beautiful reading, it's also a good teacher and reminder for our day-by-day life—written in plain English without “high theology” teaching.

Paul Schwaricz
New South Wales, Australia

Mr. Meredith, thank you for all the fine articles in the *World Ahead* magazine. I enjoy them very, very much. I think the series you are writing now on the Ten Commandments is excellent and, when all ten are completed, they would make a great companion booklet to *What Is a True Christian?*... Thank you for a great magazine and I look forward to future issues.

Richard Huss
Dickson City, Pennsylvania

I recently read *The God You Can Know!* and *The World Ahead*: “A New Covenant?” issue [Feb.-Mar. 1995]. This appears to be the kind of Church I have been searching for—this is what original Christianity was like before it was changed over the ages.

Phillip J. Corbett
Queensland, Australia

Thank you for the sample literature. The magazine, *The World Ahead*, is simply inspirational reading. Mr. Raymond F. McNair's historical articles are always a good read.... Your literature is really interesting. Thank you!

Bruce Bell
Mount Marion, New York

I am glad to see the “Question and Short Answers” section in the *World Ahead* magazine. You answered the question about Romans 10:4 for me [May issue]. The article, “Where Do You Turn?”, was excellent. It showed me that you must put God first before everything else and not make physical things idols.

I am so pleased to hear of the response from the TV program. I saw the pilot program and it was exciting to see

the Gospel of the Kingdom of God being preached. Thank you for obeying God. God is truly working a Work.

Ray Provencher III
Granville, Massachusetts

Thank you for *The World Ahead* and all the work you and the staff put into making a quality magazine. I appreciate the biblically sound articles and the visual interest which supports rather than overwhelms the text. (As a teacher, I view with dismay classrooms plastered with distractions and publications pulsating with graphics at the expense of language, order, clarity!) So keep up the good work.

On the suggestion side.... please consider whether printing critical letters, such as the recent harangue against Jews, serves the reader any good purpose. The *WA* does not need to demonstrate its “fairness” or to inject interest by highlighting and responding to controversial, minority opinions. In a world filled with bad news, I find it encouraging to read positive reader responses to the *WA*, affirming that we can make a difference—even now.

Mary M. Hendren
Cupertino, California

Printing only positive letters would make this section appear to be propagandizing and self-serving. While “minority opinions” may be held by only a small percentage of the population, that can represent a significant number of people—ed.

Focus on Anglo-Saxons

We've noticed that the physical descendants of ancient Israel are a frequent focus in your magazine and other publications. While a perspective on God's involvement with certain peoples may be helpful, we think you're doing a severe disservice to Jesus Christ.

Here's why. Jesus Christ is the “more sure word of prophecy” which we do well to heed as a light shining in a dark place (2 Pet. 1:19). From Genesis to Revelation, the purpose of Scripture is to point to Christ, because He was “slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8) so that all peoples could be united in one through Him. You can search the

Scriptures for the Work of God and it is to be found in Jesus Christ (John 5:39).

God's purpose through Christ is to reconcile all human beings to Himself through the blood of Christ. Through Him we are made one so that neither Jew, Greek, slave nor free, male nor female remains in God's eyes, but all become one in Jesus Christ. We're all children of God through faith in Christ (Gal. 3:26-29). We're no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God (Eph. 2:19-22) through Jesus Christ. We are all the offspring of God (Acts 17:29).

When you fail to focus on what God has done through Jesus Christ, you fail to highlight what is of preeminent importance, and you fail to fulfill your own stated mission (Matt. 28:19-20) because you re-stitch the veil that Christ rent with His death. Without a proper perspective on Christ's fulfillment of prophecy the veil remains in place when you look at the Old Testament (2 Cor. 3:14-16).

So, for the sake of the Work you're doing and the One for whom you do it, please stop hammering on physical lineage and start focusing on how God is working through Christ to make all of us children of Abraham through faith in Christ.

Tim and Liz Quast
Sacramento, California

Thanks for writing. Although you made some valid points, your criticism of our approach is unwarranted. First of all, we are finishing a SERIES of articles on the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples which we plan to compile into a brochure. Once completed, you will not see as many magazine articles devoted to this subject.

Second, we CONTINUALLY focus on the saving work of Jesus Christ—in His role as Creator, Redeemer, Savior, High Priest and coming King and Judge! It is a principle theme in our publications. However, to confine our message to a simple “Jesus saves!” would simply be joining our voice to the already loud din of false Christianity. Most people in the Western world have already heard this to the point of overkill. What they DON'T know is what salvation IS—and they don't possess the true KEYS to understanding their Bibles.

One vital key is understanding who the modern descendants of Israel are.

Some might argue that God was unbalanced in mentioning “Israel” 2,294 times in the Bible. They might criticize His concentration on the history and development of that nation while essentially ignoring other nations—except, of course, for their impact on Israel. They might think He was slighting Jesus by devoting most of Bible prophecy to physical Israel in the end-time. Of course, this is absurd. When we understand it, Jesus, the Word of God, is the One who Himself inspired these prophecies! A REAL “severe disservice to Jesus Christ” would be to ignore the verses HE gave which deal with His physical people Israel.

You said, “a perspective on God's involvement with certain peoples MAY be helpful.” There is no “MAY” about it! “ALL scripture... IS profitable...” (2 Tim. 3:16). And it is not just “certain peoples” here; it is God's CHOSEN people (Deut. 7:6). This, by the way, is not some racist concept. The Israelites have failed time and again in obedience to God. And THAT is exactly the point! Because of Abraham's faithfulness, his physical descendants were given tremendous blessings. But great national wealth and even a perfect system of laws is NOT ENOUGH! All of mankind—Israelites AND Gentiles—are to learn this vital lesson from Israel. We ALL need Christ's sacrifice and His living in us. In short, we must ALL become SPIRITUAL Israelites (Gal. 6:16)!

Still, God is working out a global purpose through His physical people and we must be watching world events (Luke 21:36). Furthermore, as Mr. Raymond McNair's article in this issue describes, the modern descendants of Israel are going into a horrible time of national tribulation. As those who KNOW this from God, it is our JOB to WARN them, in brotherly love, of impending calamity! To show them that God's prophecies in this regard are about THEM, we must PROVE to them WHO they are! That has been the purpose of our article series on this subject—ed.

We welcome your comments, criticisms or questions. Please mail letters for this section to “Letters to the Editor” at our U.S. address. Be sure to include your name, address and daytime phone number. We reserve the right to edit your comments for clarity, propriety or space.

EDITORIAL (continued from page 3)

obey God's command to “PROVE all things” (1 Thess. 5:21 KJV). Prove to yourself that there is a REAL God. You can do this by studying—*spiritually feeding*—on His Word. Come to know what the Bible *really* does say.

Then you will become aware that your Creator is in TOTAL charge of this earth and *your* life. Every breath of air you draw comes from Him. He even gave you the brain with which you think and reason to try to prove His existence. Apart from Him you could do nothing, think nothing, be nothing. As you come to understand this more fully, you will indeed *want* to zealously WORSHIP the One in whom “we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

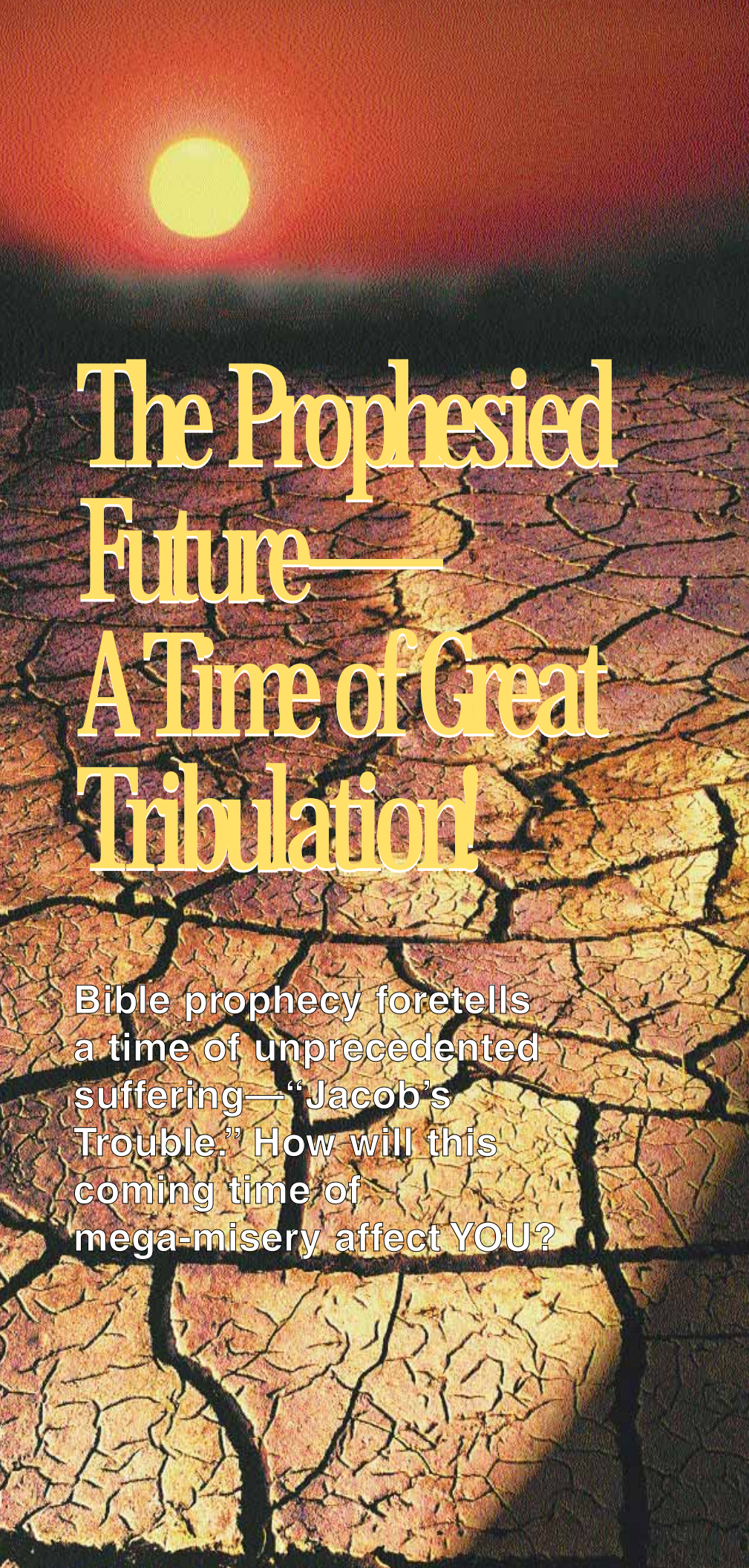
God does not accept half-hearted worship. Jesus Christ said, “So likewise, **whoever of you does not forsake all that he has CANNOT be My disciple.** Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (Luke 14:33-35).

Are you willing to forsake all in order to be a *true* disciple of the Living Jesus Christ? This NEVER means carelessly following some charismatic “Jim Jones” type of individual! But it does mean deeply *studying, fervently praying* on your knees and seeking to literally GIVE YOUR LIFE to the God of Creation, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. It does mean getting excited about the most important relationship in your entire life—the relationship you have with your Creator! And it needs putting into action Jesus' challenge to His *true* disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matt. 16:24-25).

As you read carefully and perhaps even *study* the articles in *The World Ahead* magazine each month, I hope you will check up on what we have to say. I hope you will begin to *prove* these things out of *your own Bible*. If you do, then the true God will become more real to you—and you will truly want to give your life unreservedly into His hands and to be His servant and then live forever in His Kingdom.

In powerful words that are paraphrased in the beautiful “Elijah” oratorio, God speaks through the Prophet Jeremiah, “You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with *all your heart*” (Jer. 29:13).





The Prophesied Future— A Time of Great Tribulation

Bible prophecy foretells a time of unprecedented suffering—“Jacob’s Trouble.” How will this coming time of mega-misery affect YOU?

by Raymond F. McNair

In this series of articles in *The World Ahead*, we have traced the *Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples* of America, Canada, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Northwest Europe back to Southwest Asia—to the region immediately south of the Caspian Sea. And from their captors’ lands of Assyria and Media (2 Kings 17:6), these Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples trace their lineage still further back to the Promised Land. In other words, these peoples are the descendants of the so-called “Ten Lost Tribes of Israel”!

Bible prophecy reveals what *will happen* to the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples in the future. But if we want to understand the sure prophetic Word of God (2 Pet. 1:19), we must search under the ancient biblical names of “Israel” or “Jacob”!

Meaning of “Jacob’s Trouble” in Prophecy

Once we possess the vital *key* of the Anglo-American identity, we can understand what biblical prophecy has to say regarding *our future*. One of the most detailed prophecies in the Bible is found in Jeremiah 31-32. The Prophet Jeremiah wrote his prophecies about 130 years *after* the northern Ten Tribes of Israel were taken captive in 721 B.C. Therefore Jeremiah’s prophecies couldn’t possibly refer to ancient Israel prior to that time. Consequently, the prophet spoke about a *yet future captivity* to befall those ancient Israelites’ descendants!

If our people would really understand where we are mentioned in Bible prophecy, then we would realize the seriousness—for TODAY—of Jeremiah’s warnings. To be frank, Jeremiah’s prophecies tell *us*, in broad outline, what will happen to *our peoples* during the traumatic

years not very far ahead of us—a horrifying World War III!

Jeremiah addresses his prophecies to both “Israel and Judah,” meaning both the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples *and* their kinsmen, the Jews: “Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel... ‘For behold, the days are coming...that I will bring back from *captivity* My people Israel and Judah.... I will cause them to return to the land [the Promised Land] that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it’” (Jer. 30:2-3).

“For thus says the LORD: ‘We have heard a voice of *trembling*, of *fear*, and not of peace. Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale? **Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it**’” (vv. 5-7)! Other Scriptures describe this same time of “Jacob’s trouble” and call it the “Great Tribulation” (Matt. 24:21-22; Rev. 7:14; Dan. 12:1). Clearly, this soon-coming time of unparalleled trouble and human misery will be the *worst*, most cataclysmic time this earth has ever seen, or ever will see!

Jesus Christ spoke of this same traumatic time of unprecedented worldwide human suffering: “**For then there will be great tribulation [Gk. *thlipsis megale*, “mega-misery”], such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.** And unless those days were shortened [by God], *no flesh* would be saved [“saved alive” Moffatt]; but for the *elect’s sake* those days will be shortened” (Matt. 24:21-22; cf. Mark 13:19-20).

Jesus promised His people—His “elect”—who would genuinely turn to Him in repentant obedience and faith that, “Because you have kept my word of patient endurance,

I will keep you from the HOUR OF TRIAL [Great Tribulation] which is coming on the WHOLE WORLD, to try [“test” Moffatt] those who dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10 RSV)!

This article is mostly about the future bad news which will befall **Israel and the various Gentile peoples who live with them.** Whatever your ethnic origin, if you have lived with the descendants of Israel to enjoy their materialistic blessings provided by God, then you will suffer with them when punishment comes for their disobedience! God is NOT a respecter of persons. The Anglo-Americans and their Gentile allies have turned their backs on the Creator God, choosing to practice sin and evil instead of righteousness and good. Yet, Jesus Christ says *He will provide* a shelter from the coming storm of violence for those who believe and live by the Word of God—whether Israelite or Gentile! This help for God’s saints is also referred to in Revelation 12:13-17.

Christ said concerning this same time, “For it will come as a SNARE on all those who dwell on the face of the WHOLE EARTH” (Luke 21:35). Jesus warned His people, “Watch...and pray always that you may be counted worthy to *escape* all these things” (v. 36)!

This same time of Great Tribulation is also mentioned by the Prophet Daniel, who wrote his prophecies nearly 200 years *after* the Ten Tribes of Israel went into national captivity in 721 B.C. “At that time MICHAEL shall stand up, the *great prince* [“the archangel” Moffatt] who stands watch over [“defends” Moffatt] the sons of your people [the descendants of Jacob]; and there shall be a time of trouble, *such as never was* since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered” (Dan. 12:1).

When we compare Jeremiah

30:7 and Daniel 12:1 with Matthew 24:21-22, we see that *all three* of these Scriptures refer unmistakably to the *same time*—an *utterly unique* time in man’s history. There is coming a time of great trouble so traumatic that no other period in the entire history of the earth has ever been so bad. In all the bloodstained, awful history of humanity, never has any people experienced the intensity of horrors prophesied to come on a global scale.

Will Our Peoples Ever Become Slaves?

According to Jeremiah’s prophecy, what kind of trouble will the people of Jacob (modern Anglo-Americans) get themselves into? “‘For it shall come to pass in that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘that **I will break his YOKE from your neck, and will burst your BONDS; foreigners shall no more enslave them**’” (Jer. 30:8-9). Clearly, this prophecy reveals that the modern descendants of Jacob (Israel) will have a yoke of servitude put on their necks—bringing them into bonds by foreigners who will enslave them! When Britons sing “Rule Britannia,” they boast that “Britons never will be slaves!” But contrary to that song, modern Britons *and* Americans will become enslaved.

The Great God plainly tells us exactly *why* He will allow foreigners to invade and conquer our nations and peoples—because our personal and national sins are greatly increased: violence, murder, abortion, adultery, rape, lying, cheating, stealing, dishonoring parents, drug abuse, sorcery, pornography, prostitution and blaspheming God’s name. The list could go on and on, but the point is that the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples are breaking God’s laws by committing all of the above evils along with religious crimes such as *idolatry* and *Sabbath breaking* (cf.

Grim WW II Statistics

World War II damaged more property, and cost far more, both in terms of money and human lives, than any other war. That awful war was waged between the *Allies* (over 50 nations including the U.S., Britain, France, Russia, China, etc.), and the *Axis* coalition (Germany, Italy, and Japan, etc.).

“THE WAR’S STATISTICS...The greatest tragedy the world has ever known...[which resulted in] the staggering costs of... [that] TRILLION-DOLLAR CONFLICT [over \$10 trillion in today’s money!]. **BATTLE DEAD, 15,000,000...CIVILIAN DEAD AND MISSING, 40,000,000...WOUNDED--military and civilian, 35,000,000...HOMELESS, 28,000,000...IMPRISONED, 35,000,000...ORPHANED, 5,000,000...EXTERMINATED, 11,000,000...** [and] 60,000,000 left **STARVING**“ (WORLD WAR II, 1st ed., 1980, published by LIFE, pp. 428-440). “The gigantic rounded-off numbers that appear on these final pages are based on the best statistics available.... Some 85 MILLION served in uniform during the war” (p. 428).

Ezek. 20:12-24; Is. 59:1-15).

The Prophet Ezekiel—writing about 150 years *after* the Ten Tribes went into Assyrian captivity (733-721 B.C.) mentioned this same time of Jacob’s trouble. His prophetic warnings to Israel concerned a *future* affliction and captivity, and in no way could they refer to a *past* captivity which occurred over a hundred years before his time! In Ezekiel 5, the prophet predicts future pestilence, famine and warfare *because of* modern Israel’s abominable sins:

Thus says the LORD God.... Because you [Israelites] multiplied disobedience more than the nations [Gentiles] that are around you, and have not walked in My statutes, nor kept My judgments...I am against you and will execute judgments in your midst.... **And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations...**and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will scatter to all the winds.

One-third of you shall die of the *pestilence* [disease epidemics], and be consumed with *famine* in your midst; and *one-third* shall fall by the *sword* [warfare] all around you; and I will scatter *another third* to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them. Thus shall My anger be spent, and I will cause My fury to rest upon them, and I will be avenged; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them [Ezek. 5:5, 7-10, 12-13]!

If one-third of our people die of disease and famine, and one-third die by war, this would mean the deaths of

approximately 200 million since there are now about 300 million descendants of the ancient Patriarch Jacob living in Northwest Europe, America, Britain and her British-descended Commonwealth nations.

The Cities Will Be Devastated!

God solemnly warns us that:

In all your [Israel’s] dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places [religious shrines and places of worship] shall be desolate.... The *slain* shall fall in your midst, and you shall know that I am the LORD. Yet I will leave a *remnant*, so that you may have some who *escape* the sword among the nations, when you are scattered through the countries. Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations where they are *carried captive*, because I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me...and they [the remnant of Israel] shall loathe themselves for the evils which they commit-

ted in all their abominations. And they shall know that I am the LORD, and that I have *not* said in vain that I would bring this calamity upon them [Ezek. 6:6-10]!

How could this be after we have become the mightiest people on earth? How could national defeat and captivity come upon us? In this series of articles concerning America and Britain in prophecy, we have demonstrated that God *did* strengthen the hands of the Anglo-Americans during recent centuries. We saw numerous instances, especially during WW II, where the *hand of God* was with the Anglo-American forces to give us *victory* when, otherwise, we would have suffered *defeat*. By the *grace of God*, our armies and navies have been victorious in engagement after engagement all over this globe—just as God Almighty had prophesied 3,500 years ago (Gen. 49:22-24; Deut. 33:13-17; Num. 23:20-24, 24:8-9, 18-19)!

But at the time when we have become like the lion (Micah 5:8-9) among the other beasts (nations) of this earth, when we have become victorious over all our foes, God says that because of our skyrocketing sins and crimes, He will give us over to

defeat at the hands of a cruel enemy *unless* we repent of our personal and national sins!

Micah makes that very clear:

And it shall be *in that day*, says the LORD, that I will cut off your horses [cavalry] from your midst and destroy your chariots [in modern language, tanks, artillery, armored cars]. **I will cut off the cities of your land and throw down all your strongholds** [military installations].... Thus I will destroy your cities [Micah 5:10-11, 14]!

Does this indicate horrific nuclear warfare or some other method of high-tech destruction?

I Will Break the Pride of Your Power!

The Prophet Moses also predicted this same time of unprecedented national calamity to befall the people of Israel in the latter days—if we forsook God’s covenant, and flagrantly violated His holy law (cf. Lev. 26; Deut. 28).

God solemnly promised the Israelites that *if* they obeyed Him, He would bless them and their descendants in their cities and in the countryside. They would be given peace, prosperity, overflowing happiness and every blessing imaginable!

But *if* they broke God’s covenant, His laws and statutes, then God Almighty said He would take those blessings away from, and punish, them for their *unfaithfulness*. They would have sickness and disease, drought, crop failures, famine and pestilence. Aliens in their land would rise up high above them until they were destroyed as a nation (cf. Deut. 28:43). “But *if* you do *not* obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments.... **I will break the pride of your power**” (Lev. 26:14, 19)!

Has that prophecy already been

fulfilled? Has America lost the will to win? God reveals that He would repeatedly bring more and more intense curses upon His *disobedient, unrepentant* people. “*If* you defy me and will not listen to Me, I will inflict *seven strokes still* on you, as your sins deserve” (v. 21 Moffatt).

Additional curses would be sent by God to humble us:

Till your *roads* [highways] lie deserted. And if with all this you will not let yourselves be reformed by Me, but continue to defy Me, then I will defy you Myself. I will strike you seven times Myself for your sins; I will let loose the sword of war on you, in punishment **for your breach of compact**, and you shall huddle inside your towns; I will send pestilence among you, and you shall fall into the hands of an enemy. When I deprive you of the bread that sustains you, ten of your women will need but one oven for their baking, and your bread shall be doled out in rations, till you never have enough to eat.

If all this will not make you listen to Me, if you continue to defy Me, then *I will defy you* in My fury and punish you *seven times over* for your sins; you shall be forced to eat the flesh of your sons and of your daughters. And I will destroy your shrines and cut down your sun-pillars and heap your carcasses on the carcasses of your fetishes [religious icons]: *I will abhor you*, I will lay your towns in waste and your sanctuaries desolate [vv. 22-31 Moffatt].

Moses also predicted, “The LORD will bring a nation against you *from afar*, from the end of the earth, as swift as the *eagle* flies, a

nation whose language you will not understand” (Deut. 28:49) who will conquer modern Israel (the Anglo-Americans) and make them slaves. William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania state, once said, “If we will not be governed by *God*, we must be governed by *tyrants*” (*Great Quotations*, p. 45)!

The pride and crowning glory of American and Western European government, democracy, will be stripped away and replaced with foreign conquest and horrifying tribulation.

Will We Heed the Lessons of History?

Today, America needs to examine and heed the lessons of history. Cicero (Roman statesman and author, 106-43 B.C.) said, “Those nations who *ignore history* are doomed to *repeat its tragedies!*” All the mighty nations and empires of the ancient world crumbled from *internal decay!*

The ancient nation of China built a wall to keep its enemies out—but somehow forgot that all a determined enemy had to do was to bribe the gatekeeper. Every ancient nation or empire which *rose to greatness* and fame did so when its peoples were hardy, valiant, self-sacrificing and self-disciplined. But they always *fell* when their people lost their sense of purpose, their self-restraint, and began pursuing idleness, ease, complacency, self-indulgence and moral lassitude! American author, John Steinbeck, said, “If I wanted to *destroy a nation* I would give it *too much* and I would have it on its knees, miserable, greedy and sick.”

In his monumental work, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon mentioned *five* things which led to the *downfall* of the ancient Roman Empire: 1) *disintegration of the home and family life*; 2) *burdensome taxes* and increased public spending; 3) a mad craze for *pleasures*, sports becoming increasingly

WORLD WAR II

DEATHS
(civilian and military)

55 MILLION

Anglo-Saxon-Celtic
peoples—3%

France
610,000

British Commonwealth
& British Empire
512,000

United States
295,000

Belgium, Holland,
Denmark & Norway
315,000

All other nations—97%

Russia
20-27 million

China
13.5 million

Germany
7.1 million

Poland
5.4 million

Japan
2.1 million

Yugoslavia
1.6 million

Italy
0.4 million

Czechoslovakia
0.4 million

NEXT TIME, THE
ISRAELITE NATIONS WILL
NOT FARE SO WELL!

brutal; 4) a *gigantic armaments program* when the real enemy was the decadence within; 5) a serious *decline in religious fervor*. Those problems and national afflictions are evident among the Anglo-Americans today.

Has modern America, like the U.S. during Abraham Lincoln's presidency, become "intoxicated with unbroken success"? Are our peoples "too proud to pray" to the Great God who made us? Have many of us, in Lincoln's words, "forgotten God" (cf. Deut. 6:10-12, 8:17-20)?

The Anglo-American peoples have been blessed by God as no other people has ever been blessed! Are we willing to share those manifold blessings with others? Are we willing to make the needed *personal* and *national* sacrifices, in giving our *time* and *effort*, to keep our nations great? Or, are well-fed, affluent, complacent Anglo-Americans so consumed with greed and the pursuit of pleasures (2 Tim. 3:4) that we no longer give meaningful time to the God who made us—in the *study* of His Word (Deut. 17:18-20) and *ferve*nt prayer to Him for guidance and blessings?

President Theodore Roosevelt once said, "It is only through strife, through hard and dangerous endeavor, that we shall ultimately win the goal of *true national greatness*." He also confessed that we Americans have made "many blunders and [have many] shortcomings." But he also expressed the hope that "we shall yet in the end prove our faith by our works, and show in our lives our belief that *righteousness exalteth a nation*."

God's Word assures us, "Righteousness exalts [builds up!] a nation, but sin [cf. 1 John 3:4] is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34)! *If* we Anglo-Americans don't quickly make an *about-face*, and begin to deeply reverence our Creator, His Word, and His law, then we, like ancient Rome, will surely disappear into oblivion!

President Calvin Coolidge said,


"We [Americans] do not need more *material* development, we need more *spiritual* development. We do not need more intellectual power, we need more moral [spiritual] power. We do not need more knowledge, we need more character...we need more [true] religion...more of the things that are unseen."

And former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson, hit the nail on the head when he stated, "**The greatest work in all the world is the building of men and women of character.** Without *character* there is not much that's worthwhile, because *character* is the one thing we take with us from this world into the next" (Benson, *An Enemy Hath Done This*, p. 299).

During the Korean War, on December 12, 1951, General Douglas MacArthur warned his fellow Americans: "In this day of gathering storm, as the *moral deterioration*...spreads its infection...it is essential that every *spiritual force* be mobilized to defend and preserve the *religious base* upon which this nation was founded. For it is that base which has been the motivating impulse to our moral and national growth.

"History fails to record a single precedent in which nations subject to *moral decay* have not passed into political and economic *decline*. There has been either a *spiritual reawakening* to overcome the moral lapse, or a progressive deterioration leading to *ultimate national disaster*" (MacArthur, *A Soldier Speaks*, pp. 285-286).

Bible prophecy reveals that the ultimate disaster—like the iceberg that doomed the Titanic—is about to strike the Anglo-American nations and their ships of state will sink!

If we continue rushing headlong down the road of lawlessness, greed, violence, lust, vanity and stiff-necked rebellion against God and His commandments—then surely the Great Tribulation shall be hastened—the horrible day of Jacob's trouble! 

QUESTIONS & SHORT ANSWERS

Q. "Where do you get the idea that mankind has been appointed 6,000 years of self-rule to be followed by a 1,000-year reign of Christ?"

A. As Genesis shows, God reformed the earth and created the progenitors of all present life upon it in a six-day period, then rested on the seventh-day Sabbath. This began a weekly cycle in which man is to work for six days and rest every Sabbath (Ex. 20:9-11). In Hebrews 4:3-11, the Apostle Paul explained how the seventh-day Sabbath pictures the wonderful era of peace and rest that will follow the current age of man's activity. In the book of Revelation, John was inspired to write that this coming era, beginning with Christ's return to set up His Kingdom, will last 1,000 years (20:1-4)—often referred to as simply the "Millennium."

As the seventh day of the week, then, represents a thousand-year period in God's plan, it follows that the previous six days of the week represent thousand-year periods as well. In explaining what some would perceive as a *delay* in Christ's return, Peter brought up this principle as something the Church should not be ignorant of: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet. 3:8 KJV).

The idea of each day of the week representing a thousand years of God's plan was well-known to the Jews of Peter's day. About 200 years before Christ, Rabbi Elias wrote, "The world endures six thousand years: two thousand before the law, two thousand under the law, and two thousand under Messiah." The famed historian, Edward Gibbon, wrote that "the tradition was attributed to the prophet Elijah" (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 403). *The Encyclopedia of the Jewish Religion* (art. "Millennium," Adama Books, 1986, p. 263) reports that the *tannaim*—rabbis of Christ's day—based such an interpretation on Psalm 90, written by Moses: "For a thousand years in

Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night" (v. 4). The *tannaim* said that, as there were six days of creation, the world would last for 6,000 years. The seventh "world day" would be 1,000 years of the Messiah (Sanhedrin 97a; Avodah Zarah 9a).

According to Gibbon, the 7,000-year plan of God was "carefully inculcated" in the early Church. The extra-biblical *Epistle of Barnabas* (probably of Alexandria, NOT the apostle)—though it contains some errors—is illustrative of ideas prevalent at this time: "And God made in six days the works of His hands; and He finished them on the seventh day.... The meaning of it is this.... in six days, that is, in six thousand years, shall all things be accomplished. And... when His Son shall come...then He shall gloriously rest in that seventh day."

The "church father" Irenaeus had been taught by Polycarp (disciple of the Apostle John). Sadly, he departed from apostolic teachings. However, he apparently retained *some* truth. In *Against Heresies* (c. 150 A.D.), he related a belief of the early church: "This is an account of the things formerly created, as also it is a prophecy of what is to come. For the day of the Lord is a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed; it is evident, therefore, that they will come to an end at the sixth thousand years['] end]."

To further illustrate how widespread the concept of the Millennium beginning six thousand years after Adam's creation was, many more writings by other early rabbis and "church fathers" could be examined: Rabbi Ketina, Lactantius, Victorinus, Hippotylus, Justin Martyr, Methodius, etc. Though these men may not always be relied upon for *biblical truth*, they certainly do attest to how popular this understanding was in the early centuries after Christ's death. This, in fact, has been the respected opinion of "Christian" scholars throughout the centuries, up to our present day.

As a final scriptural point, God told Adam that in the "day" he ate of the forbidden fruit, he would *die* (Gen. 2:17). Yet Adam lived to be 930 years old (Gen. 5:5)! How is that possible? One way is just as Methodius and other early church commentators explained: since a day with

God was a thousand years, Adam had to *die* before the first 1,000-year day was completed—and he did.

Q. "Haven't many people always thought the end of the age would come in their lifetimes? Why do you think we're now near the end of the 6,000 years of human rule?"

A. The simple answer to the first question is yes. However, throughout history, the period overwhelmingly acknowledged as beginning the Millennium equates to around 2000 A.D. Using known dates and the overlapping ages of the patriarchs in the Bible, it is possible to show that Adam was created *approximately* 4,000 years before Christ's birth. This is a fact that has long been known. Notice that on Rabbi Elias' timescale quoted above, the Millennium would begin around 2000!

In 1552, Bishop Latimer wrote, "The world was ordained to endure, *as all learned men affirm*, 6,000 years. Now of that number, there be passed 5,552 years, so that there is no more left but 448 years." On this man's timescale, writing before the Protestant Reformation, the Millennium commences around 2000 also! While the year *cannot* be exact since the creation of man has not been exactly pinpointed (even within decades), the consensus placing the end-time in our generation is compelling! In fact, throughout the Reformation and long after, many scholars understood that the "last days" would begin around 2000.

This, of course, is only *one* of the *many* reasons we believe the last days are upon us. In Christ's Olivet prophecy (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21), He related SIGNS of the end of the age. While we do not know its exact time (Acts 1:7), there *are* events to look for to let us know it's near (Matt. 24:32-36). Such events, along with happenings described in Revelation, are beginning to take shape. To help you understand what to look for in the days ahead, please write for our free booklet, *Fourteen Signs Announcing Christ's Return*. It will help you bring many things into focus.

AIDS:

Will it change the course of history?

What is the REAL significance of the global AIDS epidemic?
History and Bible prophecy hold ominous answers!

by Douglas S. Winnail, Ph.D., M.P.H.

In less than a decade AIDS has invaded every continent, leaving an estimated one million dead and ten million orphans in its wake. Today, more than 20 million people carry the virus for a disease that has no cure, no effective treatment and is widely believed to be 100 percent fatal after its onset. Infection rates continue to rise. Ominous prospects? What does the future really hold?

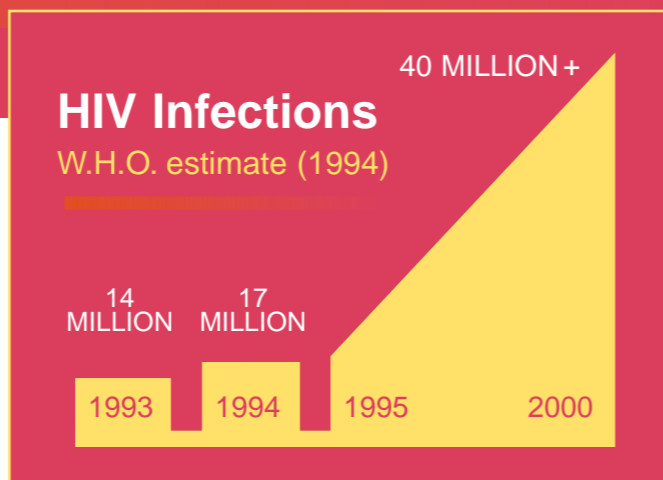
AIDS has been called “the disease of the century” and “a global epidemic spinning out of control.” Experts say it represents a “new health threat of massive proportions” to mankind. One authoritative source stated that “the global HIV/AIDS epidemic is volatile, dynamic and unstable, and its major impacts are yet to come” (*AIDS in the World*, Harvard University Press, 1992).

Comparisons are frequently made between the AIDS epidemic and the bubonic plague—the Black Death of the Middle Ages. Yet, this reference to history may not be that meaningful to a generation raised on sound-bites and superficialities. One of the dangers of not understanding the lessons of history is the risk of *repeating the mistakes* of the past.

While thousands of articles and speeches debate the origin of AIDS, discuss the merits of various treatments and argue over the different strategies, *hardly anyone* seems to be looking at the *big picture*. Whether you have AIDS or not, know a victim or not, or are at risk or not, you need to understand AIDS. In the years ahead, we will all have to deal with the ultimate effects of AIDS as this deadly disease spreads through our global village.

Disturbing Parallels

A comparison of AIDS to the Black Death reveals ominous similarities. Both are highly infectious diseases capable of decimating populations. Terminal effects are



dramatic, engendering fear and panic. And both diseases are spread by ignorant human behaviors.

Historians clearly recognize that the plague has *changed the course of history* on numerous occasions. **Similarly, the global AIDS epidemic may ignite major changes in human history which are little suspected at present but are clearly foretold by the Bible.**

The Black Death Shook the World!

The Black Death pandemic that entered the Western world from the East in 1347 has been called “the greatest catastrophe to ever strike Europe” and “the most lethal disaster of recorded history.” As it swept around the Mediterranean and followed the trade routes through Europe to Scandinavia and the British Isles, “houses were left empty, towns were abandoned...trade ceased and wars stopped...a dreadful solitude hung over Europe. The sick died too fast for the living to bury them...contemporary historians wrote that posterity would not believe them that such things could happen, because those who saw them were themselves appalled” (*Fundamentals of Microbiology*, Alcamo, 1994). An estimated 30-40 million people died in the short space of four years—perhaps one-third of the population of Europe. Many thought the

end of the world was at hand.

The *conventional wisdom* of the time blamed the plague on poisoned water, bad air, movement of the stars, earthquakes, evil spirits, Satan’s activities, the wrath of God against sinners, and the Jews (who were not as greatly affected by the disease). Commonly suggested cures for the Black Death were penance, relic worship, magic spells, masks to avoid breathing bad air, various medicinal preparations and self-flagellation. *None* of these remedies were effective in stemming the course of that disastrous epidemic because they ignored the true cause of the problem (Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror*, 1978; Cartwright & Biddiss, *Disease and History*, 1972).

Today, epidemics of plague have been *almost totally prevented* by addressing the *real cause* of the disease. Yet this preventative information *was also available* in the Middle Ages. Medical historians and many public health professionals realize that the Medieval Jews escaped the ravages of the Black Death because they applied the *biblical laws of hygiene and sanitation* that God had revealed thousands of years earlier. Both history and the discoveries of modern science have demonstrated the validity and effectiveness of those health laws. Millions of lives could have been saved.

In the eyes of many historians, the epidemic of the Black Death that devastated Europe in the 1300s was “a major turning point in Western Civilization.” For those who survived the plague, the restraints of the old order had been shattered. Protestant reformers arose to challenge the established church. Science began to examine the real world, unfettered by tradition or super-

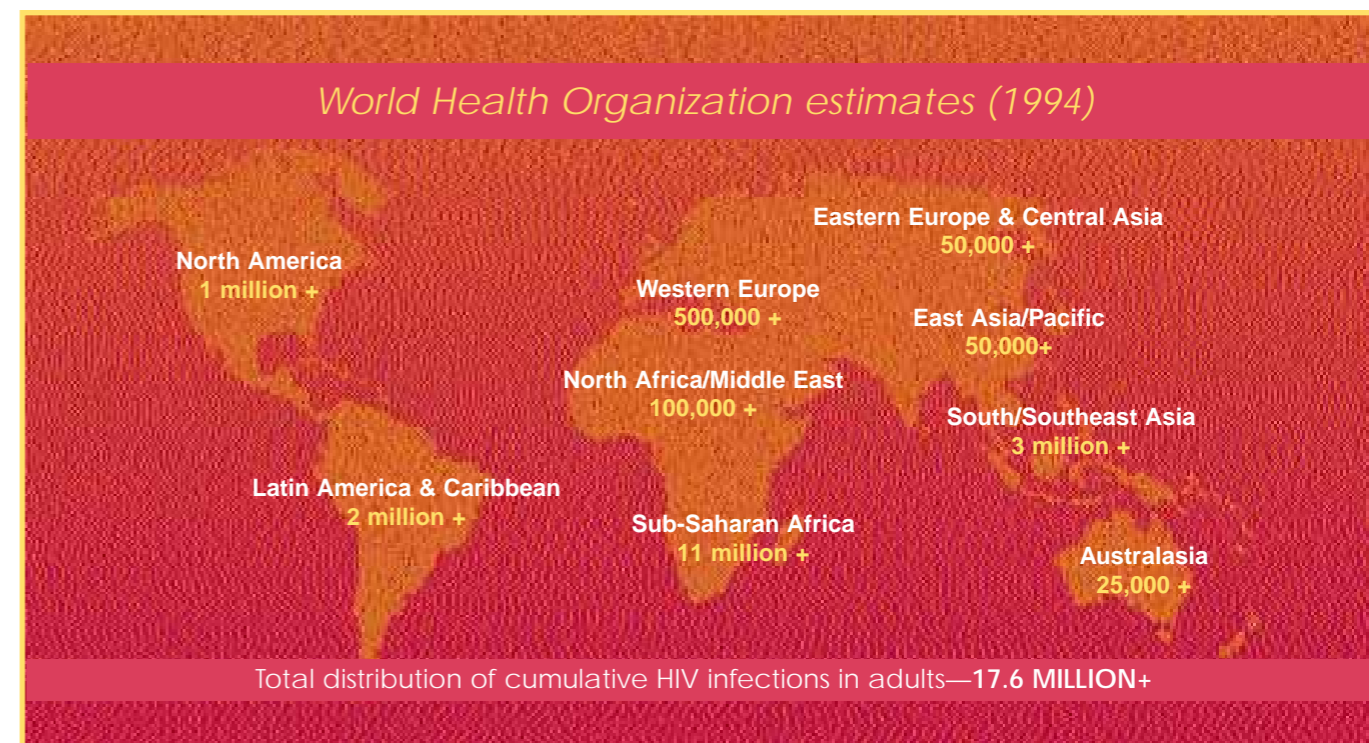
stition. Medical practices gradually improved. With the rediscovery of Greek literature and learning, science and secularism assumed dominant positions as the influence of religion and traditional values declined. The Renaissance had begun. **Unknowingly, the seeds of our current AIDS epidemic were sown.**

The AIDS Plague

AIDS is thought to be caused by the human immune deficiency virus (HIV) that invades the body and progressively destroys the immune system over an average of ten years. During this period, the infected person may feel and appear normal. However, the person is HIV-positive and can transmit the virus to others. When flu-like symptoms appear—fever, swollen lymph glands, involuntary weight loss, diarrhea and mental confusion—the person has AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). With their immune systems disabled, AIDS victims are prone to develop a host of diseases that healthy people are normally able to resist—pneumonia, tuberculosis, cancer.

The mode of AIDS transmission has also been discovered. The virus is spread when body fluids (reproductive fluids, blood, urine, feces, breast milk) enter the body of another person through sexual activity, injections, surgical procedures, blood transfusions, nursing and giving birth. **The most frequent mode of infection, by far, is through sexual activity—homosexual, bisexual and heterosexual.**

Homosexuals were initial victims because of the number and nature of their sexual encounters. One study revealed that the average male homosexual patient had



over 1,100 sexual partners in his lifetime (*Science Digest*, 1983). Heterosexual transmission is becoming more frequent in the United States and is the dominant mode of transmission in most parts of the world. People who already have a sexually transmissible disease (STD), or who share needles to inject drugs, also have a much higher risk of being infected with HIV. Blood transfusions in countries with good health care systems only account for about 5 percent of AIDS infections.

Like the Black Death in the Middle Ages, AIDS currently has no cure. No treatment is yet satisfactory. Modern medical science, at present, is quite powerless in the face of AIDS. Almost inevitably, becoming HIV-positive eventually leads to AIDS and death. It is a sobering scenario. Former Surgeon General Dr. C. Everett Koop has commented, “**Never was a disease so tailored to wipe out a generation.**”

Current practices in health education to prevent the spread of AIDS have focused primarily on sex education in schools (reproductive biology and birth control), and the promotion of the use of condoms as a means of protection. Although abstinence and monogamy are acknowledged as the most effective means of prevention, they are often ridiculed as being out of date, unrealistic, politically incorrect or offensive to some interest group. Religious input tends to be categorized as puritanical fanaticism.

Conventional approaches to AIDS prevention are *not working well*. This is especially evident among adolescents where infection rates are skyrocketing. In this age group, sexual activity is *increasing* and occurring at *progressively younger ages*. Among high school students the number of sexually active students increases from about 50 percent in the freshman year to over 70 percent in the senior year. By the senior year of college nearly 90 percent of students have had sexual experiences. These young people are at serious risk for AIDS.

The simple fact is that current efforts of prevention have *not stemmed* the spread of the AIDS epidemic. Authorities reviewing the results of the last ten years acknowledge “a sense of *threatening collective global failure*.” Increasingly, voices within the medical and public health communities are saying that the AIDS epidemic requires a *new vision* of health education and that new ideas and more creative solutions will be needed if we are to control this deadly disease.

A New Vision

Formulating a new approach to preventing AIDS is just not that difficult or complicated. To be effective, any new approach must honestly address the *real cause* of HIV transmission—**promiscuous sexual behavior!**

A new vision must **clearly promote the most effective behaviors that would prevent the spread of AIDS**. These

behaviors are *plainly stated* in the Bible. While providing condoms to school kids and clean needles for drug users *may* reduce the spread of infections *temporarily*, avoiding sex outside of marriage and illicit drugs are *permanent solutions* that would literally stop the spread of AIDS.

To effectively change human behavior and interrupt the spread of AIDS the **moral foundation of our global society must be rebuilt—on a solid foundation—the Bible**. This may sound unrealistic to many today, especially in the fields of public health, education and medicine—but only because we have been so heavily influenced by the secularism and moral relativism that began to surge in the aftermath of the Black Death. A new vision of health *is* coming that will stop the spread of AIDS—but only after we have learned some difficult lessons.

Lesson 1. Ignoring the Cause Creates a Problem

When we look at epidemics of the past through the lens of history, several vivid lessons emerge that could be extremely helpful in dealing with the growing problem of AIDS.

Ignorance played a major role in the spread of bubonic plague. To a considerable extent the Black Death of the Middle Ages was a tragedy waiting to happen. People crowded into walled cities choked with filth, ignorant of basic principles of sanitation and unable to practice adequate personal hygiene. These conditions provided fertile ground for bubonic plague. When the deadly bacteria arrived, it was like throwing a lighted match on a garbage pile soaked in gasoline. The explosive results decimated Europe.

Most of the Jews, who knew and applied the basic sanitary laws found in the Bible were able to escape the ravages of the plague. As medical science slowly discovered the value and encouraged the application of those same principles, the threat of plague has diminished.

Ignorance has also played a major role in the spread of AIDS around the globe. It, too, has been an epidemic waiting to happen. Our hedonistic attitude toward sexuality is extremely fertile ground for the AIDS virus. Just as accepted social behavior in the Middle Ages fostered the spread of the plague, many people refuse to admit that the promiscuous behavior sanctioned by our societies has placed them at risk to contract or spread AIDS. The risk for people who avoid sexually immoral behavior is extremely low.

Lesson 2. Denying the Solution Creates a Problem

In the Middle Ages the opinion leaders of the Catholic religious establishment were unable to stem the

BIBLE HEALTH LAWS FOR PREVENTING AIDS

Avoid Adultery (Exodus 20:14; 1 Cor. 6:9-10)

Avoid Fornication (Exodus 22:16; 1 Cor. 6:13-18)

Avoid Homosexuality (Leviticus 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10)

Avoid Promiscuity (Proverbs 5)

Avoid contact with others when sick—especially body fluids
(Leviticus 15:1-13; 22:2-7)

Obedience to God’s moral laws promotes health, prevents disease
(Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28)

Ignoring laws of God has serious consequences (Hosea 4:6-10)

plague because their proposed remedies were *ineffective*. Their suggestions—penance, magic spells, worship of relics—just did not work. They apparently never realized that the *real solutions* to the Black Death *were there all the time* in the sanitary laws of the Bible.

Today the medical scientists, public health educators, psychologists, sociologists and the media have been *largely ineffective* in stemming the advance of the global AIDS epidemic. The secular, technical, morally neutral approach has *failed* to stop the spread of the disease. Once again the *real solutions* are to be found in the Bible—in the *moral laws* that govern sexual behavior.

Yet, many people today are simply choosing to *ignore* those laws! We have been conditioned by our secular society to believe these biblical laws are outdated, irrelevant and can be disregarded at will—in spite of the fact that they are widely recognized as the *only real solution* for permanently stopping the spread of AIDS.

When we step back and look at the overall picture, it appears that we are ignoring the lessons of history! And what will these mistakes result in? Will the AIDS epidemic fulfill Bible prophecy?

AIDS and Prophecy


When we look at the burgeoning global epidemic of AIDS in the light of Bible prophecy, a number of Scriptures begin to make sense. The real significance of AIDS may be *much more* than just a public health issue.

Health experts are warning that HIV could afflict 40 to 100 million people in the next decade. This would devastate certain areas of the world, disrupt economies, overwhelm health care systems and demoralize whole societies. Jesus Christ was once asked by His disciples what signs would mark the approaching end of this age and announce that His return was near. **Jesus predicted global disease epidemics would occur that would**

dwarf anything that had ever happened before in the history of civilization (Matt. 24:3, 7, 21-22). Could the impact of AIDS exceed that of the Black Death? The potential is there!

Deuteronomy 28 clearly predicts that *incurable diseases* and incredible suffering will result from disobeying God’s moral laws. Hosea 4:6-14 plainly indicates that those who are ignorant of or reject the knowledge that God has revealed will reap the consequences of their own actions. In biblical terms, AIDS is not so much a result of the direct wrath of God, but rather something *we are doing to ourselves*.

As the year 2000 approaches, the threat of AIDS hangs over our world. Partially in response, religious activity is increasing in an ecumenical effort to *again forge a universal church* to spread society-wide moral behaviors. Christians are being urged to rekindle society’s moral and religious unity that existed prior to the Reformation. These are striking developments from the perspective of prophecy. Daniel chapters 7 and 11, Matthew 24, 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 17 and 18 all speak of a coming time of *religious revival* when a great church will again dominate the world, for a short time, just before the return of Jesus Christ.

The global AIDS epidemic may precipitate a change in the course of history that will fulfill the end-time prophecies of the Bible! Nevertheless, there is a much brighter day coming. Bible prophecy reveals that when Jesus Christ returns He is going to establish a world-ruling government that will bring a new vision of health and teach all mankind the laws of God that will eliminate forever the tragedy and suffering caused by epidemics such as the Black Death and AIDS. This is a future that you can play a part in. This exciting time is described in your Bible and is explained in our free booklets *Your Ultimate Destiny* and *God’s Intervention in World Affairs*. 

BEHOLD TECHNOPOLY!

A Future World Enriched— or Held Captive?

by Jeffrey H. Patton

"Simon Peres, Israel's foreign minister, is certain of the fact that, on the eve of the 21st Century, human society is on the brink of monumental changes. 'We are not beginning a new century. We are beginning a new era.' He is talking about the development of a global information society which will create a new economic, social and political order.... The information revolution is driving global trade and international investment on to enormous growth rates [Asian countries, 7.8 percent; Latin America, 3 percent; central and eastern Europe, 4 to 6 percent].... Henry S. Rowan, professor of economics at Stanford University, adds, 'A process is developing which promises, within a generation, to make the majority of the world's population rich, or at least richer than they are today'" (*Deutschland*, June 1995, pp. 16-17).

Today, the information highway

based on computer-driven technology is creating a set of true believers as politically

diverse as American Vice President Al Gore and Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich. Everybody is jumping on the high-tech bandwagon. "The 21st Century should be as great a century of exploration for humanity as the 16th Century was for the Europeans. Now that is an exciting future. Just list some of the changes we are living through: laptop computers, cellular telephones, molecular medicine...home security systems that talk...microengineering...high definition television, the video store—the list goes on and on" (Newt Gingrich, *Los Angeles Times*, "Into the Future, Led by Visionaries," August 2, 1995).

Is humanity's present marriage with high technology going to result in exciting bliss? Or are we being seduced into an abusive relationship by a wired-up, digitally dirty old man who baits us with materialistic baubles?

Intuit Corporation recently announced that "19 of the largest financial firms in the U.S. are joining it to enable their customers to conduct banking transactions on-line.... The service will use Intuit's personal-finance software program.... The first on-line banking transaction will be a historic moment not unlike the first automobile sale or the first commercial airline flight. It will signal a

commercially viable use of a new technology that may ultimately *eliminate* what until now we have considered the retail aspects of banking, stock brokerage and more.... **The effect on the banking and brokerage business and their employees is going to be profound.** The retail sales forces of banks and brokerage houses may *shrink substantially*, as may the ranks of financial planners. The number of bank and brokerage buildings may also shrink" (*The Wall Street Journal*, "Your Home Computer Will Soon Be Your Banker and Broker," August 1, 1995).

Some effects of this incredible, high-tech transformation of our economic culture are just beginning to hit home. "Something is wrong with America's economic boom. After nearly four years of ever-stronger growth, people's wages should be going up faster than their expenses. For most people they're not.... Raising wages has become the No. 1 economic issue in the nation today" (*The New York Times*, "Recovery? Not in Your Paycheck," January 8, 1995).

"In a survey that sampled 20,000 U.S. households, the Census Bureau found that workers who left a full-time job, or were laid off between 1990 and 1992, saw their wages drop an average of 23 percent upon regaining full-time work.... The study also lends support to the view that **the new jobs are 'distinctly inferior to the ones they replaced,'** said James Medoff, a labor economist at Harvard University" (*Wall Street Journal*, "Census Bureau Confirms Eroding Wages," January 25, 1995).

Rebels Against the Future?

In today's marketplace of ideas, a number of voices are warning us to weigh the consequences of this new Information Revolution and to evaluate, publicly, if we are ready to pay

the price.

One of the foremost of these "rebels against the future" is Kirkpatrick Sale who has written a book of the same title. Sale recounts the struggle waged by English cottage textile weavers who rose up to destroy the "automated" looms powered by the newly invented steam engine during the early years of England's Industrial Revolution in 1811 and 1812.

Called Luddites, these English laborers sought to preserve their skilled heritage of cottage-level hand-weaving which provided employment at a living wage in reasonable conditions. The economic and social effects on the weavers by industrializing textile production were disastrous. Employment and wages dropped precipitously. "The work that in 1800 required 27 coppers [textile workers] to do, in 1828 could be done, according to a Parliamentary inquiry, in a factory by three men of modest skill and two children" (Kirkpatrick Sale, *Rebels Against the Future*, 1995, p. 23).

Families were impoverished. A man's wages dropped from 36-40 shillings per week to 10-14 shillings. Basic food (cabbage and potatoes) for survival cost the average family 12 to 14 shillings per week. Working conditions deteriorated reducing labor for all practical purpose to wage-slavery. For the first several decades of the Industrial Revolution, men, women and children toiled six days a week behind locked doors for 12 and 14 hours per day as a rule. A factory's fines and physical intimidation (women and children were beaten if they fell asleep) enforced compliance.

"The real challenge of the Luddites was not so much the physical one [destroying power looms], against the machines and manufacturers, but a moral one, calling into question on grounds of justice and fairness the underlying principles of

unrestrained profit and competition and innovation at its heart" (p. 5).

Kirkpatrick Sale sums up the Luddite's warning to a generation undergoing a high-tech information revolution: "Whatever its presumed benefits, of speed or ease or power or wealth, **industrial technology comes at a price**, and in the contemporary world that price is ever rising and ever-threatening. Indeed, inasmuch as industrialism is inevitably and inherently disregarding of the collective human fate and of the earth from which it extracts all its wealth...it seems ever more certain to end in paroxysms of economic inequity and social upheaval, if not in the degradation and exhaustion of the biosphere itself" (p. 21).

Today's automation, enabled by computer information power "has eliminated vast numbers of jobs across all sectors of the economy in all industrial nations, maybe 35 million of them in the last decade" (p. 225). While many of these job losses have, so far, been primarily in manufacturing, many additional job losses will occur in the service sector. "In fact, a 1992 Carnegie Institute study concluded that **6 million more manufacturing and no fewer than 38 million office jobs were at risk to automation with no sign that anyone has any idea where to fit the displaced workers**" (p. 226).

Technopoly: A Brave New World?

As the leader of the Western world in 1995, America has entered into a culture and state of mind that respected author Neil Postman calls "Technopoly." Postman sees Technopoly as a culture that makes a "god" of technology. The ultimate authority in a Technopoly is technology.

"Those who feel most comfortable in Technopoly are those who are convinced that technical progress is

humanity's *supreme achievement* and the *instrument* by which our most profound dilemmas may be solved. They also believe information is an *unmixed blessing*" (Neil Postman, *Technopoly*, Vintage Books, 1993, p. 71).

In this new digital era, *human* progress is secondary. *Technological* progress is paramount. Efficiency, productivity, rationality and profitability are everything. Since the first industrial revolution in the 19th Century, machinery has been taken for granted. That people were sometimes treated as if they were machinery was also allowed by manufacturers—even if reluctantly. But today, Technopoly wholeheartedly proposes that human life must find its meaning in technology—that “human beings are placed at the disposal of their techniques and technology, **that human beings are, in a sense, worth less than their machinery**” (p. 52)!

Technopoly cuts mankind off from an understanding of the transcendent purpose of human life because it exalts the technical fact as *truth*. In the 19th Century, “With the emergence of technocracies moral and intellectual coherence began to unravel. What was being lost was not immediately apparent. The decline of the great narrative of the Bible, which had provided answers to both fundamental and practical questions, was accompanied by the rise of the great [technological] narrative of Progress” (pp. 59-60).

Technopolists believe in information—more and more of it, without context or any means for society to evaluate its worth. “Like the Sorcerer’s Apprentice, we are awash in information. And all the sorcerer has left us is a broom. Information has become a form of garbage, not only incapable of answering the most fundamental human questions but barely useful in providing coherent direction to the solution of even

mundane problems.... The milieu in which Technopoly flourishes is one in which the tie between information and human purpose has been severed” (pp. 69-70).

As Vaclav Havel, president of the Czech Republic, said to the U.S. Congress, “We still don’t know how to put morality ahead of politics, science and economics. We are incapable of understanding that the only genuine backbone of our actions—if they are to be moral—is responsibility. **Responsibility to something higher than my family, my country, my firm, my success**” (p. 82).

A Tree Bearing Good and Evil

One of the most iconoclastic spiritual teachers of the 20th Century observed, “Few stop to think about it, but when you do, could anything be wrapped in more mystery than this world’s civilization? How [can you] explain the astonishing paradox, a world of human minds that can send astronauts to the moon and back, produce the marvels of science and technology, transplant human hearts—yet cannot solve simple human problems of family life and group relationships, or peace between nations?” (Herbert W. Armstrong, *Mystery of the Ages*, 1985, p. 136).

Or, as Kirkpatrick Sale noted of this present civilization’s population: “As of 1990 it was estimated that at least a billion of these people live in abject poverty and another two billion eke out life on a bare subsistence level. Another billion and a half, it is thought, live modest lives on incomes under \$5,000 a year, part of the commodity economy but without being able to accumulate enough land or wealth to leave anything to their children. And a billion people enjoy a dissipative life at various levels of prosperity” (Sale, p. 232).

Sale states that our present Technopoly confers 85 percent of the

world’s income to one-quarter of its population living in Western Europe, North America and East Asia. This leaves 4.5 billion people, three-fifths of the world’s population, “Forced into an existence marked primarily by deprivation, often by wretched misery, probably at levels never known to them, however inequitable their past, before the 20th Century” (p. 235). Kirkpatrick Sale gives Technopoly only “a few decades longer” to exist before collapsing (p. 236).

Yes, how did we arrive at this astonishing paradox? The answer is found in humanity’s ancient narrative of origins, the book of Genesis. This account relates that the LORD God made to grow out of the ground a tree of life and a tree of the knowledge of good *and* evil. When man was created, “The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, ‘You may freely eat of every tree of the garden: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall NOT eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die’” (Gen. 2:15-17 NRSV).

Later, after God created a woman to keep the man from being lonely, a seducing serpent appeared in utopian Eden to persuade Eve to disobey God. Eve was taken in by this snake’s oily information and her husband gullibly followed her lead. The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good *and* evil has evolved into today’s information highway. Technopoly has replaced Eden.

Spiritually what happened was that humanity rejected living by God’s revealed knowledge, and instead took to itself the authority to produce whatever knowledge and information it wanted. This has been man’s continuing curse because much of the technology we’ve developed over the years has had

(continued on page 30)

“Test” Commandment (continued from page 13)

acceptable or unacceptable to do on the Sabbath. In doing so, they made the Sabbath a great burden—something God never intended. The LORD gave the Sabbath and magnified it in other places in His Word with *some* specifics but, in the main, broad spiritual principles.

What does God tell us? In the fourth commandment itself, God says, “Six days you shall labor and do all your work” (Ex. 20:9). Many would be surprised to know that this is actually part of the commandment. God ordained the first six days of the week for our business and work. Our Creator intended that we work and be productive—*earning* our daily bread. The person who idles away the first six days of the week is just as guilty of breaking God’s law as the one who works on the seventh!

That brings us to the next injunction in this great law: “But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates” (v. 10). So you are not to do any kind of work on the Sabbath—be it occupational work, personal business, shopping, housework or strenuous activity. And neither are others to labor within the environment you control.

But cessation of labor is not the only requirement God makes. He also gives *positive* instruction. Leviticus 23 lists: “The feasts of the LORD [not the Jews], which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts” (v. 2). The first one mentioned is the weekly Sabbath: “Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings” (v. 3). God then lists

His seven other Feasts or Festivals which contain seven *annual* Sabbaths. These days are also to be observed in the spirit of the Sabbath commandment.

God’s Sabbaths—weekly *and* annual—are to be holy convocations and are, therefore, days when people assemble to worship God. When we fellowship with other people in whom God’s Spirit dwells, we are fellowshiping with Him (1 John 1:3, 7). The New Testament states that we must not be “forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day [of Christ’s return] approaching” (Heb. 10:25). We must not forsake assembling on the days God has appointed for that purpose.

DELIGHT in God’s Sabbath!

Finally, to really understand how God intended the Sabbath to be observed, look at what He said in Isaiah 58: “If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight...not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth” (vv. 13-14).


So we are not to be doing our own pleasure on God’s Holy Day. That means we aren’t to be pursuing our hobbies or leisure activities. That does not preclude doing any enjoyable things whatsoever on the Sabbath, for we are to find DELIGHT in it. The point is, whatever we do, God must be an intrinsic part of it. A family walk through a natural setting is a wonderful way to get in touch with the Great God who made the beautiful creation.

When the seventh day arrives, we must stop doing the things we normally do, simply seeking pleasure. This is often VERY HARD to

do because “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matt. 12:34). To truly keep the Sabbath in the spirit, we must focus our *minds* on God and those things He wants us to be concerned with during His holy time. Then, as God promises, we will be truly blessed.

The Sabbath is not the day when you can’t do this or that! Rather, we should approach this very special day as a period when we CAN and *should* really TAKE TIME to deeply *study* and thoughtfully *analyze* the Bible. When we can sit quietly and meditate about and *think through* the truly big issues of life: Why were we born? What is the purpose of life? What is the way to achieve that purpose? And what are we doing to achieve it? In addition, the Sabbath is the perfect time for unhurried, thoughtful, heartfelt prayer to our Father in heaven—to commune with our Creator, to *worship* Him, to get to *know* Him intimately.

In His most complete prayer in the entire Bible, Jesus Christ said, “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one” (John 17:20-22).

To help fulfill this supreme purpose, the Creator set aside the seventh day and made it holy. Heartfeltly keeping the fourth commandment is a vital part of becoming “at one” with the God who gives us life and breath. It should be clear—when you honestly think about it—that there is NOTHING more important than that! Are YOU willing to “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy”? If you obey God in doing so, you will discover the Sabbath is one of the greatest blessings God has given. 

United Nations (continued from page 7)

When Jesus Christ returns, He is going to educate the world in His perfect law—the way of peace—and directly judge international disputes. There will be no more war! “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Is. 11:9).

At Christ’s First Coming, He came as a human being preaching the true Gospel message of ultimate peace in the coming Kingdom of God. At His Second Coming, He is coming in all the power of the Infinite GOD to establish that Kingdom forever: “For unto us a Child [Jesus] is born, unto us a Son is given; and [at His Second Coming] the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called...Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Is. 9:6-7).

We will not bring this about ourselves! As Isaiah 26:12 says, “LORD, *You* will establish peace *for* us.” Nevertheless, we *will* have a part to play in submitting to God’s way by the power of His Holy Spirit. Peace, in fact, will not come “until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high... Then justice will dwell in the wilderness... The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places” (Is. 32:15-18). What an incredible and wonderful World Ahead!

No, the present United Nations with all its terrible problems is NOT the way to world peace. In fact it may yet provoke *war* in collaboration with

a future superpower which will make a grab at world domination (compare references to “all nations” in Revelation 14:8 and 18:3, 23). Bible prophecy states that “all nations” will actually attempt to stop the establishment of God’s Kingdom, fighting against Christ at His return (Joel 3:2). Thankfully, this human military effort will be thwarted. God’s Kingdom WILL come. NOTHING can stop it!

Commemorations of Future Events

Just as people around the world commemorate anniversaries like U.N. Day, so God’s people also commemorate the major events of the Creator’s great plan: “The first Christians continued to observe the Jewish festivals [God’s Festivals—Lev. 23:1-2], though in a new spirit, as *commemorations of events* which those festivals had foreshadowed” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., vol. 8, p. 828). Leviticus 23 lists the enduring Festivals of God—the weekly Sabbath and the annual Festivals with God’s Holy Days.

The seventh-day Sabbath is a memorial of creation and a commemoration of the coming World Ahead of peace and happiness. As the first six days of the week represent 6,000 years of man’s civilization, the seventh day symbolizes the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ.

This September 25 we celebrate the annual Feast of Trumpets (Heb. *Rosh Hashanah*) “a memorial of blowing of trumpets” (Lev. 23:24). This day represents the awesome return of Jesus Christ to this earth in power and glory at the last trumpet blast. It is upon the shoulders of Jesus Christ that a successful world government will be established. He will never lack a will for peace. And since He is perfect, without sin, the governing institution He establishes (the Kingdom of God) will shine with justice, equity, truth and peace. ■

Technopoly (continued from page 28)

evil consequences whether intended or not. Humanity has NOT listened to God’s counsel: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding” (Ps. 111:10 NRSV).

God is not against the development and use of technology per se. He employs it in His service—directing its appropriate use! In fact, God’s Holy Spirit has inspired some technical development: “See, the LORD has called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and **He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship**” (Ex. 35:30-31).

Neil Postman calls the Bible’s society the “most detailed account of an ancient tool-using culture we have” (*Technopoly*, p. 25). “The name ‘tool-using culture’ derives from the relationship in a given culture between tools and the belief system or ideology. The tools are not intruders. They are integrated into the culture in ways that do not pose significant contradictions to its world-view.... **Their theology took as a first and last principle that all knowledge and goodness come from God, and that therefore all human enterprise must be directed toward the service of God.** Theology, not technology, provided people with authorization for what to do or think...[it] provided order and meaning to existence, making it almost impossible for technics to *subordinate* people to its own needs” (p. 26).

According to God, the development of humanity’s greatest potential takes first priority. All machines, all technology **MUST** be subordinate to human welfare! The most humble, impoverished human being is worth infinitely more than all computers and technological

wonders combined.

But today’s unsustainable Technopoly rejects the Word of God as the foundation of knowledge. Technopoly spiritually impoverishes our present civilization. It is a mixed bag of good and evil which will eventually lead to death as it rejects the bedrock morality that defines human relationships.

God, on the other hand, commands us to choose life, not just for ourselves, but also for our children, our nation and our world (cf. Deut. 30:19; 28:1-14). God’s Word represents a sustainable way of life, unlike Technopoly which is sowing the seeds for its own destruction. “There is a way *that seems* right to a man, but its end *is* the way of death” (Prov. 14:12).

The Good News is that God has promised to establish a new society in the World Ahead upon the trash heap of a collapsed Technopoly. This new culture, called the Kingdom of God, will subordinate technology to the Word of God. In the future, humans will not be considered less important than machines (cf. Rev. 21; Ezek. 40-48).

For those Technopolists who mock the primacy of the divine, the revelation of the tree of life encompassed by the Holy Scriptures, the LORD God issues a challenge:

Remember this and consider, recall it to mind, you transgressors, remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, “My purpose shall stand, and I will fulfill my intention... I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have planned, and I will do it” (Is. 46:8-11 NRSV). ■