

THE WORLD AHEAD

A view of today...A vision for tomorrow!

November-December 1996

**How
Would
Jesus
Vote for
President?**

THE WORLD AHEAD

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EDITORIAL

The Character Issue



Roderick C. Meredith
 Editor in Chief

Many surveys show that Americans think their leaders—especially their presidents—should possess good character. Yet when it comes to *specifics*, most Americans tend to vote for the man or party they agree with on the pocket-book issues—the issues affecting their economic or social well-being.

The nominee of the conservative major party seems to indicate that concern over the huge issue of abortion—the taking of human life—is less important than, say, defending the tobacco industry. The publicly revealed faults of the other major candidate are legendary: alleged adultery, drug use and switching his political positions back and forth so often that a person might get eyestrain watching these political contortions.

Yet just ahead of us, America's political leadership is faced with a large number of primarily *moral* issues: the sickening rise in teenage crime and drug use, the growing pressure to legalize marijuana, the relentless lobbying for more and more homosexual "rights" including, now, the right of two men or two women to "marry" each other. Who has the proven *character* to guide our nation in choosing the right path? Who can we genuinely rely on to lead us at a time when nearly all of our cherished Judeo-Christian values seem to be under attack?

Who?

The truth is that our present political process has produced virtually *no one* with a proven record of real integrity, consistency and outstanding leadership. Yet, for those few who still truly believe the Bible, God inspired these words through King David of Israel: "**He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God**" (2 Sam. 23:3).

Most of our modern politicians refer to God or the Bible. Yet they are constant liars, compromisers, men whose opinions change with the latest public opinion poll. Such men don't fit God's description of a leader, do they? In a syndicated article published in the August 25, 1996, *San Diego Union-Tribune*, columnist George F. Will described what is now happening in the American presidential election: "Proving the power of cynicism in our time, Clinton has gone far toward reelection because he seems to believe nothing he says."

When considering the unseemly political cronies and influence peddlers that seem to surround almost any president or government leader nowadays, we need to pay attention to our Creator's warnings about this

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How Would Jesus VOTE for President?

by Roderick C. Meredith

What would our Creator really want us to do in this presidential election year?
Does the Bible reveal what Christians should do?

The television and radio political message ads are beginning to bombard our senses: “Vote for President Clinton!” or “Vote for Bob Dole!”

What should a real Christian do? How should we respond? Most importantly, how would Jesus Christ

respond in this politically charged atmosphere? With America’s national debt looming in the background, military operations in Iraq, the Bosnian and Middle Eastern peace agreements beginning to break down and a host of other problems presenting themselves, *who* do we think can really

solve America’s problems? *Who* can lead us out of the morass of our plummeting morality, our insecure economy, our declining standard of living and the increasing racial and ethnic tension in our society? *Who*?

We all need to recognize that a true Christian is one who has Christ *living in him* through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul wrote, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20 KJV).

A true Christian must learn to live *as* Jesus Christ actually lived—not as many people incorrectly imagine how He might have lived. Jesus Himself told us, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God” (Luke 4:4). The genuine *answer* as to how we ought to live and function in a democratic nation is to be found in the Bible—the inspired Word of God. For we are to have the “mind of Christ” (Phil. 2:5). And the Bible is the revelation of God’s mind—telling us how the Father and Jesus Christ *really* think about the fundamental issues of life.

Seasonal Contradictions

Two contradictory messages will be aired during this November–December season in America. On the one hand, we will be

told, “Vote for so-and-so as your leader!” On the other hand, in churches and auditoriums across the land—and over the airwaves as well—these majestic words of Handel’s *Messiah* will be sounding forth: “King of kings and Lord of lords, King of kings and Lord of lords!”

Most professing Christians don’t even grasp or understand the inherent contradiction between the messages described above. For they have been told far more about the “little lord Jesus, away in a manger,” than they have about the *biblical* Jesus Christ who is now seated at the right hand of God in heaven (Acts 7:55-56). The real Christ will soon return in majestic glory as the *literal* King of kings over the entire earth! To most people, *this* Jesus is unknown.

Again, very few professing Christians realize that Jesus’ Gospel was about *world government*. One of the most clever, Satanic deceptions ever spread is that Jesus Christ’s Message was principally about *Himself*. The *starting point* of true Christianity is accepting the shed blood of Jesus Christ after truly REPENTING (seldom mentioned elsewhere!) of sin. However, Jesus’ main Message—the Gospel He preached—centered on world government and the willingness of each human to genuinely *surrender* to God and eventually become part of His divine Family. This divine government will soon RULE over this entire earth!

Who RULES This Present World?

Though many have been led to believe that *this* world is God’s world, the Bible tells us something entirely different. The Apostle John was inspired to write, “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15).

During the temptation of Jesus Christ, He was taken to a mountain and shown the glory of all the kingdoms of this world: “And the devil said to Him, ‘All this authority [to govern] I will give You, and their

glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish’” (Luke 4:6).

Did Jesus contradict Satan and tell him that he was NOT in charge of the kingdoms of this world? No. He did not. Rather, near the end of His ministry, Jesus spoke of Satan in this way: “Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out” (John 12:31). Again, in John 14:30, Jesus said, “I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.”

Later, the Apostle Paul wrote, “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them” (2 Cor. 4:3-4). Satan the Devil is the invisible *ruler*—the “god” of this age, which has covered about 6,000 years of human history since the creation of Adam. But this age will end at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as King of kings! In Ephesians 2:2, God inspired Paul to reveal to us that Satan is “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.” **So the invisible spirit ruler—the prince—over this world’s society is actually Satan the Devil!**

Nevertheless the true Creator God *intervenes*, when necessary, to accomplish His purpose. In Galatians 1:4, the Apostle Paul taught that Christ “gave Himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present *evil* world” (KJV). But egotistical men, who think they know it all, are actually unaware that they are under the powerful sway of the invisible Satan. They think that their ideas about society and about government—often diametrically *contrary* to those of God—make sense. But God says, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end

is the way of death” (Prov. 14:12).

Satan DECEIVES this world in a thousand different ways! In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John foresaw a spirit war just ahead when “the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who *deceives* the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Rev. 12:9).

Later, God reveals to us that at the beginning of Christ’s reign on earth, Satan is cast into a bottomless pit “so that he should *deceive* the nations *no more* till the thousand years were finished” (Rev. 20:3). The Bible makes it exceedingly clear that this present society is Satan’s. Rather than truly seeking God’s will, today’s civilization is based on vanity, competition, deception and fraud.

Jesus told Pontius Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here” (John 18:36). Clearly, Jesus had no intention of trying to get into this world’s politics and wars. He represented *another* world, another government—the Kingdom of God. Therefore, Jesus would definitely not try to reorganize *this* world and get into the midst of a lying, scheming political system under the sway of Satan the Devil!

In Training to Be Kings

Probably within the next generation, the biblical Jesus Christ will return to sit on a real throne in the city of Jerusalem. His government will be established throughout the entire earth—a *literal* government empowered by Almighty God (Rev. 19:15-16). And what will Jesus’ followers—the *true saints* of God—be doing? “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest

matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?" (1 Cor. 6:2-3). In the next few verses, Paul went on to expound how the Christians in Corinth were supposed to learn to practice God's government *in the Church* by correctly "judging" problems among themselves. From Genesis to Revelation, a position in God's government has *always* been by appointment—NOT by politicking or otherwise making deceptive promises to people to buy their votes. So Paul asks, "[Why] do you *appoint* those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?" (v. 4).

Christians are in training, now, to be kings and priests in the soon-coming Kingdom of God. Jesus stated in Revelation 2:26-27, "He who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces'—as I also have received from My Father." So we need to overcome our human ways and human selfishness—and learn to *practice God's government now*. Notice this "prayer of the saints" in Revelation 5:9-10: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth." Clearly, the true saints of God will soon have *rulership*—NOT up in heaven—but *on this earth!*

Carefully study the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:11-27 in the King James Version. Here Jesus is pictured as going off to heaven to receive His Kingdom and to return. When Christ returns, He rewards His servants according to how well each has done in using God-given time, talents and wisdom in serving God. What reward did Christ give His faithful servants? "And he said to

him, 'Well [done], thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over *ten cities*'" (v. 17). And to the servant who had only gained five pounds? "Be thou also over *five cities*" (v. 19).

Do you see any indication of politicking or voting here? Not at all. Rather, it is just one more scriptural example to make clear to Christians that the *best* form of government—God's government—is *not* in any way based on human politicking, compromising, wheeling and dealing, and coming up with half-baked solutions to our problems.

As Jesus said, "My Kingdom is *not* of this world" (John 18:36). Jesus certainly would not have lowered Himself to be part of this world's wrong-headed approach to governing. Rather, when Christ returns, He will deal decisively with the governments of this world. "And in the days of these kings [in power just prior to Christ's return] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall *break in pieces* and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44).

Later in Daniel, God clearly describes how the true saints will be given authority, under Christ, over ALL the governments of this earth at the Messiah's return. "Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (7:27).

How Should Christians Interact with Human Governments NOW?

Although Jesus Christ did not actively participate in the governments of this deceived world, He did

set us an example of obedience to civil law, showing respect to those in office. When the Pharisees came to ask Jesus about paying taxes, He answered, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21).

God inspired the Apostle Paul to write, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves" (Rom. 13:1-2). And Paul further explains in verses 6-7: "For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor."

Paul tells us to *pray* for those in positions of authority. "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

True Christians—who make up the church (Gk. *ekklesia*, literally, the "called-out ones")—are like foreign ambassadors. "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20).

A number of years ago, I had the opportunity to act as deputy chancellor of a small college near London, England. Because of this, and other responsibilities, I attended a number of distinguished gatherings in London and at the home of the U.S. ambassador to Her Majesty's government. On two of these occasions, I met the American ambassador.

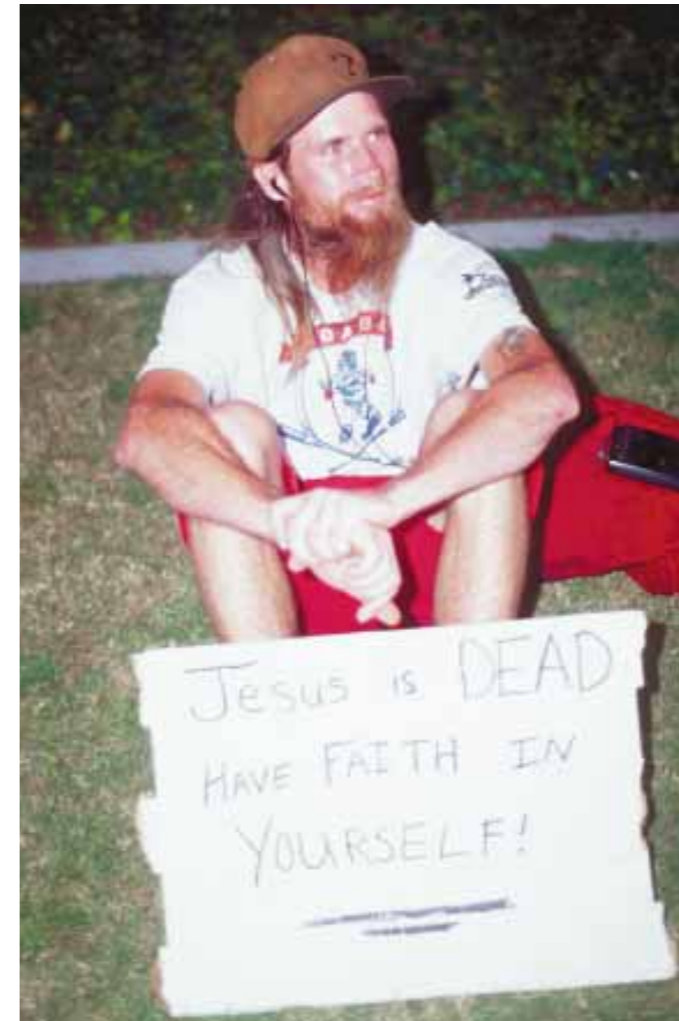
The U.S. ambassador to

Britain—or to any other government for that matter—is obligated to obey the laws of the land in which he is residing, to pay his taxes, to respect the authorities and to give honor to whom honor is due. On the two occasions when I visited Winfield House—the ambassador's residence—a toast was proposed to the Queen. All rose and lifted their glasses in honor of the gracious lady who is still monarch of the British people. On each occasion, both U.S. ambassadors—Elliot Richardson in one instance and Walter Annenberg in the other—joined in the toast. Showing this kind of respect to those in authority is clearly reflective of the attitude which God wants us all to have. And certainly to obey all the legitimate laws of the land and to pay our taxes is required. Of course, if some Hitlerian government ever tried to make us *directly disobey* the higher laws of Almighty God, then we should follow the

inspired example of the apostles who said, "**We ought to obey God rather than men**" (Acts 5:29). Even then, if we should decide to stay in that nation, we should expect to suffer any penalty or punishment such authorities might impose—looking in FAITH to God to take care of us (cf. Dan. 3).

But, as the Apostle Paul wrote, "We are AMBASSADORS for Christ" (2 Cor. 5:20). We should conduct ourselves with love and respect for all human beings—including those in political offices.

But we must always remember that our ultimate citizenship is NOT in or from the governments of this Satan-inspired society! Although we



A protestor outside the Republican Convention site in San Diego expresses his atheistic convictions. Far too many think that God should have nothing to do with government—World Ahead photo.

should serve others and do good on an individual basis, we cannot and must not get involved with political efforts to reorganize or to clean up Satan's deceived world. For the system itself is not God's system. He is only *allowing* deceived human beings to go their own way and experiment with various types of government during these last 6,000 years of human experience.

Again, the Apostle Paul wrote, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawless-

ness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?" (2 Cor. 6:14-15). Referring to the political system that will dominate the entire Western world when Jesus Christ returns, God commands His people, "And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'COME OUT of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and **lest you receive of her plagues**'" (Rev. 18:4).

What would Jesus do in this election year in the United States? He would be so busy proclaiming the GOOD NEWS of the soon-coming Kingdom of God that He would have no time—and *no interest*—in politicking, voting or taking part in any groups pressuring to clean up Satan's world. For He would know that—although often well-meaning—human attempts to save this world are doomed to *failure* because they are under Satan's sway and are part of *his system* which God Himself calls "Babylon."

The mission and calling of all true Christians is to help prepare the way—as advance emissaries—for the Kingdom of God, the literal *government* that the Living Jesus Christ will soon set up. It will replace all the misguided human governments of this earth. "Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'" (Rev. 11:15).

May God speed that day! 

For many Americans the election of 1996 has been a battle over family values (*USA Today*, Aug. 7, 1996). Major contenders for political office have emphasized a need to return to “time-honored values... heartland values... traditional American values” of work, responsibility and the family. Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian Coalition—a growing force

Bennett, a former Secretary of Education under President Reagan, this unfortunate trend is part of what he calls the “decivilization” of America—a “**civilization gone rotten**” (*When Nations Die*, 1994, p. 7).

Cultural historian Jim Nelson Black observes that in America “attachments that were once the *foundation* of culture are disappearing. Marriage is no longer a secure bond.

However, as individuals, we have all too often played an unintentional role in this crime against our own culture. Bennett observes, “In this period, many of us *lost confidence* in our own right and our duty to affirm publicly the desirability of what most of us believe in private. We *allow* our social and cultural institutions to drift away from their moorings.... **We ceased being clear about the standards**

they have for the most part *hurt* themselves, their interests, their beliefs, and most important, their children. When they have heeded the elites, things have gotten worse—sometimes a lot worse” (pp. 37-38).

Bennett states, “**Our institutions, practices, and policies... will not improve until we get the underlying principles right**” (p. 38). Politicians talk of a need to

return to traditional American values that govern family life. But what are those values? Where do those traditional values come from? Most modern scholars and politicians are reluctant to admit or acknowledge the source!

The Forgotten Source

The source of traditional American values regarding the family is *religion*—the Judeo-Christian ethic—based on the Bible. America’s Founding Fathers “intended religion to provide a *moral anchor* for our liberty in democracy” (p. 207). Astute observers recognize the real problem comes from “efforts by liberals... to establish a *wall between religion and society*, in the guise of maintaining the wall between church and state” (p. 214).

Even the voice of the churches has been influenced by this liberalizing trend. A recent majority report on human sexuality by a mainline Protestant denomination “questioned the importance Americans place on marriage, approved masturbation and petting among teenagers, and says that ‘maturity,’ not marriage, should determine when teens engage in intercourse. It argued that the church should endorse ‘new’ family structures (including same-sex couples with adopted children), and that homosexuals

Will Politicians Save the Family?

Why are “family values” a hot issue? What makes marriages strong? Where can we find real answers?

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

in American politics—stated, “The enthusiasm for the pro-family movement is palpable” and is strongly influencing the agendas of major political parties (*Vital Speeches*, Mar. 15, 1996, p. 329). But *what* has propelled this concern for family values to the front burner of American politics? Why is this debate so significant?

A Nation at Risk!

Quite simply, American marriages are in trouble! One in every two weddings ends in divorce. Since the 1960s, both the U.S. divorce and illegitimate birth rates have increased by 400 percent! The number of children living in single-parent homes has increased by 300 percent (*Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*, 1993). America has some of the *highest* divorce and illegitimacy rates *in the world!*

While the most visible divorces are those of celebrities, politicians and business tycoons, most of the real pain touches the average lives of some 2.4 million divorcing American spouses plus *additional millions* of children from the couples affected. Who could count the number of disheartened relatives and friends who are somehow impacted? While each failed marriage represents a personal tragedy, it is the *cumulative effect* of these broken families that has politicians worried at the national level. It is widely acknowledged that “families are the infrastructure of societies” and that “the institution of marriage is almost everywhere the basis of the family” (*New Book of World Rankings*, 3rd ed., 1991, p. 30).

The Western world’s climbing divorce rates are also symptomatic of a decline in the authority of the prevailing religious system (p. 31). In the words of William

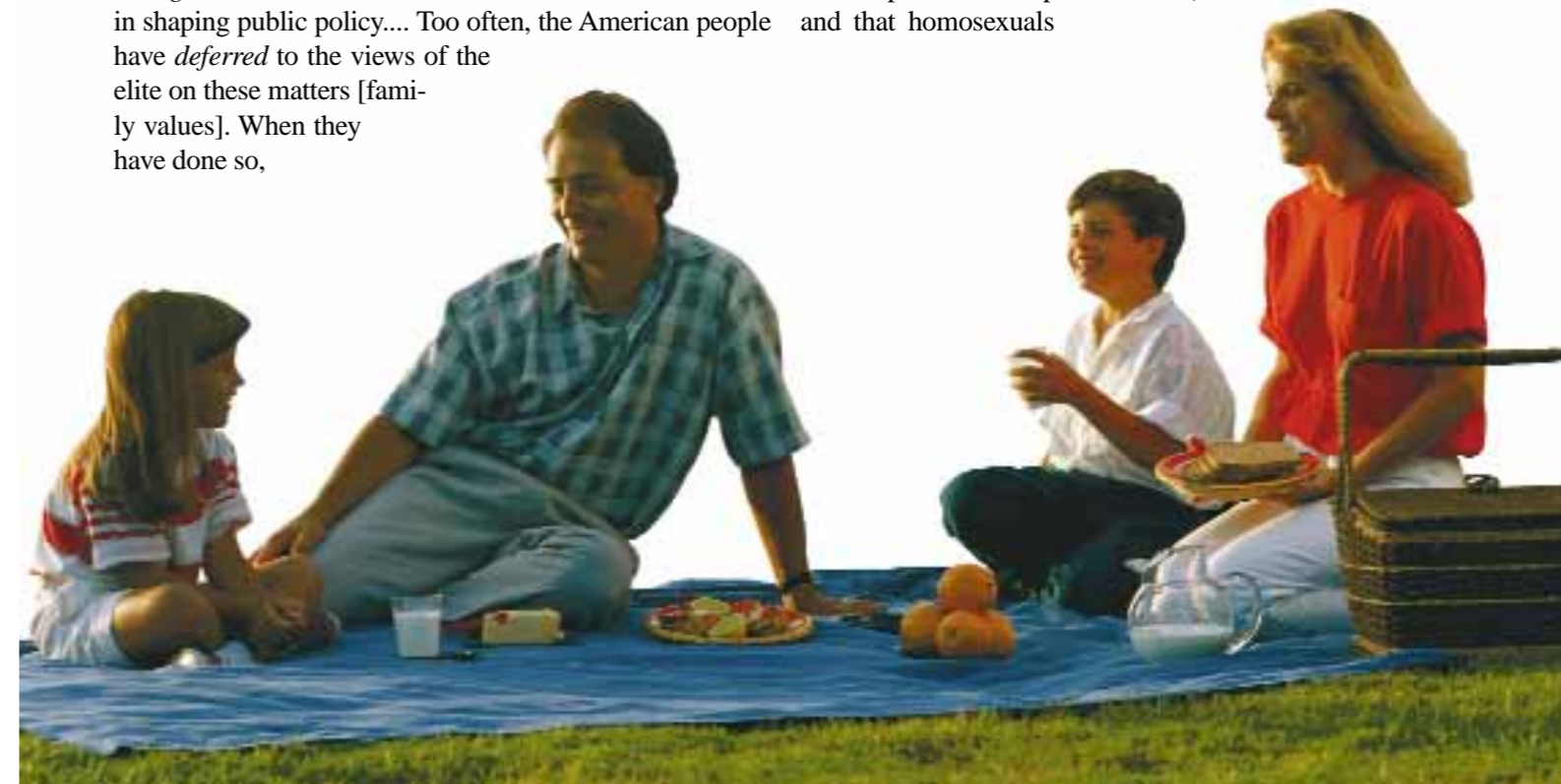
For many, marriage is just a way of expressing affection that has *no lasting value*. Marriage vows are *not* meant to be *binding before God*... vows are easily broken when the thrill fades away” (p. 218). When viewed from the perspective of the last 3,000 years, these high levels of broken families are among key factors that have led to the downfall of great civilizations. Black argues that the “**United States of America is racing mindlessly down many of the same blind alleys that have led the great empires of the past to oblivion**” (p. 15). Will these *warning signals* be recognized and remedied in time? What has caused this problem? What forces have pushed us in the wrong direction?

The Surprising Cause!

William Bennett offers a thought-provoking analysis of the forces that have shaped contemporary American attitudes toward the family. Bennett writes of a “growing realization that over the last 20 years or so the traditional values of the American people have come under steady fire, with the heavy artillery supplied by *intellectuals*. This all-out assault has taken its toll. In our time, too many Americans became *embarrassed, unwilling or unable* to explain with assurance to our children and to one another the difference between right and wrong, between what is helpful and what is destructive, what is ennobling and what is degrading” (*The De-Valuing of America*, 1992, p. 33). As a consequence, “the fabric of support that the American people—families especially—could traditionally find in the culture at large became *worn, torn, and unraveled*” (p. 33). We are actually reaping the fruits of well-intentioned, but ineffective ideas of “progressive” intellectuals and political leaders.

which we hold and the principles by which we judge... we somehow *abdicated* the area of public discussion and institutional decision making to those who challenged our traditional values. As a result, we suffered a *cultural breakdown* of sorts—in areas like education, family life, crime and drug use, as well as in our attitudes toward sex, individual responsibility, civic duty, and public service” (p. 33).

We have also *acquiesced* while leaders in education, theology and politics led public opinion and legislation down the wrong road. Again Bennett comments, “The American people’s sense of things is in most instances *right*; the liberal elite’s sense of things is in most instances *wrong*. Still and all, the elite exercise enormous influence in shaping public policy.... Too often, the American people have *deferred* to the views of the elite on these matters [family values]. When they have done so,



should be ordained into the ministry” (p. 222).

Many now see liberal reinterpretations of family values as *morally and intellectually bankrupt!* They are just so much nonsense! A major issue of our day concerns *rediscovering* vital information about marriage and the family that has been deliberately subverted. What are the biblical, time-proven principles governing marriage and family?

Why Do People Marry?

Why do people want to get married anyway? Most often a man and a woman meet, fall in love and desire to share their life with that special someone. Many people seek the fulfillment and challenge of having children. Some cerebral types might even be aware of studies that show married people live longer, are more satisfied with life, experience more orderly lives and have children who are more likely to finish school (*The Nation*, May 8, 1995, p. 624). Even today, marriage is the traditional framework in which many men and women seek to live. But is that all there is to marriage and the family? What is the real purpose?

The Bible reveals a number of important reasons for marriage that are just not discussed in most books on the subject. Sociology textbooks can only scratch the surface when it comes to understanding the *real purpose* of marriage. The Word of God states, “It is not good that a man should be alone... therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen. 2:18, 24). The Scriptures clearly teach that human beings marry for the purpose of *companionship, sex and reproduction* (1:28). But this is merely the *beginning* of God’s revealed purpose for marriage.

When the laws that God gave to protect marriage and the family are considered, it becomes obvious that they were designed to provide a *stable unit* for raising happy, healthy, well-adjusted children. And such children build stable societies. The divine laws regulating family values include prohibitions against fornication and adultery (Ex. 20:14; 1 Cor. 6:12-18), instructions for parents to love their children and children to respect their parents (Col. 3:20-21), and a strong stand prohibiting divorce in most circumstances (Matt. 19:3-9). If the Bible’s teachings are taken into account and followed, they produce good results. If ignored, the consequences engender pain and misery.

Another purpose for marriage found in Scripture is that God intends a man and woman to learn to *work together* as a team. Men and women were created to be suitable for one another, to complement and complete each other (Gen. 2:18). God never intended marriage to be a master-slave relationship. Husbands and wives are equal heirs to God’s grace of life (1 Peter 3:7). A major part of the challenge of becoming a team is working

toward having the *same mind* (v. 8). This does not mean that you have to think exactly alike. But it does mean living by the *same principles*. The biblical admonitions, “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” (Amos 3:3) and “Every city or house divided against itself will not stand” (Matt. 12:25), are powerful and true. Unless the principles to be followed in a marriage are agreed upon by both parties, a couple will be living with continual conflict. When husband and wife *both desire* to follow God’s inspired guidelines for marriage, they increase their chances of having a solid, satisfying union.

The Ultimate Reason for Marriage

As good as the above reasons for marriage may be, the ultimate purpose for marriage is far more awesome. God created men and women in His likeness and in His image (Gen. 1:26-27)! The Apostle Paul said that our ultimate purpose is to become part of God’s Family—His sons and daughters (2 Cor. 6:18)! We are to be joint heirs with Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God (Rom. 8:14-17).

The marital relationship outlined in the Bible is actually designed to picture the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:22-33). The marriage union also pictures the relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ. By understanding and following the biblical guidelines for marriage, we are actually learning how to become effective members of God’s Family. Marriage is not just a physical relationship. It is also a spiritual relationship. Marriage is actually a *training ground* for the Kingdom of God. This is a dimension you will never discover in most books about marriage. But there is more.

Roles for Success

God plainly states in the Scriptures that if we follow His instructions we reap positive results, but that if we reject them we will suffer the consequences (Deut. 28:1-2, 15). It may not be politically correct to say today, but when God created humans as male and female, He built in certain roles that each gender must live by if marriage is to achieve its full potential.

Man is assigned by God to be the head of his household. He is to lead with love, patience, vision and understanding. He is not to be a domineering dictator. He is also to be a provider (1 Tim. 5:8). This requires getting appropriate education and training *before* becoming emotionally and romantically involved with a woman (Prov. 24:27). The Bible reveals that God holds the husband responsible for being the chief *decision maker* in

(continued on page 28)

Is She Lost Forever?

by Dexter B. Wakefield

Once again the sad ritual was repeated. A young girl, perhaps in her early teens, trudged wearily up the steep slopes of South America’s Mt. Ampato in the company of Inca priests in what is now Peru. Upon reaching the 20,700-foot summit, she was killed in a ritual sacrifice and buried as part of a religious ceremony attempting to appease the Incas’ mountain gods. Five hundred years later in 1995, a team of scientists discovered her frozen, mummified remains on this desolate mountain along with two other sacrificed children, one of whom—a little girl—was not more than eight years old (*National Geographic*, June 1996, p. 62).

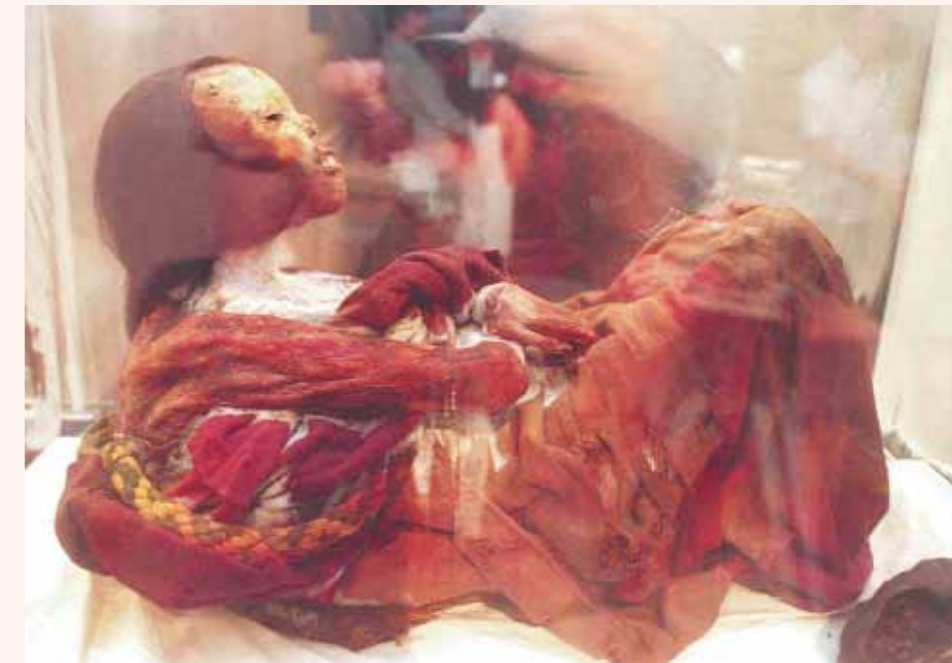
The Incas were not the first to use such a barbaric practice. Millennia ago, the ancient Israelites found this terrible ritual of child sacrifice prevalent in the Promised Land when they invaded it under the leadership of Moses and Joshua (Lev. 20:2; Deut. 12:31). And they then, as we today, must have anguished over such a terrible religious system that required the murder of innocents.

Ultimately, the question enters our minds: What is the fate of those sacrificed girls? And what about the millions of other young innocents who were ritually murdered in various pagan religions, or died of whatever causes, over the ages? The vast majority of these innocents never heard of the God of Israel. They never were told about Jesus Christ. Are they lost forever?

The shocking belief many people hold today is that these children and all the adults who lived with them have been *burning in hell* ever since their death, because they never had a chance to be saved. As one TV evangelist said, they are simply “out of luck”!

However, the Bible nowhere says those who died without ever having heard the Gospel are now suffering horribly in hell. Those who hold such a belief have *deduced* it based on two erroneous doctrines. These mistakes make God—who is loving and merciful—seem to be *unjust*.

It is important for you to know the exciting truth of what the Bible *actually* says about the ultimate fate of those who die without ever having known Christ. The



Scriptures teach that all who have ever lived will have a *full chance* for salvation. The questions about who is lost and who is saved are answered by the biblical doctrine of *eternal judgment*. In contrast to the foreboding reputation this teaching has usually been given, it is actually a doctrine of *great hope and promise*.

Smoking or Non-Smoking?

Once, while driving through a rural area of the South, I noticed a sign in front of a small country church, which stated the name of the pastor and a message regarding that week’s services. The sign read, “Would you like the smoking or non-smoking section?” I was puzzled by the pastor’s approach, allowing people to smoke in church, until I realized that he wasn’t referring to congregational seating. He was

talking about life after death!

This reflects the common belief that when one dies one's "immortal" soul must immediately go to one of two places: heaven, if the person has been "saved," or hell and everlasting flames ("the smoking section"), if the individual is lost. In this traditional Protestant view, there are no other options. Why? Because those who teach this belief reason that this age is the only time when a person can receive salvation. After all, one's immortal soul must go *somewhere* upon death. Are there errors in this teaching?

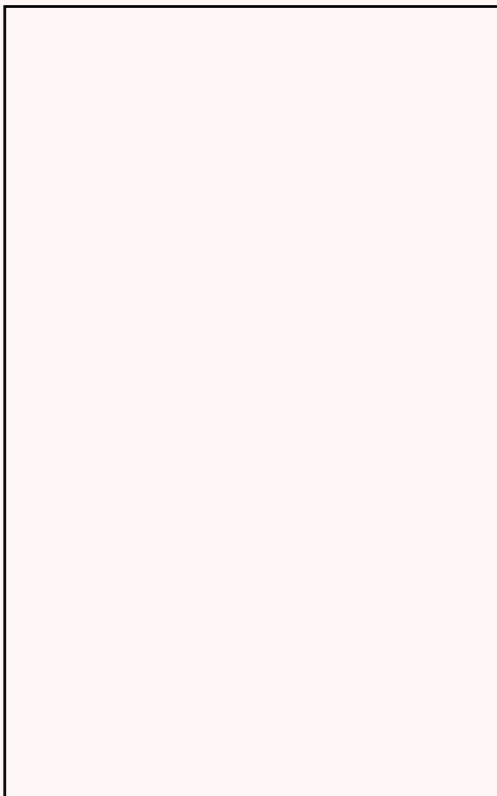
Misleading Errors

Error number one is the mistaken belief that "now is the only day of salvation." This is due to a translation error in the King James Version of the Bible. Isaiah 49:8 (KJV) states: "Thus saith the LORD, in an acceptable time I have heard thee, and in *a* day of salvation I have helped thee." But when this verse is quoted in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians 6:2, it is changed to: "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted and in *the* day of salvation I have succoured thee."

Therefore, many who have read only the NT quotation, and not the OT verse being quoted, have incorrectly reasoned that this time must be the only time in which a person may obtain salvation. In other words, they think if you die without ever having heard of Jesus Christ, then you must be "out of luck."

Error number two is the belief that you have a conscious, immortal soul that goes somewhere when you die. This ancient, pagan belief was inherited by orthodox Christianity from the Greeks and the Romans. Historically, it was not part of the understanding of ancient Israel or the first-century Church of God.

Both the Old and New Testaments affirm that human death is substantially what we observe it to be, and that our hope for life after we die rests in the resurrection—not in an inherent, immortal soul. "For the living know that they will die; but *the dead know nothing*.... Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave [Heb. *sheol*] where you are going" (Eccles. 9:5, 10).



Above: A doll-sized statue offered by the Inca people to the gods, found buried with one of the three sacrificial mummies on Mount Ampato in the Peruvian Andes by a National Geographic Society expedition. **Page 11:** The Andean "Princess of Ampato" mummy rests in a glass case in an exhibit that opened May 21 in Washington, D.C. The young female was sacrificed as a gift to the gods in the Americas during pre-Columbian times—Reuters.

The dead "know nothing." They are unconscious in their graves—"fallen asleep" as the Apostle Paul described it. "Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection

of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is in vain... your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have *fallen asleep* in Christ have perished.... But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have *fallen asleep*" (1 Cor. 15:12-14, 17-18, 20). The Bible plainly teaches that after we die, we are unconscious in our graves—as in a sleep—until the resurrection.

But don't the Scriptures say that we have immortal souls that leave us when we die? No! The Greeks *reasoned* this to be so, and the pagan Babylonians and Egyptians believed it before them. But God reveals in His Word that you do not *have* a soul, you *are* a soul!

The word translated "soul" in the Hebrew Scriptures usually comes from the Hebrew word *nephesh*, which refers to any living thing—human or animal. The Bible also says that a soul can die. "For the soul [*nephesh*] who sins shall die" (Ezek. 18:4, 20).

It is widely recognized among scholars that God never taught ancient Israel that humans possess an immortal soul. The respected Catholic historian, Edward Gibbon, wrote, "We might naturally expect that a principle so essential to religion would have been revealed in the clearest terms to the chosen people of Palestine.... [But] we discover **that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is omitted in the law of Moses**" (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 1, pp. 401-402).

The invention of a purgatory, along with varying degrees of hell, has been another human attempt to explain—among other things—how a just and merciful God might deal with children or adults who had no real chance for salvation. However,

even adherents of such doctrines acknowledge that these beliefs are not taught by the Scriptures.

The Bible says that at this time, *only Christ* is immortal—which clearly excludes inherent immortality in us. "Fight the good fight of faith, *lay hold* on eternal life, to which you were also called... that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing... who *alone has immortality*, dwelling in unapproachable light" (1 Tim. 6:12, 14, 16).

We do not have inherent immortal souls. The children of God will "put on immortality" at their resurrection from the dead. "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must *put on* immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has *put on* immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (1 Cor. 15:51-54).

The Bible Reveals God's Plan

Revelation 20 gives more details of what happens after this *first* resurrection: "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. And I saw the souls [lives] of those who had been beheaded for their witness.... And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead *did not live again* until the thousand years were finished. This is the *first* resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the *first* resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (vv. 4-6).

Did you note the important statement in verse 5? "**But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.**" The plain statement of the Bible is that at the *end* of that millennial rule, "the rest of the dead"—all those who died over the centuries without Christ—will be resurrected to *physical life again!* The Inca children of Mt. Ampato—and all others who died without knowing of Christ—have a great hope and promise!

Clearly, God is not trying to save all humanity now. Jesus said, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). It is obvious that billions of people in our time and over the ages have never had a chance to hear the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

The Bible says that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23) and that "the wages of sin is *death* [not eternal life in torment], but the *gift* of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). Unless we receive immortality as a gift through faith in Jesus Christ, the fate of humanity is the unconsciousness of death—not immortality in the torment of hell.

Only a "Few" in This Age

The Bible indicates that prior to Christ's Second Coming, God's Church will be a "little flock" (Luke 12:32), "because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are *few* who find it" (Matt. 7:14). The Church is being called and judged *now*. The saints are "called, chosen and faithful" in this age—the time prior to the coming of Jesus Christ to establish His Kingdom. The Apostle Peter taught the Church, "**For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first**, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4:17).

Those who are called now have a great privilege and a special responsibility to obey God in their calling. They are being judged *now* in the time of their calling, but judgment comes *later* for the rest of the world.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "**He has appointed a day [in the future] on which He will judge the world [not the Church] in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained.** He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). All in the world who will be judged after their resurrection, which will follow Christ's millennial reign, have assurance of that opportunity because of Christ's own resurrection.

Revelation 20 describes the scene at the end of the Millennium when "the thousand years were finished" (v. 5). "And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books" (v. 12). Many believe that "the books" refers to the books of the Bible, because we are judged by what God has revealed in His Word.

God will teach those who are in this great *physical* resurrection His way of life. God showed the Prophet Ezekiel what will happen. "And He said to me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?'.... Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: 'Surely, I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live'.... Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them.... 'Then shall you know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live'" (Ezek. 37:3, 5, 8, 13-14).

(continued on page 30)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

World Ahead on TV

We are sending a small offering to you to help in God's Work. We listen to Mr. Roderick C. Meredith on channel 3 in Chattanooga, Tennessee. We heard that he was going off the air, but we got to watch him today.

We hope you don't have to take him off because this is the only place we can get the TRUTH in this area. So please, if it's possible at all, keep sending us the Truth in Chattanooga.

John W. Fitch
Tracy City, Tennessee

It is true that we were off the air for a brief time in the Chattanooga area. But the World Ahead television program can now be seen in Chattanooga, as well as in many other cities throughout the United States, on superstation WGN. To find out when to tune in, please check local airtimes on page 31—ed.

I can't get enough fast enough! I was an avid student under Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, but I turned aside. While channel jumping early one Saturday morning, Mr. Roderick C. Meredith grabbed my attention. There was something very familiar about his delivery. Right away, I felt as though God was reaching out to me again. I must never turn away again. Please pray for me.

Eddie Cooley
Rahway, New Jersey

I get up at 5:00 in the morning to watch your TV show on Saturdays. I'm really learning a lot from you and want to learn all that I can.

I recently got out of prison. I accepted Jesus while I was locked up and all I want to do is to serve Jesus my Lord for the rest of my life. I would really appreciate it if you would start sending me your magazine, *The World Ahead*, and the booklets you had offered. These would really help me to understand the bible and to learn more.

Kelly E. Pope
Stockdale, Texas

Thankful for Literature

Thank you so much for the magazine I just received. I can't find words to tell you how much I appreciate it. I also appreciate the great service you have fully committed yourself to doing the Work of God for the sake of your brothers and sisters all over the world.

Adi Senirewa Kula
Samabula, Fiji Islands

I would like to thank the Global Church of God for providing the *World Ahead* magazine and booklets free of charge. I find it very helpful and edifying.

I have been receiving your literature for about four months now, and I deeply appreciate the magazine articles. They are a big help to me and my friends also. I really feel motivated to continue doing according to the Word of God and meditating upon it in my life.

Gabriel Myaga Njoka
Nairobi, Kenya

I am very grateful to you for being so kind to me by sending your wonderful magazine. I am new on your mailing list. I've been blessed by the articles I have read—I find them very informative and they guide me in the right channel. Thank you very much indeed.

Ambuse Macreveth
Port Vila, Vanuatu

I just want to say that we, my husband and myself, have been receiving *The World Ahead* for about six months now. I have to say that I truly count it as one of the many blessings God has given to our family. I know that the time is so very close for Christ's return. This magazine confirms what the Bible has always said would happen in the endtime. God has blessed your ministry. I see it so clearly.

Margaret Laxton
Powell, Tennessee

After reading about five of the wonderful booklets that you have already sent to me, [I know] they have spiritually built me up. I am very thankful for your support and

I am here to inform you that God is blessing you for your kindness towards me.

Curtis Calloway
Vacaville, Calif.

A & B in Prophecy

I would like to know if you could send me your publication, *America and Britain in Prophecy*, by Raymond F. McNair. I heard that this shows how the United States fits in with prophecy—something that I haven't been able to figure out!

It is a question that is in most of our minds. Here we live in one of the biggest countries in the world—a superpower. One would think that America must be mentioned in the Bible. I am very curious to read how this relates to Bible prophecy.

Andrew M. Duran
Tehachapi, California

I found your home page on the Internet. Your literature appears to be really worth studying. Would you please send me a couple of things so I can take a closer look at them without being rushed by time limitations on the computer?

The current issue has information about the cultural background of the Palestinian people, which I have never seen presented so clearly before. I'm very impressed and would like to order it. Can you also please send the brochure *America and Britain in Prophecy*? With your talent for clear presentation of that type of material, I'm sure it will be very enlightening.

Bonnie Strub
Internet e-mail

The article you refer to is written by Raymond F. McNair and is titled "The Roots of Today's Mideast Turmoil" (Sept.–Oct. 1996). It is part of an ongoing series examining the history of strife between the Arabs and Jews, and the astounding resolution of their differences as revealed in Bible prophecy. The first installment of this series appeared in the June 1996 issue. The current installment, "Seventy-Five Years of Mideast Bloodshed!" can be found on page 20. Mr. McNair has been an evangelist, an author and a historian for more than 40 years—ed.

Thank you for the copy of *America and Britain in Prophecy*. This is truly a fascinating book and well-researched I might add. I tell friends about it and I can't seem to hang on to a copy.

Hank Hynes
Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada

Howdy! Thank you for the booklet *America and Britain in Prophecy*. It is packed with new things I hadn't read before. I also sent one to a friend in England (not a member of the Church) who thinks it is excellent too. Thank you for still telling the Truth and sticking by it.

Patricia Brummett
Austin, Texas

Financial Blessings

I had been out of a job for seven months, but God has blessed me now with a new job, a new car, a new house and a new church area with greater opportunity. All are more than I dreamed about or hoped for.

We feel that God has really blessed us. Our tithes will pick up now and we have added a little extra to help out. We are very thankful for the Work that God is doing through the Global Church and we are very happy and proud to be a part of it.

Keith and Jackie Cooper
Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

Enclosed is a small offering from our new business we started a few months ago. We are not quite turning a profit yet but God is blessing our efforts. We hope and pray that as our company grows we will be able to give more to the Work. Our prayers are with you all at headquarters; keep up the good work and have a happy Feast.

Brian Scarborough
Independence, Mo.

We welcome your comments, criticism 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)

kind of politicking: "Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness" (Prov. 25:5). And again, "If a ruler pays attention to lies, all his servants become wicked" (Prov. 29:12).

We also need to focus on the powerful influence exerted on the young and the unthinking by any president or political leader. Most people *do* tend to follow not merely the words—but the *example*—set by their leaders. If their leaders tend to have a shallow sense of values, if theirs is an "easy come, easy go" lifestyle, the impressionable of a nation are quick to pick up on this and imitate it. Although voting their pocketbooks may seem to help some individuals in the short term, the moral decay and spiritual cancer brought on an entire nation by this neglect of the character issue will eventually DESTROY the nation itself! The record of history proves that every nation that has abandoned sexual morality and integrity has eventually collapsed, and has often disappeared completely from the pages of history.

Peter Drucker is regarded as the dean of modern management theory. He has been a confidant and advisor to dozens and scores of top-ranking professional, industrial and government leaders. In his virtual "bible" of management text, *The Effective Executive* (pp. 86–87), Mr. Drucker comments on the *corrupting influence* of leaders without character. He says this is so because "subordinates, especially bright, young, and ambitious ones, tend to mold themselves after a forceful boss. There is, therefore, nothing more corrupting and more destructive in an organization than a forceful but basically corrupt executive. Such a man might well operate effectively on his own; even within an organization, he might be tolerable if denied all power over others. But in a position of power within an organization, he destroys."

Do we really want to destroy our youth, and millions of other unthinking individuals, who just seem to go along with whatever is dished up to them by our political system and by our liberal media? Yet that is what our modern democratic political process is bringing about with increasing regularity. The few "good" men and women around are usually ridiculed and pushed to the sidelines. The vaunted majority—usually heavily influenced by the left-leaning media—are usually beguiled into voting for whatever the political manipulators want them to.

Righteous *character* in a top leader is of paramount importance. But from now on, it will become increasingly obvious that *that* kind of leader will only be given authority when the Kingdom of God is set up on this earth. Just one more reason to follow Jesus' instruction and pray with understanding and fervency, "Thy Kingdom come."



Childhood DENIED!

by Jeffrey H. Patton

Abused as obedient soldiers, exploited as sex objects, wooed as the key to future tobacco profits and used as the cheapest of cheap labor—children are being made victims of their innocence and natural humility. Why are children valuable?

Governments around the world officially say that they value and respect children. Your average person on the street supports laws against child abuse. Nevertheless, the reality is that youthful millions are exploited by society as valuable commodities for a variety of reasons.

"Children make awesome soldiers," says Peter Nkhonjera, Save the Children coordinator in Mozambique's Tete district. "Child soldiers are effective because they are easy to organize, and they don't ask questions. In wartime, a commander wants total submission. You get that only from a child" (*World Press Review*, "Children in Bondage," Jan. 1996, pp. 8-9). As you read this, there are about 200,000 child-soldiers, about 10 percent girls, killing and being killed in some 27 ongoing conflicts. Most guerrilla

movements and many government armies use them.

"They worked out quite nicely in the field," remarked a former commander of a vicious guerrilla insurgency in southern Africa.

"You know, they always did what they were told to do, they were fiercely loyal and brave in battle. They had the hardest job really, they were often the first to go forward when we attacked a village.... The ones who didn't follow orders or failed in some way, they would be killed... in front of the whole group" (p. 10).

Because many modern assault weapons such as AK-47s are lightweight, easy to break down, clean and shoot, it is not unusual to see nine-year-olds being recruited or kidnapped into military service. Orphanages have been commonly seen as manpower recruiting depots

in countries at war. And it is not unusual for groups using kids as soldiers to give them drugs to make them violent and erase their inhibitions.

"Col. Abraham Kromah is fighting his own private war in Liberia's six-year-old civil conflict. His enemy is the drug scourge that has ravaged the country's youth, and in his eyes, led to the death of his teenage brother who was forced to join a rebel group. "The rest [three other siblings] died at the hands of child soldiers who never knew what they were doing because they were under the influence of drugs," said Colonel Kromah, deputy director of Liberia's National Police and the head

of Interpol in Monrovia, the capital" (*Christian Science Monitor*, "Nigeria's Drug Traders Ply the 'Liberian Connection,'" Jan. 29, 1996).

An international treaty called the "Protection of Children," which was signed in 1977, called on all nations to avoid using children younger than 15 as combatants. But today, most armed conflicts are internal, civil wars and no one enforces any rules in these cases.

Such wars during the last ten years have killed 2 million

children, disabled another 4 to 5 million, orphaned 1 million, made homeless 12 million and psychologically traumatized another 10 million according to UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, "Children Suffer in Front Line of Global Strife," Dec. 17, 1995).

In the United States, a twist on this use of children as soldiers has been perfected by super-organized criminal enterprises such as the Chicago-based "Gangster Disciples" (GD), a \$100-million-a-year operation with 30,000 gang members spread throughout 35 states.

"Today the gang lures young recruits, many of them poor and jobless, with the promise of ready cash. These youths shoulder much of the

risk for the gang's business, but profit far less than the top executives, who prosecutors say generally don't handle drugs or weapons.

"Jeff, 14, and Mike, 13, are two recent recruits, or 'shorties'.... Every day, for \$75, they work three hour 'security' shifts.... First they pick up guns—powerful handguns like TEC 9s, .357 Magnum semiautomatic revolvers, and Uzi machine guns.... Standing on corners or outside buildings, they look out for police or rival gang members.... Despite their bravado, both Mike and Jeff admit they are scared of going to

jail. 'I don't want to get beat up and raped,' says Jeff, a soft-spoken seventh grader wearing the GD colors of black and blue. Jeff joined the gang only a few months ago after failing to find another job. The money, he says, comes in handy for buying clothes and food" (*Christian Science Monitor*, "How Nation's Largest Gang Runs Its Drug Enterprise," July 15, 1996).

Gang violence is the major killer of youngsters—shorties—in the

poor, inner city neighborhoods of America. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, "while blacks make up 15 percent of the juvenile population, 52 percent of kids murdered are black" (*The San Diego Union-Tribune*, June 25, 1996).

Sex Slaves

Child prostitution has become wholly commonplace in many nations. Sex tourism is big business in many Third World cities, which profitably pander to First World pedophiles' insatiable lust for young bodies. "UNICEF estimates that 1 million children a year are forced into prostitution, trafficked for sexual purposes or used to produce pornography" (*The San Diego Union-Tribune*, Aug. 29, 1996).

In Cambodia it is a "normal" option for a poor family looking for cash to sell a young daughter to a bordello. An astute bargainer might squeeze several hundred dollars from the madam who can rent out a virgin (low risk of HIV) for \$500 to a visiting businessman. Thereafter,

like used cars, the price goes steadily down as the mileage increases. Many of these girls do eventually contract HIV.

"Today in the U.S. and Canada there are between 100,000 and 300,000 children under the age of 18 trapped in

Left to right: Young girl lighting up her cigarette—*PhotoDisc*. A 12-year-old Pakistani boy working his "normal" 13-hour, 7-days-per-week job (without pay) at his father's workshop—*Reuters*. This Calvin Klein billboard in New York's Time Square, part of a nationwide ad campaign, stirred up a wave of protests from consumers because many say it promoted child pornography—*AFP*. Children soldiers in Liberia—*Reuters*.

prostitution, researchers say. The average age of entry into prostitution is 14 years old... More than 80 percent of children who do enter the sex trade say they were sexually or physically abused at home" (*Christian Science Monitor*, "Sex Trade Lures Kids from Burbs," Aug. 30, 1996). This same article points out that sex procurers have an easy job in finding fresh American child prostitutes. They can recruit among the 500,000 or so children "who run away or are 'thrown away' (shut out of their homes) annually in the U.S." As a result, in Vancouver, Honolulu, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York and Washington, it is "easy to find a child for sex."

The U.S. Postal Service closed down what it said was the biggest child pornography ring that American law enforcement officials had ever seen. "So far, 56 people across the United States have been arrested and charged with receiving by mail order videotapes showing sex involving underage boys. Officials expect the number of arrests to exceed 100... In the thousands of videos and photographs seized from the [pedophile] business by Mexican and U.S. police officers, investigators counted about 300 boys [some as young as seven] who appeared to be underage Mexicans. Many were recruited on beaches, in public parks and on the doorsteps of bars in Acapulco, they say" (*The San Diego Union-Tribune*, Aug. 9, 1996).

Other predatory pedophiles recently shocked the Belgian people when police discovered the remains of two 8-year-old girls who had been kidnapped near their homes after going out to play. "Prosecutor Michel Bourlet told a news conference Sunday that police had pooled the files on [13 other] victims after one of the men arrested led them to the two girls' corpses and confessed to more kidnappings" (*Los Angeles Times*, "Girls Starved to Death in Suspected Sex Ring," Aug. 19, 1996). The pedophile's confession enabled police

to rescue two other girls, who are 12 and 14 years old, from a makeshift, underground dungeon where they had been repeatedly sexually assaulted.

"The commercial exploitation of children is an atrocity," said Peter Piot, head of the United Nations' AIDS agency. "It denies children their fundamental human rights... and it has devastating psychological consequences for them" (*The San Diego Union-Tribune*, Aug. 29, 1996).

Good Customers?

A little more than a year ago, President Bill Clinton asked the Food and Drug Administration to draw up plans for regulating the nicotine found in tobacco as an *addictive drug*. He sought to position the debate on the proposed crackdown as a child protection issue—calling tobacco smoking "a pediatric disease" (*Los Angeles Times*, "Clinton Takes Some Risks with Tobacco Crackdown," Aug. 23, 1996).

Whatever the merits of Clinton's political strategy, the risks associated with smoking are clearly a public health issue that strikes hard at children. The same article reports, "**More than 90 percent of new smokers begin before the age of 18**, and recent studies show that teenage smoking is on the rise again, reversing a 16-year decline." FDA spokesman Jim O'Hara said, "The public health data clearly show that if you can keep young people from beginning to smoke, they won't become smokers (as adults)."

Needless to say, the cigarette manufacturers are not happy about this potential threat to their billions in profits. But the tobacco industry has long known the importance of cultivating its "product's" favorable image in the youth market. This is a central point in the State of Minnesota's lawsuit that seeks to recover Medicaid costs spent treating tobacco-induced diseases.

"R. J. Reynolds concluded in a secret 1984 report that it needed to

pitch its cigarettes to young adults to replace other smokers, according to court papers filed yesterday. The marketing report, citing federal research, which showed that smokers begin as early as age 12 and rarely pick up the habit after 25, suggested that the company aggressively advertise toward younger people. 'Younger adult smokers are critical to RJR's long-term performance and profitability. Therefore RJR should make a substantial long-term commitment of manpower and money dedicated to younger adult smoker programs...'

"Minnesota Attorney General Hubert Humphrey III said the document is central to the state's case, which accuses the tobacco industry of intentionally trying to maintain its markets by appealing to children and teenagers" (*The San Diego Union-Tribune*, July 11, 1996).

Could the pervasive identity recognition and even popularity of the "Joe Camel" character among children and young teens be simply a case of market targeting gone awry? With a straight face, the tobacco industry would so assert.

Cheap Labor

For many of those living in impoverished nations, child labor is a fact of life. In recent months there has been considerable publicity about famous-label clothing retailers selling garments manufactured by "sweatshops." This business is powered, mostly, by women and children who are paid less money per completed garment than you and I might get from returning a bottle or can to reclaim the deposit!

But the sad fact is that such export-related jobs are better paying, more regulated and less abusive than many of the alternative jobs left to kids. "Boycotts of goods made with child labor may harm rather than aid

(continued on page 29)

QUESTIONS & SHORT ANSWERS

Q.

Doesn't Acts 4:12 prove that we must use the sacred name of Yeshua, rather than Jesus, in order to be saved?

A.

Acts 4:12 states that "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." There are many who believe this means we must use only a particular

form of the name of God, as well as of His Son. But is that really so?

The personal name of God throughout the Old Testament is represented by a four-consonant word called the Tetragrammaton (ancient Hebrew had no written vowels). The ancient Hebrews considered it too holy to speak, so they would read the word as *adonai*—"Lord." Consequently the actual pronunciation has not been preserved. Today, some say it should be Jehovah; others argue for Yahweh, Yahveh, Yahwah, Yahvah or numerous other variants.

A similar argument exists for the Messiah's name. Jesus is the modern form of the Latin *Iesus*, derived from the Greek *Iesous*—from an original Hebrew name whose modern English form is Joshua. Some think the name was Yehoshua. Others would contract this to Yeshua or Yahshua. The name means "Yahweh Is Salvation." But there is simply no way to know for sure how to pronounce the name.

Does the word "name" in Acts 4:12 refer to the correct pronunciation of Yeshua? The Greek word rendered "name" in this verse is *onoma*. According to the *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*, not only does this word refer to proper names, it is also "used for everything which the name covers... i.e. for one's rank, authority, interests, pleasure, command, excellences, deeds, etc."

When Bible translators render this word as "name" in English, what exactly do they mean? According to the *American Heritage Dictionary* (1992), "name" means "a word or words by which an entity is designated and distinguished from others" and also "general reputation." Also given is the idiomatic phrase, "in the name of," e.g. "Open up in the name of the law!" Here the person speaking is doing so *by the authority* of the law.

"Name" does indeed convey authority

in the Bible (cf. Eph. 1:21; Phil. 2:9-10). In Acts 4, the passage in question, "name" is specifically tied to "power." While the Apostles Peter and John were preaching the Gospel to a crowd, Peter miraculously healed a lame man. The apostles were taken before the Jewish religious authorities, who asked them, "**By what power or by what name have you done this?**" (v. 7). Peter answered that it was "**by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth....** Nor is there salvation in any other, for **there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved**" (vv. 10, 12).

This has nothing to do with pronouncing a word. That would be like having some kind of chant you could say to gain yourself salvation. We must believe in the *power* of our Savior to forgive us and save us (Rom. 5:10). We must believe and obey everything He taught. God's Word is more important than His name (Ps. 138:2).

Q.

Some teach that the Kingdom of God will be established in the future when Christ returns to the earth. But others teach that the Kingdom is already here, in the hearts of all believing Christians. Which view is correct?

A.

Many theologians do teach that the Kingdom of God is the Church, or is found in Christians' hearts. Let's examine Luke 17:20-21 to see the origin of this erroneous teaching. "Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, 'The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, "See here!" or "See there!" For indeed, the kingdom of God *is within you.*'" But what exactly does this mean?

The word "within" is translated from the Greek *entos*. But this word can also be translated "in the midst of" according to *The Enhanced Strong's Lexicon (Logos Bible Software)*. And, in fact, this is the meaning conveyed by the NRSV's "the kingdom of God is among you" and the Moffatt translation's "the Reign of God is now in your midst." But how can we be

sure this latter interpretation of Jesus' words is correct? By studying the *context* of the discussion Christ was in.

Note again the beginning of verse 20: "Now when He was asked *by the Pharisees....*" And it was to the Pharisees that Christ responded. These are the same Pharisees who caused Christ so much trouble during His earthly ministry. These are the same Pharisees whom Christ told, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Matt. 23:27-28). Jesus also said that unless someone's righteousness exceeded that of the Pharisees, he would "BY NO MEANS enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20).

Certainly, then, Christ could not have been telling these same Pharisees—hypocrites who would not enter the Kingdom—that the Kingdom of God was already INSIDE OF THEM!

We can find further evidence of what Christ meant in the writings of the Apostle Paul. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul states that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (15:50). And yet, the Pharisees *were* flesh and blood.

Perhaps one of the most convincing proofs that the Kingdom of God is not now set up in the hearts of Christians is found in Christ's own words. In Luke 19, Jesus is speaking to His disciples who "thought the kingdom of God would *appear immediately*" (v. 11). He told them a parable to *dispel* this idea—the parable of the nobleman who went to a far country. Christ explained that He would be gone for a long time (the time between His crucifixion and His Second Coming). In the interim, His servants—Christians—were to be doing His Work of preaching the Gospel and bearing the fruits of the Holy Spirit (vv. 12-27).

What then *did* Jesus mean when He said the Kingdom of God was "in the midst" of the Pharisees? Quite simply that He, the Christ—who was literally *in the midst* of the Pharisees He was addressing—was the very embodiment of that Kingdom. After all, Jesus Christ will be the KING of that soon-coming, future Kingdom!

Seventy-Five Years of Mideast Bloodshed!

by Raymond F. McNair

Palestine proved to be Imperial Britain's crown of thorns. After Turkey's defeat in World War I, some of her territories, including Palestine, were ceded to Britain under a League of Nations' mandate.

"Palestine involved Britain in a **tragic and intractable dilemma**. Here in a harsh land with a sparse but predominately Arabic population, Jews had already begun the attempt to reestablish the Jewish nation destroyed and scattered 20 centuries before. Paradoxically, Britain had assumed obligations to *both* communities—a recipe for disaster. An influx of Jewish immigrants, eager to see Jerusalem once again the capital of a Jewish nation, alienated the Arabs. British efforts to control the rush [of immigration] set Jew against Briton. After 30 years of mutual bitterness and violence, **Britain departed, leaving Israel to come to birth in a welter of blood**" (*The British Empire*, Time-Life Books, p. 2,241).

Room for Both?

How small is the State of Israel compared to the large "Arab nation"—the combined Arab States? "The land mass of the Arab states today is 5,414,000 square miles, as compared with 8,290 for pre-1967 Israel, and 2,130 for Judea, Samaria, and Gaza (together 10,420 square miles). **This is a ratio of 540 to 1**" (Benjamin Netanyahu, *A Place Among the Nations*, p. 41). Can you now see why modern Israelis feel like little David before an Arabic Goliath?

Following WW I, many prominent world leaders welcomed the idea that the Jews be given a "national home" in Palestine. Even the Emir Faisal (the future King Faisal of Iraq) told American jurist, Felix Frankfurter, "We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with *deepest sympathy* on the Zionist movement.... We will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home.... We are working together for a reformed and revised Near East, and our two movements [Pan-Arabism and Zionism] complement one another.... There is room in Syria [which then included Palestine] *for us both*. Indeed, I think that neither [Jew nor Arab] can be successful without the other" (Martin

Gilbert, *The Atlas of Jewish History*, p. 87).

However, Arab leaders subsequently began to have second thoughts, arguing that Britain's promises to them in 1915–1916 included *both* the West Bank region (of the Jordan River) as well as the East Bank lands. They began to resent the establishment by the West of a bridgehead in the very heart of the "big Arab state" that they claimed Britain promised to them.

Why Did Britain Abandon the Jews?

In 1917, Britain's Balfour Declaration promised the Jews "a national home" in Palestine. Following WW I, the "Balfour Declaration was ratified by the Allied Powers. [and in 1922] the Balfour Declaration was embodied in a Mandate of the League of Nations entrusting Britain with the government of the country" (Netanyahu, p. 60).

Winston Churchill declared, "It is manifestly right that the scattered Jews should have... *a national home* to be re-united, and where else but in Palestine?" However, after the Arab riots of 1920–1921, many British politicians, including Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, began to *reinterpret* the Balfour promises.

In spite of the fact that Transjordan (or the East Bank—the western part of modern Jordan) had been *included* in the British promise to the Jews, Britain did not keep her promise. Rather, the British began seeking the favor of the Arabs. In the 1930s, discovery of vast Arab oil fields played a key role in convincing British officials to renege on their promise of a Jewish national homeland. Britain soon became deeply dependent upon Mideast oil—not having yet developed her own North Sea reserves. To the dismay of the Jews, Britain simply turned her back on the promise made to them, and openly courted the Arabs.

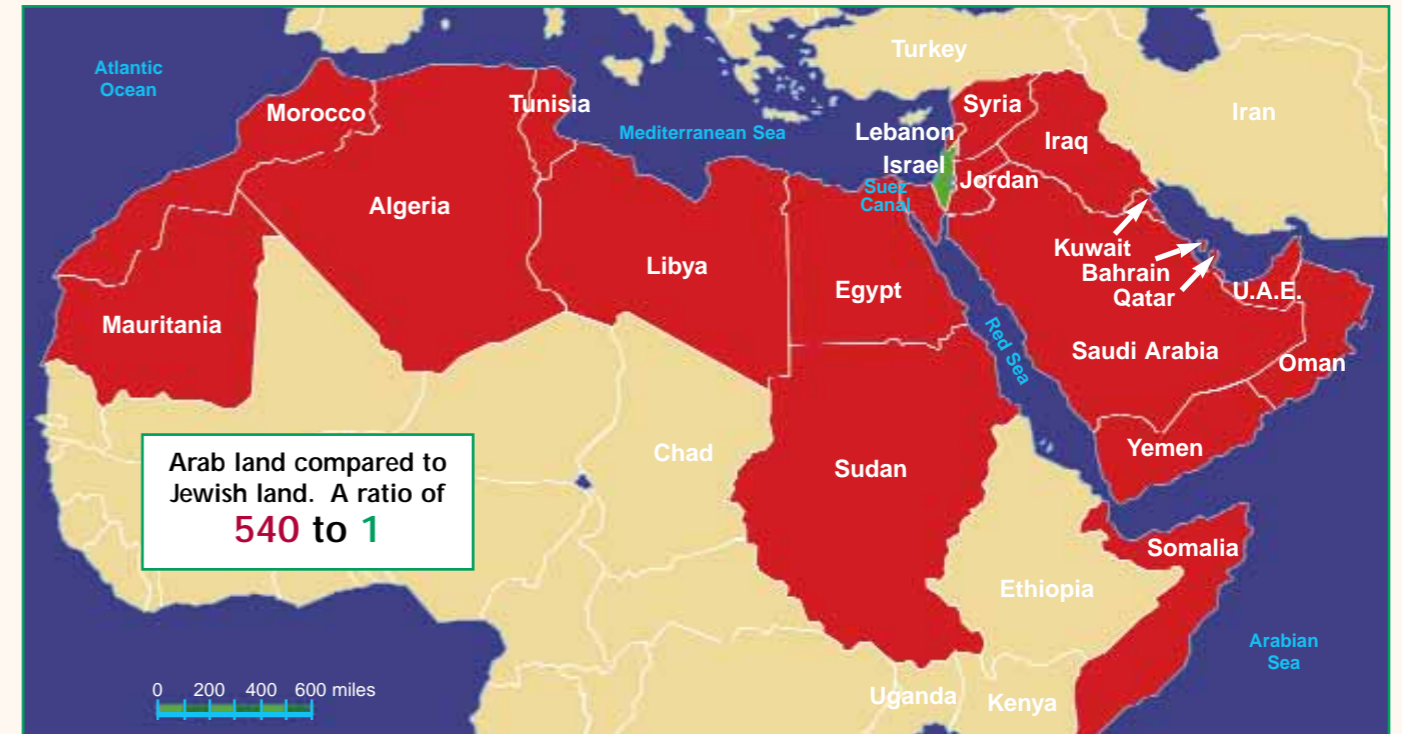
Even though the Jews had looked upon Britain as their friend at the time of the Balfour Declaration in 1917, they soon came to realize that a drastic change had occurred in the attitude of the British government toward them. Some British officials looked upon strident Jewish objections to Britain's repudiation of the Balfour promis-

es as "unscrupulous Zionist sob-stuff!" Britain's Lord Curzon revealed that attitude when he said that Britain's "Mandate... reeks of Judaism in every paragraph" and was therefore *unfair* to the Arabs.

Mediterranean, Iraq and everything which counts in the Middle East" (Harris Schoenberg, *Mandate for Terror: The U.N. and the PLO*, pp. 413-414).

Meinertzhagen said, "The Nazis mean to eradicate

Why did both Jews and Arabs come to resent Great Britain?



"Under its changed policy, **Britain turned its back on promises it had undertaken in the Balfour Declaration....** Britain tore off Transjordan from the Jewish National Home in 1922. With one stroke of the pen, it lopped off nearly 80 percent of the land promised the Jewish people, closing this area to the Jews to this day" (Netanyahu, p. 50). Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain led the British Government to abrogate the Balfour Declaration only six months after his shameful betrayal of the Czechs at Munich in September 1938.

When President Franklin Roosevelt heard what Britain had done, he said, "I was at Versailles, and I know that the British made no secret of the fact that they promised Palestine to the Jews. Why are they now *reneging* on their promise?"

Col. Richard Meinertzhagen, a British official charged with helping carry out Britain's policy under the mandate, commented, "**How we have let the Jews down.** And if we are not careful we shall lose the Eastern

Judaism from Germany and they will succeed. Nobody loves the Jews, nobody wants them and yet we are pledged to give them a home in Palestine. **Instead we slam the door in their faces just at the moment when it should be wide open.** We even whittle down their home at a moment when we should enlarge it. The action of His Majesty's Government in Palestine is very near to that of Hitler in Germany. They [the British] may be more subtle, they are certainly more *hypocritical*, but the result is similar—insecurity, misery, exasperation and murder" (*The Wall Street Journal*, July 26, 1979).

British rule over Palestine (1917–1948) was dogged with nothing but headaches and vexing obstacles from the beginning. God's Word had prophesied that the Jewish question would "harass" or "vex" Ephraim—modern Britain (Is. 11:13 KJV; see our free brochure *America and Britain in Prophecy*)! Following is only a partial list of the many troubles that vexed Britain during the 30 years she ruled over Palestine: in May 1921

anti-Zionist Arab rioting broke out—killing 46 Jews and injuring 146; in 1929 Arabs butchered 60 Jewish civilians in Hebron, the burial city of Abraham, and killed 133 Jews in the northern Palestinian city of Safad.

After the Arab riots, the British, fearful of more violent Arab-Jewish clashes, issued a “white paper” in June 1922 in which they said that Britain had *not* promised the Jews “Palestine as a whole... [as] a Jewish national home.... In September 1922 Transjordan [modern Jordan], although included in the British Mandate of Palestine, was excluded from the scope of the Balfour Declaration under protest from the Zionists” who felt they had been *betrayed* by Britain (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Palestine,” 1970).

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu explains this betrayal. “In July 1937, the Royal (Peel) Commission gave explicit sanctions to Arabist policy. The Mandate for a Jewish National Home in Palestine, it concluded, simply could *not* be fulfilled in the face of Arab sensibilities. Instead, it recommended that Palestine be partitioned: [1] the Jews would receive their ‘state,’ (roughly *five percent* of the original homeland granted the Jews by the Palestine Mandate); [2] the British would retain Jerusalem and Haifa; and [3] an Arab state (to be merged with Transjordan) would receive everything else—more than *90 percent* of Palestine. Yet the Arabs... rejected the plan unequivocally and demanded everything... [including] a *complete end* to all Jewish immigration and a *complete renunciation* of the Jewish National Home” (p. 68).

In May 1939, Britain issued another “white paper [that] limited further Jewish immigration to a total of 75,000, to be admitted in the course of five years, and severely restricted Jewish land purchases in Palestine. After some hesitations, the Arabs accepted the plan as meeting their demands. The Zionists rejected it as meaning the end of the policy of the *Jewish national home* (a view which was supported by the League of Nations) and the Jews replaced the Arabs as the party in opposition to the government” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Palestine,” 1970)!

Israel, an Illegitimate Child?

What was the Arab reaction when the League of Nations included the Balfour Declaration promises in Britain’s mandate to rule Palestine? “The Arabs now assert that at the time of Versailles, the Jews had no political rights over the land, that these devolved upon the Arabs then inhabiting it—and that therefore the *original sin* in favor of Zionism was committed by the international community not in 1948 (the year of Israel’s founding) or in 1967 (the year Israel gained control over Judea, Samaria and Gaza) but in 1917, when the British government endorsed the Balfour Declaration promising the Jews a national home in Palestine” (Netanyahu, p. 22).

The prime minister of Israel also says, “Half a century after the Jewish state was created, the notion still endures among Arabists that somehow Israel was conceived in *geopolitical sin*—that sin being, in Arabist eyes, that its very existence deprived the West of cherished Arab support” (p. 75).

After Israel’s lightning victory in the Six Day War in 1967, Pakistan accused Israel of “naked aggression” and also said, “Israel is an *illegitimate child* born of fraud and force” (Katz, *Battleground*, p. 61).

Speaking in Geneva on December 13, 1988, Yasser Arafat said, “More than 40 years ago, the U.N., in its Resolution 181 [1947 partition of Palestine], decided on the establishment of *two states* in Palestine, one Palestinian Arab and the other Jewish... [which resolution Arafat called a] *historic wrong* that was done to our people.”

Israel’s Lifeblood—Immigration

For nearly 2,000 years the Jews had longed to reclaim their ancestral homeland. “Next year in Jerusalem!”—had long been an expression of this yearning. A continuous flow of Jewish immigrants to Palestine would be the lifeblood of the Jewish people’s dream of someday giving birth to a new nation in Palestine. They knew the return of Jewish exiles to Palestine was necessary to reach a critical mass that would allow them to attain their prophesied sovereign status.

The Arabs also realized that Jewish immigration was vital to the birth of a Jewish state in Palestine—so they did all they could to choke off the flow of Jewish immigrants.

Yasser Arafat even urged the Arabs to use murder to prevent Jews from immigrating to the West Bank. “I want to say clearly: **Open fire on the new Jewish immigrants....** It would be disgraceful of us were we to see herds of immigrants conquering *our land* and settling *our territory* and not raise a finger. I want you to shoot, on the ground or in the air, at every immigrant who thinks our land is a playground and immigration to it is a picnic.... It makes no difference if they live in Jaffa or Jericho. I give you explicit instructions to *open fire. Do everything to stop the flow of immigration*” (quoted by Hans Josef Horchem, *Conflict Studien*, “Terror in West Germany,” 1985).

We are informed that “between 1880 and 1914 over 60,000 Jews entered Palestine, mostly from Russia, Galicia, Rumania and Poland. The victims of persecution and discrimination, they sought a new homeland and a new security under Turkish rule. Many settled on wasteland, sand-dunes and malarial marsh, which they then drained, irrigated and farmed. In 1909 a group of Jews founded the first entirely Jewish town, Tel Aviv, on the sandhills north of Jaffa. The Jews purchased their land

piecemeal, from European, Turkish and (principally) Arab landlords, mostly at extremely high prices” (Gilbert, p. 85). Many of those immigrants either worked as hired laborers in the towns, or on the land. By the time of the First World War, 100,000 Jews lived in Palestine.

What were the terrible *consequences* of Britain’s vague promises to the Jews and Arabs? And more importantly, what were the *tragic results* of Britain deliberately *breaking* her promise of a Jewish national homeland? And after promising that the British would “use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object”—why did they do the exact opposite?

Shortly after the Balfour Declaration was issued, many Arabs (even those like Faisal who had previously favored such a national home for the Jews) began to bitterly oppose giving the Jews political control over Palestine—regardless of how small their homeland might be!

Much of the 20th century turmoil and bloodshed in the Middle East can be traced to: 1) the vagueness of Britain’s *conflicting promises* to the Jews and Arabs; and 2) the broken British promises to the Jews, thereby sacrificing Jewish interests in order to court Arab favor! *Oil diplomacy* figured prominently in Britain’s renegeing on her promise to the Jews.

There is a tragic footnote to Britain’s foreign policy regarding the Jews. While Hitler implemented his “final solution” to secretly eliminate six million Jews in Europe, Britain tried to prevent desperate Jewish refugees from reaching the safe haven of their ancestors’ homeland in Palestine. In the novel *Exodus*, Leon Uris dramatically portrayed this sad chapter in Anglo-Jewish relations during the closing years of British rule over Palestine.

Born in a “Welter of Blood”

In 1946, Jewish frustrations toward Britain began to surface. “Two terrorist groups, the *Irgun* and the *Stern Gang*, took it upon themselves to attack and murder British officials. At first, *Haganah*, the defense force created in the 1920s to stave off Arab attacks, believed that terrorism could only harm the Zionist cause, and helped the British try to crush the extremists. But when at the war’s end Britain still made no move to fulfill Zionist dreams, Haganah, too, defied her with violence.... On July 22, 1946, Irgun—with Haganah complicity—blew

up the British Military H.Q., a wing of the King David Hotel. Ninety-one Jews, Arabs and Britons were killed” (*The British Empire*, Time-Life Books, p. 2,258).

It soon became clear to both Jews and Arabs that matters had gotten out of hand. Atrocities were being committed by both Arab and Jewish “freedom fighters.” Each side felt totally justified in its cause, and each was fully determined to fight to obtain its objectives.

By 1947, Britain realized she could no longer handle the Palestinian problem so she dumped this political hot potato squarely in the lap of the United Nations! Therefore, on November 30, 1947, the U.N. approved a plan to *partition* Palestine between Jews and Arabs. The U.N. partition plan was sup-

Much of the 20th century turmoil and bloodshed in the Middle East can be traced to: 1) the vagueness of Britain’s *conflicting promises* to the Jews and Arabs; and 2) the broken British promises to the Jews, thereby sacrificing Jewish interests in order to court Arab favor!

ported by 33 nations—including both the United States and the Soviet Union. Thirteen nations (mostly from the Arab League) bitterly opposed the U.N. plan, while Britain, along with ten other nations, abstained from voting.

The Jews immediately accepted the U.N. partition plan, but the Arabs flatly rejected it—vowing to fight, if necessary, to prevent its implementation. Soon violence erupted between the Jews and Arabs. On February 23, 55 Jews were killed by an Arab terrorist’s bomb in Jerusalem; on March 4, Arabs ambushed and killed 16 more Jews.

On April 9, in retaliation for Arab atrocities, Jewish terrorists (Irgunists) massacred “250 civilian inhabitants of the village of Deir Yasin”—including men, women and children (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Palestine,” 1970). The Jewish Agency and the Haganah—Britain considered the latter to also be a terrorist organization—condemned the killings as “utterly repugnant.”

More violence occurred on April 13, as Arab terrorists killed 40 Jewish doctors and nurses en route to the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem. Then, on May 12, just two days before Israel would declare independence, Arabs killed 100 Jews—15 of whom were machine-gunned to death *after* they had surrendered! As the British prepared to leave Palestine, both Jews and Arabs braced themselves for the struggle they knew lay just ahead!

In May 1948, the Jews numbered about 650,000, the Palestinian Arabs about 980,000. Tiny Israel knew that the armies of the Arab nations—whose peoples then numbered about 50 million!—were poised to crush the infant Jewish state. The Arabs were also much better armed.

(continued on page 27)

Grasping for the Wind



A Society Enslaved to Covetous Obsession

by Roderick C. Meredith

Campaign trails are ablaze in America! But will the Election of '96 turn out to be an anticlimax? Some new faces and some not so new will fill contested presidential, congressional, state legislature and city council seats of power next year. While the world's spotlight presently focuses on U.S. politics, politicians and their basic motivations are similar the world over.

WHY do political candidates seek office? Are their motives pure and altruistic—an honest desire to serve the general public or at least their constituency? Not often enough! I think many of us would sadly acknowledge that the vast majority of politicians are, to some degree, pursuing selfish ambition

and increased personal power.

Too many challengers who seek to win public office *covet* the position of the present incumbent—just as that incumbent probably did before he or she won the office. Certainly, there are many candidates who legitimately feel that they can do a better job for the public than the current officeholder. Yet, even among these, personal dissatisfaction with the level of political clout they wield is most likely a factor in their candidacy. To put it bluntly, they want what someone else now has.

That shouldn't surprise us. Wanting what belongs to another is an international pastime that extends to almost every facet of life. Today's society is *based* on getting—especially

getting ahead of others. The modern proverb speaks of "keeping up with the Joneses." This idea that we must grasp for as many material luxuries as our next-door neighbors have is pushed by modern commercialism. High pressure ads convince many that failure to "keep up" is ridiculously backward or even wrong.

Worse still is the desire to have what rightfully belongs to someone else. All around the world, this is crime's bottom-line motivation. Theft obviously starts from wrong thoughts as do adultery and other offenses against God and society.

In prior issues of *The World Ahead*, I wrote about the first nine of God's Ten Commandments. Because the sin of covetousness is so broad, it

is well-placed as the tenth and final commandment of God's royal law. This last commandment deals with the attitude that leads to disobedience to all the other commands. It directly addresses the thoughts of selfishness and self-will. The voice of God boomed from Mount Sinai, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's" (Ex. 20:17).

A Spiritual Commandment

Of the ten points of God's law, this last commandment discusses the basis for a man's relationship with his fellow man. Notice the focus of the command: "Your neighbor's... your neighbor's... his... his... his... his... your neighbor's." Here, then, is a *sevenfold* emphasis on securing another's interests!

It isn't wrong to desire a house, wife, servant or some material asset. But it *is* wrong when the object desired is lawfully out of reach of the one wanting it. This, in fact, is *sin* in the eyes of Almighty God!

Many argue that to keep the Ten Commandments one is merely required to do or not do some overt action. This is what is meant by following only the "letter of the law." Those who hold such a view do not perceive that the "ten words" are a spiritual law.

For instance, the seventh commandment prohibits adultery (Ex. 20:14). Those who view this commandment in the letter think that a married person having sex with someone other than his or her spouse is the only thing forbidden here. Yet Christ said when a man *lusts* for another woman, this is *also* adultery (Matt. 5:28)—a violation of the same commandment.

Christ, then, showed the original, spiritual intent of the seventh com-

mandment. Yet many will argue that the seventh commandment merely forbids the *physical act* of adultery, while Jesus gave a *NEW* command—a spiritual command—against *lusting in the mind*. They reason similarly with the other commandments and conclude that the Ten Commandments are the bare minimum standard of human conduct—in stark contrast to the broad principles expounded by this series of articles.

But those who argue along these lines cannot use the same reasoning with the *tenth* commandment. Plainly, the tenth commandment requires of man unseen, spiritual obedience in the mind. Of all the commandments, the tenth neither proscribes nor commands *any physical action!* Rather, this law forbids certain thoughts! It can only be seen as a spiritual command. The Apostle Paul said that he "would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, 'You shall not covet'.... For we know that the law is spiritual" (Rom. 7:7, 14).

Covetousness instigates many other sins. Paul said that sin produced in him "all manner of evil desire" (v. 8)—just as it has in all of us. The book of James explains how this happens: "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (1:14-15).

Sin that is not repented of earns the death penalty (Rom. 6:23). And any person who covets definitely sins. Romans 1:28-31 lists a number of sinful behaviors, including covetousness. Verse 32 says that "those who practice such things are deserving of death."

In Ephesians 5:3-7, Paul writes, "But fornication and all uncleanness or *covetousness*, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints.... For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, *nor covetous man*... has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let

no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them."

Again, the Scriptures teach, "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and *covetousness*.... Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them" (Col. 3:5-7).

On the other hand, the Bible says that "he who hates covetousness will prolong his days" (Prov. 28:16). Why? Because such a person will not endanger his life or health in going after more and more and more materialism. And those who heed God's instructions will be rewarded with eternal life in the World Ahead.

Passions, Possessions and Positions

Notice again the wording of the tenth commandment. Many focus on the specific prohibitions listed. But notice the last thing that we are not to covet: "*Anything* that is your neighbor's." That's *all* inclusive! We shouldn't inordinately desire to own someone else's Mercedes. We shouldn't want to steal someone's job. We shouldn't want to take credit and accept praise for something someone else has done.

In fact, there are literally thousands of applications of this commandment. The Apostle John summarized them: "For all that is in the world—the **lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life**—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:16-17).

The "lust of the flesh" concerns the body's passions. For example, hunger, the sex drive or any other

physical craving, such as drug addiction that seeks to be satisfied. Coveting a neighbor's spouse normally would fall into this category since the reason for the desire is usually sexual attraction—in which case it is also adultery. Gluttony, drunkenness and pleasure-seeking are also forbidden by this spiritual principle.

God's Word warns us that "the unfaithful will be taken by their own lust" (Prov. 11:6). Paul exhorted his formerly pagan converts, "Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in licentiousness and lewdness, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts" (Rom. 13:13-14). He also

wrote, "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts" (Rom. 6:12).

To repentant Christians, Paul says, "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others" (Eph. 2:1-3).

Children of wrath? Oh yes! For many people seek to satisfy their covetous desires through fighting. At the national level, this means war. In the fourth century B.C., Socrates observed, "Wars and revolutions and battles are due simply and solely to the body and its desires. All wars are undertaken for the acquisition of wealth; and the reason why we have to acquire wealth is the body, because we are slaves in its service" (quoted by Plato in *Phaedo*, sec. 65c-66e).

By divine inspiration, the Apostle

James gave a similar assessment in the first century, A.D. He wrote, "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). Micah 2:2 mentions evildoers who



"covet fields and take them by violence, also houses, and seize them."

This touches the second category of covetousness, the "lust of the eyes"—our desire for material possessions and riches. According to millionaire Donald Trump, "you can't be too greedy" (*The Art of the Deal*, 1987, chap. 2). Yet such a philosophy is directly contrary to the tenth commandment of God.

Giving the 1986 commencement address at U.C. Berkeley's business school, American financier Ivan Boesky said, "Greed is all right, by the way.... I think greed is healthy. You can be greedy and still feel good about yourself." Boesky became infamous when he was caught in an insider stock-trading scandal and had to pay \$100 million in fines.

God's Word states, "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish

and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. **For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows**" (1 Tim. 6:6-10).

American psychologist Erich Fromm wrote in 1941, "Greed is a bottomless pit which exhausts the person in an endless effort to satisfy the need without ever reaching satisfaction" (*Escape from Freedom*, ch. 4). God said the same thing thousands of years earlier in more eloquent terms: "Hell and Destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied" (Prov. 27:20).

Jesus Christ warned us about the pursuit of possessions. He said, "Take heed

and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Luke 12:15). When we begin focusing on material things, the important issues of life slip by us. We should pray to God as King David did: "Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in Your way" (Ps. 119:36-37).

Some seek riches for the increased status that comes from being rich. This is covered by the third category of covetousness concerning the "pride of life." This is the desire for position, prestige and fame. Shamefully, people will slander and defame others to advance themselves up the corporate ladder. Election campaigns commonly feature mudslinging. It's all about running over people to get to the top. God answers, "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Ps. 75:6-7 KJV). Competition in a "winning-is-everything" spirit—whether in

sports, games, business or social contexts—is also covetousness!

The Commandments Link Up

The famous French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in 1840, "Consider any individual at any period of his life, and you will always find him preoccupied with fresh plans to increase his comfort. Do not talk to him about the interests and rights of the human race; that little private business of his for the moment absorbs all his thoughts, and he hopes that public disturbances can be put off to some other time" (*Democracy in America*, vol. 2, pt. 3, ch. 21).

How true this is of most people. If everyone's thoughts are so engaged, where is the time for God? In my article on the first commandment, I wrote that anything coming between us and God is an idol. And so here the last commandment joins hands with the first. God says, "covetousness... is idolatry" (Col. 3:5) and a "covetous man... is an idolater" (Eph. 5:5).

If you begin to lust after and covet certain things above your desire to obey God, those things become idols to you. You are breaking the first commandment: "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Ex. 20:3). The Apostle Paul, concerned about this sin we all have been guilty of, said, "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16).


When you start coveting material things, you "serve" them. You spend your time, energy and money on them. Then you have no time or energy to study God's Word or to pray to Him—the One who gives you life and breath. You become stingy and covetous of the money you owe God to finance the publishing of His Gospel. And, suddenly, worthless

things become your GODS—cutting you off from the fellowship and blessing of the true God. Sadly, the Bible mentions people who hear God's Word, but "the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful" (Mark 4:19).

We must make sure we put God first. We should *seek first* His Kingdom and His righteousness—then He will take care of us (Matt. 6:33). In the meantime, we must learn to be satisfied with the things God provides. "Let your conduct be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have" (Heb. 13:5). As the Old Testament attests, **"Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of desire. This also is vanity and grasping for the wind"** (Eccles. 6:9).

We must learn to *trust* in Jesus Christ and the Father, not in material riches. In 1 Timothy 6:17-19, God inspired Paul to write, "Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

The life worth living is outgoing. A giving, sharing approach in all of our personal affairs is a recipe for happiness, success and true peace of mind. To be free of covetousness we must have outgoing love for our neighbor.

Yes, we must learn to give, just as God gives. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Only in learning to serve our fellow man and worship the Eternal God will we find real joy and fulfillment in this life. And, in the wonderful World Ahead, God will give us a reward greater than anything we can now imagine. 


MIDEAST BLOODSHED (continued from page 23)

The Jews, however, had a burning desire to build for themselves a new nation in their ancient homeland. They were willing to fight and, if necessary, to die in order to realize their dream of a Jewish state. As the fateful day—May 14, 1948—approached, everyone watched and waited! The Arabs and much of the rest of the world expected tiny Israel to be strangled before it could draw its first breath of freedom.

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says that on May 14 "the last British High Commissioner, General Sir Alan Cunningham, left Palestine. On the same day the State of Israel was proclaimed and within a few hours won *de facto* recognition from President Truman" ("Palestine," 1970). The Russians quickly followed suit and before long most of the other nations recognized Israel.

The next day, May 15, the armed forces of five Arab nations (Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Iraq and Lebanon) savagely attacked Israel—ensuring that her birth would be "in a welter of blood"! But Israel's armed forces prevailed. Many believe the Great God had decreed that the new nation of Israel would survive and *thrive* during the coming traumatic decades.

The Israelis viewed their struggle with the Arabs as a replay of the ancient life-and-death struggle between the youthful David and the giant Goliath (1 Sam. 17). Most Israelis firmly believed Almighty God would grant them victory over their foes and crown their infant nation with success. They believed the God of their fathers had so prophesied in their ancient Scriptures, the Hebrew Bible!

In a future article in *The World Ahead*, we will examine the tumultuous decades following the birth of Israel in May 1948, as we note the hand of God delivering the Israelis from their hostile neighbors time and again. 

SAVE THE FAMILY? (continued from page 10)

the family. When God gave instructions to Adam, and Satan worked on Eve to effect a change in direction, God still held Adam responsible for what happened (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:17). Man is also to be the primary *teacher* in the family (Gen. 18:19; Eph. 6:4), showing by instruction and example how to deal with life's situations.

This means all men must be growing mentally and spiritually to be able to fulfill their important responsibilities. A steady diet of TV, sports and six-packs will not equip any man for his role.

A husband is also to cleave to his wife in love. A man's leadership and example should be a blessing and a benefit that promotes the overall welfare of each member of the family. Unfortunately no one is born with these skills. They must be learned through instruction, example and experience.

Women were created by God to be helping partners for men (cf. Gen. 2:18 NRSV). God designed women to be *suitable companions*, complementing and completing men—not to *compete* with them. God assigned to women the incredibly important role of being the *homemakers* for the family (Titus 2:4-5)—creating a warm, comfortable, loving, safe oasis in the midst of life's everyday challenges.

The feminist idea of liberating women from this essential role has had a devastating effect on our modern society. A wife is given the challenging role of being a *decision facilitator* in the family as well as making many decisions herself, for instance, regarding homemaking and child rearing. This involves a willingness to be subject to and adapt to her husband's loving leadership (Col. 3:18). This can be done most readily if the husband acts in ways to earn his wife's respect. There is no biblical requirement to endure a husband's rage and abuse. Children who observe their mother helping her husband make wise decisions—disagreeing *diplo-*
matically when necessary—will learn vital skills.

As Titus 2:4 points out, another role for women that engages their innate qualities is to *nurture* their families. This loving concern will have to be applied in different

ways as family members grow and mature. Women have also been given the opportunity to be *beneficiaries* of their husband's love and their children's respect. This does not mean they can grow selfish. A woman who deeply appreciates this God-given privilege will use this role to benefit her family, herself and others (cf. Prov. 31:10-31).

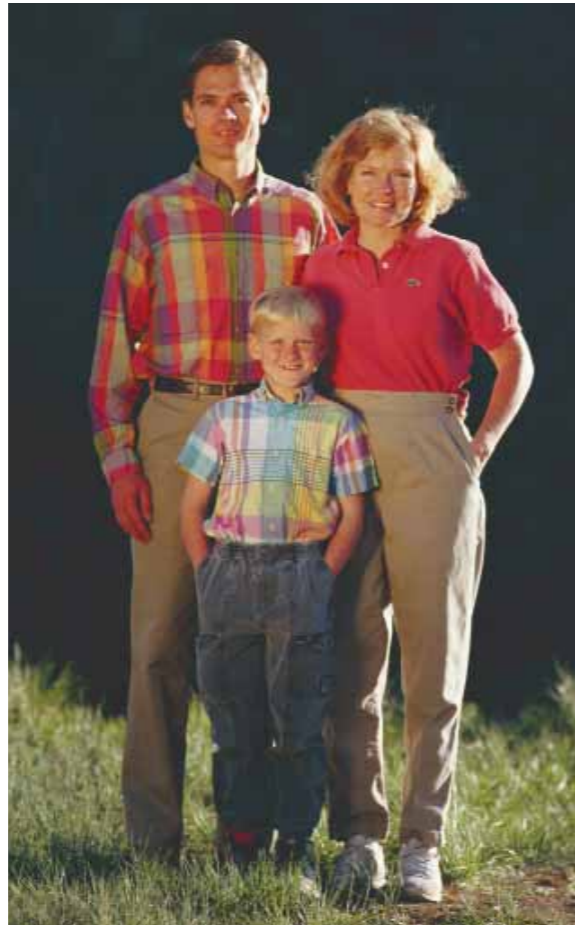
Unfortunately many in our modern society have discarded these God-given roles designed to promote strong, stable marriages and families. Liberal intellectuals describe these biblical concepts of marriage and the family as an "archaic system of family relationships that we *know* has not been very successful in the past" (*The Progressive*, Aug. 1996, p. 25). The consequences of liberal social engineering are predictable in biblical terms. Our pathetic national statistics on divorce prove the point.

Even today, while politicians give lip service to the *need* to return to traditional family values, they seldom *define* what those values are! To get specific would alienate certain interest groups and cost precious votes. Ironically, to advocate biblical solutions for serious domestic problems—in an America that claims to be "one nation under God"—would be committing political suicide!

The solutions to troubled marriages, fractured families and increasingly violent children are not likely to be found in the promises of politicians. The real solutions are found in the

pages of the Bible. Only when this world has leaders with the courage to promote genuine family values will we be able to correct the tragic situation that is threatening to take us down the same road to oblivion that other once-great civilizations have traveled.

Despite society's trend, you and your family don't have to be misled by flawed social values. You can begin to change your life. You can begin to strengthen your marriage. You can improve relationships in your family. Write for our free booklet, *How to Have a Joyous Marriage*. Learn how to apply the biblical principles that apply to marriage. Develop your knowledge and skills in this vital area. Such information will be useful now and in the World Ahead when everyone will have the opportunity to learn God's "family values." WA



CHILDHOOD (continued from page 18)

children, the United Nations International Labor Organization (ILO) recently warned.... Of the more than 80 million child workers, most are *unpaid* domestics. [In India, for example, debts are passed down from generation to generation and a child can be bound to the parents' creditor until the debt is paid.] Experience suggests that "one immediate consequence of boycotts—the precipitous dismissal of children who are already working—can endanger rather than protect those children" (*World Press Review*, Jan. 1996, p. 12).

The conclusion of the ILO report advocated action: to eliminate the various modern forms of child slavery, to end the dangerous work conditions in which many children labor, and to require children's access to a few primary school classes to achieve at least a minimum level of literacy.

Many Americans have forgotten that child labor in the U.S. ended less than 60 years ago. "Because children could be hired cheaply and were too small to complain, they were often employed to replace adult workers. In industries where large numbers of children were employed, their low wages pulled down the earnings of everyone else, so that grown-ups could not earn enough to support their families. As a result, poor families needed their children's wages just to survive" (Russell Freedman, *Kids at Work*, Scholastic Inc., 1995, pp. 21-22).

Only in 1938 was the employment of children in manufacturing and mining prohibited by the Fair Labor Standards Act. In 1949 this law was broadened to include commercial agriculture, transportation, communications and public utilities while employment in other occupations was forbidden during school hours. With the 1996 abolition of Franklin Roosevelt's 1935 welfare program of Aid to Families with Dependent Children, will the United States see a

massive reappearance of poor children seeking work out of necessity?

Why Are Children Valuable?

Obviously, today's world sends mixed signals about how much it cherishes its children. Societies and nations differ in how they really treat their young. Too many adults only see kids as easy marks to manipulate, use and abuse in the selfish pursuit of money, sexual gratification and power. This is NOT the God of the Bible's perspective.

Nearly 2,500 years ago, God explained His purpose for children when He was rebuking a society that professed to know Him, but had allowed divorce to become commonplace. Why did Israel's God not like divorce? Because He was seeking something special from married couples—"godly offspring" (Mal. 2:15).

The Hebrew for this phrase is *mevaqesh zera Elohim*. Literally this means: "He was seeking a seed of God" (Jay P. Green Sr., *The Interlinear Bible*, 1985, p. 730). What does God mean by this?

Besides the word *zera's* obvious meaning for seed being "descendants, posterity and children" (cf. *Logos Bible Software*), there is another shade of meaning indicating something of a "moral quality."

The Gospel of Mark records the first two instances where Jesus taught His disciples that He was going to soon be martyred as the suffering Servant of all humanity rather than immediately enthroned in temporal power as the world-ruling, glorious Messiah (8:31; 9:31). After the second warning of Jesus' impending death, the disciples began arguing about who would succeed Him—"who would be the greatest" (9:34).

"And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, 'If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.' Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him [the

child] in His arms, He said to them, 'Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me'" (vv. 35-37).

Then as now, children occupied the lowest position on the totem pole in society. They were "last of all and servant of all." Consequently, Jesus carefully explained the moral quality that God finds so refreshing, so appealing in most young children.

"Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted [mentally and spiritually transformed] and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18:3-6).

Children are not the sole property of their parents or their society. They belong to the LORD God who has established some specific principles on how they are to be treated.

God did not permit the army commanders and kings of ancient Israel to draft into their armies any youth under the age of 20. In the first chapter of Numbers, Moses repeated 14 times the phrase "from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war." The Bible considers that a youth becomes an adult at age 20. From that age God holds an individual strictly accountable for his actions (cf. Ex. 30:14; Num. 14:29; 32:11).

Also, the Scriptures did not permit any family to sell its daughters into prostitution (Lev. 19:29). But God did permit families to take payment for arranging the marriage of a daughter to a rich suitor. Even so, the young woman always retained specific legal rights that secured her material and even emotional well-being (Ex. 21:7-11).

The kidnapping and pedophilia practices mentioned in this article are strongly condemned by God (cf. Deut. 24:7; Col. 3:5-6). Strangely, history has a way of repeating itself. In antiquity, children kidnapped by pirates were one of the most common sources of new slaves. But, “by the 1st century [A.D.]... the children of women in slavery had become the primary source of slaves.... The quality of daily life of all those in slavery, but especially that of household slaves *and children*, depended almost entirely upon the particular character and mood of the owner.... Greco-Roman slave systems and legal frameworks gave slave owners much room to be cruel or compassionate.... The fact that the owner of slaves owned the *bodies* and not just the work of the persons in slavery meant that **slaves were generally regarded as sexually available without restriction**” (*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, “Slavery,” vol. 6, 1992, pp. 67-69). Remarkably, the Bible foretells a time when an economic and political superpower, inspired by the legacy of the ancient Roman Empire, will arise to once again trade in the “bodies and souls” of human beings (Rev. 18:13). God promises to completely destroy that genuinely evil empire.


The Scriptures command parents and guardians to nurture and protect, rather than abuse and exploit, the children who are loaned to them by God. “Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is His reward” (Ps. 127:3). In ancient Israel’s most famous creed, the *Shema*, God first commanded His people to love Him with all of their being (Deut. 6:4-5). Secondly, they were to take His revealed knowledge and teach it “diligently” at every opportune moment to the children temporarily in their care (vv. 6-7).

But while the adult generation should be teaching children the spiritual and material knowledge

they will need to successfully prepare for the future, adults should also learn something from children. One of the divine purposes of children is to model the innocent, trusting and teachable attitude that many adults have long forgotten in their rush for money, power and self-gratification.

The Father of life is seeking holy seed: children of God whose hearts and minds are tender, humble, teachable. “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” (Rom. 8:5-6). **“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God”** (v. 14 NRSV).

Too many in today’s world exploit and abuse children because they are unaware of God’s purpose for human life. But to those who have a heart and mind to understand, it is written, “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean [exploitive, abusive practices], and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and **you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty**” (2 Cor. 6:17-18).

True Christians will cultivate the humble, innocent attitude of a little child to prepare themselves for maturity as eternal sons in God’s Family. The Apostle John wrote, “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 John 3:1-2). 

LOST FOREVER?

(continued from page 13)

Those who have never heard the Gospel of the Kingdom of God—such as the Inca children sacrificed on Mt. Ampato—will be able to hear it for the first time in an environment where God’s righteous government rules. “‘It shall come to pass... [that] the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy Mountain,’ says the LORD” (Is. 65:24-25). God is merciful and just, and He plans for all who have ever lived to have *one full chance* to be given eternal life. The Church is called and judged in this age—the rest of humanity will be called and judged in the next.

The Foundational Doctrine of Eternal Judgment

Hebrews 6 lists several doctrines that are foundations of true Christian faith. One of them is *eternal judgment*. Because of erroneous beliefs, many have reasoned that innocent children and “out-of-luck” adults, who died without ever having had a chance to accept Christ as Lord and Savior, have been suffering in the torment of hell since their death. This makes God—who is merciful and just—seem *unmerciful and unjust*.

Happily, the actual doctrine of eternal judgment—as the Bible teaches it—is a doctrine of *great hope and promise*. God has revealed in His Word that all who have *ever lived* will have a full chance for salvation and eternal life in His Kingdom.

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